Journalism 5100, Problems in Public Relations  
Fall 2010  
The Twitter hashtag for this course is #UNTJ5100

Instructor:  
Samra (Sam) Jones Bufkins, MJ, APR  
Lecturer, Strategic Communications  
Samra.Bufkins@unt.edu  
GAB 102 C 940-565-2167  
Cell xxx-xxx-xxxx (phone does not work in my office, text is OK)

Note about communicating with me: If you need a rapid response, text me or email me on my UNT account. I cannot respond to email through Blackboard from my mobile device.

Office Hours:  
30 minutes before & after each class  
Tuesday 12:30-1:30 pm  
or by appointment

COURSE GOALS:  
• Develop student experience in strategic thinking and the analysis of factors that contribute to the decision making process in strategic public relations.  
• Develop student experience in the oral, written, computer and new media skills necessary to success in 21st Century communications.  
• Develop student accountability for all actions relating to the development of strategic communications, planning, issues management and branding.  
• Simulate a real-life organizational atmosphere so students learn how to determine more than one solution for opportunities and problems that exist, and the value of examining incorrect solutions.  
• Improve the student’s ability to think critically and creatively.  
• Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.  
• Work closely with professionals to help achieve each student’s career goals.  
• Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Technical Requirements  
• Blackboard  
  o All assignments will be submitted via Turnitin in Blackboard. There are no exceptions. Anything not submitted via Turnitin will be considered a missed assignment. Turnitin will lock you out at the deadline—don’t be late.
All official class correspondence will be through Blackboard email—please have emails forwarded to your main email account. If it’s an emergency use regular email so I can respond via my mobile device. Count on checking email daily.

- Twitter, and be following me (@samjb), all fellow students, and as many PR professionals as possible.
- Tweetdeck or similar download that facilitates chats and following multiple Twitter feeds.
- Blog—you are required to blog about what you’ve learned from the guest speakers as well as any topics assigned by the instructor.
- LinkedIn—you must have a LinkedIn profile and be connected to the instructor and all classmates. You are expected to look up the LinkedIn profiles of guest speakers BEFORE they come to class.
- You will need to find an actual client with whom to work on your final project. Details will be discussed in class.

Required Texts:
Putting the Public Back in Public Relations
Brian Solis and Dierdre Breakenridge
Upper Saddle River: FT Press, 2009

Study Guide for the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations, Second Edition
Universal Accreditation Board: New York, 2010
Downloadable free at http://online2learn.net/docs/APRPREP/APR_StudyGuide.pdf Print it out and get it spiral bound with a plastic cover.

Students will also be assigned one additional (unique) book related to public relations and social media which they will read and report on in class. Specific texts will be assigned once class enrollment is determined.

Additional REQUIRED reading:
Twitter: You must follow your instructor’s Twitter feed (@samjb), and each of your classmates’ Twitter feeds, which everyone is required to post in Blackboard by the second class meeting. You’ll also want to search #untj5100 regularly for relevant Tweets being shared by the class. One relevant Tweet per week is mandatory, but more than that will contribute to class participation. Anytime you want to Tweet or ReTweet something you think is of interest to the class, use the hashtag #untj5100. Participation in Twitter discussions will be considered as part of your class participation grade, but be mindful that we all appreciate quality over quantity. Feel free to use Twitter for sharing links to articles of interest. Students must also participate in at least one Twitter Chat per semester, and provide screen shots of your Tweets. A schedule of relevant chats is posted in Blackboard.

Supplementary Articles I have the annoying habit of finding articles, websites, blogs, etc. and sharing links to them with my colleagues via Twitter and Facebook. I will do the same for this class, via #untj5100 (as well as the hashtags for my other classes, #untj4460, #untj4470 & #untj3420). Feel free to do the same. Here’s the deal: If I “Tweet” it with the class hashtag, that’s a hint that I’d like you to at least skim over it and be prepared to discuss it in class. (You can print it out and bring it with you if that’s easier.) This is not required, but could enhance your class participation grade. Feel free to share info you find with your classmates and me via this same Twitter hashtag—information sharing goes both ways and we can all learn from each other. If, however, I post an
article in a discussion section of Blackboard, in a content folder or email it directly to you, that’s a pretty clear indication we WILL be discussing it and your classmates and I would appreciate your knowledgeable input. All this last minute Tweeting and emailing is not to harass you, but a response to the fact that information about PR and business is moving at the speed of light, and to succeed in this field you need to have the fast-twitch fibers in your brain engaged at all times.

Optional, recommended texts (books every PR pro should have within reach for easy reference)  
The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law  
Norm. Goldstein, ed.  
New York: Basic Books 2010

The AP Stylebook is also available online for $25 a year, and includes frequent updates and style reminders based on breaking news. It has a useful interactive feature. [http://www.apstylebook.com](http://www.apstylebook.com) You can also follow it on Twitter (@APStylebook).

**Grading System**  
920 points or higher A  
820-819 points B  
720-719 points C  
620-619 points D  
Fewer than 620 points F

**Semester Grading and Due Dates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory photo, resume, LinkedIn profile, blog link and Twitter handle uploaded to Resume/photos folder in Blackboard discussion area</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11:55 pm Monday 9/6</td>
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<td>Weekly blogs and social media—blog about the topic covered by the guest speaker and/or the instructor that week, and don’t be afraid to be provocative (but respectful). At least one class-related Tweet per week to the hashtag, and participation in at least 2 Tweet chats</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11:55 pm each Thursday, beginning 9/2 and ending 12/9. Upload text in Word document via Turnitin, providing the link to that week’s post on the actual document. No post on Thanksgiving. Tweet chat screen shots (hard copy) by Thanksgiving.</td>
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| Case Study Analyses: Analyze 2 PR case studies—one past, one contemporary—Provide a minimum 3 page bullet summary of each and be prepared to present in class. | 20% total, 10% each case study | #1 due Monday 9/20, 11:55 p.m., discuss in class 9/22.  
#2 due Monday 10/18, 11:55 p.m., discuss in class 10/20. |
| 5-7 page summary and critique of “Putting the Public | 10%              | 11:55 pm Monday 9/27, discuss in class 9/29. |
This is not a book report, it is a critical summary and you should be citing other source material and/or your experience in PR to support your positions on this book.

5-7 page summary and critique, with presentation in class, of the book assigned at the beginning of the semester. 10% 11:55 p.m. Monday, 11/15, discuss in class 11/17

Communications Plan Outline—Problem Statement and preliminary SWOT analysis for an actual client of your choice—this will be the basis for your semester project. 10% Monday, 10/18, 11:55 pm. Be prepared to describe and discuss in class on 10/20.

Principles of PR and ethics Test (in class) 10% Wednesday, 11/17

Final Communications Plan—written and oral presentation to class 15% Tuesday 12/7, 11:55 p.m. Present in class Wednesday, 12/15.

Your final grade in this course will be determined by how well you participate in class discussions, (live and online), your test score and how well you do on your assignments in comparison to everyone else in the class—kind of like real life.

All assignments are to be done in Microsoft Word format and then uploaded through the Turnitin drop box for that assignment. ANY ASSIGNMENT NOT SUBMITTED VIA TURNITIN WILL RECEIVE A MAXIMUM OF HALF CREDIT. Bring a hard copy to class. To gain access to this class go online to https://ecampus.unt.edu and enter your EUID that every student has as his/her identification number. If you have any problems, call the Help Desk listed on the site during its working hours. I cannot help you with Blackboard or Turnitin problems.

All official class announcements, online discussions, grade postings, and additional readings will be posted in Blackboard, so familiarize yourself with it tomorrow. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK IT DAILY FOR SCHEDULE UPDATES, ADDITIONAL READINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS. I will not accept assignments via email.

Do not post your assignments under discussions or send them to me via email—You will receive no credit if you do. All assignments are due by the appointed time on their due date. HOWEVER, do not wait until the last minute to post your assignments—both Blackboard and individual computer technologies fail, and I have Turnitin set up to lock you out at the deadline. Don’t let procrastination keep you from earning credit for your hard work. Grades on assignments will be posted in blackboard as quickly as humanly possible.

All written submissions, discussions and emails (with the exception of Tweets) will be in standard English. The AP Stylebook is the grammar, punctuation, spelling and usage guide for this class. All
sources must be cited within the text or in footnotes at the end of the assignment. Sources must be cited in their entirety, whether a website, blog, book, magazine or journal article, or any other scholarly source, including the date of publication. Any omission of these citations will result in a lowered grade and possible investigation for plagiarism. When in doubt, cite. Don't press your luck.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: When you submit work for this class, that is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety. Plagiarism, fabrication, copyright infringement and similar uses of other people’s work are unacceptable. You are expected to conform to the university Student Code of Conduct: www.unt.edu/csrr. Please also read the statement on plagiarism that is posted on the home page for this course.

A note about Wikipedia. I use Wikipedia—I love it, it’s a great tool, but it is not to be relied upon as the sole source for anything, especially in this class. If you use it to get started, great, but check the sources within Wikipedia as well as other sources online and in the library (yes, there’s a big building with books and journals and helpful people in it on campus, you should visit it some time). Assignments written with sole reliance on Wikipedia will not be considered complete and will be graded accordingly.

CLASS ATTENDANCE REQUIRED: Because of the organization of this class, you are required to attend all face-to-face class meetings. We meet once a week, so missing a class means you missed a week of class. I might give you an excused absence upon a written explanation well in advance of the class meeting, or a doctor’s excuse after the fact. I WILL DROP ANY STUDENT WITH TWO UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. The amount of information covered in this class warrants your perfect attendance. Besides, you might learn something.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY: This class is generally a no cell-phone, iPhone, Blackberry PDA, texting, emailing, WiFi or otherwise wireless communications zone. If you are using your laptop to take notes, fine, but if you can’t hold off emailing and texting your friends for a couple of hours at a time, you don’t need to be in this class and I will ask you to leave. We will have guest speakers, and they deserve your undivided attention. Your instructor and the classmates with whom you are learning and sharing information also deserve your undivided attention. If a phone rings in class, I reserve the right to confiscate it until the end of the class and give you a zero for class participation that session. EXCEPTION: if you are on call for your employer and notify me in writing (email works) well in advance of each class for which you are on call. Another exception to the rule would be if, during class discussion we need to research a topic on the spot, then I will authorize it. My phone will be on vibrate in case of any emergencies.

Disability Accommodation: The Mayborn School of Journalism cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodations to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students. If you have not registered with ODA, please do so, and present your written accommodation request to me by the second class meeting.
Class Schedule
Topics are subject to change pending availability of guest speakers. Changes in class topics will not affect the due date of assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>Administrivia, definitions, history, economic &amp; political setting for PR, the environment for PR, what PR is and what it isn’t.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Communications theories &amp; practices, KSAs needed for the practice of PR, business literacy &amp; PRSA Code of Ethics.</td>
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<td>September 15</td>
<td>PR Research and Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>More Research and Planning. Discuss first case studies, PR Ethics in a new age of media</td>
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<td>September 29</td>
<td>Solis book discussion</td>
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<td>October 6</td>
<td>Social Media Integration</td>
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<td>October 13</td>
<td>Media Relations Panel</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>Discuss second case study. Brainstorming and discussion of communications plan requirements. Review exam material.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 27</td>
<td>Issues Management</td>
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<td>November 3</td>
<td>Crisis Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Non-profit and education communications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>Exam and second book review due</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 24</td>
<td>No class—Happy Thanksgiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>Work on communications plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>International Public Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 15</td>
<td>Meet to present communications plan to class</td>
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