ADGR772801 and ADCO500201 / Public Relations
4 Credits; Fall, 2015

Instructor: Dr. Donald Fishman
E-Mail: fishmand@bc.edu
Office: 454 St. Mary's Hall South
Office Hours: M/W 1:30-2:45 p.m. and by appointment
Telephone: 617-969-4190
Class Times: Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Room: To Be Announced

Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual idea of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit University, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and values systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description

This course is designed to be an examination of the technical, counseling, and planning elements in public relations. Attention in the course will focus on public relation campaigns, non-profit public relations, and the often complex relationship between management strategies and promotional objectives. Emphasis will also be placed on developing proper writing techniques for public relations. Included among the writing assignments will be a press release, bio piece, publicity campaign, and a press kit.
Course Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify the role of public relations in society at large and understand its historical and economic development.

2. Students will be able to understand the importance of public relations in meeting managerial objectives and in creating a positive image for an organization.

3. Students will be able to handle a variety of writing formats associated with public relations, including but not limited to, a press release, biographical summary, fact sheet, annual report, fundraising letter, digital press release, and a press kit.

4. Students will be able to understand the role of social media in altering several conventional protocols for distributing news and information.

5. Students will be able to demonstrate an ethical knowledge of and an understanding the legal context of public relations as demonstrated in the readings and class discussions.

6. Students will be able to demonstrate a knowledge of public relations across cultural settings and will explore the impact of culture and technology on changing standards and practices of public relations.

Computation of the Course Grade
The approximate breakdown of points awarded during the course is as follows: Two-Thirds Term Examination, forty percent; Press Kit, forty percent; Press Release, ten percent; and Class Participation, ten percent. Excessive absences during the semester will be cause for automatically lowering the final grade.

WCAS Grading System
The undergraduate grading system consistent of twelve categories: A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00) B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1/33), D (1.00), D- (.67) passing but unsatisfactory; F (.00), failure; I (.00), incomplete; F (.00) course dropped without notifying office; W (.00) official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67) excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (0.00) failure.
Grade reports: All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their semester grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known, the HELP Desk located in the Campus Technology Resource Center (CTRC) in O’Neill Library will issue a new one. The CTRC requires a valid picture ID (A BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

Written Work

There will be several short writing assignments in this class. These assignments are designed to introduce students to writing techniques suitable for public relations. The major writing assignment in the class is a press kit that is due at the end of the semester. The press kit will include a variety of writing assignments that are typically found in a public relations campaign. Unless otherwise specified, all written assignments must be: (1) Typed (2) Double-spaced and (3) On good quality bond paper.

Text/Readings (Required)

Each student should have a copy of the following book: Donald Fishman, *Readings in Public Relations* (BC Press, 2015). Required reading will be drawn from the materials listed in *Readings in Public Relations* and supplementary handouts. Reading assignments should be completed on or before the dates listed on the last page of the syllabus, and students should be prepared to discuss intelligently the materials they have read.

Examinations

There will only be one examination in this course: a Two-Thirds Term Examination. The examination will include objective questions, true-false questions, and short-answer questions. A more precise description of the examination will be presented during an in-class prep session that will be held prior to the midterm examination. There also will be a prep sheet distributed prior to the examination that contains sample questions.
Case Studies

Students are expected to read several case studies during the semester. The basic procedure for analyzing these case studies revolves around three questions: (1) What are the key facts in the case? (2) What are the main issues in the case? (3) What actions, if any, should be undertaken from a public relations viewpoint?

Scholarship/Academic Integrity

It is expected that all students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes but is not necessarily limited to cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. All such cases will be referred to the Dean of WCAS for disciplinary action. Cases of plagiarism will lead to an automatic failure in the course.

Request for Accommodations

If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or AHD) or Dean Paulette Durrett, (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations. For further information, you can locate the disability resources on the web at http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html.

Attendance

Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, it is the student’s obligation to inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets. The student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows that he or she will be absent on a particular day, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain the assignments for that day. If a student misses a class, he or she will be responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate’s notes and handouts and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, many instructors give points for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with
that class. Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc. Additional assignments, penalties, and corrective are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, students should consider withdrawing from class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of different backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult faculty members promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations entailed in the observance of that particular holiday. However, it is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements that are missed due to religious holidays.

There may be circumstances that necessitate a departure from this policy. Feel free to contact the WCAS at 617-552-3900 for consultation.

**Deadlines**

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late assignments will be graded accordingly.

**Course Schedule**

Please bring your coursepack to class each time: Donald Fishman, *Readings in Public Relations* (BC Press, 2015). Many of the writing assignments, workbook exercises, and other materials are located in the book. In addition, students must have a computer available, or access to a computer, for online writing activities and for submitting writing assignments.

September 5: Introduction to PR
- Southwest Airlines (Handout)
- Lecture on Business and PR
September 12:
Fishman/Robert Hall, 1-11
Fishman/Edsel, 13-26
Fishman/Euro Disney, 27-44
Fishman/GEICO, 45-52
Fishman/Firestone, 73-82

Fishman, afternoon session, 119-130

Writing Exercise I

Preliminary Discussion of Press Kit

September 19:
Fishman/Tuna, 83-92
Fishman/Chrysler, 93-100
Fishman/Coca-Cola, 53-71
Fishman, United Way, 119-130

• Writing Exercises II

September 26:
Fishman/Wall Street, Trading, 109-117
Fishman/Edward Bernays, 337-34

• Fundraising Lecture: Read 211-217
• Muir, Social Media (to be distributed)
• Berman, Social Media and PR (To be Distributed)

• Borders Case Study (To be Distributed)

• Further Discussion of Press Kit
October 3:  
Fishman, 167-208; 131-165 morning session--Legal Aspects of PR

- Special late morning prep session;

- **Two Thirds Term Examination**

October 10:  
Press Kit Workshop

- Review of Difficult Formats
- Discussion of Case Statement
- Visual Communication

**Examination Grades Available**

October 17:  
**Press Kits are Due.**

Students who want their press kits returned should put them in a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and I will mail the press kit back to you.