

SPORTS PUBLIC RELATIONS SYLLABUS - 2011

Class Number: J454
Units: 2
Meets: Tuesday, 7:00 - 9:40 PM
Midterm Exam: March 1
Final Exam: May 10 (7:00 – 9:00 p.m.)
Texts: No required textbooks
Mandatory Reading: espn.com; latimes.com; usatoday.com

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OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday nights (30 minutes prior to class) or by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sports Public Relations 454 is a course designed to provide you with a complete overview of public relations opportunities within the sports industry. The course will take a detailed look at all elements of sports public relations including newspaper, radio, television, agency, the internet, colleges, second-tier sports and major professional teams. The course will include lecture time, field trips, guest speakers and group activities. Class participation, brainstorming, and problem-solving situations will also be key components of the class. The students will become sports publicists over the course of the semester.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Develop a clear understanding of the day-to-day responsibilities of sports public relations professionals.
- Promote attention-grabbing writing skills that reflect an understanding of news judgment.
- Learn how to target key contacts and develop relationships within the field.
- Become adept at handling negative publicity and crisis situations.
- Gain exposure to professionals in the field.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is defined as taking ideas or writings from another and passing them off as one's own; in journalism, this includes appropriating the reporting of another without clear attribution. The following

is the Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity as published in the university catalogue: "Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and will be dismissed as a major from the School of Journalism. There are no exceptions to the school's policy."

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Any students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. The office is located in the Student Union room 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

INTERNSHIPS

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to one percent of the total available semester points for this course.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are advised to attend the first class meetings of their journalism classes or the instructors may drop them from their classes. The School of Journalism adheres to the university policy, which states "an instructor may replace any student who without prior consent does not attend...the first class session of the semester for once-a-week classes. It is then the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from the course through the Registration Department."

GRADING POLICIES

Undergraduate Degrees:

The School of Journalism expects its students to maintain at least a 2.7 (B-) grade point average in all journalism classes. Those who fall below this will receive additional counseling from faculty and advisement staff. Students are required to complete each journalism class with at least a grade of C-. Journalism courses with a grade of D+ or below must be repeated.

Please note that the university's cumulative grade point average will include both grades in its calculations and students must maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average to graduate from USC.

GRADUATE DEGREES

A minimum grade of C (2.0) is required in a course to receive graduate credit. Work graded C- or below is not acceptable for subject or unit credit toward any master's or doctoral program. A grade point average of at least 3.0 (B) on all units attempted at USC toward a graduate degree is required for graduation. In addition, a grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate work attempted at USC, whether or not all such units are applied toward the degree, is required.

OFF THE RECORD

Everything that is discussed in and for this class by the teachers, students, or guest speakers is strictly off the record. Nothing should be discussed outside of class, especially with members of the media (including

The Daily Trojan).

CAVEAT

The information, procedures and schedule included in this syllabus are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Open Registration	Thu-Fri	January 6-7
Classes Begin	Mon	January 10
Martin Luther King's Birthday	Mon	January 17
President's Day	Mon	February 21
Spring Recess	Mon-Sat	March 14-19
Classes End	Fri	April 29
Study Days	Sat-Sun	April 30-May 3
Exams	Wed-Wed	May 4-11
Commencement	Fri	May 13

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Writing assignments will consist of in class writing assignments, writing press releases and creating a blog about the team and player assigned to you. These writing assignments may be discussed openly by the entire class upon turning them in. You will be graded on what you write, as well as how you write. Emphasis will be placed on accuracy, and eliminating misspellings, grammatical errors and typos.

WEEKLY CLASS PARTICIPATION

Full class participation is expected each week. We will discuss publicity as an art and polish your skills through situational analysis. We will discuss current events and the public relations problems that they present. We will tackle the issues and create the solutions. I will also be asking for each of you to participate with our guest speakers rather than merely listen to a lecture. We want insightful questions and intriguing observations.

TEXT BOOKS/REQUIRED READING

There are no text books. However, there is required reading for quizzes and some writing assignments. Required reading includes, but is not limited to: latimes.com, espn.com and usatoday.com. In addition, we may read excerpts from other books and/or magazine articles.

MIDTERM EXAM

There will be a cumulative midterm exam on everything covered up to that point in the class. We will discuss what to expect on the exam the week prior.

FINAL EXAM

Your final exam will include all material covered throughout the semester, including lectures, class discussions, current event quizzes, guest lectures, and special trips and accommodations.

ATTENDANCE

This is a weekly class, so we expect perfect attendance. We will also be making some trips to sporting events. We expect full attendance to these activities as well, which will usually take the place of our classroom meeting. If you cannot make a class or trip, you must let me know why in advance.

MAKE UP ASSIGNMENTS/EXAMS

This will be permitted only upon written verification of medical emergency or illness.

GRADING PROCEDURE

Class Participation	10%
Writing Assignments	15%
Quizzes	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final	25%

Tuesday, January 11

Lecture: Course Overview and Introduction to Sports PR

Guest Speaker

In Class Writing Assignment

Tuesday, January 18

Lecture: Press Releases/Media Alerts

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, January 25

Lecture: Contacting and Managing the Media

Writing Assignment # 1 Due

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, February 1

Lecture: Interviews

Quiz # 1

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, February 8

Lecture: Crisis Management Part I

Athlete Extreme Makeover Group Activity - Part I

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, February 15

Lecture: Crisis Management Part II

Guest Speaker

Athlete Extreme Makeover Group Activity - Part II

Tuesday, February 22

Lakers vs. Atlanta Hawks @ STAPLES Center

Writing Assignment # 2 Due

Tuesday, March 1

Lecture: Team PR/Agency PR/Corporate PR

Quiz # 2

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, March 8

Lecture: Press Conferences

Midterm Exam

Guest Speaker

In-Class Mock Press Conferences

Tuesday, March 15

NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 22

Lecture: PR for Minor League Teams and Second-Tier Pro Sports

Writing Assignment # 3 Due

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, March 29

Lecture: Agents and Publicists

Quiz # 3

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, April 5

Lecture: Websites and Blogs

Writing Assignment # 4 Due

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, April 12

Lecture: The Future of Sports PR

Guest Speaker

Tuesday, April 19

Dodgers vs. Atlanta Braves @ Dodger Stadium

Tuesday, April 26

Lecture: Professional Athletes Forum

Quiz # 4 at the beginning of class

Final Exam Review

Tuesday, May 3

NO CLASS – STUDY WEEK

Tuesday, May 10

Final Exam

Quiz/Exam Dates:

Feb. 1

Mar. 1

Mar. 8 MIDTERM EXAM

Mar. 22

Apr. 26

May 10 FINAL EXAM

Writing Assignment Due Dates:

Feb. 15

Feb. 22

Mar. 22

Apr. 5