

Fall '99

Louis Torraca

COM 375: Public Relations Tuesday and Thursday, 0930-105

TEXT: Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics, 5th edition, by Wilcox, Ault and Agee. (You will also need access to The Associated Press Stylebook)

INSTRUCTOR: Louis A. Torraca, APR, 254-3286 Phone and Fax; Email luitj@hawaii.rr.com

BIO SKETCH: 26-½ years experience as an Air Force public affairs (public relations) officer with assignments as the Director of Public Affairs for three major commands, including the world's largest, the US Pacific Command, headquartered at Camp Smith, Hawaii. Director of the Honolulu Mayor's **Office** of Information and Complaint; Director of Communications, **Office** of the Hawaii Superintendent of Education, Special Assistant to the President, Bishop Museum.

DEGREES: B.S. Communications/Public Relations, Boston University; MA Journalism/Public Relations, Oklahoma University

PR INSTRUCTOR for eight years at **Chaminade** University.

ACCREDITED (APR) member, Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Hawaii Chapter President, 1995; National Delegate, 1996-1998 and active member of the International Association of Business Communicators (**IABC**).

CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS: The Society of Professional Journalists; The Retired **Officers Association**, Program Director for the Computer Users Group; **Hawai'i Society**, Sons of the American Revolution (President, **1997-2000**); **Air Force Association**; American Legion; Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Civilian-Military Advisory **Council**.

LISTED IN: *Who's Who in the West*, *Prominent People of Hawai'i and Outstanding Young Men of America*.

COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES: This is an introductory course designed to provide students with a basic understanding of the **practice** of public **relations**, together with the opportunity to visit a public relations office. Topics covered will range from the history, principles, and theory of **public** relations to the practice of public relations in the **various** fields. Special attention will be given to the public relations process, which serves as a framework throughout the public relations sequence. While not the primary purpose of this course, some skills will be introduced. For the undecided, hopefully this course **will** help you make up your mind as to whether a public relations career is for you.

UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- (1) Define public relations and discuss its history and the role it plays in society.
- (2) Demonstrate an ability to produce the various written products expected in *public* relations.
- (3) Discuss the roles of ethics and professionalism in *public* relations work.
- (4) Apply the four-step *public* relations process in solving public relations problems.
- (5) Explain the concepts of persuasion, audiences and law, as applied to public relations.
- (6) Decide whether you wish to pursue a career in public relations.

YOUR APPROACH TO THE COURSE: Your primary objective in this course should be to learn all you can about public relations; as the title of the book implies, this includes strategies, tactics, as well as, tools. You'll only get out of this course what you put into it. It's an opportunity to excel. Studies show that "C" students think "A" students only study twice as hard and long as they do. In fact, "A" students study three times as much as "C" students!! You should spend at least two hours preparing for every hour in classes. You will need to read assignments before class. Don't be satisfied with completing the minimum requirements. Be intellectually curious. Do some research and reading on your own just for the fun of it. Most PR professionals are news addicts. They read four or five newspapers, watch several TV news shows daily, listen to all-news radio at every opportunity and connect to the Internet for news updates and downloads, several times a day.

CONDUCT OF THE COURSE: The course will consist of lecture, discussion, case studies, projects, skill exercises, videotapes and guest speakers (time-permitting). Perhaps the most important aspect of the class will be the time you spend learning public relations during your visit to a public relations office. Students are expected to read all assignments in the text, thoroughly, before each class and to take notes in class. Content of reading assignments will not necessarily be repeated in lecture; however, all material is subject to being covered in examinations whether covered in lecture or not. If there is something you don't understand, ask questions in class. Discussion, participation, and questions are encouraged and expected in class. If you can't get enthusiastic about the subject in class, you probably won't enjoy a public relations career. There are no cheerleaders in this profession. It can be a tough way to make a living. Public relations is demanding, invigorating, intellectually stimulating and rewarding. As a student contemplating a career, you should be self-driven and striving for excellence.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: Written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, one side of the sheet of paper only. Any assignments not appropriately prepared according to these guidelines will automatically be penalized 10 points. Releases, articles, etc., must be written following the formats provided and the Associated Press Style book. Good writing usually requires several edits, so refine your writing through several drafts. Check spelling. You may use appropriate journalistic editing marks. Above all, meet deadlines! If accepted at all, late papers will be severely penalized. If you can't meet a deadline, I want you to do the exercise anyway whether you receive credit or not. The objective is for you to learn the task at hand and to meet deadlines.

GRADE SCALE: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=below 60.

GRADING WEIGHT:

Public Relations Visit Project	20%
Mid Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Final Paper	20%
Writing Assignments	15%
Quizzes	5%

EXAMINATIONS: A mid-term and a final exam, consisting of 100 multiple choice/true will primarily cover material from the text. However, information presented by lecture, reading, videotapes, guest speakers, projects, skills, etc., may also be covered. Read your text closely and try to understand it. Re-read it before exams. Not all material in the chapters will be covered in lectures. If you miss one of these exams, you will receive a zero (0). There will be no make-up exams, unless you arrange for it before the scheduled exam. These examinations are primarily made up of standardized questions provided by the authors of the text, that have been tested many times throughout the country. Take-home quizzes will also be provided to assist you in understanding the material covered in the chapter. These questions will not necessarily be the same ones covered in the mid-term or final examinations

CURRENT EVENTS QUIZZES: Periodic, unannounced current events quizzes will be given. They will cover top stories (usually page one) in the news media since the last quiz. They will be given at the beginning of class. If you arrive in class while a current events quiz *is in progress*, you may be allowed to take the quiz. If you arrive in class while or *after the quiz papers are being collected*, you will not be allowed to take the quiz and will receive a zero (0). There will be NO make-up current events quizzes.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period indicated. Points earned for assignment turned in after assignments have been collected but before the end of the day will be reduced by 10. Late papers, if accepted, will be reduced by 10 points for each school day late. You may turn-in late assignments at faculty services on the first floor of Henry Hall, to be placed in my mailbox; be sure to have the paper date/time stamped.

PUBLIC RELATIONS VISIT PROJECT: This is a team project. (See the attachment to the syllabus for details.) The objective of the project is to study a public relations operation (office, department, agency/firm, etc.) and prepare a written report of 4-5 double-spaced pages-typewritten of course. The team leader should also be prepared to give an oral report when called upon.

ATTENDANCE: Professional public relations practitioners are always expected to be on the job every day, on time. Regular class attendance is expected. Excessive absences prevent students from attaining course objectives. Excused absences include official university activities, severe (verified) illness or injury, and other unpredicted calamities over which the student has no control.. If possible, notify me by phone or email before missing class. You can also call faculty services, before class, at 735-4739 so they can put a note in my mailbox that I check before class. Office hours by appointment, following class on Tues-Thurs. Appointments can be made for other times, if necessary.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE: The professor reserves the option of changing this schedule by announcing changes in class, usually no later than one class period in advance of the change.

Week-Date

Topic

Chapter

1-Aug 31& Sep 2

What is Public Relations?

1

2-Sep 7&9

Evolution of PR

2

Ethics & Professionalism

3

3-Sep 14&16

Written Tactics

21

The individual in PR

4

4-Sep 21&23

PR Depts. & Firms

5

Research

6

5-Sep 28&30

Program Planning

7

Communication

8

6-Oct 5&7

Evaluation

9

Spoken Tactics

22

7-Oct 12&14

Public Opinion & Persuasion

10

The Audience & How To Reach It

11

8-Oct 19&21
MID-TERM EXAMINATION
Chs 1-11, 21&22

9-Oct 26&28
Public Relations & The Law
12
Corporations
13

10-Nov 2&4
Visual Tactics
23
Politics & Government
14

11-Nov 9&11 (Holiday-Veteran's Day)
International PR
15

12-Nov 16&18
Membership Organizations
16
Social, Cultural & Health Agencies
17

13-Nov 23&25 (Holiday-Thanksgiving)
Education
18

14-Nov 30&Dec 2
Entertainment, Sports & Travel
19
PR & New Technologies
20

15-Dec 7&9
REVIEW

14-Dec 13
FINAL EXAMINATION
1-23



RECOMMENDED PERIODICALS: Public Relations Tactics; Public Relations Strategies;
Communication World; PR Reporter & PR News; Public Relations Quarterly, Public Opinion
Quarterly, and PR Journal.