

Midwestern State University  
Mass Communication

Public Relations Principles – MCOM 4683  
Fall 2023 D101, MWF 1 – 1:50 p.m.

**Instructor: Chaz Lilly**

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**Office Hours:**  
MW 11AM-1PM  
TR 2PM-4PM

**Course Description & Objectives**

The course provides a broad understanding of the nature of public relations, its development and practice, and its impact on society. We will also discuss current issues and trends. Students are expected to apply key concepts to public relations planning and management by working in a group on a PR campaign project. Students will conduct research and analyze information that promotes understanding of PR principles and explore various scenarios to develop their PR skills. By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Define public relations and how it differs from other forms of mass communication.
2. Clearly describe the role of public relations in modern society.
3. Understand PR's strategic management function and its communication activities.
4. Understand and apply legal, social and ethical standards to the PR campaigns..

**Course Requirements & Grading:**

**Required Texts:**

The Evolving World of Public Relations  
Rosemary Martinelli

<https://www.oercommons.org/courses/the-evolving-world-of-public-relations/view>

Contagious: Why Things Catch On  
Jonah Berger  
(Please purchase by midterm)

## **Assignments:**

Midterm assignment :250 Points

PR Writing Portfolio: 250 points

In Class Reading Responses: 250 points (10 at 25 each)

Group Project: 250 points

Total = 1,000 points: 900-1000 = A; 800 – 899 = B; 700 – 799 = C; 650 – 699 = D; Below 650 = F

Late work will not be accepted. Both the midterm and final will be a written film analysis that is done after screening a selected work in class. Notes will be taken during the screening. The films selected for these exams will not be made available prior to the test. Papers are to be turned in at the beginning of class on the date they're due. Any late work will receive a failing grade. Grading will be based on your comprehension and use of theory, methodology, and terminology discussed in class.

**Course Activities:** This class will consist of lectures, in and out of class readings, and writing assignments and a group project.

**Attendance:** Attendance is required at every class. Beyond university approved absences the student will lose a significant deduction from their final semester grade for any absences.

- **THE INSTRUCTOR'S RECORDS REGARDING ABSCENCES ARE THE ONLY ONES THAT COUNT AND IT IS THE STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK IN IF LATE.**

**Course Conduct:** Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Plagiarism:** Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. **Any writing that is not the work of you or your group members is plagiarism. Students in this course are expected to adhere to the MSU Student Honor Code.**

**VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY WILL RESULT IN THE STUDENT RECEIVING A FAILING GRADE FOR THIS COURSE. LAST SEMESTER, ONE STUDENT RECEIVED SUCH A GRADE.**

**AI Use in classroom:** Please see the TTU system statement:

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/tlpdc/AISyllabusStatementsClassroomGuidelines.pdf>

AI use is encouraged in some scenarios, and we will discuss possible ways we can use new technology. However, if you use chatbots to write your assignments, I will consider such action a violation of ethical

student conduct – I will act in accordance with disciplinary measures afforded to those who cheat, lie and plagiarize.

**Withheld Grades/Semester Grades Policy:** Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Senior Portfolio Requirement:** Please note that all mass communication majors are required to submit a portfolio as part of their Internship course (Internship is a prerequisite to Senior Production). This requirement is a part of MSU's reaccreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and is non-negotiable. Through the portfolio, students are required to demonstrate communication competence through the written word and visual communication; two examples of each competency are required.

As you go through this and other classes, you are responsible for saving course work that could be included in your senior portfolio.

Please see me, your adviser, the department chair or any mass communication faculty member for handouts with more information ("Mass Communication Portfolio Competencies" and "Mass Communication Portfolio FAQ"). These handouts are also available on our department web page: <http://finearts.mwsu.edu/masscomm/>.

**Privacy:** Federal Privacy Law prohibits me from releasing information about students to certain parties outside the university. Thus, in almost all cases I will only discuss your grades and other academic matters with you. Do not have your parents call me! You're college students and will be treated as such. Also, I will only correspond with you via email if your name is in the email address.

**Disability Support:** Please inform me if you are a student with a disability and need accommodation in this class. Students with a disability must be registered with Disability Support Services before classroom accommodation can be provided. MSU provides students with documented disabilities academic accommodation (Disability Support Services, Clark Student Center, Room 168).c

**Campus Carry:** Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at [Campus Carry Rules/Policies](#).

**Final Caveat:** The professor reserves the right to change any part of this syllabus for any reason. Sufficient notice will be given to students if changes to the syllabus are deemed necessary.

All lectures are on Monday, all reading responses are on Friday. Wednesdays will be reserved for workshop and discussion.

Calendar below...

<b>Week 1</b> 08/28	Course Introduction: Syllabus Review, Introductions Lecture Chapter 1: History, Impact and the Big Picture Career Assignment, come to class prepared to discuss Reading response Chapter 1 (1/10)
<b>Week 2</b> 09/4	NO CLASS 9/4 Lecture Chapter 2: Digital Culture and Social Media's Impact on PR Social Media PR Nightmares: A Quick Case Study Reading response 2/10
<b>Week 3</b> 09/11	Lecture Chapter 3: Public Relations Basics Reading Response 3/10
<b>Week 4</b> 09/18	Chapter 4: Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) and Public Relations Reading Response 4/10 Midterm writing assignment given
<b>Week 5</b> 09/25	Lecture Chapter 5: Why writing matters Writing exercises Reading response 5/10 <b>Virtual Friday</b>
<b>Week 6</b> 10/2	Lecture Chapter 6: The Role of Writing in PR Writing exercises <b>Virtual Friday</b>
<b>Week 7</b> 10/9	Lecture Chapter 7: PR Writing Basics Writing exercises
<b>Week 8</b> 10/16	Midterm peer-edit and workshop, in class
<b>Week 9</b> 10/23	Lecture Chapter 8: Ethical and Legal Considerations Reading response 6/10
<b>Week 10</b> 10/30	Lecture Chapter 9: Tools and Tactics for the PR Toolbox Reading response 7/10 Project assignment discussion
<b>Week 11</b> 11/6	Lecture Chapter 10: Establishing a Professional Portfolio Reading response 8/10 Group Workday: Final Proposal for Project
<b>Week 12</b> 11/13	Viral Media Week One (Begin reading Berger) Group Meetings, Reading response 9/10

<b>Week 13</b> 11/20	Thanksgiving break
<b>Week 14</b> 11/27	Viral Media Week Two (Continue reading Berger) Group Meetings Reading response 10/10
<b>Week 15</b> 12/4	Final Revisions to Writing Packet Group Meetings
<b>Week 16</b> 12/11	Final presentations - TBD