Course Description: A course providing a basic understanding of public relations processes, practices and effects, focusing on public relations as a career. It also provides an understanding of how public relations decisions affect various occupations in an increasingly technological and intercultural environment. The course reviews key social science concepts, such as public opinion, persuasion, and systems theory, and the ethical, analytic, and strategic approaches used by public relations professionals. Students completing this course will be able to describe the history and theories of public relations, use the basic vocabulary of the public relations practitioner, and recognize and discuss public relations as used by institutions, business, politics, government, and other organizations. They will also be able to develop writing skills for public relations tactics, use critical thinking to identify organizational problems, to offer appropriate public relations suggestions for their solution, and to identify the ethical implications of public relations practices.

Instructor: Kevin J. Mattran
Telephone: 402-489-6582 (Home)

Email: kevin.mattran@doane.edu


Course Objectives:

1. To understand the different models of public relations
2. To gain knowledge of the history of the practice of public relations, including important case studies.
3. To understand the role of values and ethics in public relations.
4. To understand key theories that underlie the practice of public relations.
5. To understand the laws that govern the practice of public relations.
6. To work with a group to present a proposal that addresses a public relations problem and/or opportunity for a client.
**Course Schedule:** While the schedule for in class activities may change, please keep up with the reading schedule.

**Week 1:**
- Introduce course and people.
- What is public relations (1-2 paragraphs). This will be used for comparison at the end of the course.
- Assign Online Journal.
- Define public relations.
- Models.
- Careers in public relations.
- Begin history of public relations.
- Read Section I (Chapters 1-6)

**Week 2:**
- The publics in public relations.
- Assign case brief #1.
- Communication theory and public opinion.
- Ethics and social responsibility.
- Begin reading *Primal Branding*.
- Select groups for final presentations.
- Read Section II (Chapters 7-11)

**Week 3:**
- Test over section I.
- Assign companies for group projects.
- Group work.

**Week 4:**
- Discussion of Section II
- Assign case brief #2.

**Week 5:**
- Test over Section II
- Discussion of *Primal Branding*
- Group work
- Read Section III (Chapters 12-16)
**Week 6:**
- Crisis communications.
- PR and marketing.
- Cross-cultural communication (related to criteria in *Primal Branding*).
- PR and the law.
- Group work.

**Week 7:**
- Test over Section III.
- Group work.

**Week 8:**
- Final presentations.
- What is public relations (compare to first week description).
- Course evaluation.

**Attendance and Participation:** Your contributions to this class are valuable therefore your attendance is imperative. If you must miss a class, please extend the courtesy of advanced notice either by phone or email. Missing class will affect your grade as follows:
- Missing 1 class lowers your participation grade to an A-.
- Missing two classes lowers your participation grade to a C.
- Missing 3 or more classes lowers your participation grade to an F.

**Final Grade:**
- 3 Tests……………………………...15% each.
- 2 Case Briefs………………….5%
- Online Journal………………….10%
- Final Presentation………………20%
- Attendance and participation….20%

**Academic Integrity Policy:** The Doane College Academic Integrity Policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and tests will represent your own work. Any use of other’s ideas without proper citation of sources is plagiarism and will result in a loss of all points for that particular assignment or test.