

Event Planning for Public Relations

PBRL 4301/6301-001

Spring 2023

Class Meeting: MW - 12:40-2:05 pm MJ 106

Prof. Taylor Ackerman, APR

She/Her

Office: Meeman 332

Office hours: Monday, 10:45 a.m. - 12:45 pm

Tuesday, 10am - 11am

Wednesday, 11:45 am - 12:45 pm

If you'd like to meet for the office hours listed, please reach out via email prior to dropping by so I can make sure I'm in my office.

I'm also available via Zoom outside of the listed office hours upon request.

Email: tckerman@memphis.edu

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Development, execution and evaluation of events that support strategic communication practices; special attention will be given to the needs of the public relations industry as well as advertising and public relations tactics for non-profit, for profit, and community-based initiatives and organizations. Hands-on experience will be integrated into the curriculum.

Prerequisites

60 hours of completed coursework

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Manus, L., Verni, S., & Rouse, M.E. *Event Planning: Communicating Theory and Practice (2nd ed.)*. Dubuque, IA. Kendall Hunt Publishing. ISBN: 9781792408885

Classroom format

Our class will meet in person in room 106 in the Meeman Journalism building twice a week. Attending class is imperative and will be necessary for your success in this course. Our course will be geared around planning an informative community event about the Memphis Massacre for the Institute for Public Service Reporting's series "Civil Wrongs." We will work hand-in-hand with another class who will be diving deep into research on the Memphis Massacre this semester. They will be presenting the story and information to the public through the event that we plan for them. The event will take place outside of class hours in April, and each student in PBRL 4301 is required to attend. Much of the event planning will be done in class, working together as a team as well as in smaller committees, and your participation in event planning tasks will count towards your grade. A good event requires a group of

people with a unified goal putting their heads together to plan and solve problems, and that's what we'll be doing this semester.

In addition to getting hands-on experience with event planning, we will be going through the fundamentals of planning a good event through lectures, slide decks, special guests, in class activities, videos, articles, podcasts, and a limited amount of individual assignments. Your learning will be assessed through the success of our event, exams, and assignments. Work will be submitted through our course Canvas shell.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis online learning home page: <http://memphis.instructure.com>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. Click on the link for PBRL 4301 to enter our course

Course Requirements

This course will require access to technology for assignments, diligence in engaging with each week's course content, attending class, organization, participation, and communication with the instructor and other classmates. The course work will often require you to work with your classmates, think critically, and approach situations creatively and with a problem solving attitude.

All students will be **required** to attend the event we plan this semester, as well as complete a few tasks for the event outside of class time. The "Memphis Massacre" event we plan will serve as the capstone for this course.

Course & Campus Resources

Students with disabilities & accommodations

If you will need accommodations through [Disability Resources](#) to meet any of the requirements of this course, please let me know as soon as possible. I'm happy to work with you to make sure you are able to be successful in this course. Remember, this is not a reflection on your ability nor is it giving special treatment, but rather making sure you are equipped to do your best in this course.

Support: If at any point in the semester you are struggling with the course load or a specific assignment, please reach out to me for a meeting so we can work to get you back on track. I'm happy to help in any way I'm able, but you must be an advocate for yourself by communicating with me and making me aware of any problems. It's impossible for me to help if I don't know there's a problem.

School in general can be stressful, and so can event planning. I am here to help make sure that you have everything possible that you need to succeed, and advocate for you. However, this requires open communication from you as early on in the semester as possible. I am happy to meet with you outside of class, hop on a Zoom call, or provide support over email. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you find yourself falling behind, feeling overwhelmed, or struggling. Please remember that the earlier I'm aware of the problem, the more likely it is that

we'll be able to get things turned around.

Academic Services:

[Writing Center](#)

[Tutoring](#)

Communities & Inclusion:

[Multicultural Affairs](#)

[LGBTQ+](#)

Grading

There are 1,000 possible points in this class. At the end of the semester, your class points will be calculated and rounded up to the nearest whole number. Letter grades will be determined according to the scale below. If additional points are added or subtracted from this possible point total, students will be provided with an updated point to letter grade scale.

A+ = 967 – 1,000 points, **A** = 934 – 966, **A-** = 900 – 933 points

B+ = 867 – 899 points, **B** = 834 – 866 points, **B-** = 800 – 833 points

C+ = 767 – 799 points, **C** = 734 – 766 points, **C-** = 700 – 733 points

D = 667 – 600 points

F = 600 and fewer points

Grading Philosophy. A=Professional quality work that could be use with little or no modification

B=Good to excellent work and exceeds requirement, but would require revision to be used professionally

C=Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirement, but would need significant revision

D=Barely satisfies minimum requirement and below average quality

F=Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirements

Assignments

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Attendance | 100 points |
| Event (see breakdown below) | 500 points |
| Quizzes | 200 points |
| Individual Assignments | 160 points |
| Surveys | 40 points |
| Total: | 1,000 points |

Assignment Breakdown

More in-depth guidelines posted to Canvas.

Attendance: Because of the nature of event planning and the fact that we'll be working as a team, class attendance is imperative. Each student will have an allotted three absences to use as they need. Each absence over three will be ten points off their attendance grade.

Event: This class is centered around planning an event that will occur in April, as well as working the event. Together as a class we will plan and execute each detail of the event plan.

Worth 100 points: Tasks and responsibilities leading up to the event (will be completed both individually and as a committee)

Worth 125 points: Assignments related to the event

Worth 75 points: Contribution to problem solving, creativity, recommendations and participation in class decision making for event

Worth 200 points: Day of event - working both the actual event and participating in set up. Points will only be awarded if you are there to help with the event.

Quizzes: A total of four quizzes will be given throughout the semester to test your understanding of course concepts. Quizzes will be given on Canvas with a time limit of 30 minutes. You will have two attempts for each quiz with the highest grade taken. You are welcome to use your notes or book to help assist you on the quiz, but working with another student is prohibited.

Individual Assignments: Students will work independently on four assignments in order to demonstrate understanding of course concepts and event purpose. Additional details will be provided in class and on Canvas. These four assignments consist of:

- Civil Wrongs Podcast Reflection
- Venue Search
- Client Question Preparation
- Elements of a Good Event

Surveys: Students will take a total of two surveys through the semester to gauge interest in different roles of event, rate team members, share event experiences, and other thoughts. As long as the surveys are completed, full credit will be awarded.

Miscellaneous Policies

Late Work: In event planning as well as the broader field of public relations and journalism, deadlines are imperative. As such, any assignments associated directly with the event and the tasks it requires will not be accepted late, nor will the surveys or quizzes. Individual assignments will accepted with the following policy:

- <24 hours late: 5% off
- <48 hours late: 10% off
- <One week late: 20% off
- One to three weeks late: 30% off
- Over three weeks late: No credit

Communication: Students should reach out to the professor via email (tckerman@memphis.edu) if they are experiencing trouble or have questions. Do not wait and let things fester. I will make every effort to respond with 48-hours during the work week. If a message is sent over the weekend, additional response time may be required.

Course Schedule

Week 1, January 17 - 22: Introductions, Get acquainted with purpose of event

Readings/Media: Listen to Civil Wrongs Podcast

Assignments: Complete Reflection on Civil Wrongs Podcast; Get Textbook

Week 2, January 23 - 29: Event Planning Basics & Secret to Success

Readings/Media: Chapter One, See Canvas

Assignments: Survey

Week 3, January 30 - February 5: Venue Needs & Setting the Scene

Readings/Media: See Canvas, Chapter Nine

Assignments: Venue Search

Quiz 1

Week 4, February 6 - 12: The Importance of Listening in Event Planning

Readings/Media: See Canvas, Chapter Two

Assignments: Pertinent Client Questions for Planning Assignment

Week 5: February 13 - 19: Hospitality

Readings/Media: See Canvas, Chapter Five

Assignments: Misc. Event Planning Responsibilities

Week 6: February 20 - 26: Creativity

Readings/Media: See Canvas, Chapter Six

Assignments: Initial Event Planning Committee Assignment & Responsibility Checklist

Quiz 2

Week 7: February 27 - March 5: Integrated Communications & Promotion

Readings/Media: See Canvas, Chapter 13

Assignments: Event Planning Roles & To Do's (due Friday 3-3)

Week 8, March 6 - 12: Spring Break! No Class.

Week 9, March 13 - 19: Roadmap to Success

Readings/Media: See Canvas, Chapter Four

Assignments: Elements of a Good Event Assignment

Misc. Event Planning Responsibilities

Week 10, March 20 - 26: Leadership & Budgeting

Readings/Media: Chapters 7 & 14, Check Canvas

Assignments: Committee Check Ins

Quiz Three

Week 11, March 27 - April 2: Conflict & Crisis

Readings/Media: See Canvas

Assignments: Misc. Event Planning Responsibilities & Committee Tasks

Week 12, April 3 - 9: Negotiation & Ethics

Readings/Media: See Canvas, Chapter 8

Assignments: Misc. Event Planning Responsibilities & Committee Tasks

Week 13, April 10 - 16: Scripting to Reflecting

Readings/Media: See Canvas, Chapter 10

Assignments: Misc. Event Planning Responsibilities & Committee Tasks

Final Checklists

Week 14, April 17 - 23: Event Week!!!!

Readings/Media: None

Assignments: Set Up for Event

Attend Event

Complete Post-Event Survey

Week 15: April 24 - 30: Semester Wrap Up

Readings/Media: None

Assignments: Final

This schedule will change as needed to suit course needs.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Professional Values and Competencies in PBRL 4301

- Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts.
- Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

How professional values and competencies will be met

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)

- Provide a conceptual overview and a systematic study of event planning, management, marketing, logistics, risk assessment and practical applications.
- Understand the importance of considering diversity, accessibility, and inclusiveness when planning events.
- Interpret and apply principles of leadership and event management to the special needs of event organizations.
- Foster professionalism in event management, covering the knowledge base, theory, methodologies and ethics.

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)

- Select and apply appropriate research and project management tools in support of event planning.
- Evaluate and critique events.
- Plan and execute a special event.
- Identify appropriate marketing strategies for different events.
- Work effectively in a group.
- Communicate the evaluation of special event in a final report/presentation.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Learn about the important role of event planning in public relations.

Understanding

- Understand leadership management and the role event planning plays in public relations practice.
- Learn the basics of event finance and budget management.
- Recognize some of the different types of events and the variety of needs that come with each type.
- Appreciate that event attendees want to have an experience at an event, and understand appropriate ways to provide this based on type of event.
- Study effective promotion of events.

Application

- Attend and evaluate campus and community events submitting an assessment assignment for each event.
- Network with professionals in public relations and greater community.
- Improve written and oral communication skills through written briefs, assessments, and presentations or reports.
- Complete project researching, planning, promoting, executing and evaluating a special event.
- Gain experience creating effective event/organization goals and timelines.
- Learn about personal leadership style and determine areas of potential growth.
- Enhance leadership and organizational skills within an event management role.
- Develop a presentation or report about the special event project that describes the experiential learning that took place during the process.

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

As an undergraduate student in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media, you are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of your work. Portfolios begin in JRSM 3900/3905. The portfolio should contain samples of coursework and/or professional experiences and should develop as you build skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while you are enrolled in your capstone course.

You may use any type of web hosting for your portfolio, but it must have an independent and professional URL. You may use any content management system, but you are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix, or Squarespace. It is also encouraged to purchase a URL if you plan to use the portfolio

long term. You must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

You should have a professional email address you plan to use throughout your professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Professional social media links (minimum LinkedIn)

You may wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, presentations, design PDFs, audio files or writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career you seek after graduation. Your portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

You must have your UofM email account activated. If you are using another provider, such as Google, you are required to have all UofM emails forwarded to that account. Go to the [account management website](#) for information about implementing email forwarding. You are required to check your email daily.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism & Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual tardiness.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade (C-) in a class required by your program of study in Journalism & Strategic Media after three attempts will be dropped from the program.

You may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. Substantially reworking the original submission, or working with the same general idea, may be permissible upon discussion and with written approval from the professor of the current course.

Academic integrity

The University of Memphis expects all students to behave honestly and follow the policies stated in the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities. If you need more information about the University policy on academic integrity visit the [Office of Student Accountability's website](#).

In addition to University-wide policies, the Department of Journalism & Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different

courses or receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on your own, as acts of cheating and punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, you are expected to comply with copyright and intellectual property laws and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas and to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. All creative work may be checked for policy adherence by the professor. The only exception to this policy is your online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo). By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.

Online SETEs

You are encouraged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. If completed, once the instructor has posted final grades, you can immediately see that grade. To access evaluation forms, log in to MyMemphis; click the "Student Pages" dropdown menu and select "My Resources" and find the SETE evaluation forms; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. Because Journalism & Strategic Media is a professional program, students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

You may be permitted to make up missing work if it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. You are responsible for learning these rules and checking your work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, contact Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Diversity and inclusivity

The Department of Journalism & Strategic Media values diversity in all its forms. Some of these forms include ability, age, appearance, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and

experiences. As such, students are expected to participate in fostering an inclusive environment that respects the differences of others.

Students are expected to approach their work through a diverse lens. Creating messages that resonate with diverse audiences requires an understanding of a variety of perspectives, which are carried out through multiple platforms, such as digital and traditional media outlets.

The department seeks to foster healthy and positive classroom discussions and experiences. As such, faculty and students are expected to remain respectful and professional at all times.

Weather policy

Always check with local media, the University of Memphis website and the LiveSafe App regarding inclement weather.

Student support

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, visit the Student Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php> or contact the Dean of Students Office at 901-678-2187, or in person in Suite 359 in the University Center for assistance. You may also talk with course instructors about the challenges you are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting you with campus or community support.