

**The University of Texas at San Antonio**  
**Department of Communication**

**COM 4523.901 • Case Studies in Public Relations**

**Fall 2009 • TR 9:30 - 10:45 a.m. • Downtown Campus • BV 3.330**

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**Phone** 458-2645 • **Office hours** TR 12:30-2 p.m. and by appointment

**Required Text.** Hendrix, Jerry. Public Relations Cases. 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. Wadsworth.

**Course Description.** Advanced study of public relations functions, principles and practices using local, regional and national organizations as examples.

**Prerequisites.** COM 3513, Com 3523 and completion or concurrent enrollment in Com 3073

**Course Objectives.** This course will allow students to learn how the practice of public-relations activities affects people, organizations and society by studying successful and unsuccessful public-relations campaigns. The course will allow students the opportunity to:

§ Engage in the process of public-relations problem-solving.

§ Familiarize themselves with actual examples of PR campaigns.

§ Alert themselves to public-relations pitfalls.

§ Develop an in-depth understanding of public-relations research, message development and programming.

§ Obtain practical experience in public-relations problem-solving.

**Students with Documented Disabilities.** Support services, including registration assistance and equipment are available through the Office of Disability Services (MS 2.03.18; 458-4157). Students should contact that office *before starting classes*. Accommodations cannot be made unless students register with this office and provide the instructor with a letter from Disability Services; *accommodations are not applied retroactively*.

**Academic Honesty.** You are expected to write your own papers and do your own assignments. If you are caught cheating, you will receive an F on the exam/assignment and may receive an F in the course. In addition, a letter also will be sent to the department chairman and dean. Cheating is not a minor offense; it can result in your being removed from the university or fired from a job. For additional information regarding scholastic dishonesty, see section 203 of the Student Code of Conduct at <http://www.utsa.edu/OSJA/section203.htm>.

**Grading.** The final grade for this class will be assessed multidimensionally. The following grading scale will apply:  $\geq 90=A$ ;  $80 < 90=B$ ;  $70 < 80=C$ ;  $60 < 70=D$ ;  $< 60=F$ .

Attendance/participation	10%
PR campaign analysis	20%
Strategic PR proposal	20%
Case oral presentation	20%
Exams	<u>30%</u>
Total	100%

**Attendance/Participation [10%].** Students are expected to attend class on time. Tardiness will count as half an absence. Missing a presentation counts as two absences. Since this class is related to the study of public-relations cases, students are expected to do the required reading and participate actively in case discussions.

**Written/Oral Assignments.** Three papers will be assigned. These must be written in AP-style, typed (double-spaced with 1" margins) and submitted at the beginning of class on the date due. Grading criteria will include

both content and mechanics (notably AP-style grammar, spelling and punctuation). No late assignments will be accepted. Major penalties will be assessed for missing assignments.

**1. Analysis of a Public-Relations Campaign (20%).** Choose an existing successful public-relations campaign and write a report evaluating its elements based on the ROPE model. Get as much information as possible; you may want to speak with the people involved in creating the campaign. Attach copies of the campaign's print elements to your paper. **Campaign selected by Sept. 8. Reports due and oral presentations begin Oct. 13.**

**2. Strategic Public-Relations Proposal (20%).** Select a contemporary unsuccessful public-relations campaign and write a complete proposal for a strategic, workable public-relations campaign. Include all the ROPE elements. This means that your proposal recommends research and target audiences and provides messages, programming, outreach materials and evaluation ideas. **Topics selected by Oct. 20. Proposals due and presentations begin Dec. 1.**

**3. Case Presentation (20%).** You will be assigned a case that draws on information from one of the chapters to present in class. You are responsible for creating and knowing all about your specific case and its chapter and for the ensuing class discussion. A written analysis using the ROPE method must be turned in before your presentation. Your presentation time limit is 20 minutes. This exercise will give you an opportunity to flex your analytical and speaking skills and your enthusiasm-generating abilities while imparting the knowledge you've gained about your specific type of public relations.

**4. Exams (30%).** Two exams will test your understanding of the ROPE model and your familiarity with specific cases in the textbook. You will have the opportunity to display your cumulative public-relations cases knowledge via the written, AP-style word. **No make-up exams will be given.**

**Schedule of Required Readings, Class Preparations and Assignments,  
Lecture/Discussion Topics and Student Presentations**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Assignments/Topics</b>
<b>Aug 27</b>	<i>Assignments for this week's classes:</i> Course introduction and overview Read Chapters 1 (Public Relations in Action) and 2 (A Public Relations Process).
<b>Sept. 1/3</b>	<i>Assignments for this week's classes:</i> <b>Read Chapter 3 (Media Relations). Case 3-3.</b> <b>1: Compile and bring to class</b> a list of 10 general and 10 specialist media directories that are helpful public-relations resources. Put your name on your list and turn it in. <b>3: Cases assigned for presentation</b>
<b>8/10</b>	<i>Assignments for this week's classes:</i> <b>Read Chapter 4 (Internal Communications). Cases 4-3 &amp; 4-4.</b> <b>8: Topic for public-relations campaign analysis report due. Type it, put your name on it and bring it to class.</b> <b>10: Bring a corporate newsletter to class</b>
<b>15/17</b>	<i>Assignments for this week's classes:</i> <b>Read Chapter 5 (Community Relations). Case 5-3.</b> Case presentations
<b>22/24</b>	<i>Assignments for this week's classes:</i> <b>Read Chapter 6 (Public Affairs and Government Relations). Video</b>

- Sept. 29/Oct. 1** *Assignments for this week's classes:*  
**29: Exam review**  
**1: Exam I (Chapters 1-6)**
- Oct. 6/8** *Assignments for this week's classes: Read Chapter 7 (Investor and Financial Relations). Case 7-1.*  
**6: Bring an annual report** to class. Also, go to <http://www.prnewswire.com>, select a company, print its most recent earnings release (Dec. 31, 2008) and **bring to class**.
- 13/15** **13: PR campaign analyses due.**  
**13/15: PR campaign analysis presentations.**
- 20/22** *Assignments for this week's classes: Read Chapter 8 (Consumer Relations). Case 8-4.*  
**20: Turn in topic for Strategic PR Proposal. Put your name on it.**  
Case presentations
- 27/29** *Assignments for this week's classes: Read Chapter 9 (International Public Relations). Case 9-2. Read Chapter 10 (Relations with Special Publics. Case 10-2.*  
Case presentations
- Nov 3/5** *Assignments for this week's classes: Read Chapter 11 (Emergency Public Relations). Case 11-2.*  
Case presentations
- 10/12** *Assignments for this week's classes: Read Chapter 12 (Integrated Marketing Communications). Case 12-1.*  
Case presentations
- 17/19** *Assignments for this week's classes:*  
**17: Exam Review**  
**19: Exam II (Chapters 7-12)**
- 24/26** **24: Strategic Proposal Group Work**  
**26: Thanksgiving Holiday. Class will not meet.**
- Dec 1/3** **1: Strategic PR Proposals due.**  
**1/3: Proposal Presentations**
- 7-8** **Student Study Days – classes will not meet.**
- 14** **Final Exam 10:30- 1 p.m.**
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**Note: This syllabus is subject to change.**