



Entertainment Press & Public Relations (EPP)

Spring 2018 UTLA PR/ADV 378 – 06530, 06975
Instructor: David H. Gardner

Class: Mondays 7:00-10:00pm, UTLA, The Denius Center, Classroom #2

Office Hours: Wednesdays & Fridays 1:30-2:30 pm (310-291-1156 cell or by appointment)

E-mail: via Canvas / gardnergeek@gmail.com (backup)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is the contemporary Entertainment business and how does PR function within the main divisions under its umbrella? How do Entertainment publicists interact with Marketing, key executives, content creators, social media teams, talent, and media? What skills must be mastered to succeed in Entertainment PR? How are Entertainment publicists adapting to the industry's key issues (i.e., waves of conglomeration, consolidation, across-the-board technological disruptions and social media movements)?

From an academic and professional point of view, we will explore Hollywood as the center of “the business of entertainment” and analyze current PR practices and activities to enable a greater understanding of the rapidly changing rules of Entertainment PR.

As we analyze the development – and increasing interrelatedness – of the Entertainment Industry from the early 20th century to the present, we will define what an Entertainment publicist does and explore the skill set one must develop, including:

- Media Relations (e.g., direct contact with media, bloggers and critics to pitch, shape, and facilitate stories)
- Press Release/Materials writing/editing/approvals
- Media Training (e.g., teaching and preparing executives and talent for interviews)
- Event Planning
- On-site/On-location/Unit Publicity
- Brand Launch/Maintenance
- Strategic Partnerships
- Internal Communication
- Crisis Communication
- Social Media Planning/Messaging
- Speech Writing
- Charitable Tie-ins
- Research/Specialized Knowledge, Technological Expertise and Pedagogy

Primarily, we will focus on the structure, practices, products and promotion of Hollywood’s film and television industries. Through guest speakers and readings, we will also explore the areas of music/radio, print/publishing, licensing & merchandising, live exhibition/theater, and specific PR practices within.

Students should leave the course with expanded knowledge of the inner workings of Entertainment Industry that you hope to join, as well as understand best PR practices during this period of reinvention for publicists in Hollywood.

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

By the end of the course you should be able to...

1. Define Entertainment PR practices and activities within the current industry structures, explain divisional media targets, and recognize today’s best practices
2. Summarize the history of and skills employed by Entertainment PR practitioners and appreciate the impact that technological shifts have had and continue to have on the overall field;
3. Describe how film & media industries developed as they have; and recognize how industrial structures can shape media products’ promotional messaging;
4. Analyze a media conglomerate to determine the scope of the components owned;
5. Evaluate the success or failure of an entertainment project to identify root causes and industry implications; and
6. Engage in critical thinking, discussing course concepts, and collaborative knowledge-building.

Learning Outcomes	Assessments	Point Value
1, 2, 3	Midterm exam	75
1, 2, 3	Final exam	75
1, 2, 3	Assignments/Quizzes	25
4	Media conglomerate proposal	25
4	Media conglomerate analysis	75
5	Final paper proposal	25
5	Case study/ final paper	100
5	Case Study Presentation	50
6	Participation	50
	Total Possible Points	500

REQUIRED READINGS

- Scott, David Meerman (2017). *The New Rules of Marketing & PR (6th Edition)*. New York: Wiley
- Havens, Timothy & Lotz, Amanda D. (2016). *Understanding Media Industries (2nd Edition)*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Holiday, Ryan (2012). *Trust Me I’m Lying: Confessions of a Media Manipulator*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin.
- Readings from Pew Research Center’s State of News Media 2018: <http://www.pewresearch.org/topics/state-of-the-news-media/>
- Additional readings, including:
 - Sample PR plans, press releases (i.e., project pick-up, talent signed, start of production, premiere date announcements; via Canvas)
 - Current trend articles (via Canvas). Example include:
 - [HuffPost: All the Doors to Hollywood and How to Open Them - Publicist](#)
 - [THR: Welcome to Hollywood's Age of Anxiety](#)
 - [TheWrap: Batten Down the Hatches for 2019 – A Media Storm Is Coming](#)
 - [Variety: Recession Fears Grip Hollywood: Can the Movie Biz Survive a Downturn?](#)
 - [IndieWire: From Netflix to NATO: Who’s Poised to Win and Lose in 2019](#)
 - [Medium: The New Age of A Publicist In Hollywood](#)

- There will be plus and minus grades in this course. Grades will be determined according to the following scale:

485-500 points	A+	400-414	B-
465-484	A	385-399	C+
450-464	A-	350-384	C
435-449	B+	300-349	D
415-434	B	Below 300	F

Two Exams: There will be a Midterm Exam and a Final Exam. Both exams consist of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and true-false questions. They cover all readings, lectures and in-class discussions. Review sheets will be available and discussed during the class prior to each exam.

Response Assignments/Quizzes/: Along with participation, this portion of your grade rewards you for attending class regularly and keeping up with assigned readings. Over the course of the semester, there will be **in-class quizzes** (1-3 questions). Students will be alerted to an upcoming quiz prior to each class. Quizzes will take place at the start of class. No late assignments will be accepted. No make-up quizzes will be given. In other words, students who are not on time and in class to participate in these activities will not, of course, receive credit for this. And they **cannot** be made up except in the case of serious illness and other emergencies with documentation, as well as pre-excused religious holidays.

Media Conglomerate paper assignment: This assignment asks you to build upon your readings, lectures and class material with independent, outside research on a media conglomerate of your choice. More information will be provided in-class/via Canvas on 2/4. Your topic is due at the beginning of class on 2/18 and the final assignment is due 3/25. **APA style must be used.** Times New Roman, 12 pt. font. (APA Style resource: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>)

PR Case Study / Final paper assignment: Building upon your research for the Media Conglomerate Assignment, this assignment asks that identify a recent – successful OR failed - PR campaign for a project within your conglomerate. It should be a project that was not extensively explored in class. More information about this assignment will be provided in class on 3/25. Proposals, which will include your chosen case study, a preliminary outline and a works cited list, are due on 4/8. The final paper is due at the *start* of class on 4/29, when you will give present a 10-min. overview of the study and your analysis. **APA style must be used.** Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.

Case Study Presentation: Present a timed 10-min. presentation on your case study. Include overview of case study and highlights, with an assessment of the PR campaign and positive/negative implications for your conglomerate and/or the Entertainment industry as a whole. Please prepare an overhead PowerPoint presentation (5-10 slides, with one hard copy for instructor). Handouts are also acceptable (bring copies for entire class and instructor). Presentations will be graded according to the **Rubric for Formal Oral Communication** (posted on Canvas):

Grading:	<u>Point value</u>
Language, Organization & Style	5
Use of overheads/handouts	5
Content	15
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	25

Attendance/Participation: Attendance will be checked. You can have two unexcused absences, although work missed during these absences may not necessarily be made up. Each unexcused absence afterwards will result in your overall grade being reduced by 10 points.

Absences are only permitted for the following (and you are required to provide me with official verification for these): Doctor's orders; participating in an official UTLA activity (sports, music, etc.); OR unavoidable disasters (i.e., death in the family, car accident on the way to class -- not job interviews, taking family members to or from the airport, etc.). Arriving late or leaving early, without the instructor's explicit permission, will result in the deduction of 5 points each time.

Your attendance is necessary for you to fully participate in the class. To participate here means:

- Behave professionally and civilly
- Stay focused and engaged in all learning activities
- Bring your best ideas into the conversation
- Ask probing questions to clarify everyone's understanding and extend ideas
- Support your classmates when they need help and ask for support when you need it
- Proactively contribute to the learning community

In addition, you will need to be in class to turn in assignments, take quizzes, and get informed about future assignments. If you are not there for in-class assignments, you can't get credit for the work done by others during class time. You are responsible for all material covered in class. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from another student.

Regarding withdrawals:

I want every student to learn and be successful in this class. If you find yourself struggling to understand the material or keep pace with the assignments, please don't hesitate to contact me so we can address the issue together. If you stay in contact and remain engaged in class, I might consider extra credit on a case-by-case basis.

A student who wishes to withdraw from all University classes after completing registration for a semester must secure the dean's approval. For more information on withdrawals, see <https://registrar.utexas.edu/students/registration/after/withdrawal>.

X | Temporary delay of final course grade:

The symbol X is not issued for student or faculty convenience; it may be issued for one of the following reasons only in the case of compelling, nonacademic circumstances beyond the student's control: 1) missing the final examination; 2) incomplete classroom assignments; or 3) reexamination petition. If the final course grade is not reported before the end of the next long-session grade reporting period, a grade of F is recorded for the course. The X symbol remains on the student's record. For more, see [General Information](#).

Tips to succeed in this class:

- **Check Canvas / Email regularly.** Along with additional required readings, all assignments, handouts and announcements will be made available to you on Canvas and/or emailed to you directly. It is your responsibility to check Canvas/your email accounts so that you can get all the class documents. In addition, you can look up your scores on assignments via the Canvas grade book. When in doubt, check Canvas.

- Remember that class notes/overheads provided in class are only guidelines. Many of the questions on the Midterm and Final Exams will come from weekly lecture material presented only during class meetings. However, this does not mean that you will be prepared for the exam simply by copying down the materials provided during overheads. Think critically about what you read – do **NOT** just memorize facts and figures. Be sure to take notes from – and think about – what I say, what we discuss as a class, and what you read.
- Life happens. When assignments are due, expect the unexpected. Hard deadlines are a fact of life in Public Relations. Get ready and assume that one (or perhaps all) of the following will happen to you on Exam dates and assignment due dates:
 - ➔ Your printer will not print
 - ➔ Your computer will crash and all data will be lost
 - ➔ Your car will not run, your phone died and you can't call an Uber/Lyft, and all your friends will be out of town

Please take whatever steps are necessary to prevent these events from affecting your deadlines for assignments.

About the Instructor ([linkedin.com/in/davidhgardner/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/davidhgardner/)):

As a senior PR executive in Hollywood for 20+ years with The Lippin Group, UP/ASPiRE, NBC, UPN, Disney Channel/ABC Family, CBS International & Syndication, FX, and Rogers & Cowan, David H. Gardner has supervised domestic and international public relations on over 150 television series, specials, movies and events, from last summer's "Take Two," "Dear White People," and "Nashville" to "Heroes," "Veronica Mars," and the 2006 Emmy Awards. His current clients include Lionsgate TV, E! International, StudioCanal/Tandem and My Friend's Place homeless youth center. His professional career kicked off in Atlanta as a junior publicist at Turner Broadcasting. Gardner previously taught Film/Journalism at Georgia State University, while completing his Master's in Communication. His 2012 thesis on how entertainment publicists and media work together to define, attract, organize, and maintain TV fans/Fandom has been downloaded 4500+ times.

Communication between the Instructor and Students: All e-mail messages related to this course that you send me via Canvas should include: 1) the name of this course (e.g., "EPP") in the subject line to make sure they are not lost in my junk mail folder and keep me organized.

Late assignment policy: Papers will be penalized 10 points for each day late. It is your responsibility to ensure the email is timestamped by the start of class on the due date. If you have access to a printer, a hard copy (Times New Roman, 12 pt.) would also be greatly appreciated.

Missed Exam policy: Failure to take exams on the scheduled dates will result in automatic zeros. Absences from exams are excused **only** in the case of serious illness and other emergencies with documentation, as well as pre-excused religious holidays.

Written Assignment Format & Quality: All assignments must be typed, double-spaced, 12 pt., stapled and adhere to APA style. (APA: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>) Poorly written papers or papers with significant spelling, grammatical, or typographical errors will be handed back and penalized 10 points. **Proof-reading is a MUST.**

Course evaluations: Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at the University of Texas at Austin. Upon completing the course, please take the time to fill out the online course evaluation. Your evaluations will help me and shape the class for future students.

Services for students with disabilities:

Students with a documented disability may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (video phone). Please inform me within the first three weeks of class if you have a disability and need accommodation to take part in or to complete the required work for this course.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY

The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor.

By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a career.

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. More information on student conduct and academic integrity is available at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php>

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Course Schedule – Spring 2018

(NOTE: This schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor)

Wk	Date	Topic(s)	Readings/Activities	Activities/Assignments
1	1/22 (Tues)	Course introduction, Bernays and the History of the “PR Flack” & Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott, Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2 • Havens & Lotz, Glossary and Chapter 1 • Bernays, origins of HW PR machine • PR terms / key concepts • <i>South Park</i> / “Gnomes” episode clip 	
2	1/28 (Mon)	PR in Real Time & Building the PR plan Mandates, Technological Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott, Chapter 9, 10 • Havens & Lotz, Chapter 2 and 3 • PR case study / discussion – See Canvas • POP TV’s <i>Flack</i> (new series) 	
3	2/4	PR – From the Ground Up – Structure and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott, Chapters 4, 5, 17 • Havens & Lotz, Chapters 5 and 6 • PR case study: <i>You Kiddin’ Me</i> / Facebook Watch PR plan • Discussion of Media Conglomerate paper 	
4	2/11	PR & Media Tiers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Havens & Lotz, Chapters 7 and 8 • Holiday, Introduction, Chapters I–IV • PR case study / discussion – See Canvas • <i>Sweet Smell of Success</i> (1957) 	
5	2/18	PR & Media Tiers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Lecturer – Meghann Burns, SVP, Theatrical Publicity with Lionsgate • Holiday, Chapters V-VI • Havens & Lotz, Chapter 9 • Intro to Film PR/Studio System • Brief individual review of topics 	Media Conglomerate topic proposal due – Please print 2 copies to bring to class
6	2/25	PR / Film / Gossip Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott, Chapters 11, 12, 14 • Holiday, Chapter VII • Film / Rise of Gossip Industry • Feedback on Media Conglomerate paper topics • Midterm Exam Review 	Bring in review questions
7	3/4	Exam I PR / Film / Gossip Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midterm Exam • The 10 Kings & Queens of HW Gossip • Case Study: Influencers vs. Hotel – on Canvas • Pew Research Center’s State of News Media 2018: http://www.pewresearch.org/topics/state-of-the-news-media/ • Ooyla State of the Media Industry – on Canvas 	Discussion questions on Canvas

8	3/11	PR and Technology: Effects on Field / News Collection The Dark Side: Fake News, Newsjacking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott, Chapters 15, 18, 19 • Holiday, Chapter VIII-IX • Review of Grading Rubric/Last questions on Media conglomerate assignment • <i>Teenage Paparazzo</i> (2010) 	Quiz on reading
	3/18	SPRING BREAK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO CLASS 	
9	3/25	PR and TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiday, X-XV • Case Study / Final Paper discussion • <i>Showrunners: The Art of Running a TV Show</i> (2014) 	Media conglomerate assignment due
10	4/1	PR and Music/Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD Guest Lecturer – Music • Current State of Radio/Music Industry • Holiday, XVI-XX • Scott, Chapter 21 	Quiz on reading
11	4/8	Globalization & Localization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Havens & Lotz, Chapter 10 • Unit PR / Growth of Atlanta, Vancouver, etc. as secondary industry destinations - articles on Canvas • Nollywood, Bollywood • <i>Welcome to Nollywood</i> (2007) 	Case Study / Final paper proposal with preliminary sources due
12	4/15	Runaway Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiday, XXI-Conclusion • Review of Case Study proposals • Final Exam Review 	Bring in Final review questions
13	4/22	Final Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Exam • Guest Lecture: TBD • Current State of Print/Publishing Industry / Licensing & Merchandising - articles on Canvas 	Quiz on reading Bring in review questions
14	4/29	Unit Publicity / Case Study Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Lecture: TBD • 10-min. presentations on individual case studies 	Case Study / Final paper due Complete course evaluations