

**Journalism 440 — Public Relations Techniques**  
**Friday, 11:00am to 1:45pm, Manzanita Hall 112**

**Professor:** Marcy De Veaux

**Office:** Manzanita Hall 365b

**Office Hours:** Mondays, 1pm-3pm and Thursdays, 12:30-1:30pm

**Phone During Office Hours:** (818) 677-7240

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**Course Description**

This senior level course is an overview of public relations techniques where you can learn the methods and strategies used in public relations campaigns. Weekly class meetings include lectures, guest speakers, and student led presentations from material found in reading assignments and case studies.

Considerable time will be spent on the advent of new technologies that have changed the way public relations professionals deliver messages to the public. A new media component will include teamwork linking public relations to new communications platforms. This component allows you the opportunity to explore emerging technology through research and hands on applications.

**Prerequisites**

A grade of C or better in Journalism 341.

**Required Texts**

*Public Relations Cases*, Eighth Edition, by Jerry A. Hendrix and Darrell C. Hayes

*Shaking the Foundations: 200 Years of Investigative Journalism in America*, Bruce Shapiro

Readings from newspapers, online magazines, newswires and blogs will be assigned.

**Attendance**

Attendance will be taken during each class meeting. Any absences will keep you from learning public relations methods and strategies. Failure to attend each class meeting will cause you to lose valuable points for assigned work conducted during class meetings. *Lost points can not be made up and will significantly lower your final grade.*

## **Classroom Conduct**

Cell phones and pagers must be placed on vibrate at the beginning of each class. Students may not take calls or answer text and e-mail messages during class time unless it is a dire, life-threatening emergency. Those who violate this policy will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period and will be marked absent.

Private conversations are not permitted during lectures.

Additionally, this course will include lively, classroom discussions around issues of current events as they relate to public relations. All points of view will be heard and respected. Disrespectful language or conduct will not be tolerated.

## **Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism/Cheating**

The CSUN Journalism Department is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated, and anyone caught cheating will be reported to the University for possible further action. For an explanation on behavior defined as academic dishonesty, and a more detailed discussion of disciplinary procedures, consult section E-Student Conduct Code in the CSUN catalog, which can be found online at [www.csun.edu](http://www.csun.edu). Section E-2 clearly defines what constitutes cheating, fabrication and academic dishonesty. Please also remember that much of the information posted on the Internet is protected by U.S. copyright laws. Passing this information off as your own is a violation of CSUN's plagiarism policy and carried the penalties outlined above.

## **Cultural Diversity**

Students are expected to broaden their journalistic and public relations experiences by including themes that incorporate: people of color, the differently-abled or disabled, as well as people living at the margins of society. The intent is to ensure that your work reflects the diversity of society and the global community.

## **Assignments and Evaluation**

Students can earn a possible 575 points for this course.

**1. Quizzes** – You will be tested on reading assignments from the textbook and material from lectures through out the semester. You can earn a possible 75 points from these quizzes.

**2.**

**2. Social Media Research Project** – This assignment involves research of social media tools, for example, Wiki sites, blogs, RSS feeds, icontact, Facebook, Twitter, Digg and others. You will choose one media platform in which to make a 10-minute presentation to the class on the origins, use and value of this tool to the field of public relations. This assignment is worth 200 points. Your grade is based on effort, originality, and presentation skills.

**3. Midterm Paper** – An additional 100 points can be earned for the midterm assignment. You will write a five page paper on the Dept. of Journalism’s assigned community reading project, *Shaking the Foundations: 200 years of Investigative Journalism in America*. You will choose two writings from this publication and one additional example of contemporary investigative journalism found in newspapers, on television or radio. You will write one 5-page paper providing your opinion of the impact of investigative journalism using these three examples.

**4. Team Project** – Students will work in teams of 5-6 for this assignment, which will provide an opportunity for you to work together simulating a small public relations agency. You will spend the semester developing a strategy to promote a corporate, small business or a non-profit organization that includes a new media component. The assignment also includes developing a press kit with a press release, a company profile, executive biographies and other press materials needed to support your public relations strategy. This component is worth 200 possible points. You will be graded on your ability to work in a team environment on creativity and sound public relations principles as well as content, grammar, punctuation and correct use of AP style.

### **Grading – Based on 575 points**

Quizzes	75 possible points
Social Media Research Project	200 possible points
Mid-term Paper	100 possible points
Team Project	200 possible points

575-517 points = A

516-460 points = B

459-402 points = C

401-345 points = D

Below 345 = Fail

*The + and – grading system will be used.*

### **About the Professor:**

Marcy De Veaux has been a public relations professional for more than 20 years specializing in entertainment public relations. She is president and CEO of her own public relations firm, DVG Communications. At CSUN, De Veaux has taught numerous public relations courses and a mass communication class, *Women in the Media*. She is

working toward a doctorate degree in Depth and Liberation Psychology and is currently researching and writing a dissertation. 3.

### Course Outline

(pending approval of furlough days for faculty)

August 28

#### **Introduction and Course Overview**

Sept. 4

**Reading Assignment:** Cases chapter 1

**Lecture/Discussion:** What is Public Relations, What isn't Public Relations?

Sept. 11

**Reading Assignment:** – Cases chapter 2

**Lecture/Discussion:** The Public Relations Process

**Quiz #1** on chapters 1 and 2

Sept. 18

**Reading Assignment:** Cases chapters 3 and 4

**Lecture/Discussion:** Media Relations/Internal Communications

**Quiz #2** on chapters 3 and 4

Sept. 25

**Lecture/Discussion:** Investigative Journalism

**Team Project:** Press Kit

Oct. 2

**Reading Assignment** Cases chapter 5 and 6

**Lecture/Discussion:** Community Relations/Public Affairs/Government Relations

**Quiz #3** on chapters 5 and 6

Oct. 9

**Team Project:** Team work meetings

**FACULTY FURLOUGH DAY – NO CLASS**

Oct. 16

**Reading Assignment:** Cases chapters 7 and 8

**Lecture/Discussion:** Consumer Relations

**MID-TERM PAPERS DUE**

Oct. 23

**Reading Assignment:** Cases chapter 10

**Lecture/Discussion:** Special Publics

Oct. 30

**Reading Assignment:** Cases chapter 11

**Lecture/Discussion:** Crisis Communications

**Quiz #4** on chapters 10 and 11

4.

November 6

**Social Media Research Student Presentations**

November 13

**Social Media Research Student Presentations**

November 20

**FACULTY FURLOUGH DAY – NO CLASS**

November 27

**THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS**

December 4

**Reading Assignment:** Cases Appendix II, Hill & Knowlton Public Relations hand out

**Lecture/Discussion:** Ethics in public relations

December 11

**TEAM PROJECT PRESS KIT ASSIGNMENT DUE at 8:00am**

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