PRCM 3270
Public Relations in the Not-For-Profit Arena

Instructor: [Name]
Office: [Office]
Phone: [Phone]
Email: [Email]

Office Hours:

Prerequisites: PRCM 3040 and 2.3 GPA.


**Course overview:** This special topics course is designed to introduce the nonprofit sector to public relations and other communications students. Students will gain an understanding of nonprofit organization foundations and the role of public relations within those organizations through a review of the course textbook, class lectures, nonprofit practitioner presentations, and application of PR knowledge in assisting nonprofit organization clients.

**Course objectives:** By the end of the semester, students should understand the basics of nonprofit organization purpose, structure and governance, as well as various nonprofit PR tactics that include volunteer and board relations; development and fundraising; strategic planning; special-event planning; and marketing.

**Course expectations:** To be successful in this course, students must attend regular class meetings and be responsible for materials presented by the instructor and scheduled guest speakers. Students’ understanding of this material will be assessed through periodic exams, which will cover material presented by the instructor or guest speakers, or assigned for independent reading from the required text or supplemental course materials.

Students will also be expected to complete client-based and individually assigned projects. Students not fully contributing to team projects may be fired by the team, or find their grades adversely affected through peer evaluations. All project teams are expected to meet assignment deadlines.

In addition, all students are expected to follow university guidelines concerning academic honesty as outlined in the *Tiger Cub.*

*The Department of Communication and Journalism recognizes the importance of both reflecting and teaching diversity. Our policy is intended to be inclusive of all underrepresented and minority groups whatever their race, religion, national origin, gender, age, ability or sexual orientation.*

**Communication:** E-mail is the official means of communication at Auburn. I will attempt to respond to your emails within 24 hours whenever possible.

**ADA:** Students needing accommodations should arrange a meeting the first week of class. Come during office hours or email for an alternate time. Bring the Accommodation Memo and Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. Discuss items needed in this class. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need special accommodations, make an appointment with
Course grading: Students will have the opportunity to earn points through several avenues. Comprehension of lecture, guest presentations and reading assignments will be evaluated through a mid-term and final examination. These concepts will be further evaluated through their application in the individual and group, client-based assignments. At the end of the semester, the percentage of total points each student earns in relation to the total possible points will determine each student’s grade. Letter grades will be assigned based on a 10-point percentage grading scale.

Grading Scale: A = 90-100%, B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, F = 0-59%. Percentages based on number of points earned out of the maximum total of 400 points.

Assignments:

Individual volunteer assignment: All not-for-profits depend on volunteers to do much of the organization’s work. To help you truly understand the not-for-profit world, each student will be expected to contact a local not-for-profit organization and volunteer to work on the organization’s PR for at least 10 total hours. In addition, you will thoroughly research the organization. At the conclusion of the volunteer time, you will write a brief (5 page) report covering the history, mission, and purpose of the organization as well as the lessons you learned from the volunteer experience. Once you report that you have completed your volunteer hours, the Instructor will send a verification form to the chief administrator of the organization so that she or he can verify the amount of time you spent and assess the quality of your work. This assignment will be worth 50 points; half will be based on the assessment and half on the written report.

Group project: The class will be divided into project groups. Each group will be assigned to work with a not-for-profit client in developing PR strategies addressing a specific need of the client organization. The work will include developing any collateral pieces and providing templates for ideas included in the plan. This project will include assessing the needs of the organization and producing a strategy to address those needs. The results of the client research and the campaign will be presented in a plan book and an oral presentation in class. You will be expected to invite your client to attend the class presentations. The written plan book will be worth 100 point and the oral presentation will be worth 50 points. You will turn in two copies of the plan book, one for the instructor to grade and one for the client.

Any creative ideas that the group includes in the plan book becomes the property of the client organization. In exchange, the client organization agrees to give the group credit for the work when it implements the campaign.

Tests: You will take two exams. One will be administered at the midpoint of the semester. The second exam will be given during the university scheduled final exam period.

Grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I (midterm)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>II (Final)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Points</td>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual assignment</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group project</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
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Make-ups for all missed and late written work are allowed with proper University approved excuses within one week of the original due date.
**Tentative Semester Calendar**

Week 1  overview and introduction, PR roles and specialties in not for profits
Week 2  Working with boards (individual cases assigned)
Week 3  Working with Volunteers
Week 4  Promotional challenges
Week 5  Publics and Public Opinion
Week 6  Individual reports due  discussed in class
Week 7  Exam I. Publics II  MID TERM  last day to drop with a grade of “W”
Week 8  test returned  Begin discussion of legal concerns
Week 9  topic continued  (groups formed)
Week 10  Ethics
Week 11  issues management and building coalitions
Week 12  government relations and lobbying
Week 13  media relations on a shoe string
Week 14  Crisis planning
Week 15  Group presentations of campaigns

FINAL EXAM  Designated University exam time