

Communication Studies (COMS) – 383 L01
Introduction to Public Relations
S 13:00-16:30

Instructor:	Chaseten Remillard
Office Location:	SS339
Office Phone:	403-210-9435
E-Mail:	csremill@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours:	TBA

Course Description

COMS 383 is an introduction to the principles, theories, and practices of public relations. The course covers the development of public relations as a professional field, its role in organizations and society today, and future directions of public relations. Topics include public relations research and planning, strategic messaging, ethics, issues management and social media. Case studies will be examined to illustrate challenges and successes of public relations practice.

Objectives of the Course

The objectives of the course are:

- to introduce and define key concepts and practices of public relations
- to actively engage students in considering public relations and its importance in various professions.
- to encourage critical thinking and discussion by examining public relations cases independently and in-class.

Textbooks

Wilcox, D. & Cameron, G. *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*.

[Newest Edition is recommended, but not required]

Assignments and Evaluation

1) Participation: (5%) – Throughout term

In class we will engage in group discussions, your attendance and your participation in these activities will be evaluated.
Participation WILL also be in the form of participation on an online forum.

2) 2 In Class Quizzes: (10% each (x3); 30% of final grade)
February 2, March 2, April 6

The questions will be based on readings and lecture materials

*** Quizzes CANNOT be rescheduled by students – failure to attend the quiz without a documented and acceptable excuse (as outlined by University regulations) will result in a FORFEIT of the quiz grade.

3) Final Exam: (20%) – Scheduled by Registrar

There will be a registrar's exam for the course. It will cover all material previous tested on the quizzes.

4) Writing Assignment: (20%) – March 9th

Students will be expected to produce a mock Public Relations document related to readings from the course. The writing assignment will require some secondary source research. Students will not be expected to generate their own questions or research agendas for the assignment.

5) Group presentation: (25%) – April 13

Students will be expected to present on an important Public Relations issue. Class presentations will include some sort of visual presentation, and will also require a “recommended reading” list.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Detailed Reading List and Lecture Schedule to be distributed in first class.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: YES

Please note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will make every attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:
<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>