

## Marist College, School of Communication and the Arts

**COM 471: Public Relations Case Studies (Spring 2008)***Section 111:* Mondays & Thursdays, 8:00-9:15 a.m., Library, Room 302*Section 112:* Mondays & Thursdays, 9:30-10:45 a.m., Library, Room 302

**Instructor:** Dr. Mark A. Van Dyke, Associate Professor, School of Communication & the Arts,  
Lowell Thomas Bldg., Room 216, 3399 North Rd., Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

**Office & Home Telephone:** (845) 575-3000, Ext. 2679 (office); (845) 592-0559 (home).

**Office Location:** Lowell Thomas Bldg., Room 216

**E-mail:** [Mark.VanDyke@Marist.edu](mailto:Mark.VanDyke@Marist.edu)

**Course Web site:** <http://ilearn.marist.edu/>

**Faculty Web site:** <http://www.marist.edu/commarts/comm/faculty/index.html>

**Personal Web site:** <http://foxweb.marist.edu/users/mark.vandyke>

**Office Hours:** (You are welcome to stop by during these times. However, to spare you a wait in the hallway, please call ahead and make an appointment in order to avoid other meetings that I may have scheduled.)

<b>Mondays</b>	<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>Fridays</b>
1:00-2:00 p.m.	None	9:00-11:00 a.m. 2:00-4:00 p.m.	1:00-2:00 p.m. *In Student-Athlete Study Center, McCann.	None

**Prerequisites:** Students must have successfully completed COM 370 – Public Relations.

**Course Description:** A survey of contemporary and modern cases in public relations that are renowned for their successful response to crises or notorious for their failure to do so. The goal of the course is to give students a thorough understanding of how and why various public-relations strategies succeeded or failed. Students will be taught to analyze successful and failed public-relations strategies and apply lessons learned to other real or invented public-relations scenarios. (3 credits)

**Teaching Goals:** My teaching goals in this course include helping students to

- ✓ Understand the role of public relations in the strategic management and organizational communication.
- ✓ Scan an organization's operating environment and identify public relations situations.
- ✓ Learn how planning, execution, and evaluation of public relations programs contribute to management of communication issues that face professional organizations.
- ✓ Acquire professional knowledge, critical thinking ability, a sense of ethics, and communication skills (oral and written) needed to succeed in an entry-level management position.

**Learning Objectives:** Students who complete this course should be able to

- ✓ Explain and demonstrate how public relations contributes value to an organization.
- ✓ Conduct research to identify public relations issues and assess their impact on organizations.
- ✓ Collaborate with team members when examining public relations issues, preparing strategic plans, and solving communication problems.
- ✓ Design, produce, edit, and present case study reports suitable for a professional portfolio.
- ✓ Write, speak, and communicate on the Internet at a level consistent with professional standards.

## Course Requirements, Grading Policy, and Administration

**Student-Teacher Relationship:** I like to begin each semester, during the first week of class, with an explanation of relationship management. If you haven't already heard from me about this, you will soon. Public relations scholars John A. Ledingham and Stephen D. Bruning (2000) reported in their textbook *Public Relations as Relationship Management*, "People have a relationship when they are linked together in some way.... The key is that people are somehow interdependent with one another – they need each other for some reason" (p. 74).<sup>1</sup> In this course, you and I are interdependent in many ways. For instance, you may expect me to provide knowledge required to pass this course (hopefully, in a fun and interesting way). I need you to show up to class prepared, eager, and ready to learn.

Two other public relations scholars, Linda Hon and James Grunig (1999), identified six concepts that can be measured to determine the quality of a relationship.<sup>2</sup> Understanding these concepts and how they apply to our class will be important to managing our relationships; therefore, I will briefly describe them below and I will discuss them during the first week of class. Please do your best to remain aware of these concepts. Using this awareness to establish and maintain a positive relationship with me and other students in this class throughout the semester will be a key to our mutual success:

1. **Control Mutuality:** The degree to which we let each other assert control over education in this class.
2. **Trust:** Our willingness to place confidence in each other, rely upon each other, and open up to each other. Trust consists of *integrity* (the belief that we are fair and just), *dependability* (the belief that we will do what we say we will do), and *competence* (the belief that we can do what we say we will do).
3. **Satisfaction:** The degree to which we view our relationship as favorable. We are often satisfied with a relationship when the benefits of that relationship outweigh the costs.
4. **Commitment:** The degree to which we are willing to invest in a relationship. Commitment requires a feeling that a relationship is worth entering into and worth maintaining.
5. **Exchange Relationship:** A relationship in which one of us provides benefits to the other(s) because we expect some kind of benefit in return for our actions.
6. **Communal Relationship:** A relationship in which one of us acts solely out of concern for the welfare of the other(s) even though we expect nothing in return.

**Expectations:** Be punctual in attending class and turning in assignments, lead or participate actively in discussions, demonstrate what you learn through readings, and strive for professional quality in all work. Stretch your creative and critical thinking skills. I will use guided classroom discussions to reinforce concepts and test your understanding of course readings and materials. I will also treat each of you with respect and remain attentive to your individual and group needs. I will attempt to prepare you for a professional career as well as help you learn course material. Feel free to approach me with any questions you may have.

You are expected to possess effective communication skills – oral and written – and intermediate knowledge of public relations. Internship and professional employment experience is also useful.

You should be familiar with basic forms of communication media, including print, broadcast, and new forms of electronic media. **NOTE:** My assessment of your work will be strongly influenced by the level of

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<sup>1</sup> See Ledingham, J. A., & Bruning, S. D. (2000). *Public relations as relationship management*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

<sup>2</sup> See Hon, L. C., & Grunig, J. E. (1999). *Guidelines for measuring relationships in public relations*. Paper prepared for Institute for Public Relations, Commission on Public Relations Measurement and Evaluation. (Copy available at [http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/1999\\_MeasuringRelations.pdf](http://www.instituteforpr.org/files/uploads/1999_MeasuringRelations.pdf).)

personal initiative and critical thinking that you display. This course is not about memorizing and spitting back facts related to public relations cases. Instead, this course uses public relations cases as a catalyst to help you think independently and become a problem solver. Therefore, you should take a *proactive* approach to learning and move beyond requirements listed in the syllabus.

You should also possess information technology skills needed when applying iLearn and on-line academic systems. If you need assistance with technology applications, visit the Marist College Academic Technology group in the Cannavino Library, Room 305; call them at (845) 575-3623; or visit <http://www.academic.marist.edu/>. If you need additional assistance, call the Help Desk at (845) 575-HELP. I also encourage you to seek help from other students who have excellent information technology skills.

### Required Texts & Readings:

- ✓ Hacker, D. (2006). *A writer's reference* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's. (ISBN 0312450257).
- ✓ Assigned readings in course reading packet (on iLearn Web site, "Resources") and handouts.

**Recommended Texts and References:** I strongly recommend that you purchase and refer often to recent editions of a professional style guide (e.g., APA) and other reference materials. You will also need an active e-mail account, access to the Web, and some form of electronic storage medium (e.g., flash memory stick, DC, floppy disk) to transport your work. Finally, keep up with current events covered by major news media. Also:

- ✓ Guth, D., & Marsh, C. (2005). *Adventures in public relations*. Boston: Pearson.

**Assignments:** Written and oral assignments will develop and test your ability to think critically about how public relations can be used to effectively manage issues that affect an organization or its publics (Overall Weight = 70%):

1) [Writing Exercises](#). You will complete writing exercises that will test your knowledge of academic and public relations writing, including elements of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style. These exercises will also test your ability to proof, edit, and revise written copy. Writing exercises will help prepare you for the final project, a strategic communication proposal written in APA style. (Weight = 10%)

2) [Individual Reflexive Memoranda](#). You will prepare two memos (similar to journal entries) to *privately* reflect on your goals and outcomes in this course and identify solutions to any problems that you encounter this semester. I will treat these as confidential correspondence between you and me. (Weight = 10%)

3) [Case Study #1 Blog Discussion](#). You will study a case conducted by River Communications Inc. about public relations in the financial sector. After you review and analyze this case, each student will present his or her analysis and findings in a blog post. Students will use the blog to discuss each other's results. You will then meet with the managing partner of River Communications to discuss your findings. (Weight = 10%)

4) [Case Study #2 Blog Discussion](#). You will study a case of your choosing, which must be related to contemporary public relations. After you review and analyze this case, each student will present his or her analysis and findings in a blog post. Students will use the blog to discuss each other's results. (Weight = 10%)

5) [Team Case Study #3 – Team Communication Proposal](#). You will complete a strategic communication plan to support Marist College's imminent change in course management systems from [Ucompass Educator](#) eLearning to [Sakai](#) iLearn. After an initial briefing, you will conduct research to collect additional information about the case. You will then analyze the situation and develop a strategic communication plan to promote awareness and understanding among the Marist College community about this change in course management systems. Finally, you will present findings and recommendations in a 12- to 15-page team communication proposal in APA style. (Weight = 30%)

I will use the following criteria to assess your completed assignments: level of independent, intellectual thinking; quality of writing; professional appearance and presentation of your products; how well you adhere to instructions for the assignment, including style and format; and level of effort and originality exhibited in your work. Submit written assignments in accordance with the [course writing guide](#).

**Exam:** A final exam will test your ability to integrate what you have learned during this course in the form of a professional, oral presentation of the public relations case proposal that your team develops. This exam will be a team presentation, in which each team member contributes an equal share. (Weight = 10%)

**Participation:** You will be graded on your level of participation in class and in teams. To participate fully you must engage actively in critical thinking, attend class and assigned meetings, and contribute to teamwork on a regular basis. I will begin and end class promptly. Once class begins, I expect your full attention and *active* participation. I will add points to your participation grade if you volunteer for activities, lead discussions, or contribute actively. If you are late for class, absent without an authorized excuse (as described in the [Attendance](#) section of this syllabus), or inattentive in class I will deduct points from your participation grade. I will also ask each of you to evaluate your own work and the work of your teammates. I will consider [peer evaluations](#) when I assign participation grades. (Weight = 20%)

**Grading Criteria:** I will evaluate your work according to criteria established in this syllabus, guidelines provided in class discussions and assigned readings, and general professional standards expected of entry-level communication professionals. I will assign letter grades according Marist College standards published at <http://www.marist.edu/academics/advise/acad.html>. Quality point conversions for these grades are:

*Quality Point Conversions For Marist Grades*

A	= 4.0;	A-	= 3.7		
B+	= 3.3;	B	= 3.0;	B-	= 2.7
C+	= 2.3;	C	= 2.0;	C-	= 1.7
D+	= 1.3;	D	= 1.0		
F	= 0.0*				

Generally, I will assign an F for work not completed or turned in. I reserve the option to assign partial credit (but less than 1.0) for work that falls below the standards expected of D work. I will follow the academic grading policy published by Marist College:

Grading is an objective measure of a student's mastery of a selected body of knowledge contained in a specific course. This mastery involves the elements of memory, understanding and expression. Memory refers to retention of certain items of information. Understanding implies insight into the interpretation of these facts. This insight would include the meaning of the thing itself, its relationship with other things or data and the ability to apply this information or data to new situations and problems. Expression is the ability to convey this assimilated knowledge to others. In assigning grades, I will examine thoroughly all the evidence involved in a case, weigh the evidence, and make a decision on the basis of this evidence. Keep in mind, however, my assessment of your work is based on concrete evidence that you, the student, provide to me.

An **A** student is one who, in addition to all the qualities manifested by a B student, seeks mastery of a special field by reason of individual interest; he or she has initiative and originality in attacking and solving problems; he or she shows ability in rethinking problems and making associations and in adapting to new and changing situations; moreover, he or she has an appropriate vocabulary at his or her command.

A **B** student must manifest all the qualities of a C student and in addition reveal a memory that encompasses more than the basic elements of a course; he or she has a more personal grasp of the principles of the course and perceives wider application of them. The student should be able to discuss the course subject matter with ease.

A **C** student must be able to recall the basic elements of a course, understand the essential background and materials of a course, apply the basic principles involved and express them intelligibly.

A **D** student is deficient in some degree in any of the areas that are characteristic of a C grade.

An **F** student has failed to show mastery of the basic subject matter for the course.

The grades of A-, B+/-, C+/-, and D+ are used to indicate that a student has shown more or less than the usual competency required for that grade.

**Attendance:** You should strive to achieve professional standards in your course work, just as you will strive to establish habits that will help you succeed in your professional careers. You must be responsible and punctual in fulfilling attendance requirements – whether in class or at work. Your level of participation in this class will be a determining factor in your final grade. I allow no specific number of "legal" absences. However, I understand that that some late arrivals or absences are unavoidable and excusable. In the latter cases, you must take responsibility for informing me, *in advance*, if you know you will be late or unable to attend class. In case of illness or emergency, notify me as soon as possible and provide evidence in the form of *written* justification for your absence.

I will permit a *reasonable* number of absences in accepted situations such as illness, family emergency, religious observances, participation in other university activities at the request of university officials, and circumstances beyond your control. I will also consider extenuating circumstances for other situations. In case of an unforeseen emergency, inform me of reasons for your absence as soon as possible. You are still responsible for any work you miss during an absence. Therefore, obtain information from another student or me and complete work that you miss during your absence.

If you provide me with advance notification, make prior arrangements, and provide me with *adequate written documentation* to validate your absence, I will consider allowing you to hand in assignments or make up any labs, exams or quizzes that will be due during your absence by the next scheduled class period – with no penalty. An *informal* e-mail message does not constitute adequate documentation. If you do not make prior arrangements or provide documentation and miss an exam, quiz, or assignment you will be penalized in accordance with the policy stated in the following [Rewrites, Late Assignments, and Extra Credit](#) section, regardless of the excuse for your absence. If your absence will affect a group activity, you must also notify your fellow group members. I will rely on my judgment if there are any disagreements over application of this policy.

**Rewrites, Late Assignments, and Extra Credit:** Assignments *received* late (counting from the end of the class period that they are due) will be penalized one full letter grade for each class period they are late, unless you make prior arrangements with me or experience an unexpected illness or emergency (see policy on [Attendance](#), above). I will normally require that all assignments be submitted in paper format, but will make exceptions to allow electronic submissions *only* if you make arrangements *in advance*. In any case, it is your responsibility to ensure that I receive your assignment on time. I recommend that you save copies of all work completed in this class and e-mails or other associated correspondence. I will consider extra credit assignments if legitimate opportunities for such work arise.

**Grammar, Style, and Spelling:** Proper grammar, style, and spelling are essential in professional writing. Your work should be free of errors and should follow proper style. If you need assistance, see me or contact the Writing Center, Cannavino Library, Room 330; telephone (845) 575-3000; or Web address <http://www.marist.edu/writingcenter/>. Also see Marist Library's electronic reference shelf: <http://library.marist.edu/db/refshelf.html>.

**Religious Observances:** If you expect to miss class because of a religious observance during this semester, please inform me as soon as possible but no later than the end of the fourth class period. No student will be penalized because of his or her religious beliefs. Students will be given a reasonable opportunity to make up assignments missed (see [Attendance](#) policy) due to participation in religious observances.

**Accommodation of Special Needs:** Marist College is committed to making reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities or other special needs that have been documented. If you require academic accommodations for this course, please contact me as soon as possible but no later than the end of the fourth class period. I also encourage you to contact the Marist College Office of Special Services at telephone (845) 575-3274 or Web address <http://www.marist.edu/specserv/>.

**Academic Integrity:** Your primary concern in this course should be academic growth. Allow yourself enough time to complete work and adhere to principles of academic honesty expected of each Marist student. Work presented to me in fulfillment of course requirements is to be *your own*, original work -- free of plagiarism. At a minimum, adhere to the following principles (see *Academic Honesty*, <http://www.marist.edu/academics/advise/acad.html>):

1. Appropriate documentation is to be provided in order that material cited from works consulted by the student is duly acknowledged.
2. An arrangement by which work is to be submitted for credit in two or more courses must have the prior approval of the instructors involved. (**NOTE:** I will consider any failure to abide by this principle as a form of plagiarism called *self-plagiarism*. Be careful. When in doubt, check with me.)
3. Each student is to use the library, computer facilities, and other college facilities in such a way that equal access for others to the resources for study and research is ensured.
4. Violations could result in a grade of "F" and/or suspension or expulsion from the college.
5. A student who cooperates with one or more others in a dishonest act is subject to these same penalties.
6. Those who witness an act of dishonesty are expected to report it to the proper authority with the full assurance that confidentiality will be maintained.

**Plagiarism:** Marist College adopts the position of Modern Language Association Handbook, New York, 1977, paragraph 6. "Plagiarism may take the form of repeating another's sentences as your own, adopting a particularly apt phrase as your own, paraphrasing someone else's line of thinking in the development of a thesis as though it were your own. In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought something that you have borrowed from another." Students are expected, as are all citizens, to respect and abide by local ordinance and state and federal statutes both on and off campus. As members of the educational community, students are expected to abide by the college's code of student conduct which clarifies those behavioral standards considered essential to the fulfillment of the college's philosophy and goals. The student can expect that the college's statement of due process will be employed in all disciplinary proceedings.

Finally, I reserve the right to utilize electronic measures to help prevent plagiarism. Furthermore, students agree by taking this course that all assignments are subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com. Assignments submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. You may find additional information about this system at <http://www.turnitin.com>. **IMPORTANT:** You are encouraged to review resources at [http://www.turnitin.com/research\\_site/e\\_home.html](http://www.turnitin.com/research_site/e_home.html), which will provide you with information on how to properly cite sources and understand what is meant by plagiarism.

**Copyrighted Material:** Making photocopies or electronic copies of copyrighted material is subject to strict legal regulation. You are responsible for knowing these regulations. Failure to adhere to these laws may be punishable under both civil and criminal laws. Be familiar with guidelines concerning copyrighted material and “fair use” rules. Refer to the Marist College Web site, <http://infosecurity.marist.edu/copyr.html>, or *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual* for additional information on copyright.

**Class, Team, and Instructor Meetings:** As indicated in the course schedule, we will engage in a variety of meetings in class and in teams or individually with me. Team and individual meetings with the instructor will take the place of some class meetings. (To meet state-mandated classroom meeting requirements, we must meet as a class, a team, or individually at least twice a week.) You will also be expected to complete other work outside of these meetings. During team meetings with the instructor, each team will be expected to prepare and distribute a meeting agenda at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Students are also welcome to meet with me during office hours or by appointment, as needed. Save copies of all of your assignments (hard copy and an electronic copy in your iLearn account) with my edits, so that we may discuss your work during team or individual meetings.

**Course Syllabus & Schedule:** This syllabus and schedule are rough outlines for the class. Topics may be covered on different days. Assignments or deadlines may change. We may amend this syllabus or course schedule during the semester. Feel free to suggest changes. I will promptly inform you of the changes in class or via e-mail.

**Final Thoughts:** Good luck and best wishes for an enjoyable and productive semester!

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Professor: Dr. Mark A. Van Dyke, Associate Professor, School of Communication & the Arts, Lowell Thomas Bldg., Room 216, 3399 North Rd., Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

**Course Schedule**

**Notes:**

- (1) Most readings are found in Marist College electronic library (Ebrary) or under “Resources” in the course packet located on our course iLearn Web site (referred to as CP). These include:
- Barbato, J., & Furlich, D. S. (2000). *Writing for a good cause*. New York: Fireside. (CP)
  - Chaffee, J. (2004). *Thinking critically*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (CP)
  - Engleberg, I. N., & Wynn, D. R. (2003). *Working in groups* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (CP)
  - Guth, D., & Marsh, C. (2005). *Adventures in public relations*. Boston: Pearson. (CP)
  - Hallahan, K. (2001). Strategic media planning. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Handbook of public relations* (pp. 461-470). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
  - Lucas, S. E. (2004). *The art of public speaking* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill. (CP)
  - Neumeier, M. (2007, December 14). Journalists get Web 2.0. Do you? *PR Tactics and Strategist* [Online]. Retrieved December 18, 2007, <http://www.prsa.org/supportfiles/news/pfNews.cfm?pNewsID=1483> (CP)
  - Wilson, L. J. (2000). *Strategic program planning for effective public relations campaigns* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt. (CP)
- (2) Readings, written assignments, and activities are listed in the right column on the date that they are *due*.

WEEK	DAY	TOPICS & ACTIVITIES	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
1: Th, Jan. 17	Day 1	<b><u>Introductions, Administration, and Overview</u></b> <i>Activities:</i> Verify registration; introductions; distribute syllabus; Web site, class survey; discuss groups; etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Syllabus content</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Review                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Course Web site content</li> <li>-- Team assignments</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2: <b>Friday Jan. 18</b>	Day 1	<b><u>Course Meeting and Writing Requirements</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Review and discuss requirements for meetings and writing assignments: <a href="#">reflexive memos</a> , <a href="#">point papers</a> , <a href="#">online discussions</a> , etc.  <b>Note:</b> Due to the Martin Luther King Holiday on January 21, classes scheduled for Monday will be held on Friday.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Course Writing Guide</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Point Paper Writing Guide</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Reflexive Memo Guide</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Discussion Guidelines</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Submit proposed changes to syllabus.</li> </ul>

Th, Jan. 24	Day 2	<p><b><u>Why iLearn ? Changing Management Systems</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Briefing by Mr. Josh Baron, Marist College, director of academic technology and eLearning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read iLearn “Overview” and other materials in iLearn case packet (in “Resources,” course Web site)</li> <li>• Browse “User’s Guide” in course iLearn case packet (“Resources”) and Sakai Web site (“Related Links” on iLearn course home page)</li> </ul>
3: M, Jan. 28	Day 1	<p><b><u>Public Relations Concepts &amp; Team Work</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Review and discuss:  -- theories and concepts of public relations.  -- importance of groups and teamwork to strategic management, case analyses – and this course.  -- reflexive memo writing requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Guth &amp; Marsh (2005)</a>, Ch. 1, CP</li> <li>- <a href="#">Engleberg &amp; Wynn (2003)</a>, Ch. 2 &amp; 3, CP</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Confirm team assignments</li> </ul>
Th, Jan. 31	Day 2	<p><b><u>The Case Study Process &amp; Critical Thinking</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss:  -- process of case analysis.  -- importance of critical thinking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Case Method &amp; Teaching, CP</li> <li>- <a href="#">Guth &amp; Marsh (2005)</a>, Ch. 2, CP</li> <li>- <a href="#">Chaffee (2004)</a> CP</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Submit <a href="#">Reflexive Memo 1</a></li> </ul>
4: M, Feb. 4	Day 1	<p><b><u>Writing Tutorial</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss course writing requirements (point papers, APA papers, etc.).   <i>Exercise:</i> In-class writing exercise: point papers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review <a href="#">course writing guide</a>, <a href="#">point paper writing guide</a> and <a href="#">sample point paper</a>.</li> <li>• Bring Hacker (2006) to class</li> </ul>
Th, Feb. 7	Day 2	<p><b><u>River Communications Case</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss strategic communication planning and introduce Case 1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Wilson (2000)</a>, Ch. 1, CP (Strategic Planning)</li> <li>- River Communications iLearn packet</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5: M, Feb. 11	Day 1	<p><b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Meeting with Mr. Josh Baron, Marist College, director of academic technology and eLearning, to discuss progress on iLearn case.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Wilson (2000)</a>, Ch. 3, (Research) CP</li> <li>- <a href="#">Hallahan (2001)</a> (Strategic Media Planning) CP</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Each team prepare updates, questions for Mr. Baron in point paper format. Upload to team leader’s iLearn folder, bring hard copy to class.</li> </ul>
Th, Feb. 14	Day 2	<p><b><u>Blogging Tutorial</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discussion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• blogging and its application to public relations</li> <li>• research and media planning for iLearn case</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each student read one article about blogging of your choice.</li> <li>• Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 blogging article of your choice</li> <li>- <a href="#">Neumeier (2007)</a> CP</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Blog Discussion #1</a> (complete by Sunday night, March 2)</li> </ul>

6: M, Feb. 18	Day 1	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Review blog discussion; discuss progress in iLearn case.  <i>Exercise:</i> In-class writing exercise: APA style.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Blog Discussion #1</a> (complete by Sunday night, March 2)</li> <li>• Bring Hacker (2006) to class</li> <li>• Open book, APA manual</li> </ul>
Th, Feb. 21	Day 2	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Team Meetings:</i> In lieu of class meeting, each team meets separately with instructor in classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Submit</b> team meeting agenda to each team member (including instructor) at least 24 hours prior to meeting.</li> </ul>
7: M, Feb. 25	Day 1	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss progress in iLearn case.  <del><i>Exercise:</i> In-class writing exercise: APA style.</del>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Blog Discussion #1</a> (complete by Sunday night, March 2)</li> <li>• Bring Hacker (2006) to class</li> <li>• <del>Open book, APA manual</del></li> </ul>
Th, Feb. 28	Day 2	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Team Meetings:</i> In lieu of class meeting, each team meets separately with instructor in classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Submit</b> team meeting agenda to each team member (including instructor) at least 24 hours prior to meeting.</li> </ul>
8: M, Mar. 3	Day 1	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss progress in iLearn case and format for final paper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Barbato &amp; Furlich (2000)</a>, CP</li> <li>- Sample case studies paper, iLearn “Supplemental” packet.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Th, Mar. 6	Day 2	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Meeting with Mr. Josh Baron to discuss progress in iLearn case.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post questions for Mr. Baron in class iLearn Web site “Forum” area (by midnight, March 3).</li> </ul>
9: M, Mar. 10	Day 1	<b><u>Wrap Up Blog Discussion #1</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Meet with Mr. Justin Meise, River Communications managing partner, to discuss results of blog discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Mr. Meise’s biography in River Communications iLearn course packet</li> </ul>
Th, Mar. 13	Day 2	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss progress in iLearn case and format for final paper.  <i>Exercise:</i> In-class writing exercise: proofing and editing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring ½ page (double-spaced) self biography suitable for introduction section of final paper. See sample case study paper in “Supplemental” packet on iLearn for examples.</li> <li>• Bring Hacker (2006) to class</li> </ul>
10: Mar. 15-23		<b><u>No Classes</u></b> <i>Spring Break</i>  <i>March 18: Midterm grades due</i>	Have a safe and relaxing break!
11: M, Mar. 24	Day 1	<b><u>No Class</u></b> <i>Residence Halls open 10 a.m.</i> <i>Evening classes resume 6:30 p.m.</i>	

Th, Mar. 27	Day 2	<b><u>Blog Discussion #2 Introduction</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss individual topics for second blog discussion and how topics relate to public relations case study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Blog Discussion #2</u></b> (complete by Sunday night, April 13)</li> <li>• Each student come to class prepared to discuss a topic of contemporary public relations that he or she plans to analyze.</li> </ul>
12: M, Mar. 31	Day 1	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Meeting with Mr. Tim Massie, Marist College chief of public affairs, to discuss strategic audiences and media planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Blog Discussion #2</u></b> (complete by Sunday night, April 13)</li> </ul>
Th, Apr. 3	Day 2	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Team Meetings:</i> Teams meet separately; instructor available in the LT216 for team meetings, by appointment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Submit</b> team meeting agenda to each team member (including instructor) at least 24 hours prior to meeting.</li> </ul>
13: M, Apr. 7	Day 1	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss progress in blog discussion and iLearn case.  <del><i>Exercise:</i> In-class writing exercise: grammar, punctuation, spelling, active voice, etc.</del>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Blog Discussion #2</u></b> (complete by Sunday night, April 13)</li> </ul>
Th, Apr. 10	Day 2	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss progress in iLearn case. <i>Exercise:</i> In-class writing exercise: grammar, punctuation, spelling, active voice, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring final questions for Mr. Baron. <b>Bring one writing tactic per team to class for editing.</b></li> </ul>
14: M, Apr. 14	Day 1	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <del><i>Team Meetings:</i> Teams meet separately; instructor available in the LT216 for team meetings, by appointment.</del> <b>Tentative: Meet in class with Josh.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del><b>Submit</b> team meeting agenda to each team member (including instructor) at least 24 hours prior to meeting.</del></li> </ul>
Th, Apr. 17	Day 2	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss progress in iLearn case.  <i>Exercise:</i> Teams peer-review, proof, and exchange suggested edits for final papers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring Hacker (2006) to class</li> </ul>
15: M, Apr. 21	Day 1	<b><u>iLearn Case Progress Meeting</u></b> <i>Team Meetings:</i> Teams meet separately; instructor available in the LT216 for team meetings, by appointment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Submit</b> team meeting agenda to each team member (including instructor) at least 24 hours prior to meeting.</li> </ul>
Th, Apr. 24	Day 2	<b><u>Final iLearn Meeting</u></b> <i>Class Meeting:</i> Meet to collect, discuss final iLearn case papers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Submit <u>final iLearn case report.</u></b> Turn in hard copy; upload backup copy to team leader's student folder.</li> </ul>

16: M, Apr. 28	Day 1	<p><b><u>Discussion of Final Projects Oral Presentations</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Discuss requirements for final exam oral presentations of iLearn case papers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and discuss guidelines for effective public presentation See <a href="#">Lucas (2004)</a> guidelines and assessment rubric in “Final Oral Exam” course packet.</li> </ul>
Th, May 1	Day 2	<p><b><u>Reflexive Review</u></b>  <i>Class Meeting:</i> Critical review and discussion of course objectives, personal goals, lessons learned, recommendations for future courses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit <a href="#">Reflexive Memo 2</a> and <a href="#">Peer Evaluation Forms</a> (see “Course Notes and Materials” in iLearn “Resources” section of Web site.)</li> </ul>
May 5-9	M-F	<p><b><u>Final Exam Week</u></b>  <b>Section 111:</b> Monday, May 5, 8:00-10:30 a.m.  <b>Section 112:</b> Thursday, May 8, 8:00-10:30 a.m.    (See <a href="http://www.marist.edu/registrar/finals.html">http://www.marist.edu/registrar/finals.html</a>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Final Exam</a>  <i>Locations:</i>  Sec. 111: Dyson 113 (Ulrich Room)  Sec. 112: LT 125</li> </ul>

**CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK IN THE FUTURE!**

# COM 471: Public Relations Case Studies

## Assignments, Exams, and Discussions

### Writing Exercises

You will be assigned writing exercises to test and develop knowledge of writing skill. These activities will be conducted as writing laboratories in class. Writing products will be peer graded, which will test your ability to proof, edit, and revise. These exercises will require knowledge of Hacker (2007), who described writing as a three-part process. During this process, “you will generally move from planning to drafting to revising” (p. 3). Hacker’s approach is consistent with Guffey’s (2004) definition of the writing process.<sup>3</sup> According to Guffey, an author uses a pre-writing phase to conduct research, analyze the situation or problem, and adapt his or her approach to the appropriate audience before beginning to write. During the writing phase, an author continues to conduct research, organizes content in a logical order, and then composes his or her work in the appropriate style and format. Finally, during the revision phase, an author proofreads, evaluates, and revises content – a step that many writers often rush through. In this course, all students must master all three phases of writing to prepare properly for the final project.

### Individual Reflexive Memorandums

You will write two memos (similar to journal entries) to reflect on what you learn from case analyses and other activities in this course. You will also identify solutions to any individual or team problems that you encounter during course work. I will treat these memos as private correspondence between you and me. Be creative and feel free to express yourself; however, remain professional in your writing, be courteous, and respect others’ feelings.

Refer to the [reflexive writing guide](#) contained in this syllabus for information about the format and writing style that I expect for these assignments. You may use an informal, creative, literary style of writing for your memos; however, you still must adhere to guidelines for effective writing (e.g., follow formal rules for grammar, spelling, and punctuation). Double space your memos to allow room for my comments and print out your entries on standard paper with one-inch margins. Each memo should be *at least two full* pages in length and follow a process that includes *description, elaboration, evaluation, and reflection*.

**Memo 1** should reflect on what you expect out of this course. *Describe* personal goals that you hope to achieve during this course. *Elaborate* on how you hope to achieve those goals. Identify any problems, questions, or concerns that have arisen since this course began. *Evaluate* these problems, questions, and concerns and offer suggestions about how you or I can resolve them. Finally, *reflect* on how you are *feeling* about this course (e.g., feelings toward the instructor and other students; your ability to complete the course; your expectations for outcomes in the course).

**Memo 2** will reflect on your experience in this course. *Describe* the goals that you achieved (refer back to Memo 1) and knowledge that you have gained during the course. *Elaborate* on how you gained this knowledge and identify unique experiences along the way. *Evaluate* this course, your performance in the course, classmate and teammate performance, instructor performance, etc. Suggest how the performance of you and others could be improved. Here, I would like you to briefly evaluate your performance and the performance of each member of your case analysis team. Finally, *reflect* on what this course meant to you. For instance, how will this course help you later in life?

### Case Study Analyses and Reports

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<sup>3</sup> Guffey, M. E. (2004). *Essentials of business communication* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western.

In addition to the cases that we discuss in our blog, we will analyze two cases presented to us in class by public relations professionals. We will use the RECAP (Reverse Engineering Case Analysis Process) approach identified by Guth & Marsh in Chapter 2 to analyze all cases in this class. Analyses will include a:

- *Description* of the incident(s) or issue(s) at the heart of the case.
- *Research* section that addresses how well the organization under study identified or anticipated problems, issues, opportunities, solutions, the nature of publics, etc. (RECAP steps 1-3).
- *Planning* section that addresses how well the organization planned strategies, goals, and objectives; developed strategic and tactical messages; balanced organization and public interests; assigned resources; etc. (RECAP steps 4-5).
- *Communication* section that addresses how the organization communicated with publics (message channels like news media, direct mail, advertising, interpersonal communication, etc. (RECAP steps 6-7).
- *Evaluation* section that addresses successes and failures in the case, to include what worked, what didn't work, what else could have been done, lessons learned, considerations for future action, etc. (RECAP step 8).

When preparing each section of the case analysis at hand, review guidelines and try to answer questions related to measuring success in public relations: inputs, outputs, outcomes, and relationships (Guth & Marsh, Ch. 2). Cases 1-3 will be identified, analyzed, and reported as follows:

- *Cases 1 & 2 – Individual Cases.* Each student will research and analyze two cases of contemporary public relations. Students will report and discuss results in a class blog. Students will use the RECAP process (Guth & Marsh, Ch. 2) when analyzing these cases. Case 1 will involve a case of public relations in the financial sector conducted by River Communications Inc. Students will choose Case 2, which must be related to a contemporary public relations issue (e.g., a case of public relations that is currently taking place or has taken place within the last 2-3 years). Publish your initial post as early as possible once the discussion period starts. Use active links and other tools to enhance the quality of your post. Comment on other classmates' posts often enough to carry on an active dialog during the discussion period. Use the RECAP process to analyze the case. Read the [blog discussion guide](#) for guidance about blogging. I will assess your results based on the following criteria: timeliness of postings (25%); frequency of comments to other classmates (25%); quality of analysis (using RECAP process) expressed in contents of posts and comments (25%); quality of writing and technical skill (e.g., use of active links, video, images) (25%).

- *Case 3 – Team Communication Proposal.* For Case 3, teams will analyze the current public relations situation related to the change of course management systems from eLearning to iLearn. Teams will use this analysis to develop findings and recommendations in the form of a strategic communication proposal, using [Barbato and Furlich \(2000\)](#) as a guide. Your final report will be written in APA style and consist of the following sections (all pages except Table of Contents will be double-spaced). I will use the *Final Case Analysis-Strategic Communication Proposal Assessment Rubric* located at the end of the syllabus to assess results.

- Cover Page (1 page): Identify title of paper, authors, college, date.
- Table of Contents (1 page): List headings or sections, including appendices, by page.
- Executive Summary (1-2 pages): Summarize your entire analysis and proposal in a page or two, with one or two sentences dedicated to each main section.
- Introduction (1 page): Identify team members and your reasons for studying this case. Explain briefly how your professional interests, expertise and talents qualify you to analyze this case and propose solutions to the problem.

- Situation Description (1 page). Describe the public relations situation that defines this case, including background, organization, publics, actions taken to date, nature of news coverage (internal and external), and outcomes or potential impacts. Explain why this situation is important or unique.
- Strategic Program Description (2-3 pages): Explain how Marist College should plan and execute its management of public relations in this case – to promote awareness and understanding of the change between eLearning and iLearn, and to reduce resistance and other conflicts associated with this change. Include subsections that provide a description of a suggested strategy, goals and objectives, messages, tactics, audiences, and communication channels. Also explain how Marist should evaluate (e.g., using research methods) the future outcomes of this public relations program.
- Resources (1 page): Describe the projected requirements for manpower, materials, budget, and other resources that will be needed to carry out this program. This information may be expressed in tabular format.
- Evaluation (2-3 pages): Here, the student-faculty team should evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Marist’s current public relations program to inform strategic publics about the change in course management systems. Base your evaluation on credible research, analysis, and application of concepts covered in this course (*not* on personal opinion or conjecture). Also evaluate the limitations and benefits of your proposed program. Save recommendations for the conclusion section.
- Conclusion (1-2 pages): Summarize your analysis, offer lessons learned from this case, and make recommendations that Marist College could incorporate immediately to promote awareness, understanding, and cooperation during the change between eLearning and iLearn. Identify costs or savings related to your recommendations.
- Appendices (Optional): Use appendices to expand on material from the text of your paper. This section will not count toward the overall length of your paper.

### **Exam**

A final exam will test your ability to analyze and report on a public relations case, using case analysis and a strategic communication approach to public relations. The exam will consist of a 10-15 minute formal presentation of your team’s final report. Dress appropriately and distribute speaking roles evenly among team members. Incorporate a variety of presentation media and follow the guidelines and criteria for effective public presentations (see the “Final Oral Exam” course packet on our iLearn site). Inform me of your audio-visual presentation (e.g., media and technology) needs by the beginning of the last week of class.

### **Individual, Team, and Classroom Meetings**

I hope that this course will expand your professional knowledge of public relations and help develop your critical thinking and communication skills. I will rely heavily on one-on-one, team, and class meetings to evoke interactive discussions that will help us achieve our goals and objectives. Parker Palmer (1998), in [\*The Courage to Teach\*](#), describes the paradox of individual and group expression in a classroom:

A teaching and learning space must be more than a forum for individual expression. It must also be a place in which the group’s voice is gathered and amplified, so that the group can affirm, question, challenge, and correct the voice of the individual... As a corporate voice emerges through honest dialogue, the group makes a claim on each person, compelling us neither to roll over nor to be defiant but to seek, and speak, our truth more thoughtfully. In a learning space ... not only do students learn about a subject, but they also learn to speak their own thoughts about the subject and to listen for an emergent collective wisdom that may influence their ideas and beliefs. (pp. 75-76)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Palmer, P. (1998). *The courage to teach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

I will meet with each of you in individual, team, and classroom settings throughout the semester. Many of the team meetings will take the place of regular classroom meetings. Read the syllabus carefully: I have indicated the type of meeting we will have on each scheduled meeting date. As the semester progresses, we will begin meeting in teams instead of a class approximately once a week. I will be a member of each team, providing guidance, support, and answers to questions. When team meetings are scheduled, team members will meet with me for approximately 15-20 minutes in our assigned classroom or my office, normally during our regular class meeting time. Teams will meet in an order determined during the previous class meeting. Members must arrive and depart from team meetings on time in order to allow time for all teams to meet.

Each team will provide a meeting agenda to each member (including me) via e-mail at least 24 hours prior to the team meeting time. I will count my receipt of an agenda as your documented “attendance.” If I do not receive an agenda I will consider the team “absent” from class. Refer to the meeting management suggestions by clicking on the “Meeting Tips” link under “Related Links” on our iLearn Web site or go directly to <http://www.meetingwizard.org/meetings/effective-meetings.cfm> for guidelines about preparing meeting agendas, managing meetings, and preparing minutes. I have also placed instructions for preparing agendas in the “Admin” packet under the “Resources” link on our iLearn Web site. These instructions explain how to automatically create a meeting agenda from Microsoft Word templates.

Since teamwork will be important in this course, make sure you read the Engleberg and Wynn (2003) chapters on working in groups located in the iLearn Web site readings course packet. I understand that many of you prefer to work independently and avoid the hassles associated with group projects. However, group work will more closely represent the way you would operate in a professional organization to develop strategy and accomplish projects – something that most of you can look forward to during your careers after college.

I also encourage you to take advantage of my office hours to meet with me individually. These meetings help build mutual understanding and can lead to improved performance in the course.

The following section describes our respective roles in classroom discussions and other group activities:

*Instructor's role.* I will modify this syllabus as needed and I will consider making changes based on student feedback during this course. I will provide leadership and course management. I will encourage students to exercise freedom of expression and individual thought. I will also provide advice and counsel but I will not simply “spoon feed” knowledge to students or answer questions that you should be able to answer on your own or with the help of classmates. I will also attempt to create situations that provide intersections between students and sources of knowledge to help you learn and retain information on your own.

*Students' role.* Students share in the responsibility for *teaching* and *learning* that takes place in this course. Each of you is ultimately responsible for your education. You must pay close attention to the syllabus and course schedule, take care to meet assigned deadlines, and complete readings and assignments without being reminded. You must come to meetings and discussions prepared to ask questions, volunteer answers, and discuss what you have learned. I also invite you to provide me with feedback on your progress in the course, especially if you encounter any problems or questions. Please take advantage of office hours, when I can meet with you individually or in teams. Finally, treat all members of this class with respect. This includes coming to meetings before the scheduled start time, listening and actively participating, fulfilling your responsibilities as a team member in a timely manner, turning off cell phones (meaning *power off*, not just ringer off with vibrate or text message on), and avoiding activities that distract others.

*Guest Speakers' role.* We will hear from guest speakers who are public relations professionals. They will describe public relations situations and provide information that you might need to understand cases as you complete your analyses. Finally, the speakers will offer a professional critique of our case analysis reports.

## COURSE WRITING GUIDE

Read the following guidelines and follow them carefully when writing your paper! Content is important. However, I will also judge your use of style, grammar, organization, and other elements of writing.

1. Organization is one of the most important aspects of writing. A good paper always begins with an introduction, transitions smoothly to your main points, and ends with a summary.
2. Style, grammar, punctuation and other elements of formal writing are also important. Use a style manual (e.g., APA, AP, MLA, Chicago) and a grammar book when writing. A style sample is attached. I also recommend using writing guides such as *A Plain English Handbook*, published by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (available at [www.sec.gov/pdf/handbook.pdf](http://www.sec.gov/pdf/handbook.pdf)).
3. Appearance is important. Type and print papers *neatly*, using double-spaced lines and one-inch margins. Use a *professional-looking*, 11- or 12-point font that is easy on the eye (e.g. Times New Roman). Include a cover sheet identifying your assignment name and title, course name, your name, and date. Include a header with your name, course name and assignment, page number, and other vital information at the top in the right-hand corner of *each* page. Use left-hand justification (right edge is “ragged”) with one-inch margins at top and sides. Staple your paper once in the upper-left-hand corner. *Do not paper clip or “dog ear” the pages.*
4. Manage your time and resources wisely. Type your paper on a computer and keep *a backup copy at all times*. Write your paper at least three days before it is due. Proof read it carefully before printing a final draft. Complete a careful spell check (both electronically *and* visually) before submitting your paper. Computer and printer problems, lost or corrupted disks, and other technical problems are poor excuses for late papers. Keep a copy of your corrected paper for later review.
5. Form good writing habits. For example:
  - a. Use an active writing style. Use strong verbs and avoid verbose sentences.
  - b. Avoid long sentences. Limit sentence length to between two and three lines.
  - c. Avoid long paragraphs. Start a new paragraph when transitioning to a new idea or speaker.
  - d. Develop a draft of your work from an outline. Build your paragraphs to follow the outline.
6. Properly cite ideas and materials that are not your own. See the syllabus for a policy on academic honesty. Plagiarizing, quoting, or paraphrasing information (including information from the World Wide Web) without proper citation could result in a failing grade for an assignment or for this course. For instance:
  - a. Differentiate your views from those of other people.
  - b. If you use published sources, cite them in the text and include them in a reference list on a separate page at the end of the paper. You must include in your reference list any work by others that you mention in your paper. Your reference format is to be double-spaced and strictly in accordance with an approved style manual. See the attached sample, which is single-spaced for the sake of brevity.
7. See me for guidance and advice, whenever necessary, during office hours or by appointment.

## Sample Citations Using American Psychological Association (APA) Style<sup>5</sup>

### Reference Citations in Text

**One Work by One Author:** In one study, Rogers (1995) compared reaction times to other variables. In a recent study (Smith, 2001) confirmed the findings of this study.

**One Work by Multiple Authors:** A recent study by Smith and Rogers (2000) cited evidence of life on other planets. Other scholars (Jones & Patella, 2001) refuted the study.

**Use Page Numbers When Citing Specific Quotations or Material:** A recent study by Smith and Rogers (2000) cited evidence of life on other planets. Many scholars refuted the study. For instance, one study claimed, “the belief that there is life on other planets is a myth” (Jones & Patella, p. 244).

**Personal Communication (e-mail, discussions, conversations, etc.):** Roger Dearing (personal communication, September 1, 2001) stated his belief that “there is no life on other planets.” *Note: Follow journalistic style for quoting sources when writing a news release, op-ed piece, letter to the editor, proposal, transcript of an interview, or other public relations, journalism, or marketing product.*

### General Forms for Reference List

#### **Periodical:**

Author, A. B., Author, C. D., & Author, E. F. (2001, xxxxx). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, xx, xxxxx. (Note: include day, week, or month; volume numbers; etc.; followed by page numbers.)

Example:

Smith, M. I. (2001, August 27). Rules on style. *Newsweek*, 56-57.

#### **Nonperiodical:**

Author, A. A. (1994). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.

Example:

Dewey, J. (1927). *The public and its problems*. Chicago: Swallow.

#### **Part of a nonperiodical (e.g., book chapter):**

Author, B. C. (2000). Title of chapter. In A. B. Editor & D. E. Coeditor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. xx-xxx). Location: Publisher.

Example:

Grunig, L. A., Grunig, J. E., & Ehling, W. P. (1992). What is an effective organization? In J. E.

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<sup>5</sup> This is a brief list adapted from The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Fifth Edition) (1999). See the APA publication manual for more detailed guidance.

Grunig (Ed.), *Excellence in public relations and communication management* (pp. 65-90). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

***Web-based guides to APA style:***

APA Style Essentials, by Douglas Degelman, Ph.D., and Martin Lorenzo Harris, Ph.D., Vanguard University of Southern California:

[http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.cfm?doc\\_id=796](http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.cfm?doc_id=796)

APA Style Guide, University of Southern Mississippi:

<http://www.lib.usm.edu/~instruct/guides/apa.html>

***Marist Library's Web-based reference shelf (with helpful online dictionaries, grammar guides, thesauri, guides to APA and MLA Style, etc.):***

<http://library.marist.edu/db/refshelf.html>

### POINT PAPER WRITING GUIDE

A point paper is a type of writing that *succinctly* identifies an issue, problem, or policy and often provides a recommendation in one or two pages. Point papers are often used to communicate with busy, senior leaders that have little time to read material in depth. Therefore, a point paper avoids bulky, detailed, narrative descriptions and instead provides a *summary of main points* and *recommendations*. Hence, point papers have a specific, recognizable format that is organized in short sections. Each section, set off with a clearly identifiable heading, contains a few brief bullet points, phrases, or sentences rather than long paragraphs of narrative text.

There are different varieties of point papers. These include:

- *Position papers.* Fact-based, persuasive papers designed to motivate someone to accept a recommendation.
- *Talking papers.* Papers that summarize an issue and provide talking points that could be used in a meeting, briefing, or presentation.
- *Information papers.* Papers that simply provide information on a topic to promote understanding. These papers offer no recommendations.

In terms of format, point papers begin with ***short title or subject section*** that identifies the topic in one or two lines. After the title, a ***background section*** describes the *general* nature and background history of an issue, problem, or policy. Limit this section to *factual* information and present a *variety* of viewpoints, *pro and con*, to achieve balance and credibility in your paper. Next a ***discussion section*** develops the background points and presents opposing views and merits of different positions; discusses how the issue or positions on the issue could affect an organization; and evaluates potential outcomes of positions. Finally, a point paper concludes with a short ***recommendation section*** that provides a persuasive argument to adopt a particular position or point of view.

When drafting a point paper, employ the following conventions to help conserve space and pack as much information as possible into one or two pages:

- Use bullets, headings, subheads, and phrases instead of sentences.
- Briefly explain jargon, acronyms, or technical phrases to avoid confusion.
- Avoid lines of text that contain only one or two words. Edit lines accordingly.
- Limit length to one or two pages.

Finally, even though it is acceptable to use bullets, phrases and incomplete sentences to conserve space in a point paper, clarity of writing and professional appearance are still important. Be consistent when formatting titles, headings, subheads and bullets. Avoid typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Strive for a neat, clean, professional appearance with a simple yet eye-appealing layout and design. Allow wide page margins (at least 1" on sides, top and bottom) and plenty of white space, which allows readers to read more easily and write in comments. See the following page for a point paper sample.

(Word Count: 461)

## Sample Format for Point, Talking, or Information Paper

Marist College

School of Communication & the Arts

COM<COURSE#>: <COURSE NAME>

<NAME>

<DATE>

<SEMESTER, YEAR>

### POINT PAPER -- <ISSUE OR TOPIC>

**Subject.** Identify *briefly* the issue, problem, or topic you are addressing in your point paper. This is not a detailed description – it is a *summary* of *main points*, so limit this section to one or two sentences or phrases.

**Background.** Describe the *general* nature and history of your issue, problem, or topic. Limit this section to factual information and present a *variety* of viewpoints, pro and con.

- There are different varieties of point papers:
  - *Position papers.* Fact-based, persuasive papers designed to motivate someone to accept a recommendation. Also called *position* paper.
  - *Talking papers.* Summarize an issue and provide talking points that could be used in a meeting, briefing, or presentation.
  - *Information papers.* Simply provide information on a topic to promote understanding; offers no recommendations.
- Use bullets, headings, and phrases instead of sentences to provide supporting facts.
- Explain jargon, acronyms, or technical phrases.
- Avoid lines of text that contain only one or two words. Edit lines accordingly.
- Limit length to one or two pages.

**Discussion.** Provide additional background and discuss *specific* details here. Offer opinion and commentary in this section. Use bullets, headings, and phrases to:

- Describe opposing views, merits, and disadvantages of different positions.
- Evaluate potential outcomes of your recommendations.
- Discuss how your position could affect your organization.

**Recommendation.** This is where you close your persuasive argument. Summarize your main points in one or two sentences here and then:

- For position papers, offer one (single bullet) or two (second bullet) recommendations.
- For information or talking papers, state, “No recommendations, provided for information.”

(Word Count: 271)

### **REFLEXIVE MEMO WRITING GUIDE**

There are many benefits to journal or reflexive memo writing. Writing reflexively helps build a record of experiences, makes a cognitive and emotional connection between learning and practice, and requires writers to take time out to reflect on life experiences – which often relieves stress. This type of writing creates unique opportunities for students. These opportunities include:

- Thinking critically and writing reflexively about individual and group learning experiences.
- Recording information and thoughts that enrich the learning experience.
- Building a record that contributes to course projects and a professional resume.

Students may write in essay format or in a more relaxed, narrative style – whichever is most comfortable. However, when writing, do more than simply construct a list of activities. Instead, perform the following actions each time you write a reflexive memo:

1. *Describe.* Describe learning activities and explain professional terms, practices, or processes associated with those activities.
2. *Elaborate.* Move beyond simple descriptions. Identify outcomes and lessons learned from activities. What was the end result of your work? Give examples.
3. *Evaluate.* Assess quality of work, lessons learned, and progress toward goals. Are you and your classmates or teammates performing as expected? Why or why not? How can you or others improve? What next?
4. *Reflect.* Dig deep and write reflexively about feelings. How do you relate to fellow students, teachers, mentors, and your learning activities and outcomes? In other words, how do you affect and how are you affected by your surrounding environment?

Refer to the following links for additional Web-based information on journaling or reflexive writing:

- <http://www.writingthejourney.com/>
- <http://www.journal-writing.com/experiences.htm>
- <http://www.journalforyou.com/>

## Blog Discussion Guide

Critical thinking is a key to success in case study analysis and in the public relations profession. Engaging in classroom and online group discussions will help students develop and refine critical thinking skills. According to Palloff and Pratt (2003), interactive discussion “helps students to look at issues from a number of viewpoints” (p. 151).<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, thoughtful consideration of issues that students and teachers raise in this course will contribute to collective learning. In this course, classroom discussions will be supplemented by online discussions through a Web log (blog) outside of class meetings.

MarketingTerms.com, an Internet-based marketing reference guide, describes a blog as “a frequent, chronological publication of personal thoughts and Web links.” The site adds, “A blog is often a mixture of what is happening in a person's life and what is happening on the Web, a kind of hybrid diary/guide site” (see <http://www.marketingterms.com/dictionary/blog>).

According to the Public Relations Society of America's quarterly magazine, *The Public Relations Strategist*, “Some observers are skeptical [of blogs], arguing that blogs are overvalued, over-hyped and due for a dot-com-like decline. Others are convinced that, regardless of whether blogs make it as big business, there's a fundamental shift going on.... PR pros need to prepare – or risk being left behind.”<sup>7</sup> The following screen shot depicts a sample blog post with a discussion question, an interactive hotlink, and an area for comments:

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window with the address bar displaying the URL: <http://www.marist.edu/~prcase/virtualworlds/seriousgaming/>. The browser title is "Marist PR Case Studies Blog (112), Fall 2006: Virtual Worlds and Serious Gaming - Mozilla Firefox".

The main content area shows a blog post titled "Virtual Worlds and Serious Gaming" dated "THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2006". The post text reads: "Many of us have wondered aloud why someone would need a 'second life' in a virtual world when our first life in the real world is so full and rewarding. Do these virtual worlds provide an outlet for people who are unfulfilled in the real world? Do these worlds actually extend our real world and help us become even more fulfilled through virtual interactions with others? Are there other reasons -- perhaps business incentives -- that help make virtual worlds and serious, multiplayer, online gaming so popular?"

The post continues: "National Public Radio broadcast a recent interview with Journalist Julian Dibbell, who wrote the book *Play Money: Or, How I Quit My Day Job and Made Millions Trading Virtual Loot*. In the interview, Dibbell discusses 'the world of online role-playing games, where hundreds of thousands of players log on to operate fantasy characters in virtual environments' (NPR, 2006). On its Web site, NPR points out, 'One of the most popular games, World of Warcraft, has six million subscribers' (NPR, 2006)."

A red link is provided: "[Listen to this interview](#) and use the links on this NPR page to listen to other broadcasts about gaming and the Sony-Nintendo competition over gaming consoles that we have discussed in class."

The post is attributed to "Mark" and posted by "Mark Van Dyke @ 7:59 AM". There are "0 comments" shown.

The right sidebar contains a "Contributors" list with names: Mark Van Dyke, Shannon, Allison, Jaime, Niki, Laura, Mariya, Danielle, Katie Dos Santos, courtney, Ashley, Mariana, Travis, Les, Dan, tarranmv, Laura Margiotta, Ann Marie, and Brian.

Below the contributors is a "PR Blog Links" section with links to: Strategic PR Blog, PR Blog - Education, Micro Persuasion, Richard Edelman's Blog, and Harold Burson's Blog.

<sup>6</sup> Palloff, R., & Pratt, K. (2003). *The virtual student*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

<sup>7</sup> Sweeney, K. (2006). The buzz on blogs. *Public Relations Strategist*, 12(3), 4-9.

Only members, guests, or other staff and faculty who supervise this course will be invited to participate in discussion groups or the blog. Still, be mindful about what you post on discussion boards or the blog. I hesitate to place too many restrictions or concrete guidelines on discussions, since this forum should be an inviting space that we can use to chronicle and freely express collective thoughts and experiences related to public relations cases. However, active participation by everyone in discussion groups or the blog will be an important means to construct our learning community and will constitute 10 percent of the course grade. Therefore, I am providing the following guidelines to help members determine how I will assess outcomes for this activity.

First, before the start of each discussion period, identify a public relations case by reading current news reports, blogs, organizational Web sites, etc. I recommend that you choose a *recent or ongoing* case that is relevant to current events, rather than an older, text-book type of case.

Second, using the framework provided by Guth and Marsh (2005), deconstruct the case and identify public relations activities that relate to how the organization you are studying conducted its research, planning, communication, and evaluation (or lack thereof) in the case. Then, by Wednesday of the first week of the discussion period, publish a post on the class blog that presents your assessment of how well (or poorly) the organization that conducted the public relations efforts carried out each of these processes. Use the RECAP questions in Guth and Marsh (2005, pp. 23-25) to guide your work and discussion.

Finally, in addition to publishing a post about your case, engage in a discussion of your case and cases presented by others by publishing comments about other cases that interest you. Group discussions and blogging require *frequent* activity. That means that each member in this course will need to post early and then comment on other postings frequently enough to sustain a continuous, active dialogue throughout the entire two-week discussion period.

I will not place a maximum number on the frequency of your posts, since the class should determine this figure. Likewise, I won't dictate length of your posts. However, each of your posts should contain *at least* 200 words and you should write your posts in a clear, concise manner. Comments may be brief but should contain content of intellectual value to others. Content in your posts should focus on public relations processes, issues, and cases.

Feel free to bring in content that you discover outside class as well as matters that come up in class. Learn how to insert in your posting interactive links to text, audio, images and other content on the Web. Ask for help with this if you are confused. In your postings, try to dig deep and express intellectual thoughts based on what you learn in this course (e.g., cite specific quotes or examples from readings and class discussions) as well as personal thoughts about what you think about this learning process.

Finally, act with integrity and respect for others when engaging in online discussions. Also, don't place anything in a discussion group or on the blog that you wouldn't want other Internet users outside this course to read.

I will assess the frequency of your posts, scholarly content, and the energy that you put into personal expression when assigning grades to online discussions. I will participate in discussions and provide feedback. Remember, though, much of the assessment for discussions will be determined by our group as a whole. Some of you will participate more than others and become leaders in stimulating intellectual thought. Others may participate rarely, with short posts that contain little intellectual content. As discussions evolve, many of us may adjust our approach to online discussions.

If you encounter problems with the blog (e.g., you cannot access the blog site) contact me by phone before the first blog discussion period begins. I won't accept technical problems as an excuse for not participating in a discussion period if you fail to notify me of such problems in a timely manner.

## Final Case Analysis-Strategic Communication Proposal Assessment Rubric (Spring 2008)

Section and Team #:	Comments/Assessment (v. 1/08)
<b>Front Pieces of Report</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover and table of contents clearly organized, in proper format?</li> <li>• Executive summary summarizes all sections, provides sufficient detail for an executive to make a decision?</li> <li>• Introduction establishes credibility of team and its members?</li> <li>• Situation description provides sufficient background?</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategic Program Description</b>	
<i>Does <b>research</b>:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address problems, opportunities, solutions, values?</li> <li>• Identify key publics (prioritized)?</li> <li>• Identify publics' stakes (interests, issues, needs)?</li> </ul>	
<i>Does <b>planning</b>:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate desired outcomes (goals and objectives)?</li> <li>• Articulate targeted messages?</li> </ul>	
<i>Does <b>communication</b>:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate media channels and tactics (activities)?</li> <li>• Link campaign actions, messages, publics, values?</li> </ul>	
<i>Does <b>evaluation</b>:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine to what degree campaign would be successful?</li> </ul>	
<b>Concluding Pieces of Report</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are resources described in sufficient detail?</li> <li>• Does evaluation section demonstrate that team has applied credible research, analysis, and concepts to its analysis?</li> <li>• Does conclusion propose credible and innovative ideas to solve the problem and identify associated costs and benefits?</li> </ul>	
<b>Integration of Theory, Readings, and Practice</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does analysis integrate &amp; define concepts from readings?</li> <li>• Does analysis attribute, quote, and cite credible sources?</li> </ul>	
<b>Writing</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good organization, structure, formatting?</li> <li>• Good balance of narrative and points (words and phrases)?</li> <li>• Good spelling, punctuation, grammar?</li> <li>• Proper APA style?</li> <li>• Clear, concise; written in active voice?</li> </ul>	
<b>Quality of Critical Analysis</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Does analysis reflect good critical thinking?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active, intelligent thinking that explores the situation?</li> <li>• Asking and answering relevant questions?</li> <li>• Independent thinking, arrives at thoughtful conclusions?</li> <li>• Viewing situation from different perspectives?</li> <li>• Supports views with valid reasons and evidence?</li> <li>• Discussion of ideas that is organized clearly?</li> </ul>	
<b>SUMMARY COMMENTS:</b>	<b>GRADE:</b>