Course Name: JOUR 4460 Public Relations Communications
Section Information: Section 001 (Fall 2010)
Class Meetings: Tuesday 9:30 am—12:20 pm, GAB 110
The Twitter hashtag for this course is #untj4460

Prerequisites:
Journalism major status; Journalism 3420; consent of school.

Course Instructor: Samra Jones Bufkins, MJ, APR
Office: GAB 102 C
Office phone: 940-565-2167
Cell phone:
Office hours: Any time my door is open, 30 minutes before & after each class, Tuesday 1:30-2:30 and by appointment.
E-mail: Samra.Bufkins@unt.edu
Twitter: @samjb

Texts
If you have completed Journalism 3420 you should already own these books, which are required for this class:

Additional Required Text
In addition, please download (it’s free) the The APR Study Guide from http://online2learn.net/docs/APRPREP/APR_StudyGuide.pdf
Print it and have it spiral bound with a plastic cover.

Additional required resources:
- UNT class Blackboard
- Selected websites and handouts
- Twitter hashtag #untj4460 (You must also follow @samjb)
- UNT Email

Course Description
Success in Public Relations communication rests on learning to manage ideas as well as possessing technological skills to ensure appropriately placed communications. Students will continue building skills that will increase their mastery of the PR process, blending technological and creative ability that will culminate in a PR campaign. The course places heavy emphasis on writing, along with appropriate writing for selected PR channels. (Prerequisite(s): JOUR major status; JOUR 3420)

Course Objectives
After taking JOUR 4460, each student will be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of individuals and groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
• Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the PR profession.
• Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, targeted audiences and purposes.
• Critically evaluate his/her own work for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style, and grammatical correctness.
• Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the PR profession.

ATTENDANCE, PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION POLICY
You are expected to attend and participate in each class meeting, complete all assignments and online assessments on time and participate in any online and social media activities that are assigned. **I will periodically give quizzes covering the week’s readings and current events—these will occur in the first 10 minutes of class.** Be there. There may also be in-class writing exercises. Don’t be late. I take roll in writing at the beginning of each class.

This class meets once a week, so missing one class means you’ve missed an entire week of class. One excused absence is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me, in writing, from the beginning about an extraordinary problem (like you’re going to be on life support). **One unexcused absence, or two excused absences: 20 points will be taken off your final grade. Two unexcused absences, or three total absences: you will be dropped from the class.** Coming to class late or leaving early constitutes 1/2 of an absence for that day (excused/unexcused, depending on prior communication). **You are late if you arrive after I have taken roll.**

An excused absence is one about which you have communicated with me at least 24 hours in advance of the class time, or for which you can submit third party documentation. **Only “unforeseeable” circumstances (i.e., serious illness, family emergency) substantiated by third-party documentation will be accepted after an absence. Submit documentation within a week after an absence occurs.** Printer malfunctions, flash drive failures, arrests for traffic warrants, difficulties in finding library materials, etc. are not “unforeseeable.” You must document a valid time conflict (i.e., an academic conference or for-credit internship conflict, religious observance) before it occurs. “Not showing up” will constitute an unexcused absence.

Disappearing during class is a form of academic dishonesty. Keep in mind the following: First, the more classes you skip, the less education you receive and the lower grade you will earn; second, **if you miss a class, you still must turn in an assignment on or before its due date;** and third, avoid “passive learning” — sleeping, sitting leisurely at the back, working on assignments for another class, playing on Facebook, text-messaging or having chitchat. I retain my nonnegotiable right to evaluate your in-class performance and ask anyone to leave if they are disruptive or their inattention is disruptive. **ONCE IN THE CLASSROOM SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND PUT THEM AWAY. THIS INCLUDES MUSIC HEADPHONES. DO NOT USE THE COMPUTER DURING CLASS UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.**

Communication:
Communication between students and instructor will often be via email. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK YOUR UNT EMAIL ADDRESS OR FORWARD IT TO YOUR PERSONAL EMAIL.** If you must reach me at night or on a weekend and need a quick response, **DO NOT EMAIL ME THROUGH BLACKBOARD because I cannot respond via mobile device.**

Class Format
This course consists of lecture, discussion and lab exercises. It is writing intensive. I expect you to read the assigned material and be ready to produce quality work. That means you will have read the assigned readings before coming to class and are ready to actively discuss or apply concepts from the readings. I’ll post announcements, activities and Web links on the class Blackboard and frequently will do so on Twitter. Please be sure you check this area often, and be prepared to discuss articles and links in class. You may see elements of these readings again on an exam.

**In this course, you will:**
• Practice applying good writing techniques and visual communications techniques to specific contexts in public relations
• Engage with actual clients in analytical and creative problem solving communications
• Create and present a public relations publicity campaign
• Build on the professional portfolio begun in Jour 3420

As demanded in a professional environment, deadlines are strictly observed. You can expect 12 online exercises, 12 written assignments, 14 blog posts, one exam, several pop quizzes and/or in-class writing assignments and one major publicity campaign done in partnership with a classmate.

Evaluation
Blackboard exercises 120 points
Writing assignments 240 points
Pop quizzes & in-class exercises (# TBD) 100 points
Exam 100 points
Blog 140 points
Publicity campaign 300 points

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

Evaluation Explanation
Blackboard exercises—online GSP quizzes
Grammar, style and AP style, and design principles
You will have 12 assignments, and together they are worth 12% of your grade, so don’t blow them off—they can mean the difference between an “A” and a “B.” These assignments can be found on Blackboard, and will be timed and due by the closing posting time each week. It is your responsibility to keep up with these assessments. I will not send email reminders of these.

Writing assignments—listed in detail below.
You will have 12 writing assignments, and together they represent 240 total points toward your grade. You will be graded as follows according to content/key messages, style and grammar, design and format, and how well you executed the assignment based on my instructions. Keep in mind, however, that well executed assignments riddled with GSP errors and AP Style errors will receive a low grade and I reserve the right to stop grading anything that’s unreadable.

A word about Spell Check. Spell Check is a great tool, and I couldn’t live without it, but IT IS NOT A PROOFREADING PROGRAM. If you’ve misspelled a word in such a way that it simply becomes another, correctly spelled word, it’s wrong, it will affect the meaning of your document, and it will affect your grade. YOU MUST GET INTO THE HABIT OF MANUALLY PROOFREADING YOUR WORK. Print out a copy and read it on paper—the eyes and brain work better together when reading paper.

All assignments must be word-processed in 12-point font, unless the assignment involves graphic design. You will have freedom of choice for font and layout; however, be aware that you will be graded according to the style you choose, and its appropriateness for the project. Please, no cutesy or funny fonts.

There are no re-write privileges in this class. Get it right before you turn it in.

Assignments must be submitted as Word document or .pdf via Turnitin up to 5 minutes before the beginning of the class period (or at the appointed time in the case of blogs) and must also be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class. TURNITIN WILL LOCK YOU OUT IF YOU ARE LATE. Prepare a hard copy with a separate reference list attached—and don’t depend entirely on
Internet research, either. Failing to prepare a hard copy, use Turnitin or attach a reference list will cost you half credit for that assignment. You will not be allowed to use a classroom printer to print out hard copy. No e-mail submission of papers is allowed. Late assignments will drop one letter grade for each day.

All source material will be cited and listed on a separate sheet to be turned in with the assignment. Sources can be cited in the backgrounder. **During this course, save all your work on your computer through the end of the course.** “My flash drive failed” is not an excuse for a late assignment.

Unless instructed otherwise, all assignments must be word-processed in 12-point font. Keep in mind that well-executed assignments riddled with typos, GSP errors and formatting errors will receive a low grade and I reserve the right to stop reading and grading anything that’s unreadable.

You will be held to high professional standards in your writing as follows: I work with my students as if they are junior employees of my public relations agency or department. As such, I hold you to very high professional standards because you are upper-level students with several previous writing classes. This is not a beginning PR writing class, it is an advanced writing class. You should already know how to write if you’re in this class.

1. Content and message appeals: Your writing will be evaluated for organization of thought, strength of message, inclusion of the human element, persuasiveness, originality, and other content issues relevant to each assignment.
2. Grammar, style and format: The Associated Press Stylebook and When Words Collide will be your guides to writing. Your writing will be graded carefully for mechanical content and construction. Some examples of these are:
   - Misspellings, typographical errors or AP style mistakes
   - Improper heading format, use of difficult, unusual, big or dead words, awkward phrases, improper or other punctuation, long paragraphs or sentences, repeated use of the same, lame words, general sloppiness or lack of professionalism.
3. Originality: Your work must reflect your original ideas and existing facts. No form of academic dishonesty is tolerated. No matter how well you have done before, one incident of academic dishonesty will have grave consequences on your college career. A typical example of plagiarism is a feature piece with minor modifications on a single news story you happen to find on the Web. Always research more than enough and use multiple sources to discover your own ideas and story angle. Cite all sources on a separate sheet attached to your assignment. Assignments without the citation sheet will drop one letter grade.

Pop quizzes and in-class writing assignments (10% of your total grade). I will periodically hit you with a quickie quiz about the week’s readings and current events. Be sure you’ve read the assigned chapters before coming to class, and any supplemental readings I send out via email or Twitter. Public Relations practitioners are expected to know what’s going on in the world, especially the business world. Get in the habit of reading the business section of the Dallas Morning News and New York Times and try listening to NPR Morning Edition. Anything in the news is fair game. I may also spring a writing assignment on you with little or no notice, to be done in class on tight deadline. This is to prepare you for those kinds of days in your job in PR. They happen to all of us. Deal with it.

**Blog** Write a short, engaging blog about the concepts you’re learning in this class or something you’ve read about PR/media/communications from other sources. You will make 14 weekly blog posts with the first one due Friday, September 3 and the last one due Friday, December 10 (no blog due Thanksgiving week). WRITE YOUR BLOG IN MICROSOFT WORD, EDIT IT, CHECK SPELLING, PRINT IT OUT AND PROOFREAD IT BEFORE YOU UPLOAD IT ONLINE. Upload it as a Microsoft Word document containing the link to your blog post via Turnitin in the Assignments drop box. Tweet about your update, read your classmates’ blogs and comment on them—there could be extra credit for that (as well as for commenting on my own blogs). **IMPORTANT NOTE: You will receive a graded hard copy of your blog. If you do not go back into your actual blog post and correct any grammar, spelling, punctuation or usage errors brought to your attention, your grade for that blog will drop by 50%.**
You have until the next Friday (when your next blog is due) to make these corrections. This is because your blogs are live and employers are looking at your work online.

**News release** – (two pages max.) Write a news release, as assigned.

**Twitter** – Create a personal Twitter account. Tweet/retweet/respond to at least one #untj4460 Tweet per week. You must also participate in no fewer than two Twitter chats relevant to PR/Journalism during the semester, and provide screen shots of your posts.

**Media list** – Compile a targeted media list in Excel that contains a minimum of 15 print journalists, 5 broadcast journalists, and 5 online sources appropriate to your client’s needs, with all contact information and relevant additional information.

**Telephone pitch** – Write a 30-second telephone pitch, and then pitch it.

**Radio PSA** – Craft a 30-second PSA in the format used.

**Print PSA** – Design a print PSA for newspaper, 1/4 page size, from the radio PSA you’ve created.

**LinkedIn** – Create a personal profile on LinkedIn that casts you as a new PR professional. Connect with other professionals (starting with your instructor).

**Social Media News Release** – As assigned and described using the format discussed in class.

**Newsletter editorial calendar** – Create a 3-month editorial calendar for a 4-page newsletter, as assigned.

**Feature story** (print) – Craft a feature story (not a personality profile), as assigned to you. **This will be submitted in two formats—one for print and one for the Web.** Extra credit available if this is published by an approved publication before Thanksgiving.

**Newsletter** – Design and write a 4-page newsletter from the editorial calendar you created.

**Op-Ed Piece** – Write an Op-Ed piece for your client related to an issue they are dealing with. You can refer to (but not edit from) the backgrounder and/or white paper you wrote in 3420.

**Exam** - This exam will be comprehensive, cover principles covered in class lecture and readings, and may include a writing assignment in class. It is not easy. Take it seriously.

**Publicity Campaign**
During the last half of the semester you will be teamed with another person to create a publicity campaign for an actual client. Each team will “compete” to produce a unique campaign and collateral materials for the same client; therefore, each team should work independently of other teams. This is a fast-track project with very specific requirements based on what might be required in the real world. This is also an opportunity for you to develop material for your portfolio. **Team members will complete a peer evaluation questionnaire that will be considered when grading the final project.**

**This assignment will be worth nearly 1/3 of your grade, graded as follows:**
Communications plan, including research protocols – 100 points (50 points reduced if you submit the draft plan late)
Tactics – 100
Timetables – 20
Budget – 20
Evaluation - 20
Presentation – 20
Overall cohesiveness of program - 20
These are the minimum requirements for the campaign:
Communications plan (100 points):
- Situation analysis
- Objectives
- Strategies
- Target publics & key messages for each
- List of tactics

Tactics (100 points):
- Organization backgrounder
- Print or social media press release
- Email pitch
- Media advisory, describing an event
- Brochure or newsletter (newsletter can be electronic)
- Five additional appropriate tactics of your choice

Timetables (20 points):
- Six-month planning timeline
- 24-hour event timeline and contingency plan

Budget (20 points):
- Itemized, realistic budget with approximate costs (provide verifiable sources)

Evaluation (20 points):
- Criteria that will be used to evaluate the program during implementation and when it is concluded

Presentation (20 points):
- Visuals used
- How the campaign materials are packaged and presented
- Professional quality of campaign materials
- Professional persona
- Presented in allotted time & all team members speak

Overall cohesiveness of the program (20 points)
- Quality of the work and graphic look
- seamlessness of product (or could I tell who did what?)
- Feedback from client (if they attend final presentations)

Teams may choose to incorporate more tactics, which will earn the team an additional 10 points/per tactic up to a maximum of 40 points. Teams that do not produce the required minimum for each component of the campaign will receive 0 points for that component.

Do not try to complete this project without meeting with me in my office at least once during project development. It is a very complex project and teams that do not meet with me one-on-one are less successful than those that do.

Syllabus/Schedule
This class outline is subject to change. I will keep an updated version of the syllabus on the class Blackboard and announce any changes both there, in class and via email. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to keep up with changes in this syllabus and assignments—in other words, check Blackboard daily, Twitter daily and your email accounts daily.

8/31 – Introduction to course; be able to access Blackboard. I've got my press release, now what? (Wilcox, ch. 5 and 10; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 1); student information sheet

9/7 – Recognizing who's on the other side of the pitch (Wilcox, ch. 11 and ch. 6, pgs. 156 – 160; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 2); news release due.

9/14 – The I is not P. (Wilcox, ch. 12 and ch. 9, pgs. 215–222; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 3);
Williams ch. 1–7); media list due. Link to blog emailed to professor

9/21 – Joining the conversation (Wilcox, ch. 12, ch. 7, pgs. 171 – 173; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 4); phone pitch assignment; PSA (radio script) and print PSA due. First blog post.

9/28 – Meet a workhorse (and then some!) (Wilcox, ch. 13; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 5; Williams, pgs. 139–142) LinkedIn due/4460 wiki begins.

10/5 – Write to be published (Wilcox, ch. 7; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 6; Williams, pgs. 123–126); Newsletter ed calendar due; Twitter assignment.

10/12 – Mailing your message (Wilcox, ch. 16; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 7); two feature stories (print and Web) due.

10/19 – Exam 1; Taking the first step and being proactive (Wilcox, ch. 18); 4–page newsletter due.

10/26 – Groups and intro of client publicity campaign; (Kessler, McDonald, ch. 8); draft communications plan due (late submission will reduce final project grade by 50 points)

11/2 – Mail out the message (Wilcox, ch. 16; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 9); 4460 wiki due

11/9 – Organize it! (Wilcox, ch. 17; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 10)

11/16 – Four score and seven years ago, and other presentation tips (Wilcox, ch. 15; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 11); draft brochure/direct mail package due

11/23 – Did we measure up? (Wilcox, ch. 19; Kessler, McDonald, ch. 12)

11/30 – Exam 2

12/7 – Complete campaign materials due at beginning of class

12/14 – Campaign presentations—during final exam time,

**Journalism Requirements and Guidelines**
The Mayborn School of Journalism, in conjunction with the Registrar’s Office, has eliminated the need for individual class codes for the majority of journalism courses. Registration will begin on the dates noted in
the schedule of classes each semester. The system is a live, first come/first serve program: thus, we are unable to maintain the traditional waiting list as has been done previously.

By registering for this course, you are stating that you have taken the required pre-reqs according to your calendar year and major/minor status. If the instructor later determines that you haven’t taken and passed these requirements, then you may be dropped at any point in the semester. If you have questions about your pre-requisites, please see an advisor.

A journalism major enrolled in any restricted 3000 and 4000 level classes must have taken and passed the GSP test, all pre-major courses, and Math 1680 and also have applied for major status. Students must earn and maintain a 2.5 UNT and/or overall GPA (depending upon catalog year) to be eligible for major-level courses. Pre-majors must file a formal application for major status in the final semester of pre-major status to be eligible for early registration of major-level classes in the following semester.

Students will not be allowed to take automatically a failed journalism course more than two times. Once you have failed a journalism course twice, you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for 12 months. Once you have waited 12 months after failing a course twice, you may make an appeal to the professor teaching the course to be allowed to enroll a third time.

Disability Accommodation
The 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 present your written accommodation request to me by the 12th day of class.

Textbook Policy
The Mayborn School of Journalism does not require students to purchase textbooks from the University Bookstore. Many are available through other bookstores or online, and are available for rental.

SETE
The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a university-wide online evaluation and a requirement for all UNT classes. The Mayborn School of Journalism needs your input to improve our teaching and curriculum. This short survey will be available at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Prompt completion of the SETE will mean earlier access to final semester grades. You are a critical part of our growth and success. We look forward to your input through SETE.

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 and ideas are unacceptable. That’s why all assignments in this class are to be submitted via Turnitin.

Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people’s written words as your own. Some people consider the use of 7-10 words in a row, copied from another source, as plagiarism. Be sure to include citations when using other people’s writing, because plagiarism is a serious offense in any discipline, especially in journalism. It’s a firing offense in the professional world.

Any situations involving potential academic dishonesty will be handled through procedures established by the UNT Office of Academic Integrity. The process also includes the opportunity for students to appeal the outcome. Read specific procedures at http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm

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