

COMM 0073 - INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC RELATIONS

Catalog Description

Advisory: Completion of COMM 71 with grade of "C" or better

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: The principles and processes of the public relations (PR) field to include: goal setting, research and planning, designing messages for various media outlets, using social media for promotion, developing campaigns, communicating effectively in a crisis, analyzing publics, evaluating, and delivering public presentations as key spokespersons for organizations. Examine public relations techniques for business, public and nonprofit organizations. (CSU)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Explain public relations' various roles in diverse contemporary society.
- CSLO #2: Formulate multiple public relations strategies that are ethical and meet intended outcomes.
- CSLO #3: Design effective and ethical public relations campaigns for diverse publics.
- CSLO #4: Deliver professional oral presentations with rhetorical sensitivity, both in-person and mediated.

Effective Term

Fall 2025

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

1. Explain the role and function of contemporary public relations in today's society and the global economy.
2. Discuss the history and growth of public relations.
3. Apply basic public relations theories, principles, concepts and practices in order to meet intended organizational outcomes.
4. Design messages with an understanding of diverse peoples and cultures, including a demonstrated understanding of: equity, inclusion, anti-racism and other forms of diversity.
5. Create appropriate social media content on behalf of a client.
6. Demonstrate competency in strategic planning and problem-solving.
7. Demonstrate the basic process of public relations research, evaluation/analysis, message planning and delivery; apply this process to various situations.

8. Formulate effective public relations campaigns; identifying multiple strategies.
9. Analyze legal and ethical situations and determine appropriate public relations solutions.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Behavioral Sciences
 - AA/AS - Comm & Analyt Thinking
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: 1. In-Person: Students will be presented with a variety of organizational public relations campaigns that were circulated via social media. After individually evaluating the effectiveness of each campaign on its intended publics, students will share their perspectives in small groups. After the small group discussion, the instructor will facilitate a larger class discussion regarding social media campaigns. Students are evaluated based on their participation in the small group and class discussions. 2. Classroom Discussion (Online) Example Instructions: Demonstrate your understanding of the major differences between marketing campaigns and public relations campaigns. Please post links to: (1) a marketing campaign; and (2) a public relations campaign. Please explain how each type of campaign fits the definition as described in this course and rate the effectiveness of each campaign's messaging.
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: Essay question: Describe the role data analytics play when implementing social media campaigns.
- Objective Examinations
 - Example: In both online and face-to-face instruction, students will take multiple-choice exams to assess understanding of key concepts from the assigned reading, module content and lectures. Sample Question: What is the difference between old public relations (PR) and new public relations (PR)? A. The goal of old PR was to get covered by the news and the goal of new PR is to build relationships. B. The goal of old PR was to fight for mental space and the goal of new PR is to do something newsworthy. C. The goal of old PR was to build relationships and the goal of new PR is to get covered by the news. D. The goal of old PR was to tell stories through social media and the goal of new PR is to pay for advertisements. Answer: A. The goal of old PR was to get covered by the news and the goal of new PR is to build relationships.
- Projects
 - Example: Students will work together in groups to identify and assess the DEI initiatives and practices of two different companies. Groups will complete a SWOT analysis that will focus on the internal and external DEI practices and initiatives and prepare a presentation to the class on how companies are creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture, as well as the opportunities that exist to better address DEI. The instructor

will evaluate each group's presentation based on content, organization and delivery.

- Reports
 - Example: Students will create reports on various aspects of public relations. For example, students are provided with a public relations case study. Directions: Using your knowledge of public relations principles, analyze the case study and rate the organization's PR response, explaining what they could have done differently and why. Instructor will evaluate student's report based on their ability to evaluate and analyze the organization's PR response using public relations principles and strategies.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. The instructor lectures on the meaning of publics and target audiences. To demonstrate understanding when applied to an organizational context, students then break into small groups and identify Sierra College's target audiences.

Distance Learning

1. Instruction: The instructor creates and posts an instructional video describing various methods to create and implement public relations campaigns. The video is supplemented with written information. Students watch the instructional video and then complete an assignment to demonstrate their understanding by creating a public relations campaign for an assigned organization.

- Author: Freberg, Karen
- Publisher: Sage
- Publication Date: August 2020
- Text Edition: 1
- Classic Textbook?:
- OER Link:
- OER: No
- Introduction to Public Relations: Strategic, Digital and Socially Responsible Communication
 - Author: Page, J.T & Parnell, L. J.
 - Publisher: Sage
 - Publication Date: October 2020
 - Text Edition: 2
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER: No
- The Evolving World of Public Relations
 - Author: Martinelli, R.
 - Publisher: OER Commons/NSCC
 - Publication Date: January 2021
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER: Yes

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.

Typical Out of Class Assignments

Reading Assignments

Read a chapter that describes public relations in the age of social media from the assigned textbook. Students take note of new or confusing terms they encounter to discuss in class.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

Students identify three entry-level employment positions in public relations posted online. Directions: Review all the necessary skills (i.e., qualifications) required for the entry-level PR position at each company. Under each job entry, include a brief summary (1-2 paragraphs) of the specific qualifications, duties, and functions you found that were most essential and the ways in which you currently meet those qualifications.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

Assignment: Students maintain a portfolio of their work throughout the course that also includes a written reflection of how they have grown in their public relations skills and understanding.

Required Materials

- Discovering Public Relations: An Introduction to Creative and Strategic Practices