

# COM 546: Nonprofit Marketing and Public Relations

Time: Weds, 6:00 to 8:45pm  
Location: Winston 213

Professor: Dr. Richard D. Waters  
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Office Hours: Weds 4:30 – 6:00 pm  
and by appointment

## Description

This course is a practice-oriented, graduate-level seminar course. We will be covering the management of public relations, marketing, and advertising activities in philanthropic organizations, including:

- The Design and Evaluation of Strategic Communication Programs
- Fundraising Campaigns
- Branding and Cause-Related Marketing.

You will learn about the role of strategic communications in nonprofit organizations by examining their public relations and communication needs, strategies and actions from both a theory-based and practice-based perspective.

The focus of this course is more broad than simply learning how to produce communication tactics, such as news releases or policy papers. It provides an opportunity to study issues related to the philanthropic sector and its management of relationships with its many stakeholders, from members to regulators to media. Both courses provide career preparation and conceptual foundations for students interested in becoming agents of change in fields such as the environment, the arts, health, education, and human services.

## Course Objectives

The goal of the course is to provide an understanding of the communication needs and processes in philanthropic organization. You will learn effective strategies, rooted in sound public relations theoretical and conceptual frameworks, for communicating with philanthropic stakeholders' stakeholders. Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand and explain the social, economic, and political realities of the philanthropic sector
- Discuss the trends and current issues facing nonprofit organizations
- Analyze nonprofit organizations' communication material to evaluate their effectiveness

## Required Texts and Materials

- 1) Course packet provided by the instructor on a CD-ROM. This course packet consists of book chapters, journal articles, and various reports put together by Foundations and Public Relations and Marketing agencies.
- 2) *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, updated biweekly at [www.philanthropy.com](http://www.philanthropy.com).

## Grading

Final grades will be based on the following 100-point scale:

A+ = 97-100    A = 93-96    A- = 90-92    B+ = 87-89    B = 83-86    B - = 80-82

C+ = 77-79    C = 73-76    C- = 70-72    D+ = 67-69    D = 63-66    D- = 60-62    F = < 60

## **Course Professionalism**

The Department of Communications' public relations concentration is designed to prepare students to work in the public relations environment, and professional decorum is expected at all times. This means the instructor and students adhere to workplace norms for collegial and respectful interaction. Students are expected to arrive on time and not leave early unless prior permission is given. Talking while the instructor or another student is talking is prohibited and can result in being asked to leave the classroom immediately and a lowering of your grade. Cell phones and beepers should be turned off during class. \*\*\*\**If a cell phone rings/vibrates or is used for text messaging during class, there will be a pop quiz on the spot.*\*\*\*\*

Additionally, because this is a discussion course with minimal lectures, *laptop computers may not be used in class* without permission from the instructor.

## **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism occurs when a student uses or purchases ghost-written papers. It also occurs when a student utilizes the ideas of or information obtained from another person without giving credit to that person. If plagiarism or another act of academic dishonesty occurs, it will be dealt with in accordance with the academic misconduct policy as stated in NCSU's Code of Student Conduct.

Furthermore, the Honor Pledge, "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this test or assignment," will be assumed by a student's typed or written signature on any test or assignment

## **Students with Special Needs**

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Disability Services for Students at 1900 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 515-7653

## **Diversity**

Effective public relations relies on the ability to recognize and embrace diversity in all its forms, including viewpoints. Throughout the class, you will have opportunities to see how different cultural perspectives influence public relations. You are encouraged take advantage of these opportunities in your own work and also to learn from the information and ideas shared by other students.

## **Attendance**

Classes will consist of lectures, discussion, in-class exercises, and outside assignments. As such, prompt attendance at all class meetings is mandatory. Because the course only meets once per week, students are allowed only one absence. Excessive tardiness or missing more than one class will impact the student's grade. Students are responsible for all classwork missed. They should consult with classmates to obtain notes on discussions or lectures.

## **Deadlines**

The practice of public relations hinges on meeting deadlines. Missing deadlines not only can damage a person's credibility, it can lead to dismissal. Thus, deadlines are treated seriously in this class. Weekly reaction papers are due by midnight on the Monday prior to the class session. The remaining assignments are due by the start of the class period on the date of the deadline. Late assignments will not be graded.

## **Format**

Unless otherwise specified, all written assignments must be typed with a 12-point serif font (e.g., Times, Palatino, and Times Roman), double-spaced and framed by one-inch margins. AP style guidelines must be followed.

## **Course Requirements and Evaluation**

Your knowledge and ability to apply the course material will be assessed in the following ways:

(1) Research Paper (30%). For this class, we will have nonprofit clients. Working in groups of three, research teams will complete research projects on topics picked by the instructor to help facilitate our understanding of public relations theory. These research projects have been picked by the instructor so that the different research teams will be completing projects that reflect similar workloads. The final paper should be approximately 20 to 25 pages not including references and tables (if applicable). The research paper will be *due at the beginning of class on April 23*. The paper should include:

- (1) Introduction: briefly describe the purpose of the research and a short rationale for the project
- (2) Literature Review: summary of relevant literature as well as research questions or hypotheses
- (3) Methodology: summary of the research methods you used and why you chose them
- (4) Results: provide a description of the sample using frequencies and report the results of your research questions/hypotheses
- (5) Discussion: describe the practical implications of your finding for nonprofits
- (6) Conclusion: in one paragraph summarize the study, then describe your study's limitations and what your future research might be based on the findings

(2) Reading Reactions (20%). Each week, you will be asked to react to the readings by posting your reactions to a class-maintained blog. As technology changes the nature of public relations, blog management (monitoring and responding to comments) is becoming a new domain of public relations practitioners. Your reactions should *be posted by midnight on Monday before each class session*. You are encouraged to post your own reaction as well as comment on others' thoughts as this will help the instructor and student presenters prepare the week's discussion. Late reaction posts will not be graded. The blog is online at <http://publicrelationsclass.blogspot.com/>. You will need to create a user ID to participate in the blog.

(3) Communication Plan for a Local Nonprofit (30%). You will select a nonprofit organization in Wake County that you will work with to address their communication needs, challenges, or opportunities. You may choose an organization that needs a new marketing or public relations plan. These plans may include repositioning their current messages, redesigning their branding and promotional material, or creating a public awareness campaign. Depending on the organization's needs, you may also revamp their Web material or creating an active social network presence for the group. For this project, you will work in groups of three to design and implement the communication project. For the final project, you will need to turn in a final paper appropriate for the project. More details on the final paper before Spring Break. The presentation on the plan will be the last night of class; the paper will be *due Monday, April 28 by 5pm*.

(4) Attendance and Participation (20%). Because this is a graduate seminar, students are expected to come to class ready and willing to actively participate in a discussion on the week's topics. Since the course only meets once per week, students are allowed only one absence. Excessive tardiness or missing more than one class will impact the student's grade. Additionally, students may be asked to participate in short assignments in-class or as homework to facilitate the learning process. One component of the participation grade will consist of a student or team presentation each week on a different public relations and communications tactic. These student presentations will allow for greater understanding of the different tools public relations practitioners and marketers use in their daily works. Students will take roughly 30 minutes to explain what the tactic is, how it is prepared or implemented, and also provide examples of how nonprofits are using the tactic. Students are encouraged to be creative with these presentations. These presentations will begin the third week of class, and students will sign up for topics on the first day of class.

**COM 546 Course Schedule**  
**(Subject to Change at Instructor's Discretion)**

Class Session	Topics	Readings	Student Presentation Topics
January 9	<i>Course Overview</i> - What is the nonprofit sector? - Who are the main target groups?	Syllabus	None
January 16	<i>What is Public Relations?</i> - The ROPES Process, Measuring Public Relations - Prioritizing Stakeholders	Week 1 on CD-Rom	None
January 23	<i>What is Marketing?</i> - Types of exchanges, Understanding consumer behavior - Positioning and market segmentation	Week 2 on CD-Rom	Press Releases
January 30	<i>Other Perspectives on Marketing</i> - The impact of advertising - IMC, Branding, Social Marketing, Buzz Marketing - The impact of new technologies (Viral marketing)	Week 3 on CD-Rom	Public Service Announcements
February 6	<i>Relationship Management</i> - Organization-Public Relationship dimensions - Relationship Marketing, Can relationships be measured?	Week 4 on CD-Rom	Brochures & Newsletters
February 13	<i>Strategic Planning</i> - Market research/information acquisition, SWOT analysis - Setting realistic goals and objectives	Week 5 on CD-Rom	Special Events & Direct Mail
February 20	<i>The Creative Process</i> - Formulating communication strategies - Persuasion	Week 6 on CD-Rom	Speeches & Position Papers
February 27	Research Day	None	
March 5	Spring Break	None	
March 12	<i>Development and Introduction of New Products/ Services</i> - Competitive Analysis, Budgeting and Pricing - Implementing the plan	Week 7 on CD-Rom	Annual Reports & Point of Purchase Adv.
March 19	<i>Cost-Effective Evaluation Techniques</i>	Week 8 on CD-Rom	Fact Sheets & Backgrounders
March 26	<i>Social Responsibility and Cause-Related Marketing</i> - Evolution of CRM - The Pros/Cons of CRM	Week 9 on CD-Rom	Web sites & Blogs
April 2	<i>Crisis Communication &amp; Fundraising</i>	Week 10 on CDrom	Social Media & Mobile Technologies
April 9	<i>Campaign Developent</i>	None	Product Placement
April 16	<i>Nonprofit Work presentations</i>	None	
April 23	<i>Research project presentations</i>	None	

