



COURSE OUTLINE

CMN120 Public Relations: Contemporary Perspectives

Course Coordinator: Penelope Holliday (phollida@usc.edu.au) **School:** School of Business and Creative Industries

2021 Semester 1

USC Sunshine Coast

ON CAMPUS

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Online

ONLINE 1

You can do this course without coming onto campus.

Please go to the USC website for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

This course introduces you to the role of public relations across a range of sectors in a global media environment. You will explore notions such as propaganda, rhetoric and public opinion and examine tactics and strategies deployed by practitioners to influence the public sphere. Via case studies you will develop a critical understanding of PR practices, gaining insights into how the ethical practice of public relations contributes to the sustainability of organisations and communities, and how they can better address the needs of all stakeholders.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
ON CAMPUS			
Lecture – 1 hour online lecture content for 12 weeks (or equivalent).	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Laboratory – On campus laboratory for 12 weeks (or equivalent).	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
ONLINE 1			
Online – 3 hours online content for 12 weeks (or equivalent).	3hrs	Week 1	12 times

1.3. Course Topics

1. Understanding the expansion of public relations and the more globalised media environment that PR now operates in
2. Understanding theories of propaganda, rhetoric and public opinion formation.
3. Unpacking strategies and tactics of strategic communication and PR to influence the public sphere.
4. Exploring ethical and responsible public relations practice

2. What level is this course?

100 Level (Introductory)

Engaging with discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Limited or no prerequisites. Normally, associated with the first full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1 Identify and describe key concepts, principles and theories that inform professional public relations practice.	Knowledgeable
2 Recognise theoretical debates, contestations and contemporary perspectives in public relations literature.	Knowledgeable
3 Deploy ethical principles in the critical analysis of public relations cases.	Ethical
4 Evaluate public relations problems and issues in a sustainable and culturally responsible manner.	Sustainability-focused

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [USC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

Not applicable

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

In week 3 a practice quiz will be conducted and students will get feedback to ensure their understandings of the key concepts explored in the course so far

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Quiz/zes	Individual	20%	45 minutes	Week 4	Online Test (Quiz)
All	2	Activity Participation	Group	30%	10 slides	Week 8	In Class
All	3	Essay	Individual	50%	1500 words	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

All - Assessment Task 1: Workshop Activity Online Quiz

GOAL:	This task is designed to build and enhance your theoretical and conceptual knowledge of public relations.		
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes		
FORMAT:	You will complete a 45-minute multiple choice quiz of 20 questions on Blackboard during your lab session in week four. Questions will cover lecture topics and readings from weeks 1 - 4.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Good knowledge and understanding of week 1-4 lectures and readings on public relations concepts, theories, principles, ethics, functions, strategies and methods.	
	2	Each correct answer will be awarded one mark totalling 20%.	
	3	You will have one opportunity only to take this test in class.	
	4	Assessment criteria are mapped to the course learning outcomes.	1 2 3 4

All - Assessment Task 2: Workshop activity Group Oral Presentation

GOAL:	This task is designed to develop your analytical, oral and team work skills.		
PRODUCT:	Activity Participation		
FORMAT:	You will make a team oral presentation of how theory relates to practice by identifying one theory and relating it to one public relations case or function. Your presentation should be made in no more than 10 PowerPoint slides during your lab session in week 8. One slide should spell out the contribution of each team member.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	10 slides with clear and neat outline of content.	
	2	Appropriate theory and case/function selection.	
	3	Sophisticated analysis of theory in relation to practice.	
	4	Correct use of English.	
	5	Sources correctly attributed.	
	6	Creative presentation - audience engagement, verbal and non-verbal skills, time management.	
	7	Team commitment and contribution.	

All - Assessment Task 3: Essay

GOAL:	This task is designed for you to critically analyse an aspect of the public relations profession from a theoretical perspective.	
PRODUCT:	Essay	
FORMAT:	1500 word essay provided in a Word doc or pdf format.	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Application of relevant public relations theories, principles and ethics.
	2	Critical analysis of the public relations profession.
	3	Sophisticated literature review.
	4	Correct use of English.
	5	Sources correctly attributed.

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Directed study hours may vary by location. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Blackboard site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

Not applicable

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Blackboard, are electronically checked through SafeAssign. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work that SafeAssign has access to.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%

The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct.

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks may be penalised at the following maximum rate:

- 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

- 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day - 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late. To request an extension you must contact your course coordinator to negotiate an outcome.

10.4. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au.

10.5. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226.

10.6. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email AccessAbility@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 2890.

10.7. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Administration of Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Academic Misconduct
- Students with a Disability

Visit the USC website: <http://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

10.8. General Enquiries

In person:

- **USC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **USC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **USC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **USC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **USC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **USC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au