

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**MASTER'S DEGREE IN STRATEGIC PUBLIC RELATIONS****201: PUBLIC RELATIONS PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES
CRN: 55805****TUESDAYS, 7:00 P.M. TO 9:15 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 2 TO DECEMBER 2, 2008**

George Washington University
1925 Ballenger (near King Street metro)
Alexandria

Office hours: 6:15 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. prior to class, and mutually convenient times arranged by the student and the instructor.

Instructor's Contact Information

James D. Spellman
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Email: jdspell1@gwu.edu

Overview:

This graduate course will survey the theories of public relations and its practice by business, government, politicians, and non-profits – domestic and international. Assignments and discussions will emphasize case studies and the application of theory to provide an in-depth understanding of planning, executing, and evaluating a public relations campaign. Lectures and readings will cover a campaign's components: assessing the situation, developing key messages, delineating targeted publics, disseminating the message through various channels, and measuring effectiveness. There will be an emphasis on new media, including do-it-yourself media (You Tube), the "fifth estate" (blogs), "social networks" (LinkedIn), and other technology-based communications platforms. Prerequisite: your ability to write clearly and concisely.

Textbooks

This is P.R. The Realities of Public Relations. By Doug Newsom, Judy Van Slyke Turk, and Dean Kruckeberg. Ninth Edition. Thomson/Wadsworth, 2006. ISBN: 0495091324; ISBN-13: 9780495091325

Corporate Communication. By Paul A. Argenti. Fourth Edition. McGraw Hill Irwin, 2005, 2007. ISBN: 0072990546; ISBN-13: 9780072990546

Supplementary Material

While the textbooks provide a structure, their case studies, for example, may be weak or dated. Hence, we will draw from media coverage, the Web sites of companies or organizations, and other resources in studying the issues and cases outlined below. Supplementary material will be posted on Blackboard or distributed in class.

Assignments

All assignments will be graded in terms of the quality of the writing, analysis, and content. Turn in all assignments typewritten, double-spaced, and in AP style. Perfect spelling and grammar.

- **1,000-word op ed. Individual assignment.**
Public Relations: Adapting to Technological Changes

Argue how public relations must change to adapt to technological changes in communications tools and pipelines. In this piece, define three key media changes arising from technological advancements (e.g., social media and “push” technologies through cellphones), and how those changes challenge public relations efforts to gain attention for clients’ interests, persuade targeted publics to adopt clients’ positions, and counter negative press generated from competitors’ attacks. This exercise is designed to strengthen your persuasive writing skills in a format commonly used by public relations professionals to advance a client’s agenda.

Assignment due: September 9

- **750-word book review. Individual assignment.**
Relate Book’s Thesis to the Practice of Public Relations

Choose one of four books listed below. Analyze how the author’s ideas relate to the practice of public relations. Use most of your allotted words to provide an analysis of the implications, rather than simply summarizing the book’s ideas. For example, you could begin your piece by outlining whether you agree or disagree with the thesis of the *New Capitalists*, that investors are becoming more vocal and more skillful at advancing their agendas. Keep that point brief. Use the remainder of your review to examine the public relations consequences of activist shareholders. This exercise is designed to demonstrate your understanding of the challenges and opportunities public relations professionals confront as the business fundamentals change rapidly. Choose from:

The New Capitalists: How Citizen Investors Are Reshaping the Corporate Agenda. By Stephen Davis, Jon Lukomnik, and David Pitt-Watson. Harvard Business School Press, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-1-4221-0101-8; ISBN-10: 1-4221-0101-0.

The Future of the Internet □ And How to Stop It. By Jonathan Zittrain. Yale University Press, 2008. ISBN-10: 0300124872.

Alpha Dogs. The Americans Who Turned Political Spin into a Global Business. By James Harding. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008. ISBN-10:0-374-10367-4.

Groundswell: Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies. By Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff. Harvard Business School Press, 2008. ISBN-10: 1422125009.

Assignment due: September 23

- **Case Studies (20 pages plus PowerPoint). Group project.**

The class will divide into public relations agencies. Each agency will prepare an analysis of one of the six cases (Jet Blue; Coca Cola India; Social Security reforms; Apple; BP; and, Google) used in the lectures. Components: problem definition; objectives; data analysis; strategies, including recommendations; and monitoring/measuring. The agency will make a short oral presentation (with PowerPoint) of their analysis (20 minutes). Think creatively. You could enact a “war room” or a board presentation. This exercise is designed to develop your skills in analyzing public relations strategies and applications. In preparing your project, it is expected that you apply content provided in lectures, readings, and Web-based resources. (See pages x-xi in Argenti’s book for the structure of a case analysis.)

Assignment	Written Report/PP Distributed to Class	Presentation/PP
Jet Blue (flight delays)	Oct. 12	Oct. 14
Coca Cola India (public safety)	Oct. 19	Oct. 21
Social Security reforms	Oct. 26	Oct. 28
Apple (Jobs’s health)	Nov. 2	Nov. 4
BP (“green” positioning)	Nov. 9	Nov. 11
Google (censorship in China)	Nov. 16	Nov. 18

- **Term paper (20 pages maximum, double-spaced). Individual assignment. How a Company, Non-profit, Government Agency, or Political Candidate Uses Public Relations and Whether They Are Effective**

Pick one company, non-profit group, government agency, or political candidate. Analyze their use of public relations – not marketing – campaigns to raise their profile, address issues from customers or voters, improve their bottom line (company), advance their agenda (non-profit), or win an election (candidate). Define your subject’s public relations effort after summarizing the context in which they work. This exercise is designed to provide a means in which the course lessons are applied to a case. At one of the last two classes, you will give a short presentation about your paper, which will be posted on Blackboard.

Proposal Due: October 7 (two-page outline)

Final Assignment Due: November 24

Presentations: November 25, December 2

Grading Policy

All assignments will be graded in terms of the quality of the writing, analysis, and content.

1,000-word Op Ed	12.5%
750-word Book Review	12.5%
Case Studies	30%
Term paper	35%
Class Participation	10%

With grading, there is a simple correlation: grades reflect the quality of work. Since this course’s goal is manifested in how much and how well you learn, your grade should reflect that. Here is how the grading works:

A Your work is outstanding and a notch above the rest. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.

A - Represents good work with minor errors. Overall excellent work.

B + Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.

B Good work but needs reworking and more effort.

B- You've completed the assignment but you are not meeting all the requirements of the class and keeping up with your colleagues.

C+ Above average. Needs improvement, effort, shows some motivation and concern.

C Satisfactory. Needs reworking, effort, research. Shows little motivation, and concern.

D Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, grammar, etc.

F Unacceptable performance.

Deadlines

If an assignment is late, you are docked one-third of a grade per day (A to A-, etc.). Please be conscious of this, since life is filled with deadlines.

Learning Concerns

Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation because of a disability (e.g. learning disability, attention deficit disorder, psychological, physical, etc.) should make an appointment to see me during or outside of office hours.

Academic Integrity

To maintain a fair learning environment for all students, there must be no cheating, plagiarism or other dishonest conduct. Please observe George Washington University's academic integrity code, which is available on the university's Web site. <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>.

LECTURES

September 2

Class One:

Public Relations Overview: Definition, History, Current Trends

An introduction to the course, your expectations and interests, the assignments, grading policy, and explanation of assignments.

What is public relations? Its value? How has it evolved? What is the “two-way street” approach? Its merits, weaknesses? How does it solve and prevent problems? How are changes in business – shareownership of public companies, globalization, multiculturalism, consumerism, regulation, laws – creating greater

demand for public relations services? Is the current era in the profession's evolution the "mutual satisfaction" phase? The advent of new media – the implications, the challenges? If Google is altering how we read and think, what impact is are cognitive process changes having on PR?

Readings:

This is P.R., Chapters 1 – 3.

Corporate Communication, Chapter 1.

"Annals of Communications: The Fixer. Why New Yorkers Call Howard Rubenstein When They've Got a Problem," by Ken Auletta. *New Yorker*, February 12, 2007. Blackboard.

" 'Mini-Me' History: Public Relations from the Dawn of Civilization," by Don Bates.

http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/MiniMe_HistoryOfPR.pdf

PR 2.0 Reference Guide. By Shift Communications.

<http://www.shiftcomm.com/downloads/pr2essentials.pdf> .

Nicholas Carr, "Is Google Making Us Stupid? What the Internet is doing to our brains." *Atlantic*. July/August 2008.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200807/google>

Web Resources:

"Freud's Nephew and the Origins of Public Relations," by Alix Spiegel. NPR.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4612464> .

Edward Bernays. Museum of Public Relations. Exhibition at:

http://www.prmuseum.com/bernays/bernays_1915.html .

"Public Relations Is a Two-Way Street." Edward Bernays film clip. Museum of Public Relations. http://www.prmuseum.com/bernays/bernays_video_pr.html

"The Father of Public Relations," *On the Media*. NPR. Jan. 17, 2003.

http://www.onthedia.org/yore/transcripts/transcripts_011703_pr.html

September 9

Class Two:

Effective Messages:

Framing; Cutting through The Clutter; Changing Peoples' Views; The Power of the Visual; New Media's Playbook

This lecture will explore the factors – source, message content, channel, receivers, feedback – determining success in communicating one's messages as the means or channels to do so continue to evolve. What is "framing?" Why was the phrase "death tax" more effective than "estate tax" in persuading Americans and eventually Congress to reduce the tax? What factors contribute to a message's "stickiness?" Is image everything, as Stanford University Communications Professor Shanto Iyengar suggests? How are new media technologies changing the rules of engagement, particularly with citizen bloggers? What new tools must public relations professionals master?

Guest Speaker: *Social News Releases*
 Michael T. Toner, Account Executive, Business Wire
www.businesswire.com
 (703) 243-0400
 Michael.toner@businesswire.com

Readings:

This is P.R., Chapter 10.

Corporate Communication, Chapters 2, 4.

Words That Work: It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear. By Frank Luntz. Hyperion, 2007. Chapter One. "The Ten Rules of Effective Language." Blackboard.

Groundswell: Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies. By Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff. Harvard Business School Press, 2008. Chapter One. Blackboard.

Marketing Metaphora. What Deep Metaphors Reveal about the Minds of Consumers. By Gerald and Lindsay Zatman. Harvard Business School Press, 2008. Chapter One. Blackboard.

Media Politics: A Citizen's Guide. By Shanto Iyengar. W. W. Norton, 2006. Chapter One. "Image is Everything."
<http://pcl.stanford.edu/common/docs/research/iyengar/2006/softnews/ch1-vpreview.pdf>.

"Social Media U: Take a Class in Social Media."
http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/social_media_u_take_a_class_in.php

"Political Freelancers Use Web to Join the Attack." By Jim Rutenberg. *New York Times*. June 29, 2008.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/29/us/politics/29opposition.html?_r=1&adxnlnx=1214782206-RA4MVEJYfVNuDTFbIMBOIw .

“Online Obama Fights 'YouTube Election' Smears.” By Edward Luce. *Financial Times*. June 13, 2008. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/ddd7700e-38be-11dd-8aed-0000779fd2ac.html> . Blackboard.

“Looking at the Future of 'E-Politics.’” NPR. *Weekend Edition Sunday*. June 29, 2008. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=91963952> .

“Amateur Campaign Blogger Scoops the Pros.” By Howard Kurtz. *Washington Post*, June 9, 2008. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/06/09/AR2008060900373_pf.html .

“Exposed.” By Emily Gould. *New York Times*, May 25, 2008. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/25/magazine/25internet-t.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=Emily+Gould&st=nyt&oref=slogin

Assignment Due: 1,000-word op ed

Web Resources:

“Frank Luntz Explains 'Words That Work',” *Fresh Air*. NPR. January 9, 2007. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6761960>

“The Secret Behind Why Ideas 'Stick,'” *Morning Edition*. NPR. February 19, 2007. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=7486659>

Interview of the authors of *Made to Stick*, Chip and Dan Heath. *Today Show*. NBC. January 3, 2007. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16449783/%5D>

George Lakoff on "The Political Mind," NPR, *Diane Rehm Show*, June 2, 2008. Linguist George Lakoff on what recent brain research demonstrates about the power of language to shape unconscious thought. <http://wamu.org/programs/dr/08/06/02.php#20824>

“The Seven Stages of FrameWorks Learning,” adapted from Jeanne Ryer, Endowment for Health. FrameWorks Institute. <http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/strategicanalysis/sevenstages.shtml>

“The Messenger is the Message,” *On the Media*. NPR. October 7, 2005. Vladimir Posner, the former Soviet spokesman, was a frequent guest on American TV in the 1980's. He offers his views on public diplomacy and propaganda, 20 years later. <http://www.onthemedial.org/transcripts/2005/10/07/03>

September 16

Class Three:

Research:

Public Opinion, “Listening to the Groundswell,” Message Testing, Results (Placements: Where? When? Quality?)

What research tools do public relations professionals use? Planning, processes, and techniques. Strengths and weaknesses of public opinion research. What results are derived from a public relations campaign? How does one measure those in terms of impact – visibility, changing an individual’s mind, etc.? Buzz (word of mouth), blogs, social media, wikis, media sharing – how does one track new media technologies (aka “groundswell”)? With what metrics does one credibly evaluate impact, your campaign’s effectiveness?

Readings:

This is P.R. Chapters 4, 5.

Chapter Five: “listening to the groundswell” in *groundswell: winning in a world transformed by social technologies*. By Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff. Harvard Business Press, 2008. Available on Blackboard.

“A New Flavor of Google Trends.” June 10, 2008. Posted by Heej Hwang, Google Trends team. <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2008/06/new-flavor-of-google-trends.html>

Web Resources:

Interview with Dr. Don W. Stacks, author of *Primer of Public Relations Research* and program director and professor of Advertising and Public Relations at the University of Miami.

http://novitaic.typepad.com/novitaic/2005/12/what_is_public_.html

The New PR Wiki

Available at:

<http://www.thenewpr.com/wiki/pmwiki.php?pagename=PRMeasurement.HomePage>

“How to Measure Social Media Relations: The More Things Change, the More They Remain the Same.” By Katie Delahaye Paine. Institute for Public Relations. April 2007.

http://www.instituteforpr.org/research_single/how_to_measure_social_media_relations/

“New Influencer Study Initial Findings Shared at Society for New Communications Research Symposium.” By the Institute for Public Relations. December 2007.

http://www.instituteforpr.org/release_single/new_influencer_study_initial_findings_shared/

“Public Relations Research for Planning and Evaluation.” By Walter K. Lindenmann. Institute for Public Relations. 2006.

http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/2006_Planning_Eval.pdf .

“Perspectives on the ROI of Media Relations Publicity Efforts.” By Fraser Likely, David Rockland, and Mark Weiner. Institute for Public Relations. May 2006.

http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/2006_ROI_LRW.pdf .

“Guidelines and Standards for Measuring and Evaluating P.R. Effectiveness.” By Walter K. Lindenmann. Institute for Public Relations. 2003.

http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/2002_MeasuringPrograms.pdf

“Dictionary of Public Relations Measurement and Research.” Prepared and edited by Don W. Stacks. Institute for Public Relations. 2006.

http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/PRMR_Dictionary.pdf

Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. American Association for Public Opinion Research.

http://www.aapor.org/default.asp?page=survey_methods/standards_and_best_practices/code_for_professional_ethics_and_practices . Proposed revisions:

<http://www.aapor.org/pdfs/CodeRecs.pdf> . This Web site has other relevant information that may interest you.

Best Practices. American Association for Public Opinion.

http://www.aapor.org/default.asp?page=survey_methods/standards_and_best_practices/best_practices_for_survey_and_public_opinion_research . This Web site has other relevant information that may interest you.

September 23

Class Four:

Strategy:

Planning for Public Relations

Assessing the environment/context, clarifying business objectives, developing P.R. objectives/strategies, executing the public relations program, evaluating results, retooling effort if needed – this class will survey this typical cycle of the public relations process. Integrating “new media” technologies to dominate your strategy or augment traditional media outlets. In your case study and final

assignments, you will need to incorporate new media technologies into a public relations plan.

Assignment Due: 750-word book review

Readings:

This is P.R., Chapters 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12

Corporate Communication, Chapter 2

Web Resources:

“Establishing Principles for Public Relations on The Internet,” Arthur W. Page Society.

http://www.awpagesociety.com/index.php/site/resources/establishing_principles_for_pr Blackboard.

Social Media White Paper. By Vocus. Available at:

<http://www.vocus.com/socialmediawhitepaper/download.html> Blackboard.

“New Media, New Influencers, and Implications for the Public Relations Profession.” By Paul Gillin, *Journal of New Communications Research*: 2:2. 2008. <http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/NewInfluencer.pdf> Blackboard.

“Examining the Increasing Impact of Social Media on the Public Relations Practice.” By Donald K. Wright and Michelle Hinson. April 2008. Institute for Public Relations. <http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/Wright-Hinson.pdf> Blackboard.

“Mapping the Consequences of Technology on Public Relations.” By John V. Pavlik. September 2007. Institute for Public Relations. http://www.instituteforpr.org/research_single/mapping_the_consequences_of_technology_on_public_relations/ Blackboard.

“Staying Afloat in a Sea of Social Media. An Intelligent Approach to Managing and Monitoring Social Media.” By Cision. Blackboard.

“How Companies are Marketing Online. A McKinsey Global Survey.” *McKinsey Quarterly*. July 2007. Blackboard.

September 30

Class Five:

Media Relations

Information channels have proliferated and simultaneously become more individualized. Who is “the media” (print, spoken/visual, online)? Is it “mass?” What trends does the media confront that are redefining its role and importance? Guidelines for working with the media. How does one communicate with the media? Value of relationships? What constitutes a successful media relations program? What is spinning? What are the new media tools (e.g., blogs, You Tube, social networks, Second Life)? Their effectiveness and ineffectiveness compared to traditional media? The challenges and opportunities for public relations?

Guest Speaker: Heathere Keenan
 President, PRSA Chapter of Washington
 President, Keenan PR
 Email: heathere@keenanpr.com

Readings:

This is P.R., Chapters 10, 11, 12

Corporate Communications, Chapter 6

“The Death and Life of the American Newspaper,” Eric Alterman, *New Yorker*, March 31, 2008.

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/03/31/080331fa_fact_alterman?printable=true . Blackboard.

The State of the Media 2008. “Major Trends” chapter.

<http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/2008/index> .

“State of Transition. *PR Week Media Survey 2008*.” March 31, 2008. Blackboard.

“Wikipedia: When in Doubt, Multitudes Seek It Out.” By Lee Rainie and Bill Tancer. Pew Research Organization. April 24, 2007.

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/460/wikipedia> .

Web Resources:

“The Pleasure Principle.” NPR. *On the Media*. May 2, 2008. Consuming the same media as your peers is what social scientists call homophily, better known as “birds of a feather flock together.” Ethan Zuckerman, blogger and Internet theorist, has been trying to fight this instinct online. He offers techniques for surprising and challenging readers with news that they didn't know they wanted.

<http://www.onthemediamedia.org/transcripts/2008/05/02/04>

“The Future Perfect.” NPR. *On the Media*. April 18, 2008. Despite the internet’s runaway success, its future is anything but clear. So says Jonathan Zittrain, professor of Internet governance at Oxford University. He explains why the very devices and applications that have enabled Internet ubiquity may now be limiting innovation. <http://www.onthemedial.org/transcripts/2008/04/18/04>

“Hard Times.” NPR. *On the Media*. June 13, 2008. Perhaps no major U.S. paper has been under siege longer than the *Los Angeles Times*, and this week brought yet another insult. *New York Times* media reporter Richard Pérez-Peña has been covering this historic retrenchment. <http://www.onthemedial.org/transcripts/2008/06/13/03>

“Extra! Extra! We Still Want News.” NPR. *On the Media*. March 28, 2008. The Project for Excellence in Journalism released its annual *State of the News Media* report and the state of the news is strong. There is an audience! Of course, the business model could use some work. <http://www.onthemedial.org/transcripts/2008/03/28/05>

“Brooks Jackson: ‘unSpun.’” *Diane Rehm Show*. WAMU. April 30, 2007. The co-creator of factcheck.org explains how to detect spin in everyday life. <http://www.wamu.org/programs/dr/07/04/30.php#13169>
The book: *unSpun: Finding Facts in a World of Disinformation*. By Brooks Jackson and Kathleen Hall Jamieson. Random House, 2007.

Media Relations Guide for the Plastics Industry. By the Society of the Plastics Industry. <http://www.plasticsindustry.org/outreach/howto/mediaguide.htm>

Guide to Managing Media and Public Relations in the Linux Community. By Sheldon Rose. Linux Professional Institute. <http://www.tldp.org/LDP/Linux-Media-Guide/html/>

“Social Networking.” NPR. *Diane Rehm Show*. May 12, 2008.
A look at the growing appeal of on-line social networks and their value to members in the profit and not-for-profit worlds. Guests: Gina Bianchini, co-founder, Ning!; Andy Carvin, senior product manager, NPR Community, NPR Digital Media; and, Josh Bernoff, vice president, principal analyst, Forrester Research; author of *Groundswell* (Harvard Business Press). <http://wamu.org/programs/dr/08/05/12.php#20823>

October 7
Class Six:
Ethics and Law

The ethical, professional, and legal considerations involved in public relations decision-making. How does one manage the inherent conflicts of interest – among the clients you serve or between client demands and the firm’s recommendations? Public relations and the first amendment, defamation law, insider trading, copyright protections, disclosure obligations, privacy protections, and Internet law. *N. Y. Times v. Sullivan* established “actual malice” as the basis for lawsuits in libel cases of public citizens. *Nike v. Kasky* case – where does first-amendment-protected free speech end and commercial speech (with fewer constitutional protections) begin? Privacy protection concerns with new media technologies. Your obligations as a practitioner, personal behavior, organizational behavior (it may be legal but not ethical, and vice versa).

Readings:

This is P.R., Chapter 9

The Future of Reputation: Gossip, Rumor, and Privacy on the Internet. By Daniel J. Solove. Yale University Press, 2007. “Part One: Rumor and Reputation in a Digital World.” Blackboard.

Assignment Due: two-page outline of final paper

Web Resources:

Case: *New York Times v. Sullivan*:

<http://supreme.justia.com/us/376/254/case.html>

Case: *Nike v. Kasky*:

http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/faclibrary/case.aspx?case=Nike_v_Kasky

“Nike Goes to Court,” *On The Media*, NPR, January 17, 2003.

http://www.onthemediamedia.org/yore/transcripts/transcripts_011703_nike.html

Case Study: Managing Conflicts Of Interest

<http://www.prsa.org/aboutUs/ethics/documents/CS5.pdf>

Code Of Professional Standards For The Practice Of P.R. P.R. Society Of America. <http://www.prsa.org/About/Ethics/pdf/codeofethics.pdf>

Matrix of Ethical Dilemmas. P.R. Society of America.

<http://www.prsa.org/aboutUs/ethics/documents/matrixethicaldilemmas.pdf>

“Deceptive Practices by ‘Front’ Groups and Individuals Using Blogs, Viral Marketing, and Anonymous Internet Postings.” P.R. Society of America *Professional Standards Advisory PSA-3 Fall 2006.*

<http://www.prsa.org/aboutUs/ethics/psaPS7.html>

October 14

Class Seven: **Reputation**

What determines reputation? What undermines it? How do you respond through a P.R. campaign? What is effective? What isn't? The "immutable laws" of earning, maintaining, and rebuilding reputation.

Case: JetBlue

Situation: When an ice storm hit the eastern U.S. in February 2007, JetBlue thought the weather would break and it would be able to fly. Flights left gates only to stand on runways for hours, holding their passengers hostage. More than 1,100 flights were canceled over a six-day period. The incident costs hovered around \$30 million.

Issues: What was the fall-out? How did the 24-hour news cycle and do-it-yourself media contribute to the escalation of the story's drama and the company's reputation? Were the company's immediate and subsequent responses adequate? Yes? No? How so? As the story evolved, what were some of the angles that emerged? What alternatives should JetBlue have pursued for their P.R. strategy to curtail further loss and rebuild the company's reputation? More than 18 months after the incident, what has been the impact on their reputation? Their business? As higher oil prices endanger airlines' existence, is the ice-storm trauma relevant in defining Jet Blue's reputation today? Or is the fact that they are now charging seven dollars for pillows and blankets.

Note: Agency "A" will provide a 20-minute presentation on the case. Paper/presentation will be distributed October 12.

Readings:

Argenti, Chapter 4

The 18 Immutable Laws of Corporate Reputation: Creating, Protecting and Repairing Your Most Valuable Asset, by Ronald J. Alsop. Free Press, 2004. Chapter 1. Blackboard.

Agency "A" Presentation

The Future of Reputation: Gossip, Rumor, and Privacy on the Internet. By Daniel J. Solove. Yale University Press, 2007. "Part One: Rumor and Reputation in a Digital World." Blackboard.

"Reputation and Its Risks." By Robert G. Eccles, Scott C. Newquist, Roland Schatz. *Harvard Business Review*, February 2007. Blackboard.

“Seventy-One Percent of Consumers Say the Reputation Of Corporate America Is ‘Poor’, But Consumers Will Buy, Recommend and Invest in Companies that Concentrate on Building Their Corporate Reputation.” Annual Reputation Quotient® 2008 study. Harris Interactive®. Press release:
<http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/allnewsbydate.asp?NewsID=1318>

Full report:

http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/mediaaccess/2008/HI_BSC_REPORT_AnnualRQ_USASummary07-08.pdf .

“What Price Reputation,” *Business Week*, July 9, 2007.

http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/07_28/b4042050.htm

Micheline Maynard, “JetBlue Starts Selling Blankets and Pillows.” *New York Times*, August 5, 2008.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/05/business/05pillow.html?_r=1&em&oref=slogin

October 21

Class Eight:

Crisis Communications

The necessities of preparedness – having in place a crisis communications plan. Understanding the situation. Balancing reactive efforts against proactive ones. The external and internal dynamics unique to a crisis that influence P.R. strategy development and implementation. The evolution of the news story narrative during a crisis, facilitated by 24-hour traditional and new media. Corporate culture and management mind-sets – their influence on how an organization responds.

Case: Coca-Cola India

Situation: An activist group issued a study finding that 12 major cold drink brands sold in India, including Coca-Cola, were found to contain pesticide residues that surpassed global standards of safety by 30 to 36 times. India is one of Coca Cola’s most significant markets, having invested more than \$1 billion. The company has promoted its corporate citizenship.

Issues: Are the findings true? If so, how is this happening? What can be done? If not, how should the company respond? Does it matter if the findings are true or false if the majority believe the accusations? Who are the stakeholders? What messages need to be conveyed to them? What potential scenarios typically unfold with such disasters? Did Coca-Cola have a crisis communications plan? What

considerations – marketing, financial, government, for example – should be included in developing P.R. strategy?

Note: details in *Corporate Communications*, Chapter 10

Agency “B” will present.

Paper and presentation will be distributed October 19.

Readings:

Corporate Communications, Chapter 10

This is P.R., Chapter 13

Agency “B” presentation

October 28

Class Nine:

Public Affairs, Government Relations

Public relations helps to advance advocacy agendas. Reaching decision makers, mobilizing members, utilizing grass-roots organizations, countering the opposition – these are some of the objectives public relations professionals confront for a trade association or activist group.

Case: Social Security Reform – Private Savings Accounts

Situation: As the baby boomers retire, they will be drawing more money from Society Security than the amount contributed by workers. The trust fund could run dry by 2035 unless reforms are enacted to slow down withdrawals and increase contributions. A coalition of business leaders wants to advance one part of the solution: creation of private savings accounts. Saving Social Security is a key platform plank of both Presidential and Congressional candidates.

Issues: Any discussion of Social Security reform brings broad-based media coverage, attracts diverse political interest groups, and involves framing in political terms (haves vs. have-nots, for example). How should your P.R. strategy address those considerations?

Agency “C” will present.

Paper and presentation will be distributed October 26.

Speaker:

Michael Bassik

Vice President for Internet Advertising
Malchow Schlackman Hoppey & Cooper

“Advocacy Communications”

Readings:

Corporate Communication, Chapter 9

Agency “C” Presentation

Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics. Eighth Edition. By Dennis L. Wilcox, Glen L. Cameron, Phillip Ault, and Warren K. Agee. Allyn and Bacon, 2007. Chapter 18. Blackboard.

Public Relations Cases. Sixth Edition. By Jerry A. Hendrix. Thomson, 2004. Chapter 6. Blackboard.

“The Internet and the 2008 Election.” June 15, 2008. Pew Internet and American Life Project.

http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/252/report_display.asp

The European Public Affairs Directory: the Comprehensive Guide to Opinion-Formers in the Capital of Europe. Landmarks Publishing Brussels: 2006. ISBN 9074373216

November 4

Class Ten:

Investor and Financial Relations

Regulations govern the dissemination of a public company’s news to the financial markets, emphasizing the necessity to fairly disclose “material” information so that some investors are unfairly put at an advantage. This effort involves managing analysts’ expectations and shaping their assessments, dealing with an increasingly activist shareholder base, maintaining customer loyalty, and preventing competitors from drawing advantages from your missteps in P.R. Your investor relations presence on the Web.

Case: Steve Jobs’s Health Condition

Situation: When Apple co-founder and CEO Steve Jobs unveiled new versions of the iPhone in June 2008, bloggers raised concerns about his appearance. “He looked especially gaunt in his trademark black turtleneck and faded jeans, other Apple executives spent more time on the stage during his keynote address -- a notable move for an executive who typically spends much of his speech rallying the Mac faithful and introducing many products himself,” observed Therese

Poletti, a MarketWatch columnist. The story contributed to a seven-percent drop in the stock's price on the day of the keynote.

Four years earlier, Jobs was diagnosed with a rare form of pancreatic cancer. After he underwent surgery, Apple said it was successful, but disclosed the information nine months after the fact. That history contributed to the bloggers' concerns. An Apple spokeswoman attributed his thinner appearance to "a common bug" and the antibiotics he had been taking. A *New York Times* columnist interviewed Jobs and reported his denial.

Issues: The incident demonstrated once again the power of new media, in this case the bloggers, in raising issues. Some raised questions about Apple's succession plans and the company's lack of transparency in disclosing information about Jobs's health. Some saw the tsunami of concern as an attempt by stock manipulators to lower Apple's share price. Apple's investor relations efforts had to deflate rumors.

**Agency "D" will present.
Paper and presentation will be distributed November 2.**

Readings:

Corporate Communication, Chapter 8

Agency "D" presentation

Code of Ethics for Investor Relations Professionals. National Investor Relations Institute. <http://www.niri.org/about/CodeOfEthicsRegMember.cfm>

"What You Need To Know To Measure Investor Relations." By David Michaelson and John Gilfeather. Institute for P.R.
http://www.instituteforpr.org/research_single/measure_investor_relations/

"Responsible Business 2008." *Financial Times* Special Report, July 8, 2008.
<http://www.ft.com/reports/responsiblebusiness2008>

Joe Nocera, "Apple's Culture of Secrecy." *New York Times*, July 26, 2008.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/26/business/26nocera.html?scp=2&sq=nocera%20apple&st=cse>

Reuters, "Apple CEO Jobs' Life Not in Danger: Report." July 26, 2008.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/26/AR2008072601415_pf.html

Apple Blog Sites:

www.theappleblog.com
www.appleinsider.com
<http://weblogs.baltimoresun.com/business/appleaday/blog/>
<http://9to5mac.com/>
<http://www.macrumors.com/>
<http://buyersguide.macrumors.com/>
<http://www.macscoop.com/>
<http://www.appleinsider.com/>

November 11

Class Eleven:

Corporate Responsibility: Being “Green”

The difficulties in positioning clients as pro-environment. From the messages to the politics to the printing paper, many landmines lie beneath the road to being green. Investor demands for adherence to socially responsible investing principles, mounting evidence that global climate change is underway, the high costs of fossil fuels – these and other events are driving management to position companies as “green.” What public relations strategies and tactics could be implemented to support this positioning?

Case: BP

Situation: In November 2006, the oil company BP announced a settlement of a lawsuit stemming from a tragic explosion in its Texas City, TX refinery that killed 15 workers and hurt 170 others in 2005. Not only was BP’s negligence to blame for the refinery tragedy, the company was also responsible for the largest oil pipeline leak of 200,000 barrels on Alaska’s North Slope. The oil leak forced BP to shutdown most of the pipeline this summer causing price disruptions in the gasoline market. These occurred against the context of BP’s enormous P.R. efforts to validate itself as a responsible corporate citizen. It’s P.R. campaign hammered way on one message: oil is bad for society and BP is leading the way in alternative energy

Issues: These incidences undermined BP’s reputation and its claims to be socially responsible and “green.” How should BP have responded?

Agency “E” will present.

Paper and presentation will be distributed November 9.

Readings:

Agency “E” presentation

“Markets alone will not lead to a green future.” By Ken Lewis. *Financial Times*, June 6, 2008.

“An Even Bigger Cleanup Job.” The head of General Electric's green-energy program says firms need the government to step in. By Fareed Zakaria. *Newsweek*, May 19, 2008. <http://www.newsweek.com/id/136312> Blackboard.

“Special Report: Corporate Social Responsibility.” *The Economist*, January 17, 2008. Blackboard.

“Cleaning up.” *The Economist*. May 31, 2007. Blackboard.

“The Power of Green.” By Thomas L. Friedman. *New York Times*. April 15, 2007. Blackboard.

“Strategy and Society: The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility.” By Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer. *Harvard Business Review*. December 2006. Blackboard.

“Competitive Advantage on a Warming Planet.” By Jonathan Lash and Fred Wellington. *Harvard Business Review*. March 2007. Blackboard.

“Responsible Business 2008.” *Financial Times* Special Report, July 8, 2008. <http://www.ft.com/reports/responsiblebusiness2008>

Getty Report on Green Images.

<http://corporate.gettyimages.com/marketing/MapReport/usa/index.html>

November 18

Class Twelve:

International Public Relations

Differences in access to information, treatments of news, public attitudes, government laws, and business management styles are some of the challenges faced in developing and implementing a global P.R. strategy. What should one be aware of in communicating across cultures? How does one develop a “local” approach within a global strategy?

Case: Google and Government Censorship in China

Situation: In January 2006, Google announced that it would be providing China with its own portal, providing faster service than the existing Chinese version of its U.S. site, as well as increasing Google's chances at capturing China's estimated 111 million regular Internet users. Despite the corporate "Don't be evil"

policy, Google agreed to censor its search results in compliance with Chinese laws.

In March 2008, Beijing blocked Google News and YouTube access amid rioting in Tibet that left at least 80 people dead. Google said it is aware of reports of users being unable to access YouTube in China, according to *InfoWorld*. "We are looking into the matter, and working to ensure that the service is restored as soon as possible," YouTube said in a statement.

"We believe that YouTube offers citizens the world over a vital window on their cultures and societies and that they should not be denied access to video information," the statement also said. *InfoWorld* reported that Google did not address additional questions about its involvement in the block or its support of governments that limit access to the Internet. Google only commented on the blockage of YouTube without mentioning any problems with access to Google News in China.

Prior to the riots, Google had announced in April 2008 the launch of Google Finance China to prove Chinese stock and mutual fund data through their interface in Chinese.

Issues: U.S. media and human rights groups brought the issue to the public's attention, damaging Google's reputation and share price. The issue eventually subsided. With the Chinese government's shutdown of news coverage of the Tibetan riots, issues arose again about Google's reputation. Is Google balancing well its idyllic corporate philosophy with the need to grow and capture market share?

**Agency "F" will present.
Paper and presentation will be distributed on November 16.**

Readings:

Agency "F" presentation

Public Relations Cases. Sixth Edition. By Jerry A. Hendrix. Thomson/Wadsworth, 2004. Chapter 9. Blackboard.

Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics. Eighth Edition. By Dennis L. Wilcox, Glen L. Cameron, Phillip Ault, and Warren K. Agee. Allyn and Bacon, 2007. Chapter 19. Blackboard.

Agency F presentation.

Web Resources:

"The Messenger is the Message." *On the Media*. NPR. October 7, 2005
<http://www.onthemedial.org/transcripts/2005/10/07/03>.

Foreign Media Relations Guide. By Business for Diplomatic Action.
http://www.businessfordiplomaticaction.org/files/fmrg_proof_20061108.pdf

"Private Sector Summit on Public Diplomacy." This first-ever summit brought together more than 150 of the top public relations professionals from the country with government leaders in a forum to discuss ways to improve US diplomacy efforts around the world.

http://www.awpagesociety.com/images/uploads/PrivSectorSummit_PD.pdf

November 25

Class Thirteen:

Presentations

During this class and the next one, students will provide a brief summary of their term paper. Term papers will be posted on Blackboard for other students to consult.

December 2

Class Fourteen:

Final Presentations: Open Topics

A brief look at the challenges projected for public relations. This class and the next one will be used for each student to provide a brief summary of their term paper. Term papers will be posted on Blackboard for other students to consult.

Each student will provide a brief presentation assessing the public relations process and capabilities of a company, non-profit, etc.

Guidelines for Communications

Email:

- Always include a subject line.
- Remember without facial expressions some comments may be taken the wrong way. Be careful in wording your emails. Use of emoticons might be helpful in some cases.
- Use standard fonts.
- Do not send large attachments without permission.
- Special formatting such as centering, audio messages, tables, html, etc. should be

- avoided unless necessary to complete an assignment or other communication.
- Respect the privacy of other class members

Discussion Groups:

- Review the discussion threads thoroughly before entering the discussion. Be a lurker then a discussant.
- Try to maintain threads by using the "Reply" button rather starting a new topic.
- Do not make insulting or inflammatory statements to other members of the discussion group. Be respectful of other's ideas.
- Be patient and read the comments of other group members thoroughly before entering your remarks.
- Be cooperative with group leaders in completing assigned tasks.
- Be positive and constructive in group discussions.
- Respond in a thoughtful and timely manner.

Chat

- Introduce yourself to the other learners in the chat session.
- Be polite. Choose your words carefully. Do not use derogatory statements.
- Be concise in responding to others in the chat session.
- Be prepared to open the chat session at the scheduled time.
- Be constructive in your comments and suggestion