

**CO 3813- Public Relations Case Problems**  
**T/Th 8:00-9:15 McComas 204**  
**Fall 2015**

**Instructor:** Melody Fisher, Ph.D.

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**Office hours:** T/Th 9:30a.m.-12:00p.m.; 3:30-4:30  
other hours by appointment

**Departmental Information:** [www.comm.msstate.edu](http://www.comm.msstate.edu); Twitter - @MSUCOMM; LinkedIn – Mississippi State University Department of Communication; Facebook- Mississippi State University Department of Communication

**Course Description:** The written analysis, presentation, and group discussion specific and hypothetical cases using public relations theory as a base. Credit: 3 semester hours.  
Prerequisites: CO 3803

**Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Apply public relations principles to problems and opportunities, which occur in a variety of work situations.
2. Provide an overview of the purpose of public relations and the process through which public relations is practiced strategically.
3. Develop a strategic public relations plan to deal with real world public relations problems and opportunities.
4. Apply ethical decision-making in a variety of case study situations.

**Course Materials:** *Public Relations Practices: Managerial Case Studies and Problems* by Center, Jackson, Smith, Stansberry (8th Ed.), 2014 Pearson Education, Upper Saddle River, NJ ISBN: 0-13-297193-5

**Additional Course Material:** Students are not required to purchase any additional texts for this course. However, readings may periodically handed out in class or may be accessed via the internet that the student will be expected to review. Students may also be asked to view/review current sources of print and electronic media.

**Course Web Site:** Log into mycourses.msstate.edu using your net id and password. Be sure to take advantage of this site, and check it frequently to view course updates, access course handouts, and to check grades.

**Course Requirements:**

Quizzes.....	20%
Current Events Assignments.....	25%
Case Review/Discussion.....	25%
Team Case Study..	30%

**Grading Scale:**

A=90-100

B=80-89

C=70-79

D=60-69

F=59 and below

**Course Policies**

**Attendance:** Students are responsible for their own education; therefore, they are required to attend all of their classes and be responsible for all assigned course material and all material covered in class. Each student is also expected to be on time for class and remain for the duration of the class. When students are absent from class, it is the student's responsibility to gather missed information from a classmate.

**Missed Work:** All assigned work is due as listed. Late work will not be accepted and a grade of zero will be entered for the assignment. Only under extreme circumstances will students be excused from assignments. **Note** – excused, not allowed to make up. These circumstances must be accompanied with an official excuse – doctor's excuse, funeral obituary, etc.

**Class Disturbances:** This is a course that requires engaging in group discussions. However, it is expected that students refrain from excessive talking amongst one another during the class period. It is also unacceptable for cell phones, pagers, or other electronic devices to be heard during class

**MSU Honor Code:** Students are expected to adhere to the MSU Honor Code. The honor code can be found at <http://www.honorcode.msstate.edu/>

## Course Requirement Descriptions

### QUIZZES

Two quizzes will be given to confirm your knowledge of course syllabus and the ROPE process. These quizzes will be accessible and submitted on the course webpage. Syllabus quiz is due **August 28 by 11:59 p.m.** and ROPE process quiz due **September 4 by 11:59 p.m.**

**CURRENT EVENTS ASSIGNMENTS** – Every other Thursday, you will illustrate your knowledge of current events through completing quizzes and informal writing assignments.

- *Quizzes* will cover material based on local, national, international news, and class discussions. Quizzes will be administered in class and will be given **Thursday, August 27; Thursday, September 24; and Thursday, October 22**
- You will complete a *Current Events Reflection* question by incorporating course material to an issue that has received the attention of the local, national or international media. Reflections will be completed and submitted **Thursday, September 10; Thursday, October 8; and Thursday, November 5**

These assignments will be completed in class.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS CASE REVIEW

Each student will select one public relations case from current events and prepare an outline summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of the case, any updates on the campaign since the program ended as well as several discussion questions. Cases can be found in the news, PR trade publications, the PRSA Web site, etc. You will then be asked to lead a discussion of the case with the class on your assigned presentation day.

### TEAM CASE STUDY

This assignment will serve as an ongoing project for the course. It will be a team effort and is divided into three parts:

**Part 1: Proposal – 0%**

The class will be divided into four or five teams. Your team will select an appropriate organization and a real-world case by identifying a problem, opportunity, or ethical issue that the organization faces that required significant public relations involvement. Each team will select its own case/organization, with instructor approval.

**Team proposal form due September 10.**

**Part 2: Peer Review and First Draft Presentations– 10%**

After receiving approval, your team will collect and synthesize research and objective components of your selected case. After receiving feedback from your peers, your team will make a formal presentation to the class based on your work thus far. The presentation should be 8-10 minutes, with an additional 5 minutes for questions. **First Draft and peer reviews September 29 and October 1**

**Part 3: Final Presentation and Paper -20%**

Lastly, you will submit your final paper, encompassing information from your first draft along with the planning, evaluation and analysis components. You will make a final team presentation to the class and submit the final paper on **the final exam date, TBA.** **More information on this assignment will be given later.**

**Written Rubric** – The following rubric will be used to assess your written work.

Criteria	1- Unacceptable	2- Minimally Acceptable	3- Proficient	4- Advanced	Score
<b>Content (did you answer the question)</b>	Central Idea/purpose is not stated; content is erroneous or irrelevant; support for assertions is largely absent.	Central idea/purpose is stated; content is accurate but not always relevant; support is offered but inadequate for some assertions.	Central idea/purpose is clearly stated; content is accurate and relevant; credible support is provided for each assertion..	Central idea/purpose is vividly stated; content is accurate, thorough, and directly on point; strong support is provided for each assertion.	/40
<b>Organization</b>	Little or no structure is present. Paper is frequently confusing to the reader because of lack of organization.	Identifiable structure is present but inconsistently executed; may contain several statements out of place and occasionally deviate from the topic.	Identifiable structure is present and consistently executed with few statements out of place.	Identifiable structure is presented in a purposeful, interesting and effective sequence and remains focused.	/10
<b>Language (fragments, run-ons, etc)</b>	Grammar usage is severely deficient	Isolated errors in grammar usage reduce clarity and credibility	Free of serious errors in grammar.	Free of errors in grammar usage. Word choice aids clarity, vividness and credibility.	/25
<b>Mechanics</b>	Excessive spacing, punctuation, APA style errors, spelling errors are present >6 errors	Some correct spacing, punctuation, APA style errors, spelling are used with 4-6 errors.	Mostly correct spacing, punctuation, APA style errors, spelling are used with 1-3 errors	Correct spacing, punctuation, APA style errors, spelling are used. 0 errors	/25
<b>Total</b>					/100

**Tentative Course Schedule**

Week	Topic(s)	Due
1- 8/18 & 8/20	Course Introduction/ Defining	Buy book!

	Public Relations	
2- 8/25 & 8/27	ROPE Process	Read Chapters 1 &2 *Syllabus Quiz Due – 8/28 Current Events Quiz
3- 9/1 & 9/3	Employee Relations	Read Chapter 3 ROPE Process Quiz Due-9/4
4- 9/8 & 9/10	Social Media	Read posted material Current Events Reflection *proposal due
5- 9/15 & 9/17	Community Relations Library Guest	Read Chapter 4
6- 9/22 & 9/24	International Relations	Read posted material Current Events Quiz
7- 9/29 & 10/1		1 <sup>st</sup> Draft Review & Presentation
8- 10/6 * Fall Break, class doesn't meet 10/8	Public Issue Campaigns	Read Chapter 8 Current Events Reflection
9- 10/13 & 10/15	Public Affairs/Government	Read Posted Material
10- 10/20 & 10/22	Crisis Management	Read Chapter 9 Current Events Quiz
11- 10/27 & 10/29	Special Publics	Read Posted Material
12- 11/3 & 11/5	Consumer Relations	Current Events Reflection
13- 11/10 & 11/12	Media Relations	Read Chapter 7
14- 11/17 & 11/19	Ethics and Standards	Read Chapter 10
15 – 11/24 *11/26 Thanksgiving	Team Work	
16- 12/1	Course Review	

\*Final Paper TBA