



Boston University Study Abroad

BOSTON UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON PROGRAMS
1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20036

COM CM 305 – Public Relations Inside the Beltway **Fall 2013**

Instructor: Xxxx X. Xxxxxxxx
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Office Hours: By appointment, or before class (5:30-7:00 p.m.)

The course meets Wednesday evenings from 7:00 - 9:30/10:00 p.m.

NATURE OF THE COURSE & ITS OBJECTIVES

Description: Public Relations Inside the Beltway is a course specially designed for BU's Washington, D.C. program. The course will provide students with an overview of professional principles and practice for public relations in the Washington area with a special emphasis on governmental public relations. The course includes an examination of the history, organization and scope of the public relations field throughout the nation and in D.C. Theories, strategies, and tactics of current public relations practice will be emphasized as will opportunities and requirements for work in the field.

Objectives and Purpose of the Course: The primary purpose of this course is to familiarize students with basic concepts and principles of public relations within the context of Washington, D.C. At the end of the course students should have attained knowledge and understanding of the following concepts:

- The role and functions of public relations within the Washington, D.C. market.
- The historical evolution of public relations throughout the nation and in Washington, D.C.
- The basic process of public relations activities – research, strategic planning, communication and evaluation – and the use of communications strategies to achieve organizational goals.
- Career opportunities in the field.

- The relationships between public relations and other fields – journalism, marketing, advertising, etc. – in and around Washington, D.C.
- Professional/ethical/legal responsibilities.
- Concepts of public relations, audiences analyses and persuasion.
- The important role played by public relations in organizational decision-making.
- An idea about a variety of case-study examples that explain the basic concepts and theory behind modern public relations practice in and around Washington, D.C.
- Practical guidelines for utilizing written, spoken and visual techniques to reach selected target audiences.

The course also will include several guest speakers, and at least one local field trip.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Regular attendance is required as is diligent preparation for class sessions. Students will be expected to attend all class sessions (unless you have cleared it first with the instructor), participate in class discussions, complete all readings, and submit assignments on time.

Final grades will be assessed as follows:

Research Paper I (20%)	Mid-term Exam (25%)
Research Paper II (25%)	Final Project (30%)

REQUIRED COURSE READINGS

- Bowen, Shannon A.; Rawlins, Brad & Martin, Thomas, *An Overview of the Public Relations Function* (Business Expert Press, 2010).
- Caywood, Clarke L. (Ed.), *The Handbook of Strategic Public Relations & Integrated Communications* (2nd Ed., McGraw-Hill, 2012).
- Lee, Mordecai (Ed.), *Government Public Relations: A Reader* (Taylor & Francis Group, CRC Press, 2008).
- Additional readings as listed in the syllabus.

COURSE TOPICAL OUTLINE

I. Week One

Introduction and overview of the public relations function (Bowen, Rawlins & Martin, Chapters 1-4). – James E. Grunig & Miia Jaantinen (1999).
Strategic, Symmetrical Public Relations in Government: From Pluralism to

Societal Corporatism. *Journal of Communication Management*, 3(3), 218-234.

II. Week Two

How public relations works with various organizations (Bowen, Rawlins & Martin, Chapters 5-9)
How Public Relations Works With Government (Larsson, Larsåke (2012). From Yearly to Daily Press Meetings: The Development of Government Press Relations. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 1(3), 257-283. Spiro Kiouisis, Alexander Laskin & Ji Young Kim (2011). Congressional Agenda-Building: Examining the Influence of Congressional Communications from the Speaker of the House. *Public Relations Journal*, 5(1), 1-14. – Scott M. Cutlip (1976). Public Relations in the Government. *Public Relations Review*, 2(2), 5-28.

III. Week Three

Best practices in public relations (Bowen, Rawlins & Martin, Chapters 10-12) History of governmental public relations (Mordecai Lee (2012). The President's Listening Post: Nixon's Failed Experiment in Government Public Relations. *Public Relations Review*, 38(1), 22-31. Canel, Maria José & Echart, Nazareth (2011). The Role and Functions of Government Public Relations. Lessons from Public Perceptions of Government. *Central European Journal of Communication*, 4(1), 109-123. Also, Caywood, Chapter 5)

IV. Week Four

Public relations in governmental decision making. (Spiro Kiouisis & Jesper Strömbäck (2010). The White House and Public Relations: Examining the Linkages between Presidential Communications and Public Opinion. *Public Relations Review*, 36(1), 7-14. Also, Brooke Fisher Liu & J. Suzanne Horsley (2007). The Government Communication Decision Wheel: Toward a Public Relations Model for the Public Sector. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 19(4), 277-393.

V. Week Five

Public relations and presidential campaigns. – Carol Anne McKeown & Kenneth D. Plowman (1999). Reaching Publics on the Web During the 1996 Presidential Campaign. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 11(4), 321-347. – Abbey Levenshus (2010). Online Relationship Management in a Presidential Campaign: A Case Study of the Obama Campaign's Management of Its Internet-Integrated Grassroots Effort. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 22(3), 313-335.

VI. Week Six

Public relations law and ethics (Caywood, Chapters 4 & 6)

VII. Week Seven

The relationship between government and the public (Hyehyun Hong, Hyojung Park, Youngah Lee & Jongmin Park (2012). Public Segmentation and Government-Public Relationship Building: A Cluster Analysis in the United States and 19 European Countries. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 24(1), 37-68). Hyehyun Hong, Hyojung Park, Youngah Lee & Jongmin Park (2012). Public Segmentation and Government-Public Relationship Building: A Cluster Analysis in the United States and 19 European Countries. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 24(1), 37-68).

VIII. Week Eight

Mid-Term Exam plus Employee Communications (Caywood, Chapter 8)

IX. Week Nine

The relationship between government and corporate audiences (Sora How Corporate and Government Organizations Responded to the 2009 Flu Pandemic. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 24(1), 69-85). – Brooke Fisher Liu, J. Suzanne Horsley & Abbey Blake Levenshus (2010). Government and Corporate Communication Practices: Do the Differences Matter? *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 38(2), 189-213. – John A. Ledingham (2001). Government-Community Relationships: Extending the Relational Theory of Public Relations. *Public Relations Review*, 27(3), 285-295.

X. Week Ten

Media relations, crisis public relations and issues management (Caywood, Chapters 17, 26 & 21). Trent Seltzer & Weiwu Zhang (2011). Toward a Model of Political Organization-Public Relationships: Antecedent and Cultivation Strategy Influence on Citizens' Relationships with Political Parties. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 23(1), 24-45. – Kaye D. Trammell (2006). Blog Offensive: An Exploratory Analysis of Attacks Published on Campaign Blog Posts From a Political Public Relations Perspective. *Public Relations Review*, 32(4), 402-406.

XI. Week Eleven

How all of this applies to the Washington experience. (Karen Sanders, Maria José Canel Crespo & Christina Holtz-Bacha (2011). Communicating Governments: A Three-Country Comparison of How Governments Communicate with Citizens. *International Journal of Press/Politics*, 16(4), 523-547. Jesper Strömbäck, Michael A. Mitrook & Spiro Kioussis (2010). Bridging Two Schools of Thought: Applications of Public Relations Theory to Political Marketing. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 9(1), 73-92. – J. Suzanne Horsley, Brooke Fisher Liu & Abbey Blake Levenshus (2010). Comparisons of U.S. Government Communication Practices: Expanding the Government Communication Decision Wheel. *Communication Theory*, 20(3), 269-295.

- XII. Week Twelve**
Working with public relations firms in Washington (Caywood, Chapter 20)
- XIII. Week Thirteen**
Student project presentations
- XIV. Week Fourteen**
Student project presentations
- XV. Week Fifteen**
Wrap-up and final class period on Capitol Hill

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students may miss two classes with no penalty. Every class missed thereafter will impact a student's participation grade. With that noted, students are strongly encouraged to attend every class and to "save" any absences should they be "needed" due to illness, etc., later in the semester.

COMPUTER & LIBRARY USE

The Instructor will communicate with the class via email and Blackboard. The DC Program also provides you with access to the DC University Library Consortium, thus library take-home privileges will be made available to you in addition to the usual BU online library access. The BU Center at 1776 will also be available to you for eight hours every Saturday in case you'd like to take advantage of computers and library access here.

PLAGIARISM POLICY/USE OF RECORDING DEVICES

Plagiarism is the act of representing someone else's creative and/or academic work as your own, in full or in part. It can be an act of commission, in which one intentionally appropriates the words, pictures or ideas of another, or it can be an act of omission, in which one fails to acknowledge/document/give credit to the course, creator and/or the copyright owner of those works, pictures or ideas. Any fabrication of materials, quotes or sources, other than that created in a work of fiction, is also plagiarism. Plagiarism is the most serious academic offense that you can commit and can result in probation, suspension or expulsion.

Please note that classroom proceedings for this course might be recorded for purposes including, but not limited to, student illness, religious holidays, disability accommodations, or student course review. Note also that recording devices are prohibited in the classroom except with the instructor's permission.

Be sure to read and comply with Boston University's Universal Academic Conduct code for undergraduates. It is available at: bu.edu/academics.