



Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: <https://catalog.uvu.edu/>

Semester: Spring

Year: 2025

Course Prefix: COMM

Course and Section #: 4850-001

Course Title: Public Relations and Strategic Communication Campaigns

Credits: 3

Course Description

Applies PR skills, case studies, and writing analysis to create strategic public relations campaigns for a number of clients. Requires students to generate a portfolio of work for clients.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

- General Education Requirements
- Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
- Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
- Discipline Core Requirements in Program
- Elective Core Requirements in Program
- Open Elective

Other: *Click here to enter text.*

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Farah Sanders

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Hone PR writing skills (VNRs, AP letters, media kits)
2. Generate strategy using research about publics of interest to the client
3. Create a fully integrated *campaign* portfolio for at least one client
4. Write news releases, compose storyboards for VNRs, create media kits using persuasive layout and design
5. Apply client research, syndicated research, and personal research to better understand target audience
6. Organize a portfolio for use when seeking employment in industry

Service Learning Objectives:

These objectives link back to the Course Outcomes above:

- Understand how PR skills can support positive change in one's community (COs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Build mutually beneficial relationships (student, client, community) that are reflective of the PR industry and civic involvement (COs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- Enhance personal development and sense of social responsibility (COs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Course Materials and Texts

1- Wilson, Laurie J., Ogden, Joseph D., Wilson, Christopher Strategic Communications Planning: For PR, Social Media and Marketing. 8th Edition ISBN: 979-8-7657-7482-3 and eBook is: 978-1-5249-9902-5.

2- Scott, Maria Elles (2021). The PR Campaigns Worktext. 1st edition. Sage Publishing.

Laptop or Tablet

- All students are expected to have access to a computer with a keyboard (not a digital keyboard). This course is intended for completion using a laptop computer, desk top computer, or tablet with attached keyboard. No cell phones are permitted for assignment submissions. If you don't have a computer, laptops and tablets are now available for [checkout from the UVU Fulton Library \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

Each student enrolled in COMM 3520 will complete the following assignments.

Course Requirements	Points	Learning Outcomes Achieved
Assignments		
Class Participation	40	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
CITI Certification	5	5
Team Contract	20	2
Team Research Report	40	2
Media Relations Training	25	1, 4, 5
Campaign Plan Outline	25	1, 3, 4
Campaign Plan Written	75	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Campaign Plan Slides	20	2, 3, 4, 5
Group Presentation to Client (In Class)	50	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Peer Evaluation I and II (2 @ 25 points each)	50	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Field Experience I and II	100	1, 2, 3, 4

Final Presentation Slides	80	1, 2, 3, 4
Final Group Campaign Presentation Attendance (In Class)	10	2
Final Campaign Book (Written)	125	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Quizzes and Exams		
Chapter Quizzes (4 @ 15 points each)	60	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Exam 1 (Ch. 1 – PR Matrix)	63	2, 3, 5
Discussions/Meeting Memos/Service Learning Reflection		
Discussions (6 @ 5 points each)	30	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Team Meeting Memos (7 @ 10 points each)	70	1, 3, 4, 5,
Service Learning Reflection (5 @ 10 points each)	50	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
TOTAL POINTS	938	

The following grading scale will be used in the course:

A = 94%-100%
A- = 90%-93.9%
B+ = 86%-89.9%
B = 83%-85.9%
B- = 80%-82.9%
C+ = 76%-79.9%
C = 74%-75.9%
C- = 70%-73.9%
D+ = 66%-69.9%
D = 63%-65.9%
D- = 60%-62.9%
F = > = 60%

You can determine your percentage (and grade) by totaling the points you have accumulated and dividing those points by the number of points possible, then multiplying that number by 100 for your final grade percentage.

Student Time Commitment / Workload:

- A 3-credit hour class means each student spends 3 hours in the classroom each week.
- Each student spends an additional 9 hours outside the classroom each week completing course-related work.
- Students taking this course will have significant readings and projects, which require them to spend 9 hours each week working outside the classroom.

- The service-learning component should fit within this workload
- This course involves group work: Student groups also need to be looking and working ahead of deadlines

Service-Learning Component

- This course also has a service-learning (SL) framework and requires 20 hours of service on behalf of a community/nonprofit organization (aka “the client”). In-class workdays will be provided throughout the semester, but additional hours are needed outside of our class time (e.g., on-site with client, canvassing research, implementation of campaign, etc.) to meet the SL requirement of this course. Students are responsible for tracking their time.
- Through service-learning, students will connect the Course Objectives to addressing a specific PR problem in order to enhance the client’s community. Students will consult, conduct research, develop a written plan and materials as well as implement and evaluate the impact of their PR campaign. In addition, students will reflect on their personal and professional impact and experience.
- The work done in this course aims to provide a more enriched and real-world learning experience that benefits both student, client, and community. Engaged students will create not just portfolio-worthy pieces but also a legacy that involves personal citizenship and greater understanding of community issues. Learn more about UVU's Service Learning - https://www.uvu.edu/socialimpact/what_we_do/service_learning.html

Semester Project

This semester, we will develop a public relations and strategic communication campaign based on previously written case studies from COMM 3520 that addresses a real-world topic. Our class will be working on a campaign surrounding affordable housing needs in rural Utah, focusing on Wasatch County, Utah, home of UVU Wasatch. We will also learn and apply PR tools and techniques to the affordable housing needs of this mountain valley, home of the Soldier Hollow Olympic Park, Midway Swiss Days, and the Heber Valley Railroad. Real world experience will include interactions with key publics, media relations, and execution of previously crafted messages, strategies, and tactics.

Students will complete a variety of assignments: a review of surveys, achievement of a goal, SMART objectives, delivery of messaging, key public interaction, strategies, and tactics, following a calendar, budget, and communication plan to execute a real world campaign. Students will also participate in other in-class activities and assignments.

Submission of Assignments

All assignments must be submitted electronically via Canvas. Unless otherwise indicated on Canvas, most assignments are due on Sundays. Assignments must be submitted on Canvas for grade. Assignments submitted after the due date/time will receive 0 points unless discussed with me before the due date.

Exam and Final Presentation

One exam (63 points) will be given during the semester. The exam will cover material from the readings, lecture materials, class discussions, and assignments.

The final presentation (125 points) will be the final and will focus on the results of the campaign execution. Students will present their evaluation of the campaign including evaluation criteria and evaluation tools used to determine the outcome to the client. As instructed by the University, the final project will be given at the time indicated in the syllabus. Please make any necessary travel, work, etc. arrangements to complete the final on the date/time indicated in the syllabus.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be given online every other week. Quizzes will not be repeated and cannot be made up. Approximately five quizzes will be given. The 10-question multiple choice, true/false, and matching quizzes will be corrected and turned in immediately after they are given. Questions will be taken from the readings due for that class module, lesson or materials presented in the previous class periods/modules.

Submitting Assignments

All assignments must be submitted electronically online via Canvas. Most assignments are due on Fridays unless otherwise indicated on Canvas. Assignments must be submitted on Canvas for grade. Assignments submitted after the due date/time will receive 0 points unless discussed with instructor before the due date

Technology Fee

This class has a technology fee. The fee is for the technology used to complete the media relations tactic components of the campaign, this includes development of media relations tactics including the development of media lists and social media monitoring, news release distribution, and media monitoring of earned media. Instructors may also use the technology for in-class activities.

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

All required readings use chapters from the course that align with lectures and assignments.

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

Lesson 1: Campaigns, PR Matrix, and Teamwork (1 week)

Readings:

- Chapter 1 THE RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING APPROACH TO COMMUNICATION

PR Campaigns Worktext

- Getting Started
- Ch. 2 - Prep for Client

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Summarize the 8-Step Strategic Communications Planning Matrix and its importance.
- Campaigns
- Teamwork
- Working with Real Clients

Lesson 2: Research Review and Development (2 weeks)

Readings:

- Chapter 3 COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH METHODS
- Chapter 4 STRATEGICALLY APPLYING RESEARCH AND SOCIAL INSIGHTS

PR Campaigns Worktext

- Ch. 5 - Creating a Research Plan (pgs. 49-51)
- Ch. 6 - Research for the Client (pgs. 53-63)
- Ch. 7 - Primary Research for the Client (pgs. 65-78)

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Analyzing primary research data
- Determining the information to gather
- Conduct Secondary Research by using the Marketing Research Checklist.
- Summarize the demographics and psychographic research of Stakeholders using the 8-Step Strategic Communications Planning Matrix.
- Formulate the Situation Analysis, and Core Problem/Opportunity.

Lesson 3: Audience and Publics

Readings:

- Chapter 6 KEY PUBLICS
- PR Campaigns Worktext
- Ch. 4/Defining the Target Audience
 - Ch. 8/Outlining Your Situation Analysis

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Examine how stakeholders and publics can be analyzed to discover motivating self-interests and opinion leaders.
- Apply research to understand the target audience, public (s), and the problem or opportunity.
- Determine needs and methodologies for a research plan.
- Think analytically to begin to identify the best messages and strategies to communicate campaign messages to the target audience(s) and affect the desired change.

Lesson 4: Goals and Objectives

Readings:

- Chapter 5 SETTING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
- PR Campaigns Worktext
- Ch. 3/Defining the Project
 - Ch. 9/Writing the PR Campaign

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Examine a mix of communication theories that can help guide strategies and tactics.
- Affirm how to set strategic goals and objectives for PR campaigns.
- Write S.M.A.R.T. objectives for PR campaign that contribute to organizational and communication goals.
- Work with a team to begin establishing a strategic PR campaign plan.

Lesson 5: Messaging

Readings:

- Chapter 6 PRIMARY MESSAGES pp. 125-133

Podcast (est. 20 minutes)

- 8 Tips For Creating Key Messages

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Review modes of persuasion and effective communication
- Explain key messages and role in PR campaigns
- Craft key messages that inform and motivate key publics
- Work with a team to begin establishing a strategic PR campaign plan
- Execute the creation of primary messages and secondary messages to help call the stakeholders to action.

Lesson 6: Big Idea Strategy and Tactics

Readings:

- Chapter 7 BIG IDEA STRATEGY AND CREATIVITY
- Chapter 8 STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

PR Campaigns Worktext

- Ch. 10 - Creating Tactics from Research and Analysis

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Be able to design realistic "big ideas" that capture attention and appeal to an organization's key publics
- Synthesize research findings into a strategy that motivates a desired behavior in target publics
- Apply the PESO model to tactics
- Create a strategic plan, including goal, objectives, target publics, messages, strategies, and tactics
- Create strategies and tactics to help achieve the objectives of a strategic communication plan.

Lesson 7: Calendaring and Budget

Readings:

- Chapter 10 CALENDARING AND BUDGETING

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Create a strategic calendar based on a Gantt Chart, budget, and communication confirmation for PR and Strategic Communication Case Study.

Lesson 8: Review Campaign Assignments

Readings: Read the following assignment instructions

- Campaign Outline
- Campaign Plan (Written)
- Client Plan Presentation

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Campaign Outline
- Campaign Plan (Written)
- Client Plan Presentation
- Team meeting notes
- Service Learning Reflection 2

Lesson 9: Review of Campaign

Readings:

- Students will meet with instructor in groups to review campaign outlines, plans and additional research needed to bring strategies and tactics to life.

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Identify needs for activation and elements to create for your campaign plan.
- Create a strategic campaign plan that fits the needs of the client.

Lesson 10: Evaluation

Readings:

- Chapter 12 COMMUNICATIONS MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
PR Campaigns Worktext
- Ch. 11 - Evaluation and Measurement
- Ch. 13 - Presenting to the Client

Online Reading

- Evaluating Informational, Behavioral, Output Objectives by Hayes et al (pgs 41-42)

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Identify the benefits of the evaluation process.
- Examine a variety of techniques and frameworks to evaluate a campaign.
- Plan for evaluation and implementation.
- Create a strategic campaign plan that fits the needs of the client.
- Know what's needed for a client presentation.

Lesson 11: Presentation Prep

Readings:

- Chapter 13 PRESENTATIONS

Handouts:

- Hayes 41-42
- Hayes 319-325
- Barcelona Principles 3.0 Infographic

Lecture and Discussion Subjects:

- Create a strategic plan, including strategies, tactics and messaging.
- Present campaign plan and draft materials to client in a professional fashion.

Lesson 12: Campaign Execution

Readings:

- Review Chapter 8: STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Lecture and Discussion Subjects

- Begin process of carrying out the campaign strategic plan
- Work with the media both traditional and social media to communicate campaign messages
- Work with their client to execute the plan

Lesson 13: Implementation (2 weeks)

Readings:

- Review: Chapter 12 COMMUNICATIONS MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
- Review: Chapter 1 PR Matrix

Lecture and Discussion Subjects

- Carry out campaign strategic plan
- Work with the media both traditional and social media to communicate campaign messages
- Work with client and instructor to execute the campaign plan
- Problem solve unexpected changes in the implementation process
- Critical thinking to look at real time data, evaluate the plan and make changes as needed.

Lesson 14: Evaluation and Final Presentation

Readings:

- Review: Chapter 12 COMMUNICATIONS MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
- Review: Chapter 1 PR Matrix

Lecture and Discussion Subjects

- Evaluate the implementation stage to determine success and areas of improvement.
- Write a comprehensive campaign review.
- Present the campaign in a professional manner to the class and the client.

Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

Use of artificial intelligence to construct written material or assist with any and all assignments, discussions, and quizzes/exams is prohibited in this course. Students must submit their own written work, crafted by them without the use of artificial intelligence software, such as but not limited to Chat GPT. Use of such software for submitted work is considered cheating and falls under the guidelines of cheating and the students rights and responsibility code of UVU.

Examples of use of generative AI tools not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts/responses assigned to you or content that you put into a Teams/Canvas chat.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers to complete class assignments.
- Answering Essay questions in an Exam

Any student work submitted using AI tools found to have more than 15% of the student work generated by AI will be addressed and is subject to review in addition to sanctions (see below). If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work.

Though intentional vs accidental is often a judgment call for an instructor, it's important to note that accidental plagiarism is still plagiarism—a serious need to address the incident arises regardless. Though the resulting consequences may vary based on the degree of intentionality, any form of plagiarism will be addressed with equal seriousness.

To be clear, copying the exact wording of an AI chatbot is considered plagiarism and means that a student will be held accountable for violating academic integrity. Although many citation guides are already presenting ways to properly use and cite AI, we do not currently believe that citing AI in your work is in line with the standards of academic writing that value knowing the exact author(s) or sources that informed your writing.

If you are suspected of plagiarism, the first step will always be a conversation with your instructor (in-person or via Teams). If the infraction is very minor or clearly unintentional, there may be no sanctions at all. However, a lowered grade and/or the chance to revise the paper may also be possible. In more serious cases, the assignment may receive an automatic zero.

The most serious infractions may lead to your instructor filing an incident report with the Student Conduct office and with the Communication department chair. Regardless of the chair's decision, the

incident report remains a part of your permanent record. The incident may also be reported to the Dean's office for further sanctions and decisions.

We draw your attention to the fact that different classes at Utah Valley University could implement different AI policies, and it is the student's responsibility to conform to expectations for each course.

Using Remote Testing Software

This course does not use remote testing software.

This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at DHHservices@uvu.edu

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

Equity and Title IX

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a [specially dedicated space](#) for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.