

Wollo University
College of Social Sciences and Humanities
Department of Journalism and Communication

Course Title: Introduction to Public Relations

Course Code: JoCo 2041

Lecturer: Ibrahim S.

Cr Hr: 3

Course Description:

The course is designed to systematically cover the concepts, origins and development of public relations. It examines the similarities and differences between Public relations and the **neighboring disciplines** such as **journalism, advertising** and **marketing**. It is also intended to develop students' understanding to the role of communication in public relations. Public opinion and persuasion, ethics and professionalism of the discipline in managing and developing public relations practices in various contexts are also the concern of the course. To know the field of public relations, calls for involvement in it and familiarity with its literature and trends; to provide for such active engagement, the course will be conducted in a **student-centered approach** and sometimes with lecture fashion.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, the students (you) will be able to:

- Understand the concept of Public Relations
- Explain origins and development of Public Relations
- Understand the role of communication in Public Relations practices
- Acquire the essentials of public opinion and persuasion
- Equip themselves with preliminary knowledge of ethics and professionalism in public relations.
- Understand the role of public relations for different organizations

Course Contents

Chapter One: Introduction to the Course (1 week)

- 1.1. Public relations defined
- 1.2. The components of public relations
- 1.3. How public relations differs from Journalism
- 1.4. How public relations differs from Advertising
- 1.5. How public relations differs from Marketing
- 1.6. Roles and responsibilities of Public Relations officer

References:

Wilcox, Dennis (1995) pp 3-23

Cutlip, Scott M., Center, Allen H., and Bnom, Glen M (2000) Pp 1-23

Activities: lectures, reading assignments, group discussions and reflections

Chapter Two: Evolution of Public Relations (2 Week)

- 2.1. Ancient Beginnings
- 2.2. The growth of modern public relations
- 2.3. Key personalities in Public Relations

References: Wilcox, Dennis (1995) pp 40-74

Cutlip, Scott M., Center, Allen H., and Bnom, Glen M (2000) Pp 101-135

Activities: lectures, reading assignments, group discussions and reflections

Chapter Three: Communication: The Backbone of Public Relations (3 - 4 weeks)

- 3.1. The goals of communication:
 - 3.1.1. A public relations perspective
 - 3.1.2. Components of the communication process
 - 3.1.3. Receiving the message
 - 3.1.4. Paying attention to the message
- 3.2. Understanding the message

- 3.3. Believing the message
- 3.4. Remembering the message
- 3.5. Acting on the message
- 3.6. Crisis Communication

References: Wilcox Dennis (1995)

Cutlip, Scott M., Center, Allen H., and Bnom, Glen M (2000)

Activities: lectures, reading assignments, group discussions and reflections

Chapter Four: Public Opinion and Persuasion (5 week)

- 4.1. What is public opinion?
 - 4.1.1. Opinion leaders as catalysts
 - 4.1.2 The Media Role
- 4.2. Persuasion: persuasive in our lives
 - 4.2.1. Uses of persuasion
 - 4.2.2. Factors in persuasive communication
 - 4.2.3. Persuasive speaking
 - 4.2.4. Propaganda
 - 4.2.5. Persuasion and manipulation
- 4.1.2. The flow of opinion

Reference: Wilcox, Dennis (1995) pp 257-284

Activities: lectures, reading assignments, group discussions and reflections

Chapter Five: Ethics and Professionalism in Public Relations (6 weeks)

- 5.1. Definitions
- 5.2. Codes of ethics
- 5.3. Ethical foundations
 - 5.3.1. Professional ethics
 - 5.3.2. The imperative of trust
 - 5.3.3. Professional privilege
 - 5.3.4. Social responsibility
- 5.4. Ethics in individual practice

References: Wilcox, Dennis (1995) pp 122-142

Cutlip, Scott M., Center, Allen H., and Bnom, Glen M (2000) Pp 143-165

Activities: lectures, reading assignments, group discussions and reflections

Class Methodology

Classes to be held for this course will be interactive. Each student is expected to be participating actively in the classes. That is presentation and discussions are the main methods of teaching besides lecturing. In addition, students should have fieldwork; they are required to observe different public relations practices in governmental and nongovernmental organizations found in Dessie town.

Mode of Evaluation: Students will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Since the course involves a lot of discussions/activities, you are expected to come to class prepared for the scheduled topic. You must also refrain from missing classes and scheduled activities.

- ✓ Attendance and participation in class discussions and activities will make up 10%.
- ✓ Reflective paper 10%
- ✓ Series of presentations that reflects your field visit and this make up 10%.
- ✓ Mid exam which covers 30%.
- ✓ Final exam 40%.
- ✓ Total = 100%

TEXT BOOKS:

Cutlip, Scott M., Center, Allen H., and Bnom, Glen M. Effective Public Relations. USA: Prentice -Hall, Inc., 2000.

Wilcox, Dennis L. Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics. USA: Harper Collins College publishers, 1995.

REFERENCES:

Center Allen et al. 2008. *Public Relations Practices*. 7 ed. Pearson Prentice Hall. USA.

Gamble, Terik., and Gamble, M. 1999. Communication Works. 6th ed. USA: McGraw Hill companies, Inc

Rayudu, C.S. 1998. Media and Communication Management. India. Himalaya Publishing House,

Seitle, Fraser P.1992. The practice of Public Relations. USA. Macmilla Publishing

William F. Eadie(ed). 2009. 21st Century Communication: A Reference Handbook

Volume 2.SAGE Publication: New Delhi. Ki

Policy

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken daily. If a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to contact the instructor prior to and be up-to-date for the next class. In the event of serious illness, continuous absence, misbehavior or a family emergency, the instructor abides himself to the University laws and regulations.