

COMM4510

public relations

Jenna Jacobson

Fall 2014

Tuesday

8:10-11:00 a.m.

61 Charles St., DTA 216



Faculty of Social Science and Humanities

Course Description

This course examines the theory, strategies, and ethics of public relations in society with reference to historical and current examples. This course explores ways of conceptualizing the public such as: the public sphere, media publics and counter-publics, public relations, public opinion and publicity. It also attends to: the historical development of the PR industry; critical debates concerning PR and democracy; the relationship between PR firms and the news media; organizational PR (crisis communications and reputation/brand management); the PR strategies employed by states, businesses and front groups (i.e. think-tanks and lobbies); old and new PR media (print, radio, TV, the Internet).

Course Design

COMM4510 Public Relations is a new class and this is the first time it is being offered! PR is a dynamic field and this class is no different. The course is intended to give you an overview of public relations as a profession by exploring the theory, strategies, and ethics of PR. We will learn the foundations of PR, and considering the fast paced change in PR, also explore current trends and happenings as they unfold in real-time on blogs, social media, news media, etc.

PR is not just one big party as shown by Samantha Jones from *Sex in the City*. In a networked society, public relations is a dynamic field that is evolving with social media. We will embrace social media as you develop an individual blog, participate using the #COMM4510 class hashtag, and craft your own online presence. Much public relations work is done in teams and you will also collaborate with colleagues, contribute ideas, and work productively to meet the needs of the project.



Meet your instructor: **Jenna Jacobson**

Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:00-1:00 p.m.
or by appointment
Office Location: 55 Bond St., East, DTB 423
Email: jenna.jacobson@uoit.ca
Twitter: @jacobsonjenna
Course Hashtag: #COMM4510

Casual Coffee Chats

Join me for a casual chat over coffee every Tuesday after class.

Just drop by the Tuck Shop.

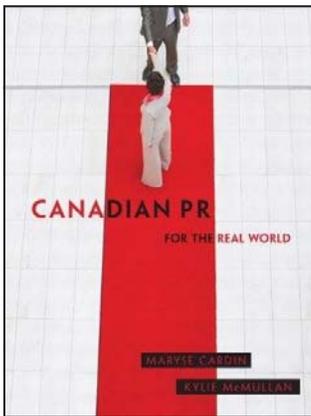
“Advertising is saying you're good. PR is getting someone else to say you're good.” – Jean-Louis Gasse

Learning Outcomes

On the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Develop critical thinking skills by conducting comprehensive research
- Understand the theory, practice, ethics, and trends of public relations in Canada
- Strategize as a public relations professional to deliver measurable results
- Apply and adapt the principles of public relations using social media
- Build key mutually beneficial relationships with influencers, bloggers, and the media
- Collaboratively produce a comprehensive portfolio of public relations materials
- Manage a brand's reputation by positively influencing public opinion

Required Course Material



Cardin, M. & McMullan, K. (2014). *Canadian PR for the Real World*, 1st Ed. Toronto, ON: Pearson Canada.

The book is available in hard copy or online. Reading online vs. offline has various advantages and disadvantages, so please choose whichever method you think will allow you to study and learn most effectively.

- Buy online access for \$44:
<http://www.coursesmart.com/0132155354>
- Buy the physical copy at the UOIT bookstore (or another retailer) for \$123

Grading Scheme

As a PR professional, you will likely work in groups on larger projects as well as individually.

In this class, we will embrace both:

1. Individual work
2. Group work

Assignment	Weight
Blog	20%
Participation	15%
Test	15%
Hot Topic Presentation	15%
Public Relations Campaign	35%

Official UOIT Grading Scheme
A+ 90-100; A 85-89; A- 80-84;
B+ 77-79; B 73-76; B- 70-72;
C+ 67-69; C 60-66;
D 50-59; F 0-49

*“People do not buy goods and services.
They buy relations, stories, and magic.” – Seth Godin*

Assessments

Individual Assessments

Blog

You will create and maintain a blog of your own. A key skill of being a PR professional is having strong writing skills. The blog is your chance to hone your online writing skills. Broadly, the blog will be public relations- and social media-related, but you can choose to make your blog more focused if you have a specific interest. Whatever you do, I suggest you think about how this can help you to take the next step in your career. Every week you will contribute to your blog (due before class) and build your online presence, but I encourage you to post more often if you are invested in building your online presence and audience. You will use the blog to:

- Respond to readings – analyze, synthesize, and evaluate
- Review a guest speaker's presentation
- Maintain a reflective journal
- Reflect on current PR news events
- Comment on a PR campaign

Some weeks you will be provided with an interesting prompt in class that you will use as the inspiration for your blog. You can select any blogging platform that you feel comfortable using. I recommend Wordpress.org because of its simplicity and popularity. You will also follow along with your classmates' blogs and post 2 comments per week on different classmates blogs to engage and provide feedback. Every week you will receive feedback from your peers, and half way through the semester (Week 7) and at the end of the semester, you will receive formal feedback from the teaching team.

Participation

Effectively participating in the class means asking questions, engaging in class discussions, and developing thoughtful responses to questions. You will be graded on your attendance and participation in class, and online active participation on social media, such as Twitter #COMM4510. Twitter is a conversation tool, so participation is not merely how many times per week you contribute. At the end of the semester, you will submit a short reflection and self-evaluation of your online and offline participation. You can be as creative as you like in providing qualitative and quantitative information, such as a Twitter report.

Test

There is one test in this course that will comprise of multiple choice, true or false, and short essay questions. The test will be completed through Blackboard during the time allotted in class. To ensure academic integrity, all assessments will be completed using Respondus Lockdown Browser.

Collaborative Assessments

Hot Topic Presentation

In PR, creating a memorable impression is key to business success. More than selling a product, you are selling yourself as an effective communicator. The group will develop a creative presentation for 20 minutes to explain, highlight, and provide an example for a specific PR key term, strategy, or topic.

Each member of the team will be required to have an active role in the presentation. The topic will be provided to you 2 weeks in advance so you can work collaboratively with your team. If your team chooses to present first, you will have 1 week to prepare and will be given bonus marks for your ambition.

Try to think of fun and interesting ways you can educate and engage your colleagues by incorporating multi-media and current examples.

Public Relations Campaign

You and your team will develop a highly detailed PR campaign that addresses a real issue. You work at a PR agency and your team is responsible for creating the document for a client. The focus will be on the creative strategies that you choose to employ in the campaign. You should aim for the document to make a strong impression and look professional.

Further information will be provided and discussed in class.

*For the collaborative assessments, all group members will receive the same grade. You are expected to contribute and participate to the highest level of your ability in your group project because group members must count upon one another for success.

While your participation of collaborative assessments will not be monitored by your instructor, if allegations are made and subsequent discussions reveals, that a member habitually missed meetings, arrived unprepared, and/or failed to complete work, then a penalty will be imposed.

Class Outline

#	Date	Topic	Important Deliverables
1	09/09	Welcome to COMM4510 Course Outline	
2	09/16	The PR Landscape Chapter 1: Public Relations in Canada	Group 1 Presentation
3	09/23	Developing a PR Strategy Chapter 4: The Public Relations Plan	Group 2 Presentation
4	09/30	Working as a Team <i>No class</i>	
5	10/07	The Media Kit Chapter 5: Writing for PR Guest Speaker: Chris Gostling	Group 3 Presentation
6	10/14	The Media Landscape Chapter 6: Media Relations Guest Speaker: John MacMillan	Group 4 Presentation
7	10/21	Social Media & Community Management Chapter 7: Social Media Guest Speaker: Leslie Hughes	Group 5 Presentation
8	10/28	Creating Buzz-Worthy Events Chapter 10: Special Events Management	Group 6 Presentation
9	11/04	The New Media Influencers Chapter 2: Influencing Public Opinion: The Foundation of PR Then & Now Chapter 9: Internal Communication Guest Speaker: Jennifer Dawson	Group 7 Presentations
10	11/11	Ethical PR Chapter 3: Corporate Social Responsibility, Cause PR, & Environmental PR Guest Speaker: Eric Novak	Group 8 Presentation PR Campaign Due
11	11/18	Tweetable Moments Chapter 8: Media Training	Group 9 Presentation
12	11/25	Reputation Management Chapter 11: Issues Management & Crisis Communication	Group 10 Presentation Participation Reflection Due
13	12/02	Wrap-up	Test

Course Expectations

Social Media

In an attempt to foster digital collaborative learning, we will be using Twitter in this course. Please use the hashtag #COMM4510 to share information that you think your classmates might find interesting or to comment on the material we discuss in lectures or in the readings. This will allow us to keep a line of communication open so you can participate at any time. Use Twitter as an opportunity to discuss key points and concisely convey what you are thinking...in 140 characters or less! Let's have fun with this.

Collaboration

In a fast-paced work environment, you will inevitably work in teams and rely on other people in your future careers. At the very least, others, including both professors and employers, will assess your work. This class will incorporate peer review and collaborative learning. The peer review process allows you to interact with other students, and review different ways of approaching and writing about a topic. This will take place through reviewing your colleagues blogs and working in teams to produce the PR Campaign and Hot Topic Presentation. We can all learn from each other.

Technology

Please bring your laptop, network cable, and laptop charger to every class. Use your laptop to enhance your learning experience by taking notes, tweeting, Googling a concept from class, conducting research, and completing activities. We all love our technologies, but try to keep other distractions to a minimum. Even if you think it doesn't distract you, it may distract your peers around you. I would recommend that you use a flash drive to back up your assignments as there is nothing worse than losing your work.

If you are experiencing problems with your laptop or if it is being repaired, please contact the Mobile Computing Centre: 905.721.3333 Option 1.

Conduct

The classroom is an environment where diverse opinions can be openly shared. All members of this class should treat one another with respect. This includes during lecture hours and online. I would like you to feel free to ask questions at any time. Emailing, texting, watching a YouTube video, and trying to pay attention in class is probably too much, even for the best multi-taskers. We meet for only 3 hours a week, so please come prepared and ready to engage.

Readings

To take full advantage of the class, please have all of the readings for each week completed before coming to class. I will also be posting links to current news articles, blogs, videos, etc. Not everything in the readings will be repeated in class because the class will be interactive with multi-media examples and time provided for discussion. Be sure to highlight or take notes from the textbook and in class because all of the information is useful and fair game for the test.

To help in your note taking, I will be posting PowerPoint slides on Blackboard prior to each class. Always plan ahead to make sure you have time for readings, studying, and completing the assignments.

Communication

If you have a question, chances are you are not alone and other people in the course may have the same question. Please post all questions to Blackboard so everyone can benefit from the collective knowledge.

Matters for the sole attention of your TA or myself should be done through email. Emails to the teaching team should be professionally written, including proper language, tone, and composition.

If you have a question:

1. Ask your friends or classmates
2. Post queries on the "General Questions" discussion thread on Blackboard
3. Feel free to email me directly if the question is more private

Attendance

This class is designed to mirror workplace experience, which means that you are to come prepared, on time, and ready to engage. Like a well-run meeting, class will start promptly at 8:10 a.m. Formal attendance will be taken in lectures, which will be used towards your participation grade. Please respect our time together by arriving on time for class. You are responsible for obtaining course materials on days you are absent. Lecture notes are always posted on Blackboard, but speak to your classmates to find out what information was missed.

I have an open door policy, so please come talk to me!

Diversity of Learning Styles

This class embraces Universal Design for Learning as your success is my priority. I celebrate that students learn in diverse ways, such as visual, auditory, tactile, etc. A multimodal learning environment is utilized in lectures, which combine the online and offline interaction of lectures, discussions, social media, etc.

I am committed to your learning, so please do not hesitate to let me know if there is anything further I can do to foster a more beneficial learning environment for you.

Individual Needs and Accessibility

To ensure that your accommodations are properly addressed during this course, students are encouraged to contact the [Student Accessibility Services](#) online, email studentaccessibility@uoit.ca, or call 905.721.3266.

Accommodation decisions will be made in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Accommodations will be consistent with and supportive of the essential requirements of courses and programs, and provided in a way that respects the dignity of students with disabilities and encourages integration and equality of opportunity.

Accommodation support is available for all students with mental health, physical, mobility, sensory, medical, cognitive, or learning challenges. For more information on the amazing services provided, you can visit the website at <http://sites.uoit.ca/csd/index.php>

Some Formal Policies

Assignments

Late assignments will have a 10% deduction per day. Assignments more than five days late will be accepted and comments will be made, but will be given a mark of zero. Incomplete or corrupted files will be marked as a zero. Plan ahead, save documents to a USB drive, and always submit well before the assignment is due.

Missed Course Work

You must submit a completed [UOIT Medical Statement](#) to the Academic Advising Office within 5 business days of the missed test/ deadline if you are unable to complete any portion of the term work due to illness. Please note that UOIT mandates that the treating physician must complete forms within 24 hours after the missed exam/deadline. Please contact the Academic Advising Office if the missed work is due to extreme compassionate circumstances.

We will then work together and discuss how missed work will be addressed (e.g., re-writes, re-weight, extension, alternate assignment, etc.), if your documentation is approved.

Academic Integrity

We all share an important responsibility to maintain the integrity of the teaching and learning relationship. This relationship is built on honesty, fairness, and mutual respect for the aims and principles of the pursuit of education.

Please familiarize yourself with UOIT's regulations on [Academic Conduct](#) (Section 5.15 of the Academic Calendar) which sets out the kinds of actions that constitute academic misconduct, including plagiarism, copying or allowing one's own work to be copied, use of unauthorized aids in examinations and tests, submitting work prepared in collaboration with another student when such collaboration has not been authorized, and other academic offences.

If you ever feel overwhelmed, please come and speak to me or seek out extra support services available at UOIT in academic development, study skills, counseling, and peer mentorship.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

UOIT is governed by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("FIPPA"). In addition to providing a mechanism for requesting records held by the university, this legislation requires that UOIT does not disclose personal information about students without consent.

*The syllabus outlines my intentions for this course. Changes in the schedule may be necessary during the term to improve the class. Changes will be made through "Announcements" on Blackboard or an email will be sent out.

Tips for 4th Year Success

It's (likely) your last year of undergrad and I'd encourage you to get the most out of your year and make this your best year yet. The university is an amazing place with so many people and resources, so take full advantage.

If there is anything I can do to help you over the course of the semester, please come and chat with me. I have an open-door approach and would love to get to know you! The weekly coffee chat is a chance to casually talk – perhaps about the next step in your career, your online presence, time management, grad school or college, resumes, etc. I truly care about your academic, professional, and personal growth – both inside and outside the classroom.

Please feel free to call me Jenna.

How to survive & thrive in your graduating year:

- **Reflect** – With graduation coming up sooner than you, think about where do you want to be once you complete your degree.
- **Research** – Do the research to ensure you are well positioned for your dream job or grad school.
- **Plan** – The final year of university can be stressful with lots to juggle, so be sure to plan ahead of time and manage your time.
- **Explore** – Check out what events/lectures/workshops are offered at the university and in the community that are of interest and can expand your horizons.
- **Participate** – Be that person who is excited to come to class and contribute something new. Your classmates may be your future colleagues.
- **Network** – Go to networking or professional events that will allow you to meet fascinating people and learn about their experiences.
- **Think differently** – Consider what you are doing now that will help you stand out.
- **Be flexible** – Keep an open mind to new opportunities and learning experiences because life happens and plans change.
- **Enjoy** – It's your final year at the university so be sure take it all in and enjoy the ride.

Some useful resources for you:

Campus Health Centre is there for you when you need some extra support or need someone to talk to.

http://www.uoit.ca/current_students/campus_services/campus_health_centre/services/counselling.php

Student Experience Centre is a hub for student involvement and support, including campus events.

<https://studentexperience.uoit.ca/>

Career Centre provides support to launch your career, such as resume workshops, career counseling, interview technique appointments, etc.

<https://studentexperience.uoit.ca/careerServices/Overview.htm>

Student Learning Centre helps you develop effective study skills and learning strategies.

<http://academicsuccess.uoit.ca/>

“The history of PR is...a history of a battle for what is reality and how people will see and understand reality.”

– Stuart Ewen