**BUS 379 – PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**Course Syllabus**

**Instructor Information**

**Instructor:** Heather Ashbach  
**Email:** hashbach@adams.edu (preferred method of contact)  
**Phone:** 719.651.3224  
**Address:** San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

**Course Communications**

If questions arise throughout the course, please contact me at my Adams State email, hashbach@adams.edu. Please do not use the Message function in Blackboard as I prefer email to my Adams State account.

**Course Delivery**

Online, Semester-based

**Credit Hours**

3 Semester Hours

**Course Prerequisites**

None

**Course Time Limits**

All semester-based courses follow a 16 week calendar as detailed in the Course Schedule.

**Course Materials**

Textbooks can be purchased from the Adams State University Bookstore. To order textbooks or obtain information about book titles, you may go to extudies.adams.edu and click on the "Bookstore" link. Select "DISTLEARN" from the department menu. (http://adams.edu/students/sub/bookstore/)

Use **Section Number: 1318** to order books from Bookstore site. This should provide the correct textbook information and ordering options.

If you have questions, you can contact the Bookstore at 719-587-7981, email at asubookstore@adams.edu or by mail to Adams State University Bookstore, 208 Edgemont Blvd., Suite 3140, Alamosa, CO 81101.
BUS 379 – PUBLIC RELATIONS

Required Textbook:


Catalog Description

Public Relations (BUS 379) explores the basic concepts and strategies of today’s public relations practices. Topics covered include public relations roles, processes, strategies, tactics, and applications with a particular focus on new and emerging social media and internet practices, prepping materials for mass media, reaching diverse and multicultural audiences, and dealing with public relations crises.

Student Learning Outcomes

Course Requirements

Upon completion of this course, you will:

Chapter 1

• Be familiar with the global scope of the public relations industry.
• Have a good definition of public relations.
• Understand that public relations is a process, not an event.
• Know the difference between public relations, journalism, advertising and marketing.
• Understand the skills needed for a public relations career and what salary to expect.

Chapter 2

• Understand the evolution of public relations from ancient empires to today’s practice.
• Know how public relations tactics have contributed to American independence, the settlement of the West, and social causes such as voting rights for women.
• Appreciate the contributions of visionaries such as Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays, who laid the foundation of today’s practice.
• Have insight into the reasons for the massive influx of women into the field.
• Be knowledgeable about current developments and trends in the field.

Chapter 3

• Understand the role of the ethical advocate.
• Appreciate the role that professional groups play in setting standards.
• Be familiar with the progress being made toward professionalism.
• Know the characteristics of being a public relations professional.
• Be familiar with ethical practices when working with the media.

Chapter 4

• Understand the role and functions of a public relations department.
• Be more knowledgeable about the staff function of public relations.
• Understand the structure of a public relations firm and its various activities.
• Know the difference between working in a department and working in a firm.

Chapter 5

• Understand the importance of research in public relations planning.
• Be able to conduct online and database research.
• Understand how to organize a focus group.
• Know how to design a scientific survey.
• Be familiar with writing a survey questionnaire.
• Be able to determine the best method of reaching respondents.

Chapter 6

• Understand the value of the planning process.
• Identify the elements of a public relations plan.
• Know two approaches to planning.
• Understand a rationale for including each element of a plan.
• Identify the essentials of each element of a plan.

Chapter 7

• Understand the role of effective communication in the public relations process.
• Identify the characteristics of various media channels.
• Be familiar with the communications objectives of a campaign.
• Recognize the components of how audiences receive messages and process them.
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Chapter 8

- Understand the purpose of evaluation.
- Know the key elements of objectives.
- Distinguish the measurement of different communication components.

Chapter 9

- Understand the implications of public opinion for public relations.
- Explain the crucial role of opinion leaders in public discourse.
- Describe theories explaining the role of mass media.
- Understand the pervasive role of persuasion in modern life.
- Enumerate key factors in persuasion.
- Identify major considerations in conducting ethical persuasive campaigns.

Chapter 10

- Understand the role of public relations in managing conflict.
- Describe the two basic principles of strategic conflict management.
- Identify the four phases of the conflict management life cycle.
- Understand the issues management process as a key public relations contribution.

Chapter 11

- Understand the diversity of audiences in the U.S.
- Gain insights on how to communicate with diverse audiences.
- Be familiar with the cultural values of Hispanic, Black, and Asian audiences.
- Learn about public relations campaigns directed to specific audiences.
- Understand the characteristics of various age and lifestyle groups.

Chapter 12

- Describe what public relations professionals need to know about defamation, employee and privacy rights, copyright, and trademark laws.
- Understand the key issues surrounding freedom of speech and public relations.
- Identify which government agencies regulate the commercial speech used by public relations professionals.
- Explain how public relations professionals can work effectively with lawyers.
Chapter 13

- Understand why the internet is a communications revolution.
- Organize and design an effective website.
- Be familiar with the mechanics of doing a webcast.
- Use social media and networking as public relations tactics.
- Know the potential of mobile-enabled content to reach future audiences.

Chapter 14

- Write a standard or multimedia news release.
- Recognize the components of a good publicity photo.
- Prepare media kits, media advisories and fact sheets.
- Use proven techniques to “pitch” a story to a journalist.
- Understand the structure of an organization’s online newsroom.
- Be familiar with how to organize media interviews, news conferences, and media tours.

Chapter 15

- Write radio news releases and video news releases.
- Prepare public service announcements (PSAs) for broadcast.
- Understand the components of a radio media tour and satellite media tour.
- Know the procedure for booking a guest on a talk show.
- Understand the strategy of product placement on television shows.

Chapter 16

- Know the logistics of organizing a meeting.
- Plan a banquet, reception or cocktail party.
- Organize an open house, exhibit, or plant tour.
- Understand the multiple aspects of organizing a convention.
- Recognize the basic elements of a trade show.
- Creatively think about promotional events that will attract attention.

Chapter 17

- Describe the role of public relations in corporations.
- Explain how media relations contributes to the success of corporations.
- Understand the crucial roles of the customer, the investor, and the employee in the corporate communications program.
- Describe the main supportive functions of public relations for corporate marketing efforts.
- Explain the environmental relations process.
- Define corporate philanthropy and the part public relations plays in corporate giving.
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**Chapter 18**

- Understand the role of public relations in the entertainment industry and the opportunities for employment.
- Describe the nature of celebrity culture and how publicists and media create celebrities.
- Use techniques to promote a play, concert, or other entertainment event.
- Outline the tactics used by public relations staff to promote a sports team.
- Describe the work of public relations personnel in the tourism industry.

**Chapter 19**

- Describe the basic purposes and functions of public relations in government.
- Explain what public relations professionals do at the federal, state and local levels.
- Define public affairs, government relations, and lobbying.
- Describe the roles public relations plays in election campaigns.

**Chapter 20**

- Appreciate the practice of public relations in other nations.
- Know the various cultural values that shape a nation’s communications patterns.
- Recognize the impact of the global economy and the role that public relations plays in the economy.
- Recognize ways that foreign governments and corporations attempt to influence U.S. legislation and policies.
- Appreciate the major role that NGOs now play in shaping public opinion.
- Understand the job opportunities available in global public relations.

**Chapter 21**

- Describe the variety of nonprofit organizations that rely on public relations to achieve their goals.
- Articulate the strategies and tactics employed by nonprofits to remain viable.
- Understand the central place of fundraising in nonprofit organizations.
- Describe the role of public relations in health communication and hospital efforts.
- Distinguish among college, university, and school applications of public relations to serve educational institutions.
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Course Requirements

Included within each module will be some variety of the following elements:

- Learning objectives and outcomes
- Lesson summary and quick notes on the material
- Reading assignment

Assignments may include all or some of the following within each module:

- Discussion
- Case study

You are free to work ahead on the learning modules, but participation in discussions will be limited to the week in which they are assigned. Think about it; it would be hard to have a real discussion with your classmates if you were the only one working ahead and had already posted your prompt with no one to respond or interact with. And I am of the mindset that discussions and collaboration with your peers is really where we all learn, so be prepared to provide quality posts and interactive dialogues with your fellow students.

All discussions and case analyses will be due by 11:59 p.m. Mountain Standard Time on the Saturday of the week they are assigned (see your course schedule/assignment list for dates). Again, you can work ahead on the modules/cases, but remember they are due by the date assigned in the course schedule/assignment list. Late work is not accepted. Period. The beauty of an online course is that you can do it from anywhere and that is expected of you, whether that means you’re responding to discussions about ethical advertising while on a sandy beach somewhere amazing for vacation or you’re stuck in a work conference all week with a spotty hotel internet connection. Do not wait until the last minute to complete your work in case you run into a technical issue that prevents you from turning in your work on time.

Discussions

Discussions in an online class function differently than they do in a traditional classroom, but they serve the same purpose. They allow you to interact with your classmates and learn from one another’s ideas. The prompts in this course are designed to get you thinking about how the material impacts your life and will ask you to draw from personal experiences with the topic. You should plan to actively and consistently participate in each discussion; they constitute a large chunk of your grade.

Discussions will open at 12:01 a.m. on the date the module begins.

When posting to the discussion area, please type your comments directly into the discussion forum (i.e. do not type your comments into a document and then attach it to the discussion).
When viewing the discussion item for the week, you will only see the prompt. You will not be able to see others’ posts until you post your original response.

You will have one week following the discussion to respond to at least two posts of your classmates in order to receive full credit for the discussion.

To gain full credit for the discussion item, you must post your original response and then respond to at least two other student posts.

Remember this is an academic setting so I’m wanting to see clear examples (either through descriptions or samples) and thoughtful analysis. Constructive feedback/responses are the only kind that will be tolerated. Please be courteous. Don't flame (i.e., post insults, invective, or other personally disrespectful comments) or post flamebait (i.e., deliberately provocative or manipulative material intended or likely to elicit flames).

Please be careful in the use of sarcasm and irony. Online communication lacks the subtle nonverbal cues that help us interpret such rhetorical flourishes in face-to-face settings, so that it is easy to miss the point or misunderstand. More importantly, it is easy to give or take offense where none is intended. Accordingly, give people the benefit of the doubt, and if you are misunderstood, don't get defensive. You might also consider using such rhetorical devices somewhat less in this medium than you would in ordinary conversation, since they are generally less effective here.

Please don't post excessively or monopolize the conversation. Remember that multiple shoot-from-the-hip posts are much less effective than fewer carefully-thought-out ones, and that some patience in responding will encourage more contributors with a wider variety of ideas and perspectives to participate.

You can also use a simple text editor like Notepad (default text editor in Windows) to compose your answer; then copy and paste into the discussion thread and use the text editing features in Blackboard to format your response. (Be aware that some students have experienced problems copying and pasting from Word into a forum post when using Firefox.)

Once you have copied the plain text, you can use the tools in Blackboard to format your response. There are bulleted and numbered lists, as well as character formatting options. You can also just type directly into the discussion thread and use the text editing tools. While Blackboard is less likely to time out, the possibility still exists that if you take too long to formulate your response, you may be timed out when you click Submit.

Avoid typing in all capital letters, as this is considered to be shouting and is considered rude. Avoid the use of emoticons (emotion icons), abbreviations and informal language. Text messaging abbreviations are not appropriate. Please be
tolerant of those who are still learning how to use the Web and this forum (e.g., people who accidentally send multiple copies of the same message, PEOPLE WHO FORGET AND LEAVE THEIR CAPS LOCK KEY ON WHEN TYPING).

Each response is worth 5 points for a total of 50.

**Case Analyses**

You will complete 10 case analyses on topics aligning with course units. Each case analysis you submit must include a brief synopsis of the case (think of it like a condensed executive summary). You will then need to address all questions that follow each case study in your book, typing out each assigned question before providing your answers. This is to help keep your thoughts organized to make sure you address each question asked. **Note that several of the case studies require creation of PR materials. All typed work for this course should be done in Word using Arial 12 pt font, single-spaced.** All responses need to be written in complete, cohesive sentences and in a business professional, third person tone (i.e. no “I” or “we” unless using direct quotes or unless asked to provide your personal opinion).

To adequately address the questions, you will need to pull in information learned from the lesson’s readings as well as any outside resources necessary (remember to retype the questions before you provide your answers). Case study analyses should not exceed 5 pages (typed, single-spaced, 12 pt. Arial font). Cite all references, following either APA or MLA format. **I do not tolerate plagiarism. Period.** Do not simply regurgitate textbook definitions and examples. Make sure you properly cite all sources and put all points in your own words. All written work is subject to plagiarism detection software review. Identified instances of cheating or plagiarism will follow the Academic Integrity statement in the Syllabus. **Analyses that are plagiarized will receive a failing grade.**

Each case study is worth 10 pts for a total of 100.
Grade Distribution and Scale

In alignment with ASU academic policies, no D may apply to a major or minor field.

Grade Distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussions (10 @ 5 pts each)</td>
<td>= 50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Analyses (10 @ 10 pts each)</td>
<td>= 100 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total points possible</strong></td>
<td>= 150 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grade Scale:

- 135 – 150 points 90 – 100% A
- 120 – 134 points 80 – 89% B
- 105 – 119 points 70 – 79% C
- 90 – 104 points 60 – 69% D
- < 90 points < 60% F

ADA Statement

Adams State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Adams State University is committed to achieving equal educational opportunities, providing students with documented disabilities access to university programs. In order for a course to be equally accessible to all students, different accommodations or adjustments may need to be implemented. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is located in Richardson Hall, Suite 3-100, by mail at 208 Edgemont Blvd., Suite 3-100, Alamosa, CO 81101, by email at odsd@adams.edu, or by calling 719-587-7746. They are your primary resource on campus to discuss the qualifying disability, help you develop an accessibility plan, and achieve success in your courses. Please communicate with them as early as possible; this can be in person, via email, or by phone. The Disability Services Coordinator shall either provide you letters to give to your professors for accommodations or email these letters out to you and your professors.

Academic Integrity

In accordance with Academic Policy 100-03-01, Adams State University, to preserve academic integrity, does not tolerate academic dishonesty (misconduct). Every student is required to practice and adhere to the principle of ACADEMIC INTEGRITY while undertaking studies at Adams State University. Students and faculty at Adams State University value academic honesty as a virtue essential to the academic process. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized possession or disposition of academic materials, or the falsification or fabrication of one’s academic work will not be tolerated. Please refer
to the ASU Extended Studies Academic Integrity website for more information including the student handbook: Academic Integrity at Adams State University.

The Adams State University Student Handbook prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty. These include cheating, plagiarism, forgery, furnishing false information, and alteration or misuse of documents, records, or identification. If you engage in course-related academic dishonesty, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment in question or for the class based on the seriousness of the infraction. Please see the Student Handbook under the section Academic Integrity. I do not take this policy lightly. If you submit work that is lifted completely from the book, an online source (which is not properly cited) or another person’s work, you will fail this course.

All written work is subject to plagiarism detection software review.