



# ACS 213

## Introduction to Public Relations

Winter Session 2022 \*ONLINE

### COURSE INSTRUCTOR

**Mrs. Stephanie Batson**

Instructor

Department of

Applied Communication Studies

### Virtual Office Hours:

Tuesday/Thursday 9 -10 a.m.

### E-mail:

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### ACCOMMODATIONS

Students needing accommodations because of medical diagnosis or major life impairment will need to register with Accessible Campus Community & Equitable Student Support (ACCESS) and complete an intake process before accommodations will be given. Students who believe they have a diagnosis but do not have documentation should contact ACCESS for assistance and/or appropriate referral. The ACCESS office is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1270. You can also reach the office by e-mail at [myaccess@siue.edu](mailto:myaccess@siue.edu) or by calling 618.650.3726. For more information please visit the ACCESS website at [www.siue.edu/access](http://www.siue.edu/access).

### WRITING CENTER HELP

If you need help with basic writing skills, take advantage of the writing center on campus. Don't delay.

### LEARNING MATERIALS

Learning materials must be consulted prior to the day they are assigned on the course schedule

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This public relations course offers specific introductory information on public relations. The course is offered totally online and students should take this course VERY seriously. **This online course will require you to carefully organize your time and work.** You must take responsibility of YOUR own actions or be prepared for the consequences (often of a failing grade).

### COURSE GOALS

1. To present the history and development of the public relations profession
2. To develop your understanding of key theories that influence and shape the practice of public relations
3. To introduce a variety of techniques and tactics used
4. To develop your writing skills; a critical proficiency in public relations industry

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to introduce you to the practice of public relations. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Describe the history and development of the public relations industry.
2. Demonstrate understanding of theories used in public relations practice.
3. Practice using various public relations techniques and tactics to effectively communicate your message to your target audience
4. Point out issues and trends that shape and continue to shape the practice of public relations in the present and in the future.
5. Weigh the ethical and legal requirements in public relations practice.
6. Relate current media and events to ideas and theories in the text.

### COURSE COMMENTS

Through readings, discussions, exercises and assignments, you will gain a better understanding of current public relations practices. This class is beneficial to both ACS majors and students from other fields of study. As a public relations professional, **it is important to be aware of current events and industry news** and you become familiar with news-style of writing; it gives you effective news hooks for your clients' stories.

### STUDENT CIVILITY

Student civility includes appropriate language and behavior in the classroom (respect for your peers and the professor, and for the diversity of opinions and standpoints). Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and its Department of Applied Communication Studies will not tolerate the disruption of a classroom or discourtesy to or harassment of anyone. In conformity with the University Rules of Student Conduct, violations of student civility and class decorum will have consequences ranging from a failing grade to removal from the class.

1. **Be respectful.** Login and participate in the course. When you need help with something from me, **send an email to me that is respectful with polite greetings and signatures.** Appropriate greetings: "Mrs. Batson," "Good morning, Mrs. Batson." Or "Hello, Mrs. Batson." Inappropriate email greetings: "Hey" or "Hey Stephanie."

## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

In my experience, students can learn a lot more than textbook information from their teachers. I teach how I was taught best: through compassion, an open mind, enthusiasm for the topics, real-world experiences and with integrity. I expect high quality work and effort in assignments and discussions from my students. The students who enter with an open mind and ability to be flexible (in what they have learned in the past) LEARN the most that applies to the real world and their profession. It is also very helpful for students to be able to receive constructive criticism from peers and the instructor.

## COURSE EVALUATION

Near the end of the course you will be asked to complete a departmental course evaluation questionnaire. Your honest and constructive feedback is valued by the Department of Applied Communication Studies and the instructor. The course evaluation questionnaire will be confidential, and the information in the evaluations is not available to the instructor until after grades are turned in.

## QUESTIONS

You can ask questions via email at [sbatson@siue.edu](mailto:sbatson@siue.edu) or via phone in urgent situations at 314-882-1760. I typically respond within 24 hours, but if you need it quicker please request this politely. I will try my best.

## Course Communication

Check-in to Blackboard

**at least once per day.**

Check your SIUE email!

Announcements are sent through your email! (You can forward to an icloud or gmail account. Problem solve and make sure you don't miss anything!)

Emails with NO greeting are also inappropriate for use in a professional setting when communicating with a superior. Use and practice professional writing when communicating with a superior is a good skill to practice in college.

2. **Follow Directions.** I provide very detailed guidelines for the assignments. Read them carefully before you ask questions.

3. **Meet Deadlines.** Deadlines are an important part of every professional career.

You need to learn time management skills and start meeting deadlines now.

4. **Be Honest.** Don't put information online or in your assignments that is not yours.

**Do not post negativity.** It's important to learn an etiquette of online and digital information. Don't post negative comments on the site or via email. Remember that you shouldn't be posting anything online you wouldn't read **out loud** to your Grandma or Pastor.

## REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

### Expectations

You can expect from me enthusiasm for the subject matter, as well as an open and conversational course format. I expect you to participate in all course activities and complete all course assignments, and to actively seek out ways to understand and make use of the course materials.

### Computer Skills and Writing Proficiency

In order to perform well in this course you need to have **moderate level skills in computer operation**. The course is ENTIRELY online through Blackboard. You need internet access, a PC or Apple computer, Adobe PDF reader and MS Office 2007 or newer. If you have technical issues, you **MUST** contact ITS at 618-650-5500, [help@siue.edu](mailto:help@siue.edu). **Technical issues are NOT an excuse to miss an assignment deadline. Late is late.**

### Assignment Deadlines and Late Work

Students are responsible for reading the schedule, planning and turning in work on time. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** Treat this course like a professional job or interview. Would you expect a hiring manager to let you interview for an entry level professional job an HOUR late with ZERO notice about why you were late?

### Grading

Grades are determined on a straight percentage scale based on number of points earned out of a maximum of 300 points. **You must earn the grade; I do not pass students who do not have the expected level of writing proficiency.** If you are failing to meet the minimum requirement, options that have been pursued in the past include dropping the course, re-taking the course. These are decided on a case-by-case basis. Final grades are calculated as follows:

A = 90%-100% (270-300)

B = 80%-89.9% (240-269)

C = 70%-79.9% (210-239)

D = 60-69.9% (180-209)

F = 59.9% (179 & below )

## ASSIGNMENTS

In public relations courses, there is an emphasis on accuracy of content and writing mechanics and style. The written work must show good style and must be submitted on deadline. Failure to follow the directions of an assignment WILL result in a lower grade. Also, in the "real world" you would be reprimanded—or even fired—for missing a deadline. This class will teach you about public relations and the workplace skill of meeting deadlines.

**Textbook**

Public Relations by Dennis L. Wilcox; Glen T. Cameron; Bryan H. Reber. ONLINE textbook. Updated 11<sup>th</sup> edition, access online through Blackboard instructions

**Assignments**

Find requirements for each week in the corresponding "Weekly Assignment Folder." For details on grading and examples, look in the "Assignment Instructions" folder on Blackboard.

**Academic Integrity**

In case of using ideas, words, or graphics of others, identify the source of those materials. Merely restating another individual's ideas in different words does not make the ideas yours. Proper documentation requires a bibliography of any outside texts and visuals you have consulted including both traditional sources and on-line sources. The absence of such documentation constitutes plagiarism – a serious academic and professional offense. Giving other people's work as your own or having other people write/do your assignments also is plagiarism or cheating. In conformity with the University Rules of Student Conduct, any form of plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade for this course and will be submitted for university action.

Make this course a learning experience by putting in a lot of effort and strong written assignments. What effort you put in, you will benefit from! Vámonos (Let's go!)

**Video Intro Presentation**

You will create a VIDEO presentation introducing yourself to the class. You will turn in the video on the assignment link in the weekly folder AND in the Blackboard discussion board (for your classmates to view). Additional instructions are on Blackboard. **(24 points total)**

**Reading Quizzes**

The assigned readings will provide you with valuable public relations foundational information. It is important you keep up with the readings. You will complete a quiz for each assigned reading on Blackboard. The quizzes are posted in the numbered assignment folders. Chapter quizzes are worth 20 points each **(80 points total)**

**Discussion Posts**

You will post ONE original post and TWO replies for EACH reading section (see course schedule). The posts should be thoughtful and positively contribute to the discussion. Read the prompts for more details & to earn ALL your points. **(90 points)**

I will initiate weekly discussions pertaining to the assigned readings and other public relations topics. You are to engage in the discussions. Please **Adhere to proper writing standards; no grammar or spelling errors, no text-speak, e.g., LOL, IMO, IDK.** Post throughout the week; do not wait until the last day to meet all the requirements.

**A few NOTES about online etiquette.**

- ✓ Respect that the class discussions are closed and private information. Don't share, unless you've been given permission to share from the student.
- ✓ In an online forum, debate is welcome, but please be respectful.
- ✓ Keep the discussion and comments relevant to the topic to receive full points.
- ✓ If you only respond with the minimum information, you will only receive MINIMAL points towards your grade. (ie: one sentence post or reply). Put THOUGHT into your posts, add links to articles, videos or blogs.

**Media Writing Exercise**

News releases, pitches, and media advisories are just a few of the tactics used by public relations professionals. As a part of this course, you will have the opportunity to practice this style of writing. Detailed instructions are in the Week 2 Folder on Blackboard. You will write about a library opening. This assignment is worth **45 points**.

**Final Paper**

**You will pick to write a paper on Trends or to Interview one public relations professional and write a self-reflection paper based upon your interview. Detailed instructions are in the Week 3 Folder on Blackboard.** Submit in the folder online. This will be your final graded item in the course and is worth **55 points**.

Reminders: YOU earn the grade by your activities, actions and choices. This course will assist in learning and understanding deadlines, just like the real world. This introductory course is centered around public relations, but you do not have to be a major or minor to learn about the ever-growing and changing world of public relations. PR can help you sell yourself to employers, persuade a friend to join you at a concert and increase quality communication in your relationships.

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Please read the course schedule to determine the order of the topics to be discussed, materials to be consulted, and assignments due. Changes to the schedule may be made at the instructor's discretion and if circumstances require. Any changes will be announced in class and on Blackboard.

**It is the student's responsibility to note these changes.**

Dates	Content and Readings	Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> Monday, Dec. 19 through Wednesday, Dec 21	Chapters 1-4	<b>Quiz 1 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Tues. Dec. 20. <b>Discussion Original Post #1 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Tues. Dec. 20 <b>(2) Discussion Replies (2) DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Wed. Dec. 21 <b>ALL ABOUT ME VIDEO DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Wed. Dec. 21
Thursday, Dec 22 through Sunday, Dec. 25	Chapters 5-8	<b>Quiz 2 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Fri. Dec. 23. <b>Discussion Original Post #2 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Fri. Dec. 23 <b>(2) Discussion Replies DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Sun. Dec. 25
<b>Week 2</b> Monday, Dec. 26 through Wednesday, Dec 28	Chapters 9-12 and Chapter 14	<b>Quiz 3 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Tues. Dec. 27. <b>Discussion Original Post #3 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Tues. Dec. 27 <b>(2) Discussion Replies DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Wed. Dec. 28
Thursday, Dec 29 through Sunday, Jan. 1	Chapters 17,18, 20, 21  Media Writing Assignment details launched in Blackboard:	<b>Quiz 4 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Fri. Dec. 30. <b>Discussion Original Post #4 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Fri. Dec. 30 <b>(2) Discussion Replies (2) DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Sun. Jan. 1
<b>Week 3</b> Monday, Jan 2 through Wednesday, Jan. 4	Preparing for PR Interview  <b>Media Writing Assignment DUE!</b>	<b>REPLY Post 1, Week 3 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Mon. Jan 2 <b>Media Writing Assignment DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Wed. Jan 4 (Deployed on BB in Week 2!)
Thursday, Jan. 5 through Sunday, Jan. 8	Finalizing PR Interview Professional Development Extra Credit	<b>Reply Post 2, (5 points Extra Credit)</b> <b>Week 3 DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Sun. Jan 8 <b>FINAL PAPER (reflection) DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Sun. Jan 8 <b>Professional Development Extra Credit</b> <b>(5 points) DUE:</b> BEFORE 11:59 p.m. on Sun. Jan 8