

# CMN 3020: Public Relations Research, Measurement, and Evaluation

## 3 credit hours – Fall 2016

Instructor: Matthew Gill, Ph.D.  
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                  or by appointment

### **Text**

Stacks, D.W. (2011). *Primer of public relations research* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). New York: Guilford Press.

### **Course Description**

This course surveys the major approaches to data collection and analysis found in the contemporary practice of public relations. It includes an examination of the primary qualitative and quantitative methods used in public relations and how practitioners use data to inform their strategic choices. The course provides students with the foundation necessary to understand public relations research and explains its importance in strategic message creation, monitoring public relations programs, and the evaluation of message effectiveness.

### **Course Objectives**

- Summarize the basic concepts and methods of public relations research
- Explain the contexts and uses of research in public relations
- Explain the importance and necessity of research in creating public relations messages and programs
- Recognize the ethical issues surrounding public relations research
- Critique public relations efforts according to sound research methodology
- Design research and evaluation programs for public relations efforts

### **Student Expectations and Standards**

It's important that students in Communication Studies recognize what the faculty expects of you in your classes. A degree in Communication Studies encompasses a wide variety of skill sets having to do with communication. Expect to write papers, give presentations, learn new technologies, develop your argumentation skills, conduct sound and extensive research, and learn theories to support your assumptions about the world.

Please click on the following link for a more extensive explanation of student standards in the Department of Communication Studies, including the *Student Expectation and Standards Guide*. (<http://www.eiu.edu/~commstudies/standards.php>)

### **Attendance**

No attendance will be taken. You are expected, however, to attend each class meeting. If you miss class, you are responsible for getting notes and assignments *from another student*.

On the other hand, being late to class is disruptive and presents problems for your classmates and me. So there is a late policy. You will be considered late if you come into class more than five minutes after class has started (the clock in the classroom will be used as the official class time). You will be given two “free” late arrivals and for every time you are late after that you will lose 8.5 points (1%) off your final grade. Please do not make me enforce this. Show up on time.

### **Late work policy**

Deadlines are critical in public relations and therefore they will also be critical in this class. Late work **will not** be accepted. If an emergency or school function prevents you from being in class for an exam or when a major assignment is due, these are your options:

- 1) Turn in the assignment early (no penalty)
- 2) Bring me documentation of your absence in advance
- 3) Bring specific documentation of your absence within 1 week after the missed class if the absence was an unavoidable emergency
- 4) Receive a 0 for the assignment

### **Plagiarism and Cheating**

For information on Eastern’s policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty, please see [http://catalog.eiu.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=307#acad\\_inte](http://catalog.eiu.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=307#acad_inte)

You are responsible for knowing the university policy on what constitutes academic dishonesty. Here is the short version: **ALWAYS** give credit—I will assume that everything you turn in (unless otherwise noted) is your own personal work, not borrowed work or group-created work. **It is important to remember that plagiarism is not based upon intent.** Just because it wasn’t intentional or it was an accident does not mean that it was not plagiarism. It is!

If you turn in something without giving credit to others whose ideas or words you used, you will definitely receive a 0 for the assignment; additional consequences can include failure of the course and even expulsion from the university.

If you collaborate with someone else on an assignment and turn in substantially similar work, you are both guilty of plagiarism.

If you turn in something written by someone else, expect to fail the course and be reported to the Dean of Students. Do your own work. Give credit where credit is due.

### **Academic integrity**

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>).

Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

### **Students with disabilities**

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

### **The Student Success Center**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance with time management, text taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

### **Booth Library**

Located in the center of campus, Booth Library is the best place to do research, find expert help, or study in a calm, distraction-free environment. In addition to the many print resources, Booth provides access to high quality e-books, journals and scholarship not freely available on the Web. Stop by the Reference Desk or go to <http://library.eiu.edu> to explore library resources. Get expert help with your research by contacting the Booth Library reference librarians. Visit, call 581-6072, or go to <http://booth.eiu.edu/ask> to connect with a librarian.

### **Cell Phones**

Please turn off or silence your cell phone before class. If there is some sort of situation in which you need to keep your phone on please consult with me before class. Otherwise there's no reason I should even see your phone. Please do not spend your class time text messaging or on your phone in any way.

### **Email**

You should use your university email account to contact me with any matters concerning class. Mail sent from other email addresses may be filtered out by the Eastern system. Therefore, I may not receive your message if you don't use your university account.

You are expected to check your official email address on a frequent and consistent basis in order to stay current with departmental and course communications. Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time-critical. "I didn't

check my email”, error in foreign mail accounts, or email returned to the department/instructor with “mailbox full” or “user unknown” are not acceptable excuses for missing department/course communication sent via email.

### **Assignments**

**SPELLING AND GRAMMAR ALWAYS COUNT, ESPECIALLY IN PR!!!**

*Exams* – There will be three exams throughout the semester. Each will cover the material presented during the unit prior to the test. The exams are not comprehensive.

*Research practice #1: Content Analysis* – You will be given the opportunity to test your abilities in conducting a content analysis. The specifics on the assignment will be discussed during class and posted on D2L.

*Research practice #2: Observing people* – You will be given the opportunity to test your abilities in conducting research via observation. The specifics on the assignment will be discussed during class and posted on D2L.

*Visually presenting data* – There will be two times during the semester that you will be asked to turn research data into a visually appealing representation of the information. The specifics on the assignments will be discussed during class.

*PR Research Project* – There will a major group research project that will provide you the opportunity to practice and demonstrate a variety of the course concepts. The specifics on the assignment will be discussed during class and posted on D2L.

### **Grading**

This class will be based on a system of 850 points.

Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3/Final Exam	100 points
Research Practice 1	50 points
Research Practice 2	50 points
Visual Data Presentation (25 pts each)	50 points
PR Research Project	400 points

### **Grading Scale**

850-765 Points = A  
764-680 Points = B  
679-595 Points = C  
594-510 Points = D  
509-0 Points = F

## Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
8/22	Class introduction	
8/24	The what and the why of PR measurement	Chapter 1
8/26	The what and the why of PR measurement	
8/29	State of PR measurement	
8/31	State of PR measurement	<b>Visual Data Presentation #1 Assigned</b>
9/2	The Barcelona Principles	Chapter 2
9/5	<b>Labor Day – NO CLASS</b>	
9/7	Management of PR research	<b>Visual Data Presentation #1 Due</b>
9/9	Measurement	Chapter 3
9/12	Measurement and the medium	<b>Visual Data Presentation #2 Assigned</b>
9/14	Ethical concerns in public relations research	Chapter 5
9/16	Content analysis	Chapter 6
9/19	Content analysis	<b>Visual Data Presentation #2 Due</b> <b>Research Practice #1 Assigned</b>
9/21	Historical and Secondary methods	Chapter 7 <b>PR research project Assigned</b>
9/23	Historical and Secondary methods	
9/26	<b>Exam 1</b>	
9/28	Case studies	Chapter 8
9/30	Case studies	
10/3	Observing people	Chapter 9 <b>Research Practice #1 Due</b>
10/5	Observing people	<b>Research Practice #2 Assigned</b>
10/7	Observing people	
10/10	Observing people	
10/12	Sampling	Chapter 10 <b>Research Practice #2 Due</b>
10/14	<b>Fall Break – NO CLASS</b>	
10/17	Sampling	
10/19	Surveys	Chapter 11
10/21	Surveys	
10/24	Surveys	
10/26	Google analytics	
10/28	Google analytics	
10/31	<b>Exam 2</b>	
11/2	Big data	
11/4	Big data	

11/7	Measuring social media	
11/9	Measuring social media	
11/11	Measuring social media	
11/14	Facebook	
11/16	Facebook	
11/18	Twitter	
11/21	<b>Thanksgiving – NO CLASS</b>	
11/23	<b>Thanksgiving – NO CLASS</b>	
11/25	<b>Thanksgiving – NO CLASS</b>	
11/28	Twitter	
11/30	Instagram	
12/2	Instagram	
12/5	Presentations	<b>Final paper for PR research project due</b>
12/7	Presentations	
12/9	Presentations	
Finals Week	<b>Exam 3/Final Exam:</b> 9 - Tuesday, December 13 8:00 am-10:00 am	