



University of Indianapolis
1400 East Hanna Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46227

Welcome to Top Dog Communication!

For the next semester, you are officially a member of the public relations team at Top Dog Communication. Top Dog is one of only 25 student run firms in the nation that is affiliated with the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). We gained this affiliation due to our professional standards and our excellent client work. To maintain this affiliation is of the utmost importance to the reputation of our program and our firm—setting both apart from others in the nation—and making your experience here even more valuable.

Over the next couple of weeks you will be placed with an account executive and a team whom you will be working with until the end of this semester. You and your team will be part of our PR agency and your client will be a local not-for-profit organization. It may seem overwhelming right now, but remember, you will be working with a group!

In this Handbook, you will find several tools that you will need for this upcoming semester. As the semester progresses you will learn how to construct a press release, maybe create an event for your client, make brochures, or even conceptualize or produce an audio or visual promotional spot. Each item that you create will be working towards an overall objective that your team and your client construct. Although you will complete some items individually, your account executive will always be available as questions arise.

You are expected grow professionally in this course as well. To aid in that process, Top Dog Communication will pay for your dues to be a member of PRSSA if you are not already a member or if your membership is up for renewal this semester. You will also be reimbursed for one Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Hoosier Chapter Luncheon this semester if you choose to attend.

At the end of the semester your team will give a presentation to the class explaining everything that you have accomplished!

You can plan on walking away from this class with a better understanding of how public relations works and the skills necessary to be successful. The first-hand experience will prove invaluable not only when creating a resume and building a portfolio, but when going out into the real world.

We are happy to have you join our team!

University of Indianapolis
COMM 140, Applied Public Relations, 1 credit hour
Primary room Esch 261, secondary room Esch 003 (available W, F only)
Syllabus for Semester I, 2011-2012

Professor: Rebecca A. Deemer

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Office: 311D

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 9:25-10:55 & Friday, 9:55-10:55 or by appointment

Catalog Description

Provides practical experience working in a public relations agency located within the Department of Communication. Concentrates on client service, strategic planning, and creation of communication tactics. The student must devote a **minimum** of 4 hours per week to practical work. Classroom instruction orients the student to the program.

University Learning Goals

Critical Thinking - The application of intellectual criteria in order to make a judgment

Creativity - The employment of imagination and inventiveness in modifying and producing results

Performance - The demonstrable realization, execution, and communication of subject content

Social Responsibility - the establishment of connections among subject, self, and others

Course Objective

COMM 140 is primarily a performance course requiring client interaction and public relations practical performance, both enhancing the student's future marketability as well as fostering potential job success.

Required Materials

Marsh, C., Guth, D. W., & Poovey Short, B., (2009). *Strategic writing: Multimedia writing for public relations, advertising, and more*. Belmont, California: Pearson.

The newest (2010) version of the AP Stylebook.

Various e-mailed readings and the Top Dog Handbook.

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*Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.*  
~General George Smith Patton, Jr.





## Special Notes

\*\*\*\*Any and all grades can be altered due to your group members' evaluations of you.

*Unforeseen issues – Occasionally, issues arise that may not be specifically covered by course policy set forth in this syllabus. Such issues pertaining to the course will be handled as needed and negotiated with the instructor who has the final decision-making authority.*

*If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please inform me immediately so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. Students with a disability must register with the Services for Students with Disabilities office (SSD) in Schwitzer Center 206 (317-788-6153 / [www.uindy.edu/ssd](http://www.uindy.edu/ssd)) for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations. You are responsible for initiating arrangements for accommodations for tests and other assignments in collaboration with the SSD and the faculty.*

### Breakdown of Points Possible

|                                 |          |                                         |
|---------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------|
| Attendance & Participation      | 20       | (~6%)                                   |
| Quiz 1 (Top Dog Handbook)       | 10       | (~20%)                                  |
| Quiz 2 (AP)                     | 5        |                                         |
| Quiz 3 (AP)                     | 5        |                                         |
| Quiz 4 (AP)                     | 5        |                                         |
| Quiz 5 (AP)                     | 5        |                                         |
| Quiz 6 (current events)         | 8        |                                         |
| Quiz 7 (current events)         | 8        |                                         |
| Quiz 8 (current events)         | 8        |                                         |
| Quiz 9 (current events)         | 8        |                                         |
| Quiz 10 (current events)        | 8        | (note extra current events and AP quiz) |
| Group Presentations             | 30       | (~9%)                                   |
| Strategic Look 1 (group)        | 20       | (~17%)                                  |
| Strategic Look 2 (group)        | 20       |                                         |
| Strategic Look 3 (group)        | 20       |                                         |
| Professional advancement/resume | 30       | (~9%)                                   |
| Fundraising Fact Sheet          | 15       | (~4%)                                   |
| Group Project, Strategic Plan   | 100      | (~29%)                                  |
|                                 | -40 pts. | determined by client                    |
|                                 | -30 pts. | determined by manager/group members     |
|                                 | -30 pts. | determined by professor                 |
| Final                           | 25       | (~7%)                                   |

**350 total**

### Grading Scale

|         |    |
|---------|----|
| 94-100% | A  |
| 90-93%  | A- |
| 88-89%  | B+ |
| 84-87%  | B  |
| 80-83%  | B- |
| 78-79%  | C+ |
| 74-77%  | C  |
| 70-73%  | C- |
| 68-69%  | D+ |
| 64-67%  | D  |
| 60-63%  | D- |
| <60%    | F  |

Attendance—This is a public relations agency and should be treated as such. I do reserve the right to withdraw a student for poor CLASSROOM AND GROUP attendance (and will!!!). Each student is expected to attend ALL mandatory classes. If a situation arises that prevents attendance, the student needs to contact both his or her account executive and me within **24 hours** to let us know the reason for the absence. Work must be turned in on time, regardless, unless special permission is given. After 2 **excused** absences (class and/or group), the student may be required to meet individually with an account executive and/or me on a weekly basis to discuss every week's workload and to be tutored if this is suggested. If these meetings are missed, they will constitute another absence. After 2 **unexcused** absences (class and/or group), the student CAN BE DROPPED from the class. Only an extraordinary circumstance will warrant an excused absence, and I reserve the right to ask for verification. I do not accept late work (even if you "just left it in your room"). In class, a student must participate. This includes full class participation as well as participation within one's group. If you do have extreme circumstances, we will correspond via electronic communication as necessary. Leaving early and arriving late can also count toward absences. For every cell phone "catch," a student will lose one point off of his or her attendance score.

Quizzes—There will be timed AP style quizzes. Your book must be used for these, as a page number is required. Currents events quizzes will also be given. You need to consume the news on a regular basis to do well on these. Note that there is one extra AP and one extra current events quiz. Your lowest score on each of these respective types will be dropped.

Group Presentations—Will be graded on the information and delivery of your assigned topic. You will be assigned a group based on your experience level in public relations. Your group will be independent of your account executive and "main group" and should be handled as such. Remember that delivery DOES COUNT.

Strategic Looks—Three times a semester, I ask to see the progress on your portfolio. This includes all tactics done to date as well as your *overall* objective. These tactics should be error-free and should conform to the guidelines and recommendations given in your readings (and in the AP Stylebook when targeting the media). Each tactic should be instrumental in the success of your strategic plan. Don't just "make the tactics", truly execute the plan. If you remit a press release, give details on where and when it will be sent. If this has already been utilized, submit clippings of any media coverage. I am looking for error-free work as well as critical thinking....are you "in the right place" in your project?....are you "doing enough" to meet your objective?....and so on. Your clients are not editors. I want to see and approve all materials in this portfolio prior to client review. Please refer to your Handbook for an in-depth sheet on what is expected in the portfolios.

Professional advancement/resume—You will earn points and summarize them on a spreadsheet (with attachments) accompanied with an up-to-date resume to show your professional advancement during the semester and throughout your career. The resume should be eye

catching and on appropriate paper. You need to compile 10 points for your professional advancement endeavors each semester. The points can accumulate as such and, again, must be accompanied by your error-free, updated resume **in a professional looking packet**:

- 1 pt. UIndy PRSSA meeting attendance (give date and three meeting notes).
- 1 pt. Befriend or follow 5 PR professionals, organizations, firms, or employment opportunities on a social networking site (provide copy of friend list or following list with them highlighted). You may use this option only once. These additions must be new each semester.
- 2 pt. Hoosier PRSA Luncheon attendance (sit with **NO MORE THAN 1 OTHER UINDY STUDENT** and report that this stipulation was met, collect at least 1 business card, send at least one follow-up e-mail, and report about three “takeaways” that the speaker delivered. Attach all evidence of meeting these requirements).
- 3 pt. Shadow a PR professional for 2 hours minimum (provide date, signature, and business card of the one shadowed). **NO CLIENTS** will be approved as ones to shadow.
- 4 pt. Attendance at any PRSSA Regional Activity (write three “takeaways” on the program and provide for evidence).
- 6 pt. Attendance at the PRSSA National Conference (write three “takeaways” on the program and provide for evidence).

You may suggest other ideas for consideration.

**Fundraising Fact Sheet**—Each student in class is required participate in a fundraising activity for PRSSA (one of Top Dog’s clients). After this experience, you need to construct a factsheet highlighting your involvement in the fundraiser. Design elements are critical, as is your writing. You must document the time that you spent and the funds personally raised if this is relevant. There is a **ONE SHEET LIMIT** and should be made to **PROMOTE** your activities and your worth to the fundraiser. If you did not contribute the fundraiser, your content will show this lack of effort!

**Group Project, Strategic Plan**—This is the end result of the semester. Your group will summarize your experiences for the class in your final presentation. Your completed portfolio is due at the time of presentation (unless otherwise agreed upon) and must meet all requirements and be error-free. **NOTE:** Your client’s satisfaction (of yourself and your group) will be ascertained as will the satisfaction of your account manager (of you as an individual employee). You will be required to evaluate your account executive and your co-staff members as well. **HINT—YOU MUST STAY IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH YOUR ACCOUNT MANAGER THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER!!!!** I will then review all grades for fairness based on comments of others and they will weigh into your grade as noted.

**Final**—will encompass material as noted in class and on the syllabus.

The following is from the University of Indianapolis Faculty Handbook, 2004-2005

### ***3.0.4 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT***

#### **Philosophy**



The students, faculty, and administration of the University of Indianapolis commit themselves to the highest level of ethical conduct in academic affairs. The University of Indianapolis, therefore, adopts the following regulations concerning Academic Misconduct to safeguard the academic integrity of the institution. Prescribed Academic Misconduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

## **1. Cheating**

University of Indianapolis  
Handbook  
73  
2004-05

A student must not cheat in an academic exercise. The University of Indianapolis defines “cheating” generally as obtaining or creating an unfair advantage in any assignment or examination through the use of unauthorized aid, whether given or received. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- a. Use of external assistance on any “in-class” or “take-home” examination without the instructor’s specific authorization. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of tutors, books, notes, calculators, databases, software, or computers.
- b. Use of another person as a substitute or surrogate in the taking of an examination or quiz.
- c. Theft of examinations or other course materials.
- d. Use or allowance of others to conduct research or to prepare any work for a student without advance authorization from the instructor to whom the work is being submitted. Under this prohibition, a student must not make any unauthorized use of materials obtained from commercial term paper companies or from files of papers prepared by other persons.
- e. Submission of a written report or project represented explicitly or implicitly as the student’s individual work when such work was produced in collaboration with one or more other persons.
- f. Use of any unauthorized assistance in a laboratory, at a computer terminal, or on field work.
- g. Work on an examination other than during the time or at a location authorized by the examiner.
- h. Submission of work for credit, when the same work has been or will be used for credit in another course, without the consent of both instructors (see paragraph 6).
- i. Alteration of a grade or score in any way.

## **2. Fabrication**

A student must not falsify or invent any information or data in an academic exercise including, but not limited to, records or reports, laboratory results, and citations to the sources of information.

## **3. Plagiarism**

A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, words, or statements of another person without giving an appropriate acknowledgment to the source. A student must give due credit to the originality of others and acknowledge an indebtedness whenever he or she does any of the following:

- a. Quotes another person's actual words, either oral or written;
- b. Paraphrases another person's words, either oral or written;
- c. Uses another person's ideas, opinions, or theories; or
- d. Cites facts, statistics, or other illustrative material, unless the information is common knowledge.

#### **4. Interference**

A student must not interfere with any other student's opportunity or ability to produce or submit his or her best work on any assignments or examinations. Examples of interference include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Theft, destruction, alteration, defacement, or mutilation of University or public resources so as to deprive others of information.
- b. Giving or offering bribes, promising favors, or making threats with the intention of affecting a grade or the evaluation of academic performance.

University of Indianapolis

Handbook

74

2004-05

#### **5. Violation of Course Rules**

A student must not violate rules as contained in a course syllabus, a professional code of ethics, or other information provided to the student by the course instructor of the University.

#### **6. Multiple Submission of the Same Academic Work**

A student must not submit substantial portions of the same academic work for credit or honors in more than one course without the permission of both instructors.

#### **7. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty**

A student must not intentionally or knowingly help or attempt to help another student to commit or conceal an act of Academic Misconduct.

#### **8. Abuse of Confidentiality**

A student must not use data or unpublished materials belonging to another student or a faculty member without first obtaining written permission. Students using archival or personal research materials must provide for adequate protection of the privacy of living or recently living subjects. A student must not violate the confidentiality of a patient's or client's records.