

TEXT: Public Relations: A Values-Driven Approach. Guth & Marsh (You will also need access to The Associated Press Stylebook)

INSTRUCTOR: Louis A Torraca, APR, 254-3286 Phone; Email luiti@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 Hawai'i**, retired as full Colonel. 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 ten 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 (Vice President for the Computer Users **Group**); Hawaii Society, Sons of the American Revolution (President, 1997-2001); 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-I—, B=80-89, C=70-79, ~~D=60-69~~, F=below 60.

GRADING WEIGHT:

Public Relations Visit Project	15%
Mid Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Final Paper	15%
Writing Assignments	15%
Quizzes, Class Participation	15%

EXAMINATIONS: A mid-term and a final exam, consisting of 100 multiple choice/true-false questions each, 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, and have been tested many times throughout the country. Take-home quizzes will also be provided to assist you in understanding the material covered in each 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 and as indicated **will** be part of the : . 15% included with your quizzes. 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 29& 31

Administrative matters

Introduction to the Course

2-Sep 5&7

What is Public Relations?

Jobs in Public Relations

1 & 2

3-Sep 12&14

A Brief History of Public Relations

3

4-Sep 19&21

The Publics in Public Relations

4

5-Sep 26&28

Communication Theory & Public Opinion

6-Oct 3&5

Ethics in Public Relations

6

7-Oct **10&12**

First Exam

Chapters 1-6

Research & Evaluation

7

8-Oct 17&19

Strategies of Public Relations

8

9-Oct 24&26
Self Study Day
Tactics of Public Relations
9

10-Oct 31 & Nov 2
Writing & Presentation Skills
10
New Communications Technology
11

11-Nov 7&9
Crisis Communications
12

12-Nov 14&16
Self Study Day
Integrated Marketing Communications
13

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13-Nov 21&23 (Holiday-Thanksgiving)  
Cross-Cultural Communication  
14

14-Nov 28&30  
Public Relations and the Law  
15

15-Dec 5&7  
Your Future in Public Relations  
16

REVIEW

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16-Week of Dec 17

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**FINAL EXAMINATION TBA**

1-16  
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RECOMMENDED PERIODICALS: Public Relations Tactics; Public Relations **Strategies**;  
Communication World; PR Reporter & PR News; Public Relations **Quarterly**, Public Opinion  
Quarterly, and PR **Journal**.



### **Attachment 1, Visit Project**

This is a team project. 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. The report should be done in four **parts**. You may wish to split up responsibilities between team members. You are not required to use the questions below. These are **just** for your consideration. After you've made arrangements to visit an organization, then prepare questions appropriate to that organization.

Thoroughly research the organization you choose before your visit!

#### **Part I. Organization. (Consider including the following:)**

a. If a non-agency, how is this organization set up? Where does it fit in the larger organization? (Compose a wiring diagram if necessary.) To whom does the head PR report? Is the head PR involved in decision-making? Does he or she participate in the organizational staff meetings? How many people are on the PR staff, and what title does each have? How long has the office been in operation? What are typical work days like? How do they evaluate effectiveness and success of the PR program, projects and publications?

b. If a PR agency, how long in business? Number of clients? Do they also handle advertising? Do they use freelancers? How do they bill clients? What services do they offer? What sort of research do they do? Who does it? What are typical work days like? How do they get new clients? If part of an ad agency, what are advantages and disadvantages of working in PR for a firm primarily concerned with advertising? How do they evaluate effectiveness and success of their programs, projects and publications?

#### **Part II. Production.**

What sort of products do they produce? (Brochures, quarterly reports, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, news releases etc.) Collect samples and include a critique of them as to quality. Do they "farm out" any work? What publication skills are beginners expected to have? How important is knowledge of how to use the Macintosh and the various desktop and graphic programs?

#### **Part III. Professionalism.**

How many working in the office have degrees? What were the majors? How many belong to PRSA or IABC? How many are accredited? Won any awards? Do they follow any particular written code of ethics? How important is a degree in public relations? How about a master's degree? What would be the best area to get a master's in? How important is it to know finance, accounting and economics? How important is it to know about business? How do they differentiate between public relations and marketing? How important is it to be able to give persuasive presentations? Is there a place for introverted people in public relations? What skills do they consider most important in public relations?



#### Part IV. Opinions.

What are the opinions of those in this PR organization regarding the status of PR in Hawaii? What do they think of the PR job market in Hawaii? How about the future? What do they look for in resumes? How many resumes do they receive per year? Is it important for students to **participate** in PRSSA? What do they look for in interviews? What can an **entry-level** PR **expect** to earn in Hawaii? What trends do they see in Hawaii PR? What do they think about accreditation? What do they think about licensing? Are fly-by-night PR operations a problem in Hawaii? What is the image of public relations in Hawaii? If they were entering PR today, what **field** would they enter? **Where?** **Do you use** interns? Where do you get them from? How would you rate your past interns in general? Do you compensate interns?

Tips:

1. I suggest you choose a leader and let that person keep the effort organized.
2. Once you've been assigned an organization, the leader should call to make an appointment. All members should go, so find out in advance when they'll most likely be available. Try to schedule the meeting for at least an hour. Arrange a tour while you're there (This may require you to be there longer if it is a large agency).
3. Clear with me before you make your final decision.
4. Consider taking a tape recorder along. Make sure the person you'll be interviewing has no problems with being recorded.

**DONT FORGET TO RESEARCH YOUR ORGANIZATION FIRST.BE SURE TO INCLUDE A REVIEW OF ITS ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY REPORTS IF AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY.**