

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
Department of Teacher Education and Administration



EDAD 5610
School Communications and Public Relations

Summer 2016

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Instructor and Contact Methods

Johnetta Hudson, Ph.D., Associate Professor Emeritus

Preferred contact method:

Messages from the course menu inside Blackboard

Voice and/or Video Communication by appointment through Skype or Google Hangouts.

Course Information

Course Title / Name — EDAD 5610: School Communications and Public Relations

Term / Year — Summer 2016 – June 6 – July 29

Course Catalog Number, Credit Hours — EDAD 5610, 3 hours

Fully Online Course – AOP Program

Technical Pre-requisites and Requirements

Knowledge of personal computer operation is prerequisite to registering for and successfully completing this online course.

It's your responsibility to purchase and install current and compatible versions of these applications. For personally owned computers, the UNT bookstore offers software for both systems with student pricing.

Blackboard LEARN is fully supported for both Windows and Apple computers. At the course login screen, click the "Check Browser" to verify your computer is configured properly before logging in the first time.

Course Description

- This course is a Part of the UNT Ed. Leadership's AOP Program and is completely online, with no face-to-face classroom meetings.
- From the UNT Catalog: *Every administrator in an educational organization has a responsibility to engage in public relations on a daily basis. The primary objective of this course is to examine school-based public relations with the context of life in an information age, practice in schools shared decision making, and sustained demands for school improvement. Students study three critical dimensions of school public relations: informing the public; modifying attitudes and opinions; and integrating the actions and attitudes of an organization with those of its public.*

Course Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to –

1. Describe the public's current perception of American schools
2. Describe the importance of an effective school-community relations plan and distinguish between a centralized plan, a decentralized plan, and a coordinated plan for school-community relations
3. Identify specific ways that school administrators can reach out to parents and the community for engagement with and support for the schools.
4. Describe the roles of educators at the district and campus level related to an effective school-community relations program.
5. Identify the steps in the communication process and to apply those steps given a scenario.
6. Identify barriers to communication and how they might be overcome.
7. Identify in writing each of the member groups of a school's Internal Publics (those inside the organization) and describe at least one specific action that can be taken to effectively communicate with each member group.
8. Identify and describe in writing the member groups of the school's External Publics (those stakeholders spending most of their time outside of the school's walls) and identify at least three ways or opportunities where information is best communicated to them.
9. Describe in detail at least three strategies for enhancing the school's relationship with the news media and their representatives.
10. Compare your school's experiences with the best practices identified in the text related to at least one of the following — Open House events, Parent Teacher Conferences, and Convocations and Celebrations.
11. Describe the skills and behaviors necessary for the campus administrator who can communicate most effectively with a variety of audiences, in writing and when speaking.

12. Demonstrate competencies in written and oral communications along with judgment in determining priorities when presented with multiple tasks needing responses in a simulated in-basket activity (A Tk20 assignment for the course).
13. List both benefits and cautions when communicating electronically and using social media as a means for keeping stakeholders informed.
14. Describe best practices related to leading during a crisis, including:
 - Designing a Crisis Management Plan
 - Implementing the Plan
 - Communicating during a crisis
 - Dealing with the aftermath of a crisis
15. Complete a simulation that creates a Parent and Community Involvement Plan for the school **where the student is employed or a fictional or “real” school** that meets the criteria for effectiveness that is described in the rubric for the assignment. (You may collaborate with others in the class while working on this assignment.)
16. List and describe at least three ways to collect data to evaluate the results of the school-community relations efforts

Instructional Methods

The instructor will provide reading materials for each week from the text and other sources along with an introductory narrative for the topics for each week. Students also will be provided activities related to the topics and have the opportunity to apply the learning gained each week. The instructor will review and respond to responses to the assignments and discussions found for the course in Bb Learn. The instructor expects each student to participate fully in order to integrate the subject matter and gain new or improved skills or knowledge for the learner.

Course Requirements

Reading assignments: Please refer to the each week’s schedule in the course for the assigned readings for each week.

The textbook ***School-Community Relations, Fourth Ed.***, by Douglas Fiore, published by Routledge.

IMPORTANT - When you see page numbers related to material in the textbook that appear in assignments, discussions, or other materials, realize that the 4th edition, paperback version of the Fiore book is the source of those page numbers. Those page numbers will not be accurate when using other editions and versions of the book, though you may likely find the referenced material.

Assignments: There will be assignments for each week that will be described in in each week's folder within the course, located in Blackboard Learn. See the Course Schedule, the weekly overview, the individual assignments for each week, and the Calendar. Two major assignments, the “Principal’s In-Basket” and the “Parent & Community Involvement Plan” will be submitted in the Tk20 System. See more information about the Tk20 System below.

Class Discussions: Each student will be expected to provide substantive responses to the forums in the Discussion area of the course *and* respond to the posting of other students.

Case studies or Application of Learning – Each week may include the opportunity for students to respond to a case study related to the week’s topics *or* an opportunity to apply learning by investigating or reviewing the topics with their campus or district administrator.

Final exam: There will be a final exam in this course that will provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate the skills and knowledge gained in the course. **The Exam will be available to students on Monday of Week 8 at 9:00 am. The Exam is due on Thursday of Week 8 at 11:30 pm.** Each student must complete the Exam independently. There should be no collaboration with other students in the course. Students may use any resources they need to in order to develop substantive responses to each task on the exam.

Tk20 System: VERY IMPORTANT - This course includes two assignments that will be uploaded in the College of Education’s Tk20 System. Each student *must* purchase a Tk20 Account for the M. Ed. program, including the AOP Program. For those new to the Program, you may find out information about the Tk20 System and purchase an account by going to the website, www.coe.unt.edu/tk20 or contacting the UNT administrator for the program at alyssa.floyd@unt.edu or at 940-369-5157.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSISTANCE

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparation for the technological aspect of the course.

Hardware and software necessary to use Blackboard Learn
<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/bblearn/>

Computer and Internet Literacy
http://clt.odu.edu/oso/index.php?src=pe_comp_lit

Internet Access with compatible web browser

[System and browser requirements](#)

[Computer and Internet Literacy](#)

[Plug-ins and download instructions for accessing course materials and resources](#)

ACCESSING THE COURSE

Access and Log in Information

This course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing the University of North Texas’ Learning

Management System, Blackboard Learn. To get started with the course, please go to:

<https://learn.unt.edu>

You will need your EUID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your EUID or have forgotten your password, please go to: <http://ams.unt.edu>.

Student Technical Support

Review the Blackboard Learn Student Orientation

Students should review the orientation to learn how to navigate the course and use tools. Locate the [Blackboard Learn Student Orientation](#) at the bottom of the list of registered courses after logging in.

How Students Should Proceed Each Week for Class Activities

Read the Start Here section from the course menu, then continue on to Week 1. All assignments, resources, and links to other areas and sites are contained within each week's folder, each of which are linked from the course menu. Students should access Blackboard **daily** for announcements and assignments required for the course.

Please make a note of this information NOW. If you can't log in, contact the UNT Student Helpdesk.

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

Site: [UIT Helpdesk](#)

[Report an Issue](#)

Support Hours

<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/hours.htm>

Monday-Thursday	8am-midnight
Friday	8am-8pm
Saturday	9am-5pm
Sunday	noon-midnight

Technical Emergencies and Advice for Taking Online Exams

- Be mindful of the regular weekly maintenance schedule (11pm Saturdays to 2am Sundays) when planning to begin your exams.
- Avoid using a wireless connection for exams unless you're certain of its reliability.
- Take exams using a supported web browser on a desktop or laptop rather than using an iPad. If using an iPad, we recommend the Chrome browser.
- Contact the [UIT Helpdesk](#) for assistance should you encounter technical problems affecting your ability to access or complete a test.
- Log back in immediately and continue. Save your answers often, every few minutes. If you experience any issues while taking the exam, you must contact the Students Helpdesk immediately so your issue is documented with a helpdesk ticket number.
- If the UIT Helpdesk cannot resolve the problem, it will document the problem and provide you with a ticket number that you can provide to your instructor as verification.
- When staff is unavailable, [report an Issue](#) online.

Student Support Services

Links to all of these services can be found on the [Academic Support tab](#) at the top of your course [site](#).

- Learn how to [forward your EagleConnect](#) mail to a personal email address.
- UNT Computing and Information Technology Center:
<http://citc.unt.edu/services-solutions/students>
- Change or update your AMS password (used to log into online courses)
<https://ams.unt.edu/>
- UNT Portal
<http://my.unt.edu>
- UNT Library Information for Off-Campus Users:
<http://www.library.unt.edu/services/for-special-audiences/offcampus/information-for-off-campus-users>
- UNT Computing and Information Technology Center:
<http://citc.unt.edu/services-solutions/students>
- On-campus computer Labs and hours:
<http://www.gacl.unt.edu/>

COMMUNICATIONS

Information about the communication tools in the course and how they will be used:

- For all course-related questions, please read this syllabus carefully before seeking assistance.
- For assignment clarification questions, see the *Ask Questions Here* forum in Discussions from the course menu.
- Use the *Messages* feature from the course menu in Blackboard for all private electronic communications with your professor. If for some reason you are unable to use Bb Learn *Messages*, contact your instructor via email.

Students can expect a response from the instructor within 24-hours of sending a message. If your concern is urgent, please call by phone or leave a message.

Announcements

Please check the course Announcements each time you enter the course for updated information and changes.

Collaborative Discussions

See Discussions from the course menu to check the appropriate weekly forum for assigned postings, to review the postings of classmates, and to make postings of your own.

Please extend the receiver of your message the same courtesy you would expect when communicating. Please read and consider the content of the message before responding. Profanity and insults will not be tolerated.

ASSESSMENT and GRADING

Assessments

This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course.

- Responses to prompts in the Discussion forums
- Responses to assignments
- Responses to “Application” exercises
- Two major assignments (to be posted in Tk20)
- Online final exam

Grading Procedure

Grades will be determined by the following weights:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Max. Points available</u>
Discussions	27
Responses to Assignments	30
Responses to Applications	29
Two Major Assignments	30
(15 points each and to be posted in the Tk20 System)	
“Principal’s In-basket Activity” – due in Week 5,	
And “Parent and Community Involvement Plan” –	
due in Week 7	
Final Exam	15
TOTAL	131

Final grades are determined as follows:

<u>Points earned</u>	<u>Grade</u>
118-131	A
105-117	B
91-104	C
Below 91	F

Accessing Grades

Grades will be accessible to students shortly after the point-earning tasks are reviewed and graded.

Assignment Submission Instructions

Assignments required to be submitted online must be in Word format and submitted by the deadline noted in each assignment found in the Assignments link of the course menu. Please create your response as a Word document and attach in the appropriate Assignment before submitting.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course officially begins on Monday of Week 1 and concludes on Friday of Week 8. There are eight weeks in the course. You will find the items for each week (readings, assignments, discussions, etc.) in the course menu on the left side of the course page in Bb Learn. Due dates for assignments are normally on Sunday. For example, assignments for Week 1 are due on the Sunday of Week 1. Discussion responses are due on Thursday and Sunday of each week.

Listed below are the areas of focus for each week. The items under Week One will appear in each of the weeks in Bb Learn.

Week One

“Orientation to Course and Engaging the School Community”

Weekly Overview provided by Instructor

Welcome, Building Community, Course Overview, Syllabus, Framework for Texas Principal Competencies, Texas Educator Code of Ethics

Readings will be listed for Each Week

Outside Reading – Most Recent KDP article on the public perception of schools

Review Bb for Assignments, Discussion, and Application of Learning for this week.

Week Two

“Everyone Can Be an Effective School Communicator”

Week Three

“Working Effectively with Internal and External Publics”

Week Four

“Working with Media Organizations and Special Events”

Week Five

“Effective Written and Oral Communications”

Assignments for this week will include the first major assignment for the course – **“Principal’s In-Basket Activity”** – to be uploaded in the Tk20 System

Week Six

“Communicating Electronically in the Era of Social Media”

Week Seven

“The School-Community Relations Plan and Effective Communications in Crisis Situations”

Assignments for this week will include the second major course assignment - **“Parent and Community Involvement Plan”** – to be uploaded in the Tk20 System

Week Eight

“Putting It All Together”

Assignments – The assignments for this week will include the completion of the Final Exam for the course.

COURSE EVALUATION

Toward the end of the semester, students will be notified about completing a course evaluation instrument through the AISystem. The notice will provide the necessary information and link.

SCHOLARLY EXPECTATIONS

All works submitted for credit must be original works created by the scholar uniquely for the class. It is considered inappropriate and unethical, particularly at the graduate level, to make duplicate submissions of a single work for credit in multiple classes, unless specifically requested or approved by the instructor.

COURSE POLICIES

Assignment Policy

Due dates for each assignment are posted in the instructions connected to each assignment. Assignments should be submitted in Word format and submitted by using the “Submit” button at the end of each assignment.

Examination Policy

The Final Exams is open-book and open-note; however, you may not discuss the exam with another student unless both have completed and submitted their answers. Missed quizzes or exams may not be taken at a later date without written documentation that justifies the error.

Late Work

Late work will be accepted up to one week after the due date, but a penalty of points deducted will be assessed up to ½ of the value of the assignment. Please contact the instructor when late submissions are anticipated.

Class Participation

Students are required to login regularly to the online class site. The instructor will use the tracking feature in Blackboard to monitor student activity. Students are also required to participate in all class activities such as discussion board, chat or conference sessions and group projects.

Virtual Classroom Citizenship

The same guidelines that apply to traditional classes should be observed in the virtual classroom environment. Please use proper netiquette when interacting with class members and the professor.

Incompletes

If a student wishes to request a grade of “incomplete,” the student must:

- Submit the request in writing as soon as possible during the semester.
- Submit the request to the instructor at the instructor’s address above.
- Discuss the request with the instructor immediately by phone or email.

No requests will be considered later than one week prior to the final exam, UNLESS A SERIOUS INTERRUPTIVE EVENT OCCURS WITHIN THAT TIME PERIOD. It is within the instructor’s sole discretion to grant such a request. Please see the “Grading System” section of the current UNT Undergraduate or Graduate Catalog for details. STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE AN “INCOMPLETE” MUST COMPLETE THE COURSE NOT LATER THAN ONE CALENDAR YEAR THEREAFTER TO AVOID AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVING A FAILING GRADE.

Policy on Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties**Copyright Notice**

Some or all of the materials on this course may be protected by copyright. You may use the materials during the duration of the course and for assignment purposes only. When the course ends, you are required to remove all copyrighted materials from your possession. See the [UNT Copyright Resources](#) for details.

Cheating and Plagiarism Policy

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline provides penalties for misconduct by students, including academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes cheating and plagiarism. The term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to, (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; and (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university. The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use of the published or unpublished work of another person, by paraphrase or direct quotation, without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of

materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. **If a student engages in academic dishonesty related to this class, the student will receive a failing grade on the test or assignment and a failing grade in the course.** In addition, the case will be referred to the Dean of Students for appropriate disciplinary action.

Ethical Behavior and Code of Ethics

The Teacher Education & Administration Department expects that its students will abide by the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (Chapter 247 of the Texas Administrative Code) and as outlined in Domain IV: Fulfilling Professional Roles and Responsibilities of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TEXES); and as also addressed in codes of ethics adopted by professionals in the education field such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

Syllabus Change Policy

Changes to the syllabus may be necessary at times. Communication of any changes will be made via the Announcement tab and Email in Blackboard.

Policy on Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

UNT POLICIES

Undergraduate Online Course Attendance Policy

Students who login and participate throughout each week typically experience greater success than those students who do not. Students must be present and fully engaged in each mandatory exercise to receive credit.

Information about the University of Texas' Attendance Policy may be found at:

<http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-2-5>

Administrative Withdrawal

Students may add this course or withdraw in accordance with the University's policy currently in effect.

ADA Policy

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be

provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. Please note that disability accommodations are not retroactive. Accommodations will be made only after a disability is officially verified.

Information on the services provided by the ODA as well as application procedures is available at <http://www.unt.edu/oda/index.html>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323. Information on UNT's policies related to disability accommodations is available at <http://policy.unt.edu/policy/18-1-14>.

Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses:

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website at <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov>. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at "Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f) (6) (i) (G)" and can be found buried within this document: <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/get-cfr.cgi?TITLE=8&PART=214&SECTION=2&TYPE=TEXT>

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

The Syllabus may be changed or modified by the instructor as needed.