



Department of Communication &
Theater
COM 390 – Intro to Public Relations
3 Units

Fall, 2016

Meeting days: Monday	Instructor title and name: Karen Gross
Meeting times: 3:00– 5:30	Phone: 619-985-7800
Meeting location: C-102	E-mail: KHutchen@pointloma.edu
Final Exam: Monday, December 12	Office location and hours: By appointment

PLNU Mission
To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description:

This course is introduction to the theory and practice of public relations. This includes public relations roles, publics, research, media relations, social media, and an introduction to cases and campaigns of public relations. This course discussed the public relations for in business, educational, governmental and nonprofit organizational settings.

Course Learning Outcomes

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- Understand the key theories that underlie the practice of public relations
- Understand and apply the standard processes of the practice of public relations
- Work with a group to develop and present a public relations plan that addresses a public relations problem and/or opportunity for a client
- Understand the role of values and ethics in public relations

Course Readings:

- 📖 Guth, D. W., & Marsh, C. (2012). *Public relations: A values-driven approach* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- 📖 Students are to subscribe to PRDaily and PR Week

Course Format and Expectations

Over the semester, we will study an introduction to public relations and current issues. In class discussion and exercises will draw on readings from the textbook, case studies, and current events and require students to apply the knowledge learned in the readings to various activities and group work. Study groups of 5-6 students will be formed to develop a public relations plan for a client utilizing the information provided in lectures, guest speakers and readings. Every week we will have roundtable discussions on current events of the week and quizzes on class materials. Therefore, it is crucial that students complete all assigned readings before class and more importantly, attend and participate in every class session.

Assessment Requirements:

Midterm & Final Exam Exam – the midterm and final exams will be in-class and will consist of 50 multiple choice, fill -in –the- blank and matching questions and 5 essay responses. The essay questions will be weighted as 50% of the grade with the multiple chose, fill in and matching questions representing the other 50% of the grade. Insight, analysis and clear connections to course content, and a sophisticated writing style will be what I look for.

Group Project - Because public relations professionals work in teams, each student will participate in a group of four to six people to develop a public relations plan for a client of your choice, within certain guidelines. I'll give you specific instructions for the project at the time of its assignment.

There are four progress assignments on the group project which are required to be turned in as outlined in the class schedule below. Each of these assignments will be graded (10 pts. Each) and input provided on line in Canvas so that the group can improve on the final product for the group plan submitted at the end of the semester. I am always available to meet with each of the groups individually during office hours to review their PR plans prior to submittal.

Current events quizzes/ case studies – over the course of the semester, we will have six case study analyses and/or current events quizzes in class. Each of these will be graded (10 pts. each).

Participation – This is a hands-on, student -centered course. Therefore, you will be graded on your participation. Those who are energetic, contributory, and consistent with attendance will receive a “good participation grade as your contribution to and involvement with the class goes down, so will your grade. If you are not sure where you stand, see me and we’ll chat. Your contributions to our roundtable discussions and group projects will be considered when calculating your participation grade.

Grading:

	Point Possible	Your Score
Classroom case studies/quizzes	100 pts.	
PR Plan & presentation	150 pts.	
Mid-Term Exam	100 pts.	
Final Exam	100 pts.	
Total Points	450 pts.	

Grading Scale:

Grade	Percent	Points	Grade	Percent	Points
A	93-100	418 - 450	C	73-76	329 - 346
A-	90-92	405 - 417	C-	70-72	315 - 328
B+	87-89	392 - 404	D+	67-69	302 - 314
B	83-86	374 - 391	D	63-66	284 - 301
B-	80-82	360 - 373	D-	60-62	270 - 283
C+	77-79	347 - 359	F	0-59	0 - 269

Grading Standards:

“A’s” ...are awarded for work that is highly exceptional, shows insight and analysis in submittals and class discussion and **goes beyond all minimal requirements**

“B’s” ...are awarded for work that is above average and goes beyond minimal requirements.

“C’s” ...are awarded for work that meets basic standards and requirements.

“D’s”are awarded for below average work that usually lacks minimal requirements.

“F’s”are awarded for work that clearly does not meet minimal standards, or is not completed.

Assignments:

All assignments must be typed and submitted on Canvas by 10 pm the day before class. Please note that standard font and margins are expected of one inch and 12 point font (Times New Roman). All papers should be double-spaced. **There should be no grammatical errors or misspelled words in your assignments. Always proofread your assignments and have someone else proof them too.**

Hand written work from class must be completely legible or it will not be accepted.

All assignments are due on the day and time as specified. Please submit online. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Grade Concerns:

If you feel that you were unjustly evaluated on any assignment, please talk with me within 2 weeks after the assignment has been returned. An appeal is welcome by scheduling an appointment. Please come with a well reasoned and written explanation of why the grade should be changed, and I will be happy to discuss it with you. Asking for an appeal and defending your case does not secure, nor imply a change of grade. If at any point during the course you are concerned with your overall class grade or other issues in the course, please feel free to make an appointment or stop by my office. I want to help you learn and succeed in this course.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using

the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report, which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

Presentations:

Presentations can be a nervous experience for some. Please NEVER walk in on a presentation under any circumstances. Do not leave either, but simply wait until you hear applause and then enter the classroom quietly and quickly.

Appearance:

Your physical appearance on presentation days is important. You should be neatly groomed and dressed in a way that suggests you expect to be taken seriously. **At a minimum** this means a dress shirt and dress slacks for men, and dress skirt or dress slacks and blouse for women. Please do not wear hats, tennis shoes, shorts, jeans, or chew gum during your presentations. Physical appearance has been shown to affect the credibility of public speakers and as a result will also affect yours in this class!

Class Schedule

Please complete class readings before class on the date assigned.

Date	Discussion/Activity/Assignment	Readings
1) T Aug. 30	Introduction to Public Relations Syllabus Review Intro to PR Daily Intro to PR Plan project	Ch. 1
2) M Sept 12	Jobs in Public Relations Brief History of PR	Ch. 2 & 3

Internship/Job Hunting Tips
Speaker: PR Manager/Education
Group discussion/client selection
Weekly Roundup/Case Study

- 3) M Sept 19 The Publics & Stakeholders in PR Ch. 4
Group: Identify stakeholders
Assignment due: Client overview & situation analysis
Case study/current events quiz
- 4) M Sept 26 Communication Theory & Public Opinion Ch. 5
Speaker: Agency
Weekly Roundup
Assignment Due: PR Campaign Goals & Objectives
- 5) M Oct. 3 Research & Evaluation Ch. 7
Weekly Roundup
Case study/current events quiz
- 6) M Oct 10 Strategies & Tactics of PR Ch. 8
Speaker: Corporate PR Manager
Roundtable: tactics
Current events/case study quiz
- 7) M Oct 17 Mid-Term Exam
- 8) M Oct 24 Tactics of PR Ch. 9
Digital PR
Weekly roundup
Assignment Due: PR Campaign Strategies & Tactics
- 9) M Nov 7 Multi-Media & PR Chp. 10
Speaker: Government Agency
Current events/case study quiz
- 10) M Nov 14 Social Media Ch. 11
Speaker: Social Media
Current events/case study quiz
- 11) M Nov 21 Ethics in PR Ch. 6
Assignment due: Budget & Evaluation
Current Events/Case study quiz

- 12) M Nov 28 PR & Marketing/Advertising Ch. 13
Speaker: Marketing Manager/Not For Profit Agency
- 13) M Dec. 5 PR Presentations
PR Plans Due!
- 14) M Dec 12 Final Exam