Instructor: Dr. Donald Fishman  
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Office: 454 St. Mary's South  
Office Hours: T/TH 5:30-6:00 p.m. and by appointment  
Telephone: 617-969-4190  
Class Times: TTH 6:30-9:45 p.m.  
Room: Devlin 112

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 worldview 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 value 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 relations 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 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 consists 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 pages of the syllabus, and students should be prepared to discuss intelligently the materials they have read.

Examinations
There will be only 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 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.

Disability Statement

Classroom accommodations will be provided for qualified students with documented disabilities. Students are invited to contact the Connors Family Learning Center office about accommodations for this course. Telephone appointments are available as needed. Appointments can be made by calling 617-552-8903. You may also make an appointment in person. For further information, you can locate 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 correctives 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 to 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 the course syllabus as soon as it is 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.
June 23:  Introduction to PR

• Southwest Airlines (Handout)

June 25:  Fishman/Robert Hall, 1-11
          Fishman/Edsel, 13-26
          Fishman/Euro Disney, 27-44
          Fishman/GEICO, 45-52
          Fishman/Coca Cola, 53-71
          Fishman/Firestone, 73-82

• Lecture on Business and PR

June 30:  Fishman/Tuna, 83-92
          Fishman/Chrysler, 93-100
          Fishman/United Way, 119-130

• Writing Exercises I

July 2:   Fishman/Wall Street, Trading, 109-117
          Fishman/Edward Bernays, 337-343

Writing Exercises II

• Fundraising Lecture: Read 211-217
• Discussion of Press Kit

July 7:  • Muir, Social Media (Distributed handout)

• Berman, Social Media and PR (Distributed Handout)

* Social Media Handout
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<tr>
<th>July 9:</th>
<th>Introduction to PR &amp; the Law</th>
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<td>Fishman, 167-200</td>
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<td>Fishman, 201-207</td>
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<td>July 14:</td>
<td>PR Law Lecture Continued</td>
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<td>Fishman, 133-165</td>
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<td>July 16:</td>
<td>Press Kit Analysis Session</td>
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<td>Prep Session for Two-Thirds Term Examination</td>
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<td>July 22:</td>
<td><strong>Two-Thirds Term Examination</strong></td>
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<td>July 24:</td>
<td>No Class: Instructor at Jesuit Conference</td>
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<td>July 28:</td>
<td>Press Kit Workshop</td>
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<td>Examination Grades Returned</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 30:</td>
<td><strong>Press Kits are Due.</strong></td>
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<td>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 as soon as possible.</td>
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