

**College of St. Scholastica
Department of Communication and Theatre Arts**

**CTA 4404 Public Relations
Spring Semester 2007**

Credits: 4

Class Meeting/Location: M, W, F 11:45-12:50 Tower Hall 3410

Instructor: Julie Ahasay (pronounced Ace-ee)

Email: jahasay@css.edu (I check email frequently. This is a very good way to reach me.)

Mailbox: 2301

Office: Tower 3126

Office Phone: 6618

Home Phone: 724.2402 (Please feel free to call me at home. **It's OK. Really.**)

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:30-3:30

Wednesdays, 1-2:30

(Other times may be arranged by appointment).

Text: **Public Relations: From Theory to Practice** by **Tricia L. Hansen-Horn & Bonita Dostal Neff**. Used with permission of Pearson Education/Allyn and Bacon.

Various articles drawn from online journals, popular and trade media and library resources.

Course Description: Theory, history, and practice of public relations; the process of influencing public opinion, ethics of public relations practice. Writing the news release, the fact sheet, the newsletter, company periodicals, brochures, annual reports, and corporate advertising. Public relations case studies; application of public relations techniques to representative problems; communications materials for various media are planned and prepared. Students will develop and present a full public relations campaign for a selected organization.

Course Content: You will explore what it means to be a public relations professional. You will study the role of research in PR; how to identify and communicate with publics; how public opinion forms and can be shaped; and the role of the media. You will examine PR case studies to discover how professionals have managed situations and dealt with ethical issues.

Writing assignments will focus on development of a complete set of skills varying from writing press releases to speeches. Working in a team, you will develop and present a complete public relations campaign including the conception and planning of an appropriate special event.

Public relations professionals representing corporations, education, government and nonprofit organizations will bring their expertise into your classroom, giving you an opportunity to hear first-hand their experiences in the profession.

Course Objectives:

In this course, you will learn to:

1. Apply course material to improve critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making in public relations.
2. Develop varied styles of writing to address the needs and concerns of a wide range of audiences and constituencies.
3. Further develop your oral presentation abilities.
4. Consider the ethical challenges in the public relations field.

Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on the quality of written work, the ability to orally communicate concepts and strategy, and test and quiz scores. **You will be expected to be prepared to discuss your reading and writing assignments in class in a thoughtful, thorough manner.**

Coursework will be weighed as follows:

Assignments 30% Average of writing assignments, in-class work, and other small projects/discussions.

Research 20% You will investigate a public relations case study or theory and present your findings in writing and in a brief in-class oral presentation.

Tests 20%

Final Project 30% You will work with a partner (or 2) to develop a fully integrated PR campaign for a self-selected client.

Grades will be assigned in the following manner. **Remember that they represent an evaluation, not a reward.**

- **A**—Outstanding work, significant mastery of the material, combined with some originality.
- **B**—A solid command of the material with a few gaps or mistakes in a basically sound discussion.
- **C**—Some knowledge of the material; some mistakes and confusion are acceptable if mixed with understanding. Not a reward for attendance or effort.
- **D**—An incomplete and minimal knowledge of the material with substantial confusion and errors.
- **F**—A failure to present the material in a reasonably accurate and comprehensible manner.
- **I**—There are no “incompletes” given in this course except in cases of bona fide and documented instances in accordance with College policies.

Grading Scale

100 - 94 = A	76 - 74 = C
93 - 90 = A-	73 - 70 = C-
89 - 87 = B+	69 - 67 = D+
86 - 84 = B	66 - 64 = D
83 - 80 = B-	63 - 60 = D-
79 - 77 = C+	59 = F

Academic Honesty

This course follows the College of St. Scholastica Policy on Academic Honesty as follows:

“Academic honesty directly concerns ethical behaviors which affect both the academic environment and the civic community. Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty, including falsification of data, will result, at a minimum, failure of the assignment or test, and the maximum penalty shall be failure of the course. In addition, a department may deny admission to or dismiss from a program a student who has engaged in academic dishonesty, and the Dean of Faculty or the Dean of Students may exclude such a student from extracurricular activities or expel him or her from the College, even on the first instance of academic dishonesty.”

Incomplete (I) Grades

An incomplete grade will only be given in extreme cases. Students must make such a request to me before the last week of class. Both the student and I must agree upon a date for completion of the course requirements at the time of the request.

Students With Disabilities Statement

Students with disabilities, physical or learning, are entitled to appropriate accommodations. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the Access Center far enough in advance to allow a reasonable amount of time to approve of and provide the accommodation. Contact Heather Angelle, Coordinator for Students with Disabilities. Her office is in Tower Hall 2144, extension 6645.

And finally, some thoughts on **Classroom Civility**

This classroom is a place where important business is conducted; therefore there are certain basic standards of classroom civility that should be adhered to, particularly in a communication course. Civility does not eliminate appropriate humor, enjoyment or other features of a comfortable and pleasant classroom community. Classroom civility does, however, include the following:

1. Displaying respect for all members of the classroom community, both your instructor and your fellow students.
2. Attentiveness to and participation in discussions, group activities and other classroom presentations and exercises.
3. Being an attentive and supportive audience member for fellow students as they speak in class and make formal presentations.
4. Avoidance of unnecessary disruptions during class such as private conversations and doing work for other classes.
5. Turning off pagers and cell phones.

6. Avoidance of racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom community.

These features of classroom civility are by no means a comprehensive list. Rather, they represent the minimal sort of behaviors that help to make the classroom a pleasant place for all concerned.