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PBRL 3014 Section 1

Managing Organizational Public Relations

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September-December, 2006
Professor P. Parsons

PBRL3014 **Managing
Organizational Public Relations**

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Just the facts...

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What 3014 is about...

This course is one of the most important ones that you'll ever take in PR. The ability to think strategically and to develop and implement well-executed public relations plans are always identified as the most important knowledge and skill sets in our industry. In general, the following are the broad goals that I have for this course:

1. To apply the management concepts introduced in PBRL 2014 to the public relations function within organizations.
2. To explore the concept of organizational environments, both internal (organizational or corporate culture) and external, the analysis of which provides clues about the organization's public relations problems and opportunities.
3. To help you develop the right attitude that will support a strategic approach to your public relations practice within a framework of social responsibility.

4. To help you to develop the knowledge and skills that you will need to plan, implement and evaluate overall public relations strategies as well as individual tactics.

What you'll be expected to accomplish...

The following are the course objectives. A careful examination of these objectives will provide you with guidance about exactly what you will be expected to have accomplished by the end of the term and what you will be graded on. Upon successful completion of PBRL 3014, you should be able to:

1. Discuss selected management and communication theories that form the basis for the modern practice of public relations.
2. Use your knowledge of the theories as rationales for PR campaign planning.
3. Use your knowledge of corporate culture to analyse the internal environment of an organization, subsequently identifying internal public relations problems and opportunities.
4. Analyse the external environment of an organization to determine PR problems and opportunities facing an organization.
5. Create a short-term, strategic public relations plan for an organization using the public relations process.
6. Prepare planning materials to manage organizational resources such as personnel, time, and financial resources.
7. Justify the selection of appropriate evaluation strategies to complete the public relations planning process.
8. Critique public relations and communication campaigns.

Your responsibilities in this course...

Professors have responsibilities and so do students. These are yours.

Assignments

You are responsible for completion of all assignments (if you fail to submit one, regardless of how much it is worth, you will fail the course). You are responsible to complete all assignments on time. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date. Late assignments lose 20% per day including the day they are due if they aren't on the desk when class starts. After 5 days the assignment will receive an F. If you are going to have difficulty meeting a deadline, discuss it with me before the deadline and we may be able to make some mutually acceptable, fair

arrangements. (For example, if you are in a coma and send someone to negotiate, I'll consider your request).

Team Work

Like it or not, there is team work involved in this course – that is distinct from “group work.” Public relations involves a lot of team work (not group work) and you might as well get used to being a part of a management team. We'll talk more about that in class. You are responsible for being a solid team player in this course. If any team has human resource problems, it is up to the team leader (you have to pick one) to come to me for advice. ***Each team member will submit with team assignments a statement of his or her role and this will be signed by all other team members.***¹

Quality of Assignment Presentation

It's time for you to think about being a Public Relations professional and behave as one. All assignments should reflect the highest level of professional presentation that you can muster. That means the following:

- ▶ All written assignments are to be completed on a computer, and printed on a laser printer (no ink-jets whatsoever) on 20 lb white bond paper. Always use a 12pt Times Roman font and a ragged right margin. Use a cover sheet and paginate in the upper right hand corner. Use a cover if you wish (unless otherwise indicated in the assignment details) but ***do not submit anything in a three-ring binder.***
- ▶ There will be absolutely no plagiarism tolerated. If you forget what this means, I suggest you look it up. It is your responsibility to review the university regulations regarding plagiarism and cheating.
- ▶ The correct use of language is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of all written assignments.

Classes

You have a responsibility to yourself, your classmates and to your professor to actually show up for class. It will be impossible to pass this course without attending class since the reading materials are only value-added aspects of the course: most of what you need to succeed as a PR practitioner will be conveyed in class through lectures, class discussions, videos and guest speakers. You are expected to participate to the best of your ability.

Please no hats with peaks or brims, or gum chewing in class. I promise to afford you the same courtesy.

¹ A form for this purpose is attached to this syllabus.

My responsibilities in this course...

The main responsibility that I have is to show up so that the university will pay me my salary. However, I believe that my responsibilities to you and to the PR profession go a bit further than that. Here is what I am committed to.

- ▶ Presenting useful material to you in a way that makes you want to come to class and not see it as a responsibility so much as a delight.
- ▶ Being fair and equitable in how I treat students and apply policies and grading criteria. Keep in mind that this is not a science.

Department of Public Relations Writing Competence Requirement

BASIC WRITING COMPETENCE IS A NECESSARY CONDITION FOR PASSING THIS COURSE

Because writing is an important part of our field's professional practice, the Department of Public Relations cannot allow its students to graduate or intern if they do not have the ability to write correct English. Consequently, writing competence is a requirement in all department courses, and it must be demonstrated in all classes. This means that **students who fail more than one assignment in this course due to a lack of writing competence will not pass, regardless the accumulation of points they achieve through team work, class participation, and the like.**

The department plays a significant role in developing student writing; however, it does not offer instruction in basic writing skills because these skills are *beneath* the academic level at which PR courses occur. The faculty presumes that every student's general education included twelve years of writing-skills training, and therefore expects an English language competence in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and semantics. **The responsibility to achieve that minimal standard lies with the student.**

The professor will not suspend this requirement by virtue of a student's willingness to obtain remedial writing instruction. The public relations profession is writing intensive, and employers expect PR students to excel as writers, in comparison with the general public. Consequently the department requires the actual existence of writing skills, rather than the hope or the promise of these skills, as a condition for advancing students.

Readings

Please note that I have not designated anything as "required." Indeed, not even assignments are required – unless you plan to pass the course, in that case they are required for you. However, if you plan to get a good grade or even simply pass this

course, you will do all the suggested reading, attend all classes (barring comas and natural disasters), participate to the best of your ability and submit all assignments by the deadline. Then you won't have to worry: your grade will take care of itself.

Smith, Ronald. (2005). *Strategic planning for public relations*. 2nd ed. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Parsons, Patricia. (2003). *A manager's guide to PR projects: A practical approach*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Course Prerequisites

The prerequisite for this course is Public Relations 2014. Students who have not successfully completed PBRL 2014 will be dropped from the course.

Marking Scheme

Assignment	Value	Date Due
Client-Based Organizational PR Audit and Analysis ²	25%	October 18
Public Relations Worksheet	25%	October 30
Presentation of Client-Based PR Plan	20%	As scheduled
Client-Based Written PR Plan: Strategy, Tactics and Evaluation	30%	December 4

Assignment Instructions

Organizational PR Audit and Analysis

The purpose of this assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to work with a real organization to conduct internal and external research that will lead to the identification of public relations problems and/or opportunities. By allowing you to

² Clients must be approved by me and a signed, client consent form submitted by September 18.

submit for marking this part of the PR plan first, you will be able to use the feedback presented to you to improve your final, written PR plan for that organization.

This assignment, worth 25% of your final grade is Part 1 of your public relations planning assignment. It requires you to select a partner and a client (this may be a local non-profit organization or a small business – not contacted through the Centre for Women in Business on the MSVU campus). This preliminary report requires you to conduct a public relations audit that examines and assesses both the internal and the external public relationships, the environments and analyses the current situation of the organization. It will conclude with a list of the organization's public relations-related strengths and weaknesses and an identification of priority problems and/or opportunities with their associated publics. This last aspect of the assignment will provide the basis for the final project in this course.

You will be graded on the following:

- ▶ Evidence of pre-planning for the audit.
- ▶ Completeness of the sources consulted.
- ▶ Use of outside research.
- ▶ Organization of the final audit report.
- ▶ Quality of the analysis discussion.
- ▶ Accuracy and completeness of the conclusions (i.e. list of strengths and weaknesses and problem/opportunity identification).
- ▶ Presentation.

Public Relations Worksheet

The purpose of this assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your facility with public relations concepts and terminology that you will need to work with clients in the real world. This assignment is worth 25% of your final grade.

Using your reading and class notes, you are required to define a series of public relations terms. The instructions for completion of the assignment will be provided to you on October 16, two weeks before it is due to be submitted on **October 30**. If you are not in class on October 16 to receive the assignment sheet, you will be required to contact me directly. Do not ask another student to pick one up for you. .

Written PR Plan: Strategy, Tactics and Evaluation

The purpose of this final and capstone assignment is to allow you to demonstrate your ability to think strategically about a public relations problem or opportunity and to develop and communicate a plan to deal with it.

Working with the same partner and client as for the audit (this is Part 2 of the plan assignment), and basing your plan on the feedback from the previous assignment, you will prepare a plan whose objective is to solve one of the identified problems or capitalize on one of the opportunities identified in your final analysis.

Using the Sample Plan Format presented in your workbook, you will create a plan for your client. In addition, utilizing any of the worksheets provided will likely help with the quality of the plan.

It should include the following elements:

- ▶ A cover sheet as per the course style guide (must also include the name of the client)
- ▶ A purpose statement and an executive summary
- ▶ A **brief** summary of organizational background and situational analysis (there is no need to repeat what you submitted previously)
- ▶ A statement indicating why the particular problem or opportunity was chosen
- ▶ A description of publics, objectives and messages
- ▶ A delineation of the overall strategy chosen and why it was chosen
- ▶ Delineation of specific tactics keyed to specific publics
- ▶ Description of the implementation plan including considerations regarding resources, a timeline and a complete budget (time lines and budgets in chart form may be included in the appendices) and who will implement each aspect of the plan
- ▶ Complete description of the evaluation strategies and why they were chosen.
- ▶ Appendices (may include any or all of the inclusions listed on p. 9 of the sample plan in your workbook). The appendices do not include current materials such as current print literature, but might include a mock-up of a new publication or web presence for example. If you used any kind of data-gathering instrument, it should be included as should your list of sources both inside and outside the organization.
- ▶ Each team member includes a signed statement of his or her contribution to the final product. It must also be signed by the team-mate.

You will be graded on the following:

- ▶ Inclusion of all required elements

- ▶ Coherence of the plan itself (i.e. it must be congruent with the findings of the research conducted previously and each element of the plan must be congruent with the others)
- ▶ Quality of the description of the rationales for the selection of strategy and tactics
- ▶ Clarity of the tactics and implementation plan (i.e. could someone actually follow this plan and know what to do?)
- ▶ Feasibility and suitability of the tactics chosen
- ▶ Evidence of innovative thinking in the development of the strategy and tactics
- ▶ Quality of the presentation including professional look and business writing style.

This written plan is worth 30% of your final grade and is due at the beginning of class on **December 4**.

Client Presentation of PR Plan

Worth 20% of your final grade for PBRL 3014, this final assignment is a presentation of your client plan. The purpose of this assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to make the kind of business presentation that is from time to time required of everyone who works in public relations. Additionally, it will provide all students in the class with exposure to a wider variety of real-life client situations, a must for any neophyte PR practitioner.

This is a 25-30 minute presentation that should present this plan as if it were being presented to the client for the first time. You are welcome to invite your client to the presentation. Please let me know in advance if he or she will be attending.

You will be graded on the following:

- ▶ Completeness of the presentation (should cover all the highlights)
- ▶ Clarity of the explanation
- ▶ Use and quality of visuals or other aids to presentation
- ▶ Creativity in presentation
- ▶ Quality of the speakers' performance including ability to answer audience questions.
- ▶ Coordination of the two speakers' roles
- ▶ Professionalism of the presentation

Tentative Schedule

Date	Class Topic	Reading & Assignments
Sept. 6	Course Intro	Smith, Introduction
Sept. 11 & 13	Applying revisited management concepts to PR planning	Parsons, Chapter 1
Sept. 18	Writing & Presenting PR Plans/Reports/Proposals	
Sept. 20	Research: Situational Analysis	Smith, pp. 15-28
Sept. 25	Research: Internal Environment: Corporate Culture & the PR Audit	Smith, pp. 29-31 Parsons, Chapter 2 incl. worksheets
Sept. 27	Research: Internal Environment (cont'd)	Smith, pp. 32-41
Oct. 2	Research: External Environment and the Publics	Smith, pp. 42-66 + appendix A Parsons, pp. 22-24
Oct. 4	The theories that provide rationales for planning (Publics & Messages)	Smith, pp. 117-154
Oct. 9	Thanksgiving: No class	
Oct. 11	Coop Interviews: No class	
Oct. 16	Theories cont'd (Persuasion & Media)	(worksheet assignment instructions to be provided today)

Oct. 18	Plan: Developing the Objectives	PR Audit & Analysis Due Smith, pp. 69-81. Parsons, pp. 24-29
Oct. 23	Plan: Formulating a Creative Strategy	Smith, pp. 155-216 to read over next three classes Parsons, pp. 28-30 + Ch. 3 worksheets
Oct. 25	Creative Strategy cont'd	
Oct. 30	Plan: Public Relations Tactics	Worksheet Assignment Due
Nov. 1	Implement: Managing the Resources	Smith, pp. 217-233 Parsons, pp. 31-42 + Ch. 4 worksheets
Nov. 6	Evaluate: Developing the Evaluation Strategy	Smith, pp. 235-258 Parsons, pp. 43-50 + Ch. 5 worksheets
Nov. 8	PR strategy development in the real world (guest speaker)	
Nov. 13	PR strategies in the real world (guest speaker)	
Nov. 15	Client Presentations	
Nov. 20	Client Presentations	
Nov. 22	Client Presentations	
Nov. 27	Client Presentations	
Nov. 29	Client Presentations	
Dec. 4	Client presentations	Final Written Plans Due