PRINCIPLES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS
Dr. Sweetser, APR+M
Office: PSFA 337-A, phone 619-594-6714
Office hours: Tuesdays from 1-2 p.m.
Thursday from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.
By appointment
Email: ksweetser@sdsu.edu
Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 – 9:15 a.m. in HH-130

The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the professor may be necessary. Class lectures are the property of the professor.

> COURSE DESCRIPTION
Practical applications of public relations techniques with emphasis on writing and media usage. News releases and media relations, print and electronic communications production, multi-media techniques, speeches, other audio-visual presentations and special events. Field and laboratory practice.

> TEXTS
Required:

Recommended:
- Online resources for class: http://delicious.com/kaye.sweetser/JMS480

> MATERIALS
Each student must have the following (there will be no exceptions!):
- SDSU computer account with SDSU email access (check it often)
- Use of a printer, as all products, unless otherwise noted, are required to be typed, printed and stapled
- Access to Blackboard for grades – reconcile all bonus and incorrect grades by Dec. 1

> OVERVIEW
This course will focus first on messaging and strategy, then challenge students to apply those concepts across a variety of information subsidies. The information subsidies will range from news releases to social media production. The class moves quickly, and attention-to-detail errors will quickly eat away at the student's grade. If this sounds too hard, then maybe being a public relations practitioner is going to be too hard. Being present in class is strongly recommended as unannounced in-class assignments and quizzes will be frequent.

> LEARNING OUTCOMES
✓ Understanding of major theories relating to public relations
✓ Understanding of the role of strategic management in public relations
✓ Understanding of historical facts and trends in public relations
✓ Familiarity with current issues in public relations theory and practice
✓ Ability to apply theories and principles to the analysis of public relations problems
✓ Ability to conduct informal research in preparation for designing a public relations program
✓ Ability to develop a public relations program proposal
✓ Ability to write all four components of an appropriate public relations program
√ Ability to justify the selection of strategies and tactics using theory and research results
√ Ability to design and execute sample tactical elements
√ Ability to work with others to achieve group goals

ACEJMC’S 11 COMPETENCIES
1. Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
4. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
6. Think critically, creatively and independently.
7. Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
8. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
9. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
10. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
11. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

> STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at 619-594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

> ACADEMIC HONESTY
All academic work must meet the Standards for Student Conduct explained in 41301 Title 5 California Code of Regulations. Students are responsible to inform themselves about SDSU standards before performing any academic work. Students who break the university’s honor code, are found to be cheating or fraudulently use another student’s ideas/work will fail this course. Find out more about student responsibilities at SDSU at http://studentaffairs.sdsu.edu/SRR/academics1.html. Students who are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty should consult the University’s Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr).

All work must be original. Any form of plagiarism, including plagiarizing one’s self, will not be tolerated.

The best way to avoid academic honesty violations is to maintain integrity when preparing work to be turned in for the class and properly citing ideas and passages when appropriate. The fine for plagiarism in this course is, at minimum, a zero on the assignment at hand. The school or the university may determine the bigger-picture fine for additional repercussions. Just say no.

> ATTENDANCE POLICY
Students should arrive to class on time, prepared and ready to participate or work as required. Similar to the fast-paced professional world, there will be unannounced events in class that result in production. Students who miss class – for whatever reason – forfeit the right to make up graded elements that occur during class time.

> LATE WORK OR MAKEUPS
Students are not permitted to make up (either before or after) missed in-class graded assignments, exams or quizzes. All quizzes and exams are held via Blackboard. Online quizzes or exams must be completed and submitted prior to that graded element closing in Blackboard. Blackboard-administered quizzes and exams will be available from 8 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. on the day scheduled. Students arriving when homework assignment is being turned in will not be able to participate in that graded element. Late assignments or work turned in any place other than when assignments are collected/due are never accepted. Ever. In the real world, late work can mean a missed public relations opportunity.
> **GRADE**

This class employs multiple forms of evaluation to maximize the learning and evaluation experience while allowing for differences among learning types for students. There is an emphasis on real-world professionalism. All work will be evaluated based on the ability to meet the assignment objectives, clarity, professionalism, technical skill and quality. The following breakdown explains how the grade is to be computed (note this class uses a weighed formula to compute the grade, not raw points):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Item</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>% Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR Planning Competency</td>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
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All grades on assignments, projects and quizzes are based on the following +/- grading scale:

- 99 – 100% = A
- 93 – 97.9% = A-
- 88 – 92.9% = B+
- 83 – 87.9% = B
- 78 – 79.9% = C+
- 73 – 75.9% = C
- 68 – 69.9% = D+
- 63 – 65.9% = D
- 60 – 62.9% = D-

All work must employ AP Style, proper grammar and punctuation. Unless otherwise specified, all items are due the first 10 minutes of class and must be turned in during class.

The professor does not round up (not even 0.1 point). Graded items will not be dropped or weighted. Grades are based on the final product and the student's ability to meet the requirements set by the professor.

Each product is graded against the same criteria and the student’s ability to show mastery of the objective. All graded materials must meet specific standards for professionalism and quality. Effort does not equal an “A.” Only those who show mastery of the graded material will earn such a grade for that item. No one is given grades; one earns the grade based on the quality of the product.

Students are to keep track of their own grades and progress in the course. Monitor Blackboard to compute grade.

Any student wishing to dispute a grade must have the graded material when pleading the case. Students have the right to dispute a grade within one week of the material being returned; after one week all grades are final.

The deadline to reconcile grades in Blackboard grades is Dec. 1. Adjustments will not be made after this date so keep on top of your grade (i.e., monitor frequently).

Grades will not be discussed via email or the telephone. If a student has a question about a grade and would like to discuss it, then the student must meet with the professor in person. This policy protects the student.

> **GRADED PRODUCTS**

All out of class work must be typed in a word processing program and printed. Use Times New Roman font in size 12, 1-inch margins all around and double-space. All items that are more than one page must be stapled. All work must employ AP Style, proper grammar and punctuation. Unless otherwise specified, all items are due the first 10 minutes of class and must be turned in during class.

**RUBRIC:** All written assignments are graded according to a grading rubric for technical skill, in addition to the style and content considerations. Students can rely on the following rubric throughout the semester:

- AP Style error – one point each time
- Misspelled name – 10 points each time
- Misspelled word – five points each time
- Incorrect grammar – five points each time
- Fact error – 10 points each time
- Failure to follow directions – 15 points for assignment

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** Every student must demonstrate comprehension of the public relations strategic planning process to meet the PR planning competency requirement. This will be demonstrated through a group project of eight to 10 students conducting research and producing a proposal for a public relations program for a client. The client will meet with the student team during class once during the semester. Teams will compete against each other to be the proposal(s) that will be presented to the client at the end of the semester.

**INDUSTRY INTERVIEWS:** During the semester, each student will individually identify and interview a PR practitioner in the student’s area of interest. The industry options are featured in *Part IV* of EPR (chapters 15 – 21): (1) business and industry, (2) government and politics, (3) military public affairs, (4) nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations, (5) health care, (6) education and (7) associations and unions. There is a limit as to how many students are allowed to cover each industry, and slots are filled on a first-come first-serve basis with the deadline to commit no later than Sept. 8. Students are encouraged to sign up for an industry well before this deadline so as to ensure the desired industry slot is...
still available. After industry assignments are made, students will propose a particular practitioner for the interview, which must be approved by the professor. After approval, students may interview the practitioner at any time prior to the industry interview due date. All interviews must be done either face to face, over videoconference or via the phone; email interviews are not permitted under any circumstances. After the interview is conducted, students are required to handwrite a thank you note to the practitioner and turn in the addressed envelope with the note inside (sealed is fine) to the professor, who will stamp and mail the note herself. All thank you notes must be received by the professor no later than Nov. 5, and should ideally be written within 48 hours of the interview; email thank you notes are not permitted. See the syllabus calendar for specific industry interview due dates.

**EXAMS:** There are three exams in this course, which includes one final cumulative exam. Exams are administered via Blackboard and are individual efforts. Late exams submitted after the exam closes (11:59 p.m. on the day administered) will not be accepted.

**QUIZZES:** There will be frequent quizzes administered via Blackboard throughout the semester. Quizzes are to be individual efforts. Late quizzes submitted after the quiz closes (11:59 p.m. on the day administered) will not be accepted.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Students should expect additional general assignments (both announced and pop-up assignments) throughout the semester. All work must be professional, typed and spell checked.

> **COURSE POLICIES**

**BE PRESENT.** Students are required to attend class on any presentation or guest lecture days. Students arriving late on presentation/guest lecture days, regardless of whether presenting, will not be able to join class. Entering class during a presentation is completely unacceptable and will greatly deplete participation points.

**BE NICE.** Disrespect in any form in the classroom is not permitted. If a student is deemed disrespectful by the professor, then the student may be asked to leave. Disrespect is conveyed in many forms, both face to face and online. None will be tolerated. Respect your class members' privacy and do not post comments, photos or other information online without permission.

**COMMUNICATE PROFESSIONALLY.** As this is a respected legacy school in public relations, the ability to communicate in a professional and courteous manner via email is important. Students are expected to display their top-level PR communication skills each time they send an email to the professor. Students who fail to use a professional greeting, sign one's full name or use proper AP Style in an email will have one point deducted from the final (overall grade) for the course for each infraction. Ask the professor for examples of proper and improper email communication so as to not make this mistake.

**KNOW WHEN YOU NEED HELP.** The college experience is stressful. If a student feels the need for professional services to assist in coping with stress related to school or other life’s events, please contact the University's Counseling and Psychological Services (www.sa.sdsu.edu/cps/index.html). The center is located at Room 4401 in the Calpulli Center, open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Students who need assistance beyond their business hours should call the San Diego Access and Crisis 24-hour Hotline at 1-800-479-3339. Other campus emergency services include the Student Health Services Nurse Advisory Line at 1-888-594-5281 or University Police at 619-594-1991.

**INCOMPLETES UNAVAILABLE.** Incompletes will rarely, if ever, be given for this class. Only students who are already operating at a satisfactory level prior to a medical or other serious circumstance beyond one's control will even be considered for an incomplete. Incompletes are not a way to skirt responsibility and work around lost opportunities in major course assignments.

**GRADE THE PROFESSOR.** The professor worked hard on this syllabus and thinks it is perfect. It probably isn't. Being perfect is really important to her. If a student finds an AP Style error in this document, the student should kindly notify the professor immediately. The first student to report that specific error will be rewarded with one bonus point on top of the student's final grade. These syllabus error bonus points are awarded one point per error on a first-reported basis. Multiple bonus points can be earned by a single student if that student is able to find multiple errors and report them before others discover the errors. This bonus opportunity is only extended to the most current version of the syllabus posted in Blackboard, not other handouts in the semester.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Items Due and Class Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 25</td>
<td>Introduction and definitions of PR</td>
<td>EPR 1</td>
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<td>Aug. 27</td>
<td>PR roles</td>
<td>EPR 2</td>
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<td>Sept. 1</td>
<td>Organizational settings</td>
<td>EPR 3</td>
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<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td>Historical origins</td>
<td>EPR 4</td>
<td>Sign up for industry interview</td>
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<td>Sept. 8</td>
<td>Ethics and legal issues</td>
<td>EPR 5-6</td>
<td>LinkedIn resume</td>
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<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Propose practitioner for industry interview (complete GOOG form)</td>
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<td>Sept. 15</td>
<td>Strategic PR plan project</td>
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<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td>Internal and employee communication</td>
<td>EPR 9</td>
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<td>Sept. 22</td>
<td>Client meeting</td>
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<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td>Communication models</td>
<td>EPR 8</td>
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<td>Sept. 29</td>
<td>Project work day</td>
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<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>EPR 7</td>
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<td>Oct. 6</td>
<td>Media relations</td>
<td>EPR 10</td>
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<td>Oct. 8</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>Oct. 13</td>
<td>Step 1: Research</td>
<td>EPR 11</td>
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<td>Oct. 15</td>
<td>Step 2: Planning</td>
<td>EPR 12</td>
<td>Research proposal</td>
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<td>Oct. 20</td>
<td>Project work day</td>
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<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>Step 3: Implementation</td>
<td>EPR 13</td>
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<td>Oct. 27</td>
<td>Step 4: Evaluation</td>
<td>EPR 14</td>
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<td>Oct. 29</td>
<td>RPIE Review</td>
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<td>Nov. 3</td>
<td>Exam 3 (cumulative)</td>
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<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td>Industry roundtable: Government, politics, military</td>
<td>EPR 16 – 17</td>
<td>Industry interviews for these sections</td>
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<td>Nov. 10</td>
<td>Project work day</td>
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<td>Nov. 12</td>
<td>Industry roundtable: Business</td>
<td>EPR 15</td>
<td>Industry interviews for this section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 17</td>
<td>Industry roundtable: Nonprofits, NGOs, associations and unions</td>
<td>EPR 18, 21</td>
<td>Industry interviews for this section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 19</td>
<td>Industry roundtable: Health, education</td>
<td>EPR 19 – 20</td>
<td>Industry interviews for this section</td>
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<td>Nov. 24</td>
<td>Project work day</td>
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<td>Nov. 26</td>
<td>Thanksgiving break – no class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>Client proposal presentations</td>
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<td>PR plans (email PDF to professor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 3</td>
<td>Client proposal presentations</td>
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<td>Deadline to reconcile Blackboard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 8</td>
<td>Client proposal presentations</td>
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