NR 400 Public Relations in Natural Resources – Spring 2013
3 semester credits
11:00-12:15 TR, Room 133 Wagar

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University catalogue course description: Effective public relations and public information programs applicable to natural resource professionals.

This book has useful theory, examples of ideas at work and techniques for planning, implementing and evaluating public involvement and communications.

Course Outline
(Subject to change based on speakers and group cooperators’ availability, and other developments. Assigned readings should be completed by the day listed to apply to lectures/discussions. Note that readings are emphasized early in the course so projects can be the focus later.)

Week 1, January 22-24
- Introduction to course: syllabus review and course overview, projects, expectations and assignments
- Discussion of service learning planning model
- Introduction to group projects and selection of groups
- Discussion of group problem solving

Readings:
Review syllabus and additional materials
Jacobson, Ch. 10: Conservation through Education, p343-391 (Thurs)
Jacobson, Ch. 7: Communicating with Groups, p207-224 (Thurs)

Actions and assignments:
Learning styles inventory – review and self-evaluation
Selection of groups and project assignments
Week 2, January 29-31
- Project reviews
- Tentative introductory meetings with project cooperators
- PR definitions, roles, planning concepts
- SWOT analysis/WWWWWWH/Benefits & Barriers, and Desired situations

Readings:
Jacobson, Introduction & Ch. 1: Communications for Conservation, p1-23 (Tues)
Jacobson, Ch. 2: Influencing Public Attitudes and Behaviors, p.25-47 (Thurs)

Actions and assignments:
Group introductions
Determine group contact person

Week 3, February 5-7
- Tentative introductory meetings with project cooperators
- Situation Analysis: Evaluate publics and programs
- Understanding audiences
- Tentative guest speaker/case study (based on other scheduling)

Readings:
Jacobson, Ch. 3: Designing a Public Communications Program, p49-73 (Tues)
Jacobson, Ch. 11: Evaluating and Monitoring Program Success, p393-423 (Thurs)

Actions and assignments:
Audience segmentation activity
Group meetings: Situation Analysis

Week 4, February 12-14
- Formative and evaluative research tools, uses and limitations
- PR research
- Library resources: Allison Level, WCNR Librarian
  (Class will meet in Morgan Library, Room 173 on February 14)

Readings:
Review Jacobson Ch.1 (Tues)
Jacobson, Ch. 4: Researching Audiences Using Quantitative Approaches, p75-115 (Tues)
Jacobson, Ch. 5: Audience Research Using Qualitative Approaches, p117-153 (Tues)

Actions and assignments:
Group meetings: goals and objectives, target audiences, message, format, distribution, and evaluation
DUE: Rough draft of Situation Analysis, February 14
Week 5, February 19-21
- Communications and Principles in action: knowing problems, finding solutions
- Overview of communications leadership processes and principles
- Guest speaker/case study: TBA

Readings:
TBA

Actions & assignments:
Class group assignment OR case study worksheet
Group meetings: Continued work on Situation Analysis

Week 6, February 26-28
- Desired Situations, and review PR plan, sections 4-10: goals & objectives
- Communications: Presentations, outlines/agendas, fact sheets, lesson plans
- Written media & electronic media

Readings:
Jacobson, Ch. 6: Communications Strategies and Actions, p155-206 (Tues)
Jacobson, Ch. 7: Communicating with Groups, p224-239 (Thurs)
Jacobson, Ch. 8: Using Mass Media, p241-302 (Thurs)

Actions & assignments:
DUE: Situation Analysis, February 26 (include group picture)
PR campaign outline OR written/electronic media assignment

Week 7, March 5-7
- More on desired outcomes, PR plan, sections 4-10: communications and leadership strategies
- Visual aids: storyboarding, brochures, displays, web content (and video?)
- Social media strategies
- Tentative guest speaker

Readings:
Jacobson, Ch.9: Methods and Materials for Interpreting the Environment, p303-341 (Tues)

Actions & assignments:
Storyboarding OR visual aids/brochures assignment
Group meetings: pre-break debriefing

Week 8, March 12-14
- Meetings, interpretation, and field demonstrations and trips
- MIDTERM EXAM: March 14
Week 9, March 19-21
SPRING BREAK

Week 10, March 26-28
- Test review
- Diversity in public relations and natural resources communications: Guest speaker TBA

Actions & assignments:
Group meetings and catch-up

Week 11, April 2-4
- Group discussions before class about progress, obstacles, etc. (with invitation to group cooperators)
- Ethics in communications: Guest speaker: Kara Lamb, US Bureau of Reclamation (tentative)
  *(Exact dates for visits TBA)*

Actions & assignments:
Group meetings
Ethics (or diversity) worksheet

Week 12, April 9-11
- Conflict Management: principles, problems, and examples; and facilitation and participation
- Case studies

Actions & assignments:
Evaluations on case studies
DUE: Rough draft, Sections 4-10, April 11

Week 13, April 16-18
- Crisis management and more conflict management
- Greenwashing
- Case studies
- Review of project evaluation

Readings:
Review Jacobson, Ch. 11

Actions & assignments:
Evaluation on case study (or greenwashing)
Group meetings: Preparing final projects and presentations
Week 14, April 23-25
- Discussions of final projects/PR plans and group presentations
- Additional class catch-up

**Actions & assignments:**
**DUE: FINAL DRAFT, SECTIONS 4-10, April 25**
Group meetings: Preparing group presentations

Week 15, April 30-May 2
- PR plan presentations for class and cooperating partners
  *Electronic presentation materials and other electronic media due to me day prior to presentations*

Week 16, May 7-9
- PR plan presentations for class and cooperating partners
  *Electronic presentation materials and other electronic media due to me day prior to presentations*
- Course summary and exam review

**Actions & assignments:**
Critiques and recommendations
Course evaluation
Group (and self) evaluation

**FINAL EXAM: DATE TBA**

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**Grading Policy (1,000 total points):**
Participation: attendance (50 points), Group/peer evaluations (30 points), **Individual** 80
Assignments, evaluations & worksheets, in-class (6-8), **Individual** 120
Midterm and final tests (multiple choice), based on readings & lectures, **Individual** 200
Communications products (#7 in plan), **Individual** (one from each category)
  a. Brochure, Display, Popular Article, or Storyboard 100
  b. Fact Sheet, News Release, Memorandum 50
  c. Public Service Announcement or Meeting plan 50
**Group Plan** - Existing Situation 1-3, **Group grade** 100
**Group Plan** - Sections 4-10 and improvements on 1-3 in total with revisions, integration, and style formatting, **Group grade** 200
**Group presentation and group outline for talk** 100

**Total** 1,000
Attendance, Tardiness and Participation
Absences and tardiness will not gain you favorable public relations – internally in this class or externally in your career or life.

This is a campus-based class designed for instructor and student interaction, thus I expect you to be at every session and on time. Missing one day of this 1 1/4 hour class is like missing 1.5 of another class. For NR400, class time is useful for discussions, to add new information not covered in readings, to make announcements, to clarify assignments, to provide an atmosphere of learning amongst peers, and, most importantly, to get you involved in the learning process. You miss those values if you are not in class. Class participation (quantity and quality) is part of the grading system; if you are not in attendance, you cannot be evaluated. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes, handouts and directions from other students.

Minimum expectations for work outside of class are about 2 hours for each hour in class; consequently, 5 hours of work per week should be planned for readings, study, and your Public Relations plan and group project.

Academic integrity is important. Students are expected to do their own work by learning in lectures, discussions, readings, and interactions with partners. You are expected to be familiar with the principles in the following websites, and use the following statement as your guide: On my honor as a scholar, I pledge that I have not received or given any unauthorized assistance on exams, assignments, or other academic work.

http://tilt.colostate.edu/integrity/honorpledge/index.cfm; http://tilt.colostate.edu/integrity; http:// facultycouncil.colostate.edu/files/manual/sectioni.htm#I.5

Lectures and discussions
I try to give thoughtful, well prepared and interesting lectures and discussions. Class time together allows for new information to be added that is not covered in the text or that needs elaboration and discussion. You can participate best when you read the assigned text and any additional handouts.

Discussions and activities in class can help you develop your own leadership and public relations style, and may expose you to risks and criticism from peers and instructors. Accepting, understanding and using criticism to improve is good for public relations and personal development. I want you to have confidence, to take risks to make honest and supportable inputs, and to learn from disagreements. It is all of our responsibility to respect each other and understand diverse views and actions. Disruptive behavior will be addressed as per CSU standards of conduct.

Recitation sessions
Recitation sessions will be occasionally incorporated into the class. They are designed for work and to facilitate discussions, planning, reflections, group processes, reviews, and individualized help. We will use lectures and readings as a foundation for working
on the public relations plans for a local community/agency need. We discuss and compare notes, critically look at what we have produced, and ask questions to improve.

These sessions will also include setting aside time for your groups to reflect about case studies, progress on your projects, and to plan your individual and group work. Each group may want to identify a facilitator, secretary and sergeant-at-arms for each discussion. Facilitators organize and conduct meetings, and construct an agenda and process to cover all topics in the proper amount of time. Secretaries take notes and may give comments to teachers for review. A report could be a few sentences that capture the strengths and weaknesses of what you are doing and how the class is going. In these cases, I am most interested in hearing about your learning and work progress. Sergeants-at-arms are responsible for keeping attention to rules, procedures and timing. They will remind the group about what needs to be discussed based on the syllabus, class lectures/discussions and your project.

**Service Learning**

Learning is more than reading books and taking exams. The best way to learn is to do and to teach. Your knowledge, skills and attitudes will be put to work serving some of the natural resources needs in your community. You will develop a public relations plan for an organization on a topic of current interest. You will learn about areas of study and personal attributes that can help you to become effective leaders of public relations processes. As the class progresses, you will interact with members of the organizations, understand their needs and attitudes, develop a plan for the project, represent them in discussions during classes, and present your plan in written and verbal forms. The intent of these exercises is for you to integrate and apply what you have learned.

**Objectives for you:**

You will learn about and should be able to do the following:

1. Discuss the importance of public relations to your work objectives.
2. Identify internal and external publics with which you will work.
3. Explain how ideas are adopted or rejected.
4. Reduce barriers to communications.
5. Develop and explain a communications model.
6. Apply principles from lectures, reading, and visuals to actual problem solving.
7. Critically review situations in need of intervention and recommend solutions.
8. Prepare and use visual aids.
9. Identify steps in organizing presentations, committees, conferences, and projects.
10. Write a fact sheet, news release, or memorandum.
11. Design and produce a brochure, display, and storyboard.
12. Develop meeting agendas for several purposes.
13. Practice facilitation techniques.
15. Discuss public involvement procedures.
16. Work well with others.
17. Learn how to prepare, implement and evaluate objectives.
18. Participate in a Service Learning project that promotes learning about public relations.
19. Develop a public relations plan for a community-based problem or opportunity.
20. Reflect about the Service Learning experience through discussions with professors, cooperators, and peers.
21. Be able to mentally organize and summarize information.

A few more thoughts
This class is an introduction to the people-side of natural resources management. Scientists and managers of natural resources have positive impacts only when society allows them to operate. People – our “publics” – are becoming more knowledgeable about how the environment works and they have strong emotions about how their natural resources are managed. Public relations means that you need to understand publics and how to communicate with them.

This course is a mixture of learning methods: I will facilitate lectures, discussions, and demonstrations; guest experts will add variety and special expertise to the class; and we will always strive to involve you to the maximum extent in the learning process even though class size is large. Reading the book and handouts, keeping notes in journals, working on projects, and participating in active discussions will make learning more practical and student-centered. Learning is not complete by memorizing facts sufficient to get good grades on tests. I expect reading assignments to be completed before coming to class so you are part of the process rather than an observer. Our discussions and your questions will be much more thoughtful when you are prepared.

Some final things:

- Students, faculty, friends and family can have normal stress and anxieties, but some can lead to depression, safety issues or other aberrant behaviors. If you experience problems or are concerned for another member of the CSU community, you can contact campus resources. The Tell Someone phone number for CSU is 970/491-1350. The website is [http://www.publicsafety.colostate.edu/tell-someone.aspx](http://www.publicsafety.colostate.edu/tell-someone.aspx)

- Writing assistance is available to help you communicate and use proper structure, styles and mechanics: [http://writing.colostate.edu/index.cfm](http://writing.colostate.edu/index.cfm)