

Raritan Valley Community College
Academic Course Outline

COMM 210 - Introduction to Public Relations

I. Basic Course Information

- A.** Course number and Title: COMM 210, Introduction to Public Relations
- B.** New or Modified Course: Modified
- C.** Date of Proposal: Semester: Spring Year: 2020
- D.** Effective Term: Fall 2020
- E.** Sponsoring Department Communication & Languages
- F.** Semester Credit Hours: 3
- G.** Weekly Contact Hours: 3 Lecture: 3
 Lab 0
 Out of class student work per week: 6
- H.** Prerequisites: ENGL 111: English Composition I
- I.** Laboratory Fees: None
- J.** Name and Telephone Number or E-Mail Address of Department Chair and Divisional Dean at time of approval: Bick Treut, ext. 8429, bick.treut@raritanval.edu; Dean Patrice Marks, ext. 8802, patrice.marks@raritanval.edu.

II. Catalog Description

(Prerequisite: ENG 111-- English Composition I) Introduction to Public Relations examines issues, tasks, and responsibilities of public relations practitioners in a variety of professional settings (e.g., corporate, academic, government, non-profit, trade association and union). The course covers theories and foundations of public relations as well as contemporary practices of public relations in North America. It also explores legal and ethical issues facing professionals in the field of public relations today.

III. Statement of Course Need

- A. This course develops basic skills for Communication Studies students seeking internships/Co-Ops, employment, or transfer into four-year programs emphasizing Public Relations.

IV. This course generally transfers as a Communication Studies program elective.

- A. Free Elective
- B. This course meets a Communication Specialization Elective in the Communication Studies, AA degree.
- C. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, www.njtransfer.org; b) for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.

V. Outline of Course Content

This course explores the following topics:

- A. Foundations of Public Relations
 - 1. Models of public relations Public relations research Public relations process
 - 2. Public Relations and Communication Internal communication
- A. External communication
 - 1. Cross-cultural and international communication
- B. Public Relations and Media
 - 1. Understanding media needs
 - 2. Preparing news releases and publicity messages Using radio, television, and electronic technologies
 - 3. Planning press conferences and other special media events
- C. Developing Public Relations Programs and Campaigns
 - 1. Determining PR needs and objectives
 - 2. Planning PR programs and campaigns
 - 3. Developing a budget
 - 4. Evaluating PR programs and campaigns
 - 5. Developing PR in various settings (e.g., corporate, academic, government, non-profit, trade association, union)
- D. Public Relations and Crisis Management
 - 1. Developing PR crisis plans
 - 2. Crisis PR communications
 - 3. Anticipating PR crisis situations
- E. Public Relations and Legal/Ethical Issue

VI. General Educational and Course Learning Outcomes

A. General Education Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Clearly define objectives for a public relations campaign (GE-1).
2. Communicate effectively with individuals, groups, and "publics" with a vested interest in a public relations campaign (GE-1).
3. Critically evaluate a public relations campaign (GE-IL).
4. Recognize ethical issues facing professionals in the field of public relations (GE-ER).

B. Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. explain the role of public relations in the field of communication and media.
2. explain important models of public relations.
3. employ key public relations reference sources effectively.
4. determine research needs and appropriate research techniques for public relations issues.
5. determine public relations needs of a client
6. develop appropriate strategies and tactics to address a client's public relations needs.
7. evaluate the effectiveness of a public relations campaign.
8. develop public relations strategies for a crisis situation.
9. explain legal and ethical issues relevant to public relations.

C. Assessment Instruments

Given the outcomes described above, the following assessment methods may be used:

1. case studies
2. research papers
3. presentations
4. essays
5. portfolios
6. examinations

VII. Grade Determinants

- A. essays
- B. projects
- C. tests

D. presentations

Given the goals and outcomes described above, the primary formats, modes, and methods for teaching and learning that may be used in the course include:

- A. lecture/discussion
- B. small-group work
- C. guest speakers
- D. student oral presentations
- E. simulation/role playing
- F. student collaboration

VIII. Texts and Materials

THE Following types of course materials will be used.

- A. Cutlip & Center's Public Relations (11th ed.), G. Vroom, Pearson Publishing.
- B. primary sources
- C. interviews
- D. student writing
- E. film and video
- F. web sources

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

IX. Resources

- A. Computer Assisted Teaching Technology (CATT) classroom.

X. Honors Options (if relevant)

N/A