

Sul Ross State University  
COMM 5307 – Public Relations – Web-Delivered Course

Semester: Spring 2017

Instructor: Dominique Vargas

Contact Information: 432.837.8019, [dvargas@sulross.edu](mailto:dvargas@sulross.edu)

Office: BAB 319

Office hours: Mon. & Wed. 10-11, Walk-ins or by appointment welcome

### **Course Description**

Graduate public relations is designed to acquaint public administrators and other professionals with the terms, theory and procedures with modern public relations efforts. Special emphasis will be placed on practical applications of PR techniques, including organizational analysis, resource preparation and crisis management.

### **Course Objectives**

- Place public relations in a historical context by examining how persuasive theories have evolved over the years and have led to the development of modern communication techniques
- Differentiate between public relations and other forms of marketing communications
- Explain the role of research in the development of a strategic communications plan
- Analyze and understand the function and role of the news media in public relations
- Understand the use of tools for research & communication
- Learn effective public relations strategies to reach highly segmented stakeholders and diverse publics
- Understand the use of evaluation and measurement tools used to quantify behavioral and attitude change
- Develop and articulate a perspective for good and bad public relations techniques in today's fast-paced, Internet-connected world
- Identify public relations in the world around you

### **Participation and Expectations**

It is expected that all students will regularly participate in this course. Completing assignments each week by designated due dates. You are welcome to work ahead on discussion boards, assignments, and your crisis management paper, as long as assignments are turned in by the deadline.

When it comes to public relations deadlines can damage credibility and potentially lead to termination of positions or relationships. Deadlines will be treated seriously in this course. All assignments are due on their due date at the start of class, unless otherwise designated. ANY LATE ASSIGNMENT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL BE GIVEN A GRADE OF ZERO, unless previously discussed or arranged, exceptions will require discussion.

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Plagiarizing, cheating, or any other dishonest behavior in the classroom will not be tolerated. Rules and regulations regarding plagiarism, dishonesty, and other issues concerning classroom participation can be found in the University Rules and Regulations and Student Handbook. This course will abide by these established policies. A student found to be engaging in these activities will be penalized to the full extent of Sul Ross State University policy.

**Sul Ross State University Attendance Policy**

Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Therefore, students should attend all classes. Attendance includes being punctual for class and ready to engage with the professor and the day's material. The instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term. In accordance with the instructor's policy, the instructor has the right to penalize students who are out of compliance with the class attendance policy.

*Authorized/Excused Absences Statement.* An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized/excused absence. While every effort will be made by departments to minimize missed class time of students by careful scheduling of authorized University activities, when a student has to miss a class due to an authorized University activity, it will be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor of the class in advance. The department responsible for the authorized University activity will also notify instructors through the Student Life Office by providing an *excused absence list* to the office. Instructors will give students participating in an authorized University activity the opportunity to make up class work, including tests, within a reasonable time and at the convenience of the instructor.

Should an instructor have an attendance policy that allows for the dropping of a student after a certain number of absences, authorized/excused absences will not be counted towards that number of absences. Any student dropped for excessive absences will receive either an "F" or a "W" depending upon the faculty member's discretion.

*Distance Education (Web-course) Non-Participation Statement.* Policies in effect for on-campus, traditional classroom instruction courses also apply to students enrolled in distance education courses, including Web-based and ITV courses.

Non-participation and inactivity may include not logging on to the course, not submitting assignments or participating in other assigned activities as scheduled, not communicating with the instructor by phone or e-mail, and/or not following the instructor's participation guidelines stated in the syllabus.

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**ADA**

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz, M.Ed., L.P.C., Accessibility Services Coordinator, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203. Email: [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu).

**Grades**

This semester you will be able to obtain up to 1000 points, based on the allocations below. All assignments and grade distribution are subject to change as the semester continues, at the instructor's discretion.

Introductions	25
News Release #1	50
News Release #2	75
News Release #3	100
Chapter Quizzes	100 (average from all chapter quizzes)
Chapter Discussion Boards	150 (average from all chapter db's)
Social Media Assignment 1	100
Social Media Assignment 2	100
Social Media Assignment 3	100
Crisis Management Paper	200

Total Semester Points Available 1000

- 900-1000 = A
- 800-899 = B
- 700-799 = C
- 600-699 = D
- 0-599 = F

## **Assignments in Brief**

### *Introductions*

Introduce yourself according to the instructions in the discussion board section of our Blackboard course.

### *News Release #1, #2, #3*

You will be required to write three news releases this semester, they will increase in point value as the semester continues because your knowledge base and skill set will increase as well.

### *Chapter Quizzes*

There will be a multiple choice quiz that corresponds with each chapter of the required text. Quizzes must be taken in one sitting, within a one-hour time frame. Quizzes will open Monday at 8:00am on the week they are scheduled, and will need to be completed by 11:59pm on Sunday of the week they are scheduled.

### *Chapter Discussion Boards*

There will be at least one discussion board question that will relate to each chapter of the required text. You are required to respond thoughtfully and fully to each questions. Additionally, you will be required to respond to two peer's posts for each chapter discussion board. Discussion board responses will always be due by 11:59pm on Thursday of the week they are scheduled, and peer responses will always be due by 11:59pm on Sunday of the week they are scheduled.

### *Social Media Assignment 1*

You will write a report on the use of one social media tools for public relations purposes. Examples of social media tools include: Facebook, Yelp!, Instagram, Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Snap Chat, etc. Student's selection must be approved as the same social media cannot be reported on more than once. You will share your report with your classmates.

### *Social Media Assignment 2*

Select a local business to create short term social media campaign for including hashtags and tweets.

### *Social Media Assignment 3*

Select a large company or corporation to follow on social media for at least two weeks. You must follow them for at least five days on at least three different social media. Analyze their use of social media. You will write an essay discussing your findings.

### *Crisis Management Paper*

Your assignment is to write a 12-15page paper analyzing a crisis management situation for a large company/corporation. Select a case of crisis management, for example the 1982 situation when Johnson & Johnson's cyanide-laced Tylenol capsules or the 2010 BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Analyze the company, the people involved and the

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crisis situation. What did the company do right? What could have been done better? What were the short-term and long-term effects of the crisis on the company? Write a paper discussing the company, the situation, the crisis management techniques, and what you might recommend they do differently. Only credible, scholarly sources are allowed to be use. A minimum of five sources.

Student Learning Outcomes (Communication BA)

1. Demonstrates the ability to competently deliver public presentations, including the use of presentation technology such as presentation software, video, and audio.
2. The ability to analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claims, warrants, data, etc.
3. Demonstrates the ability to complete appropriate discipline specific writing assignments.
4. The ability to apply communication theory to the analysis of communication situations appropriate to each degree specialization.
5. Demonstrate competent use of media technology including video, audio, and internet-based technology.

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**Schedule of Assignments**

*Subject to change at the instructors discretion*

**Week 1**

January 16 – January 22, 2017

Introductions and responses to peer introductions due by 11:59pm on Sunday, January 22

**Week 2**

January 23 – January 29, 2017

News Release due by 11:59pm on Sunday, January 29

Chapter 1 Quiz due by 11:59pm on Sunday, January 29

Chapter 2 Quiz due by 11:59pm on Sunday, January 29

**Week 3**

January 30 – February 5, 2017

Chapter 1 Discussion Board due by 11:59pm on Thursday, February 2, Peer

Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 5

Chapter 2 Discussion Board due by 11:59pm on Thursday, February 2, Peer

Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 5

**Week 4**

February 6 – February 12, 2017

All three Chapter 3 Discussion Boards due by 11:59pm on Thursday, February 9, Peer

Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 9

Chapter 3 Quiz due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 12

**Week 5**

February 13 – February 19, 2017

Chapter 4 Discussion Board due by 11:59 on Thursday, February 16, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 19

Both Chapter 5 Discussion Boards due by 11:59 on Thursday, February 16, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 19

Chapter 4 Quiz due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 19

Chapter 5 Quiz due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 19

**Week 6**

February 20 – February 26, 2017

Chapter 6 Discussion Board due by 11:59pm on Thursday, February 23, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 26

Chapter 6 Quiz due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 26

Social Media Assignment 1 due by 11:59pm on Sunday, February 26

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**Week 7**

February 27 – March 5, 2017

Chapter 7 Discussion Board due by 11:59pm on Thursday, March 2, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, March 5

Chapter 7 Quiz due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, March 5

**Week 8**

March 6 – March 12, 2017

Chapter 8 Discussion Board due by 11:59pm on Thursday, March 9, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, March 12

Chapter 8 Quiz due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, March 12

News Release #2 due by 11:59pm on Sunday, March 12

**Week 9**

Spring Break

March 13 – March 17, 2017

**Week 10**

March 20 – March 26, 2017

Chapter 9 Discussion Board due by 11:59pm on Thursday, March 23, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm on Sunday, March 26

Chapter 9 Quiz Due by 11:59pm on Sunday, March 26

Social Media Assignment 2 due by 11:59pm on Sunday, March 26

**Week 11**

March 27 – April 2, 2017

Both Chapter 10 Discussion Boards due by 11:59pm on Thursday, March 30, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm Sunday, April 2

Chapter 10 Quiz due by 11:59pm on Sunday, April 2

**Week 12**

April 3 – April 9, 2017

Chapter 11 Discussion Board due by 11:59pm on Thursday, April 6, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm Sunday, April 9

Chapter 11 Quiz due by 11:59pm on Sunday, April 9

**Week 13**

April 10 – April 16, 2017

Chapter 12 Discussion Board due by 11:59pm on Thursday, April 13, Peer Responses due by 11:59pm Sunday, April 16

Chapter 12 Quiz due by 11:59pm Sunday, April 16

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**Week 14**

April 17 – April 23, 2017

Social Media Assignment 3 due by 11:59pm Sunday, April 23

**Week 15**

April 24 – April 30, 2017

News Release 3 due by 11:59pm Sunday, April 23

**Week 16**

May 1 – May 4, 2017

Crisis Management Paper Due by 11:59pm on Thursday, May 4



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**Alpine Final Exam Schedule, Spring 2017 Term**

Final examinations in Laboratory and Physical Education activity courses will be given during the last class period of the semester. For times not listed, consult with your instructor.

For Classes Meeting on:	Exam Date and Time will be:
<b>Monday/Wednesday/Friday</b>	<b>Friday, May 5</b>
8 a.m.	8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
10 a.m.	10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
1 p.m.	12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
3 p.m., 3:30 p.m.	3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Monday Night Classes	6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
<b>Tuesday/Thursday</b>	<b>Monday, May 8</b>
9:30 a.m.	8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
11 a.m.	10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
2 p.m.	12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
3:30 p.m., 4 p.m.	3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Tuesday Night Classes	6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
<b>Monday/Wednesday/Friday</b>	<b>Tuesday, May 9</b>
9 a.m.	8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
11 a.m.	10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
12 p.m., 12:30 p.m.	12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
2 p.m.	3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Wednesday Night Classes	6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
<b>Tuesday/Thursday</b>	<b>Wednesday, May 10</b>
8 a.m.	8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
12:30 p.m.	10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
1 p.m.	12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Thursday Night Classes	6 p.m. - 8 p.m.