PRCM 4090  PR Campaigns

**Professor:**  Dr. Margaret Fitch-Hauser  
**Office:**  312 Haley Center  
**Phone:**  844-2766  
**e-mail:**  fitchme@auburn.edu  
**Office Hours:**  TH 11 – 11:45 & 1:30 – 2:30  
W 9:30-11:30


**Course overview:**  This course focuses on applying communication and public relations research and theory to a real client's PR situation. Students are expected to work with a client and to develop an original Public Relations campaign for that client.

**Course objectives:**  By the end of this semester students should clearly understand the connection between communication theory and "real world" applications, know the basics of conducting a client analysis, know how to identify and analyze a target public, know how to develop a workable campaign strategy targeted toward an organization's target public, know how to work as a member of a project team, produce a campaign that will meet the needs of the client.

**Course policies:**  All students are expected to attend scheduled classes and keep any appointments with the instructor, their work team, and the client. Students in this class work as a PR council with a client. Therefore, students are expected to dress appropriately and conduct themselves in a business professional manner when interacting with the client. That will include dressing appropriately for the final client presentation. In addition, all students are expected to follow the University’s guidelines concerning academic honesty as outlined in the Tiger Cub. To signify your understanding of plagiarism, you will be expected to sign and turn in a copy of the attached Plagiarism Policy.

In doing a project for a client, each member of the group agrees to give the rights to the project to the client. These rights will include any future use of the project or any part of the project including images. Consequently, it is critical that you check any possible copyright concerns involving text or images used in the proposed campaign. In return for your work, the client agrees to give credit for the work to the group should that client choose to accept your project.

All students will be responsible for knowing all course materials covered in any assigned readings and class lectures.

All students are expected to contribute their share of effort to the project team. Project teams will have the option to fire any member of the team that is not contributing his or her fair share. If a team feels that a member is not contributing his or her fare share, that team should arrange a meeting with Dr. F-H to discuss the matter before taking action to fire the student. If a student is fired by a group, that student is responsible for meeting with Dr. F-H to make arrangement to complete the requirements of the course.

All team members need to remember that part of one’s contribution to the group is the quality of the work done, not just the number of hours spent working on a project.
All project teams are expected to meet assignment deadlines. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with Dr. F-H.

The secret of success in this class is to manage your time well and keep in touch with both your instructor and your client.

**Communication:** E-mail is the official means of communication at Auburn. I will attempt to respond to your emails within 24 hours whenever possible. This does not apply to weekends or times when I am scheduled to be out of town on Departmental business.

**ADA:** Any student needing special accommodations documented by The Program for Students with Disabilities should schedule a meeting with me as soon as possible so we can discuss any necessary accommodations. Please bring the Accommodation Memo and Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but feel you need special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please make an appointment with The Program for Students with Disabilities, 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT) or email: haynemd@auburn.edu.

**Inclusiveness:** 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.

**Exams:** There will be one exam given in this class. It will cover the textbook and any additional materials covered in class.

If you miss the exam due to a University accepted excuse, you will be responsible for arranging a make-up exam. Please refer to the following information from the on-line version of the Tiger Cub.

Arrangement to make up missed major examination (e.g. hour exams, mid-term exams) due to properly authorized excused absences shall be initiated by the student within one week from the end of the period of the excused absences. Normally, a make-up exam shall occur within two weeks from the time that the student initiates arrangements for it. Instructors are encouraged to refrain from giving make-up examinations during the last three days prior to the first day of final examinations. The format of make-up exams and opportunities for students to make up work other than major examinations are at the discretion of the instructor whose make-up policies should be stated in writing at the beginning of the term.

Please refer to the Tiger Cub for a list of accepted excused absences.

**Assignments and Point values:**

Your grade will be determined on a point-accumulated basis. At the end of the semester, your grade will be determined by the percentage of the total possible points you have accumulated. If you receive 90% or more of the total possible, you will receive an A, 80-89%, a B and so forth.
Course Assignments:

Client Analysis 75 points  
Campaign rough draft 50  
Exam 100  
Final Report  
  Written Proposal 150  
  Campaign Materials 75  
  Client Presentation 75  
  Peer Evaluation 50 (average of all evaluations of the individual team members)  
  Project log 15  
TOTAL POINTS 590

Assignment I  
Client and Situation Analysis

Once you have met your client, write an assessment of that client. Don’t rely on your client to provide all of the information for this assignment. Do thorough research. At a minimum your report should include the following information:

1. Who/what is your client?  
   How long has the organization existed?  
   What is the organization’s history?  
   What is the purpose of the organization and what does it do?  
   What are the organization's goals and objectives? Mission?

2. Who/what are the target publics?  
   On which target public does the client want to focus?  
   What does the public need or want from the organization?  
   What is the organization's current image with its target publics?  
   What does the organization want from the target public?

3. What type of PR is the client currently using?  
   What methods has/does the client use to reach out to its various publics?  
   How effective or ineffective have these efforts been?  
   How has the degree of effectiveness been measured?

4. What type of PR has the client used in the past?  
5. What communication channels has the client used?  
6. What are the client's current PR needs?  
7. What is the specific PR need you have been asked to address? What is your analysis and assessment of that project?

DUE: Jan 29
Point Value: 75

Format: This report needs to be written in a clear, organized and concise manner. Grammar and other writing elements are expected to be correct. Careless errors will have a negative impact on the evaluation of the report.
The appearance of the paper is expected to be neat. The margins should be approximately 1 inch all around the page. The print is expected to be standard 12 point font.

I expect all of you to have at least a basic knowledge of word processing. Please double space the report.

Assignment II
Rough Draft

Present a rough draft of the campaign that you have developed to address the PR challenge your client is facing. Keep in mind the needs that you identified in your client analysis.

Make certain to include the following pieces of information in your campaign:
- Who is your client? (client overview)
- What is the PR situation?
- Who is your target audience?
- What are your intermediate and terminal objectives?
- What are the major points you want to get across with this campaign?
- How do you plan to package these main points?
- What communication elements and tactics do you plan to use? (i.e. brochures)
- Why do you plan to use those communication elements?
- Are there any special considerations or limitations that you need to keep in mind?

DUE: March 11  After you turn in your rough draft, schedule an appointment to meet with Dr. F-H as a group.
Point Value:  50

Peer Evaluation of Group Members and Project log

You are expected to work together as a team. Team members are expected to participate and contribute equally to the project. After all, team members will receive the same grade on the project.

To help you assess whether each member is truly carrying his/her share of the workload, each of you should keep a log of the time you spend on the project, both individually and together. Each member of the team should turn in a copy of his/her log to the Team leader so he/she can prepare a weekly log to turn in to the Managing Director (Dr. F-H). It would also be a good idea for the Team leader to make a copy of this weekly log for each member of the group. At the end of the semester, you will be expected to fill out an evaluation of each member of the team, including yourself. Keeping good records of who does what in your group logs, will help you give fair evaluations.

Sometimes, team members do their work outside of group meetings. You will know when this happens and it should be evident in both the amount of work the person produces and in the
individual logs. Be certain to include individual work in the week project log and take it into consideration when you write up your peer reviews.

**Turn in your project logs (or copies of them) each Tuesday. The group should turn in ONE master copy for the group, not individual logs. I will keep a file for each group.**

ALL PEER ASSESSMENTS WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.

Turn in your peer assessments at the end of the semester to Dr. F-H. Please enclose the evaluation forms in an envelope. As you fill out your evaluations, take into account the overall effort of the individual to the group’s work and morale. Make an honest evaluation of each team member’s contribution to the group effort, including your own effort. **Should anyone fail to turn in the assessment sheets (peer evaluation), that individual will receive zero peer evaluation points regardless of how the other members of the team evaluated his or her efforts.**

You are working as a project team. All of you should participate in all aspects of the campaign. Providing clerical assistance in lieu of creative participation is **not** acceptable. If a member of your group does not assume his or her share of the responsibilities and decision making, the group may fire him or her. Take care of such problems early. Don’t wait until the last few weeks of the project to take action against a laggard. Please consult with Dr. F-H before undertaking any such action.

**Point Value:**

- Peer Evaluation  50
- Project log sheets  15

**Due date:** turn in at the same time as the final project presentation.
The final part of your campaign project involves presenting the campaign to your client. You will present a written campaign proposal and an oral report to your client.

The written campaign proposal and all communication elements (campaign materials) should be completely error free. As a minimum include the following in your written campaign:

- A cover letter to the client. Try to include contact information for a group member who can be contacted for information for at least one semester.
- An executive summary of the program.
- A situation analysis:. This will include the following:
  - A concise overview about your client organization.
  - A concise introduction of the PR opportunity. Include a discussion of how your client sees the situation as well as the results of your primary and secondary research on the situation. If you have conducted any primary research (Surveys or focus groups) include a full report of this research in an appendix.
- A brief discussion of the target audience. This discussion should include a justification for how you propose to segment your public.
- A presentation of the objectives of the campaign and an explanation of how those objectives were established and what public they address.
- The step-by-step campaign plan to address the above objectives. Explain how the campaign and audience needs are addressed by the campaign.
- A media schedule that shows what will be done to reach each segment of the target audience.
- A communication plan (or campaign strategy) that shows what will be done, by whom, and when. This section should include a budget for the program. Sample tactical materials should be included in the appendices.
- An evaluation plan for each public.

YOU WILL NEED TO MAKE TWO COPIES OF THE REPORT AND CAMPAIGN MATERIALS. ONE COPY WILL GO TO YOUR CLIENT. THE OTHER COPY WILL BE TURNED IN TO DR. F-H.

It is also a good idea to make a copy of the campaign for each member of your group. You may also consider entering the campaign or elements of the campaign in the annual PRCA Medallion award competition.

Remember to include a copy of every campaign element that you recommend in your proposal.

Oral Presentation:

Schedule an appointment to "pitch" your campaign to your client. (Clear all presentation times with Dr. F-H.) At the appointed time, you (every member of the group) will present the campaign proposal to the client. This presentation should be no longer than 30-40 minutes. The presentation will be graded on the following criteria:
The professional appearance, execution, and demeanor of the team.
Coverage of all key elements of the proposal.
Organization of the presentation.
Equal participation of all members of the team in the presentation.
Use of relevant visual aids &/or handouts to help audience understand all elements of the proposal report.
Appropriate handling of client questions.

Written proposal  150
Campaign materials  75
Client presentation  75

**Due Date:** All final presentations should be completed between **April 24 and April 29.**

**Course Outline:**

A. Overview of PR Campaigns
B. Client Focused Research
   - Researching a client
   - Researching a situation
   - Researching the audience
C. Defining strategic planning
   - Establishing Goals and Objectives
   - Developing effective and innovative tactics
   - Implementation of the plan
D. Presenting the plan
E. Evaluating the plan
Tentative Semester Calendar

Jan 8    First day of Classes   overview of course
Jan 10   working with clients
Jan 17   Nine step approach to Strategic PR   Introduction of projects
Jan 15   Step One  Situation analysis
Jan 17   Step Two  Organization analysis
Jan 22   Step Three  Analyzing the publics
Jan 24   Catch up day
Jan 29   Client Analysis due   Step Four  goals & objectives
Jan 31   Step Five  Actions & strategies
Feb 5    topic continued   Step 6  Effective communication
Feb 7    topic continued   Step 7  Selecting tactics
Feb 12   topic continued
Feb 14   Step 8  Implementation and budgeting
Feb 19   Step 9  Evaluation
Feb 21   Catch up day
Feb 26   Project day
Feb 28   Test
March 4   Test returned
March 6   Project day
March 11  Rough Drafts due
March 13  Project day
March 16 – 23  Spring Break   Test returned   Rough drafts due
March 25  Rough draft meetings
March 27  Project day   Rough draft meetings continue is needed
April 1   Project day
April 3   Project day
April 8   Group Meetings with Dr. F-H   Client project approval
April 10  Project day
April 15  “Dress Rehearsals”  A draft of all materials should be ready for a presentation of the campaign to the class.
April 17  “Dress Rehearsals” continue
April 22  “Dress Rehearsals” continue
April 24 – April 29  Final Projects and presentations
May 5     Projects returned during University scheduled final exam period
          9:00-11:30 a.m.