COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the concepts, theories, and principles that provide the foundation for the promotion of a product, service, experience, company, non-profit organization, or political/social issue. Within that context, the course will focus on the practice of public relations and how public relations fits into the Integrated Marketing Communications world that defines most effective promotional programs today.

COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook:  

Case Studies / Articles:
“Public Relations Comes of Age,” Robinson, David, 2006, Business Horizons
“Charles Schwab Inc.: Introducing a New Brand” (9-502-020)
“Nike, Inc.: Developing an Effective Public Relations Strategy” (99C034)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will acquire an understanding of key theories and research in the fields of public relations and promotion. Consequently students will be able to:

1. Ascertain key publics impacted by organizations
2. Assess underlying needs of key publics
3. Construct a strategy for communicating with the various publics
4. Develop tactics to implement the communication strategy
5. Evaluate communication campaigns and efforts

COURSE TECHNIQUE

The class will combine lecture, class discussion of “real world” examples and applications, video and film, in-class exercises, and case analyses. Students are expected to come prepared to discuss assigned readings in class. You are expected to attend all classes, complete assignments on time, and actively participate in class discussions. All written assignments are expected to be the student’s own work.
CASE STUDIES / ARTICLES

Three cases and articles will be discussed during the semester. You are individually responsible for three short case study write-ups (2 pages max) due at the beginning of class on the day of the case discussion. The objective of this assignment is to help you prepare for the case discussion and to maximize the value of the case discussion for the entire class. The write-ups will be evaluated on the quality of your analysis related to marketing, public relations, and promotion-related issues. Each write-up is worth a maximum of 10 points toward your final grade. I will post questions on Blackboard related to each case or article.

Here are some tips in preparing your write-ups:
- Read the entire case study and article first to familiarize yourself with the material and to identify any immediately obvious marketing-related issues.
- Then, read the material again, taking thorough notes of the key marketing points, including market segmentation, market research, branding, positioning, product development, pricing strategy, distribution channels, promotional tactics, etc.
- Then, summarize your notes in a logical, clear, and concise format. Please do not use a cover sheet or add any exhibits. All reports must be submitted in hard copy, typed single-spaced (12-point font only), and have 1 inch margins on all sides.
- Do not repeat in summary form large pieces of factual information from the case. Rather, focus on the key marketing points.
- It is crucial that you thoroughly analyze the case and provide practical solutions to the issues raised in the case.
- Bring new insights into your analysis. Surprise me! Inform me! Educate me!

PROMOTION/PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN

Each student will prepare a plan for a promotion/public relations campaign for a product, service, experience, corporation, trade association, non-profit organization, public institution, political campaign, etc. You can select a “client” for which to prepare the plan from recent news clips from the New York Times or Wall Street Journal or simply select a client of your own choice. In a concise, but thorough report (4-5 pages), you will describe the public relations problem, the proposed campaign strategy, the proposed tactics to be employed, and how the success of the campaign will be measured. I will distribute an outline that will help guide you in developing the plan. The plan is due on October 15, 2011.

ATTENDANCE

Mandatory

CHEATING

Any student who is caught cheating or plagiarizing will be given a failing grade for the exam or assignment and will be subject to the University’s disciplinary procedures.
GRADING

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COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE

Sept 10  Course Introduction  
         Marketing Strategy  
         Integrated Marketing Communications  
         Public Relations

Sept 17  Stakeholders  
         PR Management/Functions/Titles/Process  
         PR Tactics from A to Z  
         Brand Image, Brand Personality, Brand Equity  
         Positioning/Re-Positioning  
         Market Segmentation  
         Article: “Public Relations Comes of Age,” Robinson, David, 2006, Business Horizons

Sept 24  Target Audience  
         Key Message  
         Media Relations  
         Understanding the Media  
         Channels to the Media  
         Developing a Message  
         Case Study: “Charles Schwab Inc.: Introducing a New Brand”

Oct 1   Media Interviews  
         Crisis Communications  
         Case Study: “Nike, Inc.: Developing an Effective Public Relations Strategy”

Oct 8   Team Exercise on Developing a Promotional/PR Plan

Oct 15   Public Relations Plan due at midnight