

COURSE OUTLINE  
**Mass Communications 120**  
**Introduction to Public Relations**

I. **Catalog Statement**

Mass Communications 120 is a practical guide to effective public relations, its history, and its relationship with the media. The course is designed for persons who wish to make public relations a career, untrained persons who are currently or plan to be involved in publicity activities, and for journalism majors or minors who wish to enhance their studies.

Units – 3.0

Lecture Hours – 3.0

Prerequisite: None.

II. **Course Entry Expectations**

Skills Level Ranges: Reading: 5; Writing: 5; Speaking/Listening: 5; Math: 1

III. **Course Exit Standards**

Upon successful completion of the required coursework, the student will be able to:

1. develop a comprehensive contact list data base and work successfully with the media;
2. write effective news releases, media alerts, advisories, calendar items, feature ideas, public service announcements, and print and broadcast advertising copy;
3. design a company public relations policy;
4. orchestrate a press conference, write and speech, and deal with dignitaries;
5. use the internet and other computer-related technologies in a PR effort;
6. design a public relations campaign;
7. operate effectively during a natural or image-damaging disaster.

IV. **Course Content**

- A. Introduction to the course 3 hours
1. What to expect from the course
  2. Definition of public relations, types of PR jobs and activities
  3. How communication works

B. Understanding the media	3 hours
1. Basics of general psychology	
2. Print and broadcast media	
C. Preparation	3 hours
1. Developing credibility	
2. Training co-workers	
3. Walking the high wire	
D. General practice	27 hours
1. Setting policy	
2. Contact list data base	
3. The news release, media alert, advisory, calendar item, feature ideas	
4. The broadcast media and public service announcements	
5. Direct mail and advertising	
6. PR in cyberspace	
E. The PR campaign	9 hours
1. Setting realistic goals	
2. Defining the audience	
3. The budget	
4. Developing a plan	
5. Implementing the plan, evaluating effectiveness	
F. Special Circumstances	3 hours
1. Dealing with dignitaries	
2. Developing experts, press conferences, speech writing	
G. Crisis Management	3 hours
1. How to prepare	
2. The PR role in a disaster	

V. **Methods of Presentation**

The following instructional methodologies may be used in the course:

1. class lecture and discussion;
2. group learning;
3. internet work;
4. guest speakers;
5. field trips.

VI. **Assignments and Methods of Evaluation**

1. Quizzes
2. In-class assignments

3. Class discussions
4. Homework assignments
5. Final written examination

VII. **Textbook**

Shelburne, Walking the High Wire: Effective Public Relations

CourseWise Publishing, Inc, 1998

12<sup>th</sup> Grade Textbook Reading Level

ISBN: 0-395-989-773