



School of English, Journalism
& European Languages

Unit Outline

HEJ507 Media Relations

Semester 1, 2009

www.utas.edu.au/journalism

Convenor:	Kate Nash Room: HUM 561 Phone: 6226 2365 Email: Kate.Nash@utas.edu.au
Consultation Hours:	Friday 9am – 12pm
Unit Description:	Media engagement is a central component of contemporary communications strategies. This unit provides students with the necessary skills to successfully relate with media, and includes two days of professional media training. The unit also provides contexts for historical and current media and public relations practice. Students are equipped to interact professionally with the media, to set clear communications goals and strategies, and to build an effective media relations campaign, as well as gaining an understanding of media and communications practice more broadly.
Unit Aims and Objectives:	The objective of this unit is to enable students to engage critically with public relations practice, and to acquire the skills necessary to conceptualise and understand professional values, standards, and ethics in public relations.
Learning Outcomes:	At the end of this unit, students should have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Understanding of the tactics used in media relations.▪ Skills in media relations writing – including press releases, features and blogs.▪ An understanding of the media interview and its role for media relations.▪ An understanding of the organisation of a media relations campaign.▪ An understanding of the changing nature of the mediasphere and new directions in media relations.
Recommended Texts:	Johanson, Jane and Zawawi, Clara (Eds.), <i>Public Relations: Theory and Practice</i> . Crows Nest NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2004. Renton, N.E. <i>Public Relations: A Matter of Spin</i> . Essendon: Penon Business, 2004.

	<p>Jowett, Garth. S. and O'Donnell, Victoria. <i>Reading in Propaganda and Persuasion: New and Classic Essays</i>. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2006.</p> <p>Hunt, Todd and Grunig, James E. <i>Public Relations Techniques</i>. Fort Worth: Harcourt College Publishers, 1994.</p> <p>Martin, Jan Lee (Ed.). <i>The New Australian and New Zealand Public Relations Manual</i>, Tymson & Lazar. Manly: Tymson Communications, 2006.</p> <p>Seitel, Fraser P. <i>The Practice of Public Relations</i>. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, 2004.</p> <p><i>Stauber, John, C. and Rampton, Sheldon. Toxic Sludge Is Good For You: Lies, Damn Lies and the Public Relations Industry</i>. Monroe: Common Courage Press, 1995.</p> <p>Stanton, Richard. <i>Media Relations</i>. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2007.</p> <p>Cottle, Simon, ed. <i>News, Public Relations and Power</i>. London: Sage Publications, 2003.</p>
<p>When Taught:</p>	<p>Seminar: Monday 1:10 – 3:00pm SB.Arts201.Lab*</p> <p>*Please see the seminar schedule for more specific information regarding the teaching pattern for this unit.</p>
<p>Assessment:</p>	<p>Media releases (1500 words) 20%, feature or electronic news release (1500 words or equivalent) 20%, analysis of media campaign (2500 words) 30%, media relations strategy and exegesis (2500 words) 30%.</p>
<p>Attendance</p>	<p>All production work will be taught in practical classes. Students must attend a minimum of 2/3 of all practical classes in order to satisfy attendance requirements.</p>

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Required reading
Week 1	No class	
Week 2	Introduction to the unit: What is media relations?	
Week 3	Public Holiday	
Week 4	Understanding the media	Renton, R 2004 <i>Public Relations: A Matter of Spin</i> Chapters 4 & 5
Week 5	The art of media relations	Stanton R, 2007 <i>Media Relations</i> , Chapter 3 (Planning media relations campaigns)
Week 6	The changing mediascape	Guth and Marsh 2007, <i>Public Relations a values driven approach</i> , Chapter 11 (Public Relations in the Digital Age).
Week 7	No class	
Easter Vacation 9- 15th April		
Week 8	Writing for media relations practitioners	Mahoney J 2008, <i>Public Relations Writing in Australia</i>
Week 9	Audio-Visual communication	
Week 10	Hands-on: Making a VNR	
Week 11	Crisis Communications – Michael Lester	Stanton R, 2007 <i>Media Relations</i> , Chapter 11 (Risk, Uncertainty and Crisis)
Week 12	Issues in media relations	Coombs and Holladay 2007, <i>It's Not Just PR: Public Relations in Society</i>
Week 13	No class	
Study Period: 1-5 June		
Examination Period: 6-23 June		

ASSESSMENT

Assignment One: Analysis of a media relations campaign 2,500 words

A media relations campaign is an organised process with defined boundaries or specific objectives. Critically analyse ONE media relations campaign in terms of its objectives and tactics. In what ways does the campaign achieve its goals? Or why does it fail?

This assignment is worth 30% of your unit mark

This assignment assesses learning outcomes: 1, 3 & 4

Marking Criteria

- Demonstrated understanding of the elements of a media relations campaign
- Ability to identify the different objectives of a media relations campaign
- Identify a range of tactics and critically evaluate them in terms of the likely campaign objectives
- Consult a range of sources and appropriately reference source material
- Accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling

Assignment one is due for submission by 5pm on Monday 23rd March (Week 5). It must be submitted to the school office in hard copy with an attached cover sheet.

Assignment Two: Media Relations Campaign proposal (1,000 words) and Exegesis (1,500 words)

You must design a media relations campaign, presenting it as a campaign proposal. For detailed information on the format of a campaign proposal see Stanton, R 2007, *Media Relations*, p. 33.

You are also required to write an exegesis to accompany your campaign. This is a critical explanation or interpretation of your campaign. It should elaborate upon and contextualise your work, providing the opportunity for you to reflect upon your practice and that of other practitioners. However, it is important to remember that this is a scholarly piece of work, and not a simple 'diary' or anecdotal retelling of how your work was produced.

This assignment is worth 30% of your unit mark

This assignment assesses learning outcomes: 1, 3 & 4

Marking Criteria

- Demonstrated understanding of media relations theory and practice
- The ability to engage the media effectively using appropriate tactics
- Evidence of reflection on media relations practice
- Evidence of research with appropriately referenced source material
- Accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling

Assignment two is due for submission by 5pm on Monday 20th April (Week 8). It must be submitted to the school office in hard copy with an attached cover sheet.

Assignment Three: Writing for the media 1,500 words in total

Effective writing continues to be a core skill for media relations practitioners. With reference to your second assignment you should produce written materials that meet your objectives. This should include a media release but may also include a backstory, blog, email or letter to the Editor.

This assignment is worth 20% of your unit mark

This assignment assesses learning outcomes: 2

Marking Criteria

- Choice of a suitable written form for the message and target public
- Newsworthiness
- Demonstrated understanding of the nature and needs of the relevant media
- Use of an appropriate writing style
- Effective communication of the central message(s)
- Accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling

Assignment three is due for submission by 5pm on Monday 4th May (Week 10). It must be submitted to the school office in hard copy with an attached cover sheet.

Assignment Four: Longer-format media work 1,500 words (or equivalent)

For this assignment you are asked to produce a longer format media product. This may be written (a feature article, series of blogs or a speech for example) or electronic (i.e. VNR/ANR). You may produce work that meets the objectives of your campaign plan (Assignment two) or you may choose an alternative project.

This assignment is worth 20% of your unit mark

This assignment assesses learning outcomes: 2

- Choice of a suitable medium for the message and target public
- Newsworthiness
- Demonstrated understanding of the nature and needs of the relevant media
- Use of an appropriate communication style
- Effective communication of the central message(s)
- Accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling (where relevant)
- Demonstrated understanding of visual communication (where relevant)

Assignment four is due for submission by 5pm on Monday 1st June. Any audio-visual work should be submitted on CD or DVD. Work must be submitted to the school office in hard copy with an attached cover sheet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Submission of Assignments

Students are required to submit a signed cover sheet with every assignment. This includes a declaration that all material submitted is their own work except where there is clear acknowledgement or reference to the work of others and that they have read the University statement on Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism) on the University website at www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism or in the Student Information Handbook. Assignment cover sheets are available from the School office or the School website. **Assignments submitted without a signed cover sheet will not be marked.** Students who submit assignments without a signed cover sheet will be contacted once via their UTAS email address; in such instances the cover sheet must be completed within two weeks of the due date.

All assignments must be submitted in hard-copy (not by email) and placed in the essay box at the School office on or before 5pm on the due date. Students are required to keep copies of all submitted assignments. Assignments submitted on time will be returned within three weeks of the due date; once on time assignments have been returned no further late assignments will be accepted. All marked assignments will be returned in tutorials unless otherwise advised.

Late Assignments

Late submissions will be penalized as follows: 10% of the available marks per day for the first five (5) working days and 50% on the following day. Late work will be accepted without penalty if accompanied by a medical certificate for the relevant period or a letter from a counsellor in the case of a serious non-medical reason.

Difficulties with your Studies

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you should raise these with your lecturer and/or one of the following Student Services staff as soon as possible:

- Learning Skills Adviser
- Disability Adviser
- Careers Adviser
- Student Counsellor

University Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

"Plagiarism is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at <http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see <http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/>."

The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed.

Assignment Presentation

The Journalism, Media and Communications discipline uses the Harvard style of referencing. Please see <http://www.utas.edu.au/journalism/> for a brief introduction. For journalistic writing, refer to the JMC Style Guide, also available at <http://www.utas.edu.au/journalism/>.

For journalistic assignments, you must not use material gathered for a story, including interviews, for assessment in more than one unit. If in doubt, please discuss with your unit coordinator.

Equipment

Please note that this unit may require access to sound and/or video recording equipment and that while the school will provide access to equipment during tutorials, access to equipment outside of tutorials is not guaranteed. Where the loan of equipment is possible students will be required to sign and agree to the terms and conditions of the loan, including the penalties for late return, as presented at the time of the loan.

Marking Scale

The following distribution of marks and grades is applied in assessing your work:

- High Distinction (HD)—80-100%
- Distinction (DN)—70-79%
- Credit (CR)—60-69%
- Pass (PP)—50-59%
- Fail (NN)—0-49%

All marks are subject to moderation.

IT Support

Learning online—for online learning and Vista support – <http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/>
Information Technology Services—for general IT Support (includes link to UTAS download website)
<http://www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk/student/index.html>

Library Services—for information literacy support – <http://www.utas.edu.au/library/>
Help Desk (email HelpDesk@utas.edu.au or 6226 1818, within University 1818)