**PR 250: Strategic Public Relations: An**

**Introduction**

**4 units**

**Fall 2019 – Tuesdays – 9 a.m.-12:20 p.m.**

**Section:** 21186D

**Location**: ANN 405

**Instructor: Michael Chavez Booth (MCB)**

**Office:** ANN lobby or classroom

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Contact Info:** [chavezbo@usc.edu](mailto:chavezbo@usc.edu), 619.757.6392

**I. Course Description**

This course will familiarize students with strategies and practices in the growing field of public relations/strategic communication through analysis of landmark cases with special emphasis on historical roots, evolution, current and future practices. This course is the foundation of the public relations program.

**II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment**

The course is an introduction to public relations as a professional practice:

* What is public relations?
* What disciplines make up the public relations profession?
* Where might you fit in?
* How is public relations practiced in the U.S. and abroad, in a corporation, an agency, government/politics, and in the non‐profit sector?

Public relations means different things to different people. We will define what it means to be a public relations professional, how you learn the public relations craft, and how you develop and hone your public relations skills. We will cover the basic process of public relations–research, planning, communication, evaluation – and the use of communications strategies to achieve organizational goals.

We will explore the exciting world of PR through lectures, relevant articles, practical exercises, case studies, and guest speakers.

**Course Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of PR 250 Strategic Public Relations: An Introduction, students will understand the fundamentals of public relations including its history, principles, functions and techniques. Students will be able to:

1. Explain concepts and problem-solving techniques in public relations.
2. Describe how the field of public relations affects, and is affected by, a wide diversity of audiences in the global community.
3. Engage in critical thinking to solve public relations issues.
4. Apply key processes in public relations planning such as research, planning, strategies, tactics and evaluation.
5. Describe the structure and substance of the profession in order to succeed in USC Annenberg’s undergraduate Public Relations Studies program.

**III. Description of Assignments**

Every class will consist of the following (when applicable):

* **Lecture / discussion** – Everyone will participate. I will ask your thoughts and ideas. Lots of brainstorm sessions!
* **Case studies** – Among others, we will study PRSA Silver Anvil award winning case studies to understand what the best PR programs entail.
* **“Case of the Week” summaries** – Each week, students will brief the class with summaries of something in the news they thought was pitched or managed by a PR professional. A new campaign. A product launch. A crisis communications strategy. You’ll each present at least one news item in the course of the semester.
* **Quizzes and midterm exam** – Based on the textbook and in class lecture.
* **Final group project/presentation** – Development of a public relations campaign to be presented during the final class.

**IV. Grading**

**a. Breakdown of Grade**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assignment | % of Grade |
| Quizzes | 10% |
| Homework and Assignments | 10% |
| Midterm Exam | 30% |
| Final Group Project and Presentation | 40% |
| Participation | 10% |
| **TOTAL** | **100%** |

**b. Grading Scale**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 95% to 100%: A | 80% to 83%: B- | 67% to 69%: D+ |
| 90% to 94%: A- | 77% to 79%: C+ | 64% to 66%: D |
| 87% to 89%: B+ | 74% to 76%: C | 60% to 63%: D- |
| 84% to 86%: B | 70% to 73%: C- | 0% to 59%: F |

**c. Grading Standards**

A rubric will be provided for each written assignment/project.

For written papers, the grading standards are as follows**:**

“**A**” – near professional in quality; one or no mistakes; clearly proofread and edited material, professionally organized. You follow instructions that we cover in class. Excellent organization and flow; original and creative thinking. You clearly demonstrate the concepts and ideas that we discuss in class and thoroughly follow the planning model. High end of scale: professionally presentable today as is.

“**B**” – have two to five spelling, grammar or AP Style mistakes and shows potential as a good writer. You follow most of the instructions we cover in class. High end of scale will have at least one extraordinary element such as astonishingly creative idea or strategy. Some creativity shown. Publishable with medium editing. You demonstrate a general understanding of the ideas we discuss in class.

“**C**” – have more than five errors (spelling, grammar, AP style). Poorly edited and/or proofread. Hackneyed elements such as trite strategies and tactics. Little or no facts/figures included. Little or no creativity shown. You don’t follow the planning model or you improperly apply concepts that we discussed in class.

“**D**” – have more than 10 errors (spelling, grammar). Needs to be completely rewritten. Poorly organized with little or no understanding of the concepts we covered in class. Needs to work with writing coach.

“**F**” – are not rewritable, late or not turned in.

**V. Assignment Submission Policy**

1. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates indicated. I will accept early assignments, but I will not accept late assignments. Late assignments will automatically be given a grade of 0/F.

2. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard, unless I have given you different instructions.

**VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

**Textbook**—Teruggi Page, J & Parnell, L (2018): Introduction to Strategic Public Relations: Digital, Global, and Socially Responsible Communication, 1st edition, ISBN-13: 978-1506358031, ISBN-10: 1506358039

Besides reading the required textbook, you must keep up with current events. Please browse one or more of the following PR news websites.

Periodically we have class discussions based on news/case studies from these news sites.

* prweek.com
* prnewsonlin.com
* prdaily.com
* odywerpr.com
* adweek.com

**VII. Laptop Policy**

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [**Annenberg Virtual Commons**](http://vc.uscannenberg.org/) for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s [Information Technology Services](http://itservices.usc.edu/wireless/support/) website.

**VIII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/26/19 – 12/6/19)**

**Friday, September 13:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, September 13:** Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

**Friday, October 11:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the week three equivalent for short sessions) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, November 15:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

**IX. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

***Important note to students:*** *Be advised that this schedule is subject to change – and may change – based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Topics/Daily Activities | Readings and Homework | Deliverable/Due Dates |
| Week 1  8/27 | **PR 250 Overview**   * Course overview * Syllabus review * Expectations * Policies and procedures |  |  |
| Week 2  9/3 | **The Origins of Public Relations**   * What is public relations? * Misconceptions about public relations * The history of PR – How it got started; how it has evolved into a strategic function * The functions of PR * The model of public relations | Preface  Chapter 1  Chapter 2 |  |
| Week 3  9/10 | **The Public Relations Process: Research and Theory**   * Why is research so important; how is it done; how to use it * Common PR research methods * The role of strategy with regard to research | Chapter 4 | Case of the Week |
| Week 4  9/17 | **The Public Relations Process: Planning, Objectives and Tactics**   * Planning: The value of a communications plan; how to create a plan * The role of strategy with regard to planning * Putting plan to action * The role of strategy with regard to tactics | Chapter 5 | Case of the Week |
| Week 5  9/24 | **The Public Relations Process: Evaluation**   * How to know if we succeeded * Common PR evaluation methods | Chapter 5 | Case of the Week |
| Week 6  10/1 | **Reaching Audiences through Mass Media**   * Collateral materials: What are they? How are they used? * Mass media: radio, TV, newspapers, blogs, etc. | Chapter 6  Chapter 7 Chapter 8 | Case of the Week |
| Week 7  10/8 | **Public Opinion/Persuasion**   * Why public opinion matters * Tips/best practices to help tell our story and persuade audiences |  | Case of the Week |
| Week 8  10/15 | **Midterm** |  |  |
| Week 9  10/22 | **Meeting and Events**   * PR campaigns often include large and small meetings and events. We’ll review types of events, event planning concepts and best practices. |  | Case of the Week |
| Week 10  10/29 | **PR in Corporations**   * Corporate Social Responsibility, community relations, reputation management, social responsibility, employee communications and investor relations | Chapters 10 and 11 | Case of the Week |
| Week 10  11/5 | **Ethics and Law in Public Relations**   * Ethical guidelines in PR * How does law affect PR? | Chapter 3 | Case of the Week |
| Week 11  11/12 | **Issues Management and Crisis Communications**   * What are conflicts and crisis situations? * Conflict management lifecycle * Strategies for dealing with issues, risks and crisis * Restoring corporate reputation | Chapter 12 |  |
| Week 12  11/19 | **Preparation for final team project**   * Presentation best practices * Public speaking * Dry run of presentations |  |  |
| Week 15  11/26 | **Specialty Practice Areas**   * What is PR and communications in sports, entertainment, non-profits, education and government | Chapter 13  Chapter 14 Chapter 15 |  |
| Week 16  12/3 | **Special guest speaker**  **Final presentation Qs** |  |  |
| FINAL EXAM  Date: 12/12, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. | **Final Team Presentations** |  |  |

**X. Policies and Procedures**

* Bring laptops to every class
* Students may not make up quizzes unless there’s a legitimate and approved absence for illnesses with a doctor’s note, athletes with an approved request, or for religious holidays.

**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 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must by unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism or public relations class.

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**a. Academic Conduct**

*Plagiarism*

Presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words - is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct (<http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>).

*USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity*

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism’s policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

“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 plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an ‘F’ on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators.”

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

**b. Support Systems**

*Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

[engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*

[engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086*

[equity.usc.edu](https://equity.usc.edu/), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

*Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421*

[studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776*

[dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu/)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710*

[studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu/)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu/)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Annenberg Student Success Fund*

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

*Breaking Bread Program [undergraduate students only]*

<https://undergrad.usc.edu/faculty/bread/>

The Breaking Bread Program is designed to provide individual undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet and have scholarly discussions with faculty members outside of the normal classroom setting. Through this program, students and faculty enjoy good company and great conversation by literally “breaking bread” over a meal together and USC will pick up the tab! Your meal event can take place anywhere outside of the normal classroom setting. Your venue can be a restaurant or eatery on or off-campus.

**XI. About Your Instructor**

Michael Chavez Booth (MCB) has worked in brand communications for more than 10 years. In that time, he’s collaborated with numerous brands, personalities and startups across lifestyle, technology, sports, and even, street art.

Before launching his own agency, MCB served as a VP at M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment, where he helped manage several consumer clients (Coca-Cola, Califia Farms and Red Bull, among others), support new business efforts and of course, grow the LA office.

Prior to that, MCB worked at the National Basketball Association (NBA), dishing out PR assists for more than 25 marketing and promotional partners. He also helped drive executive communications efforts.

MCB also spent several years at global agencies such as FleishmanHillard and Edelman, servicing a variety of national and international clients.

He earned an M.A. in strategic public relations from the University of Southern California and a B.A. in business administration from the University of San Diego. MCB remains connected to his (USC) Trojan Family where he serves as an adjunct professor at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

During the NFL season, you can find him at the Dignity Health Sports Park press box (Carson, Calif.) delivering PA for attending media. “Welcome to today’s game…”