

**MOSCOW STATE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
MGIMO UNIVERSITY**

School of Government and International Affairs

B.A. in Government and International Affairs

Department of Public Relations

«Approved»

Director, School of Government and International Affairs

_____ **Mikhail Troitskiy**

«___» _____ **2017**

PR Strategies

Course Syllabus

Syllabus developed by Anton Gumenskiy, 2017

© Anton Gumenskiy, 2017

© MGIMO University, 2017

The course “PR Strategies” is designed in accordance with the MGIMO Educational Standard for the Bachelor’s Program in International Relations (program track “Government and International Relations”).

Author _____ Anton Gumenskiy, Lecturer in Communication Studies;

Director, MGIMO Library _____ Marina Reshetnikova

Director, School of Government

and International Affairs _____ Mikhail Troitskiy

**PART 1:
INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION, COURSE DESCRIPTION
AND TEACHING METHODS**

1.1 General information

- Full course title: PR Strategies
- Type of course: Elective
- Level of course B.A.
- Year of study: 3rd
- Number of ECTS credits allocated: 2
- Name of lecturer(s) and office hours:
Anton Gumenskiy
Department of Public Relations
Office hours: [Tuesday, Wednesday, 2PM-5PM], office [4129]
E-mail: Anton.Gumenskiy@gmail.com

1.2 Course aims and learning outcomes

The PR Strategies course aims to providing students with foundational knowledge of essence, effects and consequences of Public Relations phenomena for individuals and societies. An emphasis is put on problematization of PR as a professional field and an element that is present in any and every act of public policy, mass media, corporate governance, and professional communication, and on correlation between PR activities and transformations of basic individual and social realities.

The basic concept of the course is a fundamental interconnectivity and consistency of social and technological processes. Classes aim to promote independent thinking, critical analysis, self-reflection, and cooperative and responsible communication culture. Teaching methods include lectures, seminars, case studies, presentations and discussions.

The course is intended to give students an essential comprehension of systematic and holistic nature of the public communication sphere, understanding of main laws and principles of media, and broad knowledge of various genres, formats, patterns, and other phenomena, which constitute political, corporate, and personal professional communication. The course is designed to develop critical and system thinking skills, capability of information analysis and synthesis, adaptability to the constantly changing communication environment, ability to self-reflection, self-dependent problem setting and considered decision making, so to let students use media as needed, and not to get used by them.

Course objectives:

1. To introduce students to the main methodological approaches to analysis of PR phenomena.
2. To orient students to the key issues and paradoxes of the contemporary public sphere, and media and communication studies.
3. To provide students with essential approaches and methods for critical thinking and further in-depth research within PR, media business, corporate communications, public policy, and other relevant fields.

Learning outcomes:

After the course, the student should have essential media literacy, vital for any professional in political and social communications. By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. conduct an independent, problem-oriented, and methodologically correct critical research within the public, the corporate, and the personal professional communications;
2. evaluate opportunities and risks of communication technologies;
3. control own communication behaviour, effectively adapt to diverse information environments.

1.3 Course requirements and grading plan

Course requirements

Students are required to attend not less than 75% of classes and be prepared for class discussions. Thorough reading of the assigned materials is essential.

Grading plan

- Class participation – 40%.
- Essay in-class presentation – 40%.
During the course each student is encouraged to write an essay (minimum 3000 characters, up to 5000 characters, Times New Roman font, size 14, 1.5 interval) on the topic directly related to the PR field and present it in the class (up to 15 minutes). The essay should demonstrate the level of student's understanding of the subject. Class feedback will help to evaluate knowledge of all students involved into discussion.
- Oral exam – 20%.

PART 2. COURSE CONTENT

2.1 Types of work

Types of work	Academic hours	ECTS credits
Total	72	2
Total for lectures, seminar	32	
Lectures	16	
Seminars	16	
Homework	40	
Reading assignments	20	
Writing an essay	10	
Preparation for final test and exam	10	
Course works		

2.2. Course content and readings by topic

Topic 1. PR as a Problem.

Lecture 1.1 PR, Ideology, and Public Good.

Summary: Phenomenon and functions of PR. Basic terms and definitions. The Paradox of PR: to act in the interests of the society and in favour of those, who use the society in their own interests. PR's impossibility and inevitability. PR and Media: media non-neutrality principle.

Keywords: public good, stakeholder, non-neutrality, ideology.

Lecture 1.2. A Feast in Time of Plague.

Summary: Crisis Communication: to fight the fire or to explain that no fire has ever taken place? PR as a paradigm and a worldview: reflection and projection of the reality, unintended consequences, self-fulfilling prophecies, immorality of the professional ethics.

Keywords: crisis, moral dilemma, professional ethics, conflict of interests.

- Compulsory readings:
The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations, SAGE Publications, Inc; 2 edition (July 29, 2010)
- Further readings:
 1. Bernays, Edward Louis (1928). Propaganda. Routledge.
 2. Huxley, Aldous (1958). Brave New World Revisited. New York: Harper & Brothers.
 3. Orwell, George (1949). 1984. London: Secker & Warburg.
 4. Pelevin, Victor. Generation "П". Moscow, 1999. (the English translation published by Faber and Faber, UK as Babylon, 2001, and by Penguin as Homo Zapiens, 2002).
 5. Postman, Neil (1985). Amusing Ourselves to Death. Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business. Viking Penguin Inc.

Topic 2. Theory and Evolution of PR.

Lecture 2.1. Show Business from Freud to Facebook.

Summary: Sources of the profession, social, cultural, technological, and scientific contexts. Tradition, Modernity, Postmodernity. Social networks: PR is dead, long live PR.
Keywords: context, mass-culture, unconscious, evolution.

Lecture 2.2. Political Economy of PR.

Summary: PR market, politics, business, and other professional spheres. Actors and resources, from target audiences to responsible users. PR and Power: the tyranny of image, auto communication, ideology and the myth of realpolitik.
Keywords: divide et impera, power, production, exchange.

- Compulsory readings:
The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations, SAGE Publications, Inc; 2 edition (July 29, 2010)
- Further readings:
 1. Baudrillard, Jean (1998). The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures. SAGE.
 2. Heath, Joseph; Potter, Andrew (2004). The Rebel Sell: Why the culture can't be jammed. HarperCollins.
 3. Herman, Edward S., Chomsky, Noam (1988). Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media. Pantheon Books.
 4. Klein, Naomi (1999). No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies. Knopf Canada, Picador.

Topic 3. PR and Technology.

Lecture 3.1 PR as Technocracy.

Summary: The methods of PR and socio-technological context: conveyor, hypermarket, television, social networks, big data, and the dream of "the next big thing". Media enchantment. Society as a mechanism and the organism. PR as the perfect approach to the social governance.
Keywords: methods, tools, craftsmanship, technopoly.

Lecture 3.2. Research Technologies in PR.

Summary: Target audiences, evolution of concepts from mass-market to niches, from hierarchy of demands to lifestyles. Audience research methods from polls and focus groups to modelling and anthropology. PR efficiency obsessive-compulsive disorder.
Keywords: audience, targeting, research, efficiency.

- Compulsory readings:

- Further readings:
 1. Bernays, Edward Louis (1928). Propaganda. Routledge.
 2. Bourdieu, Pierre (1971). Public Opinion Does Not Exist.
 3. Graffman, Katarina (2004). The Cruel Masses. How producers at a Swedish commercial television company construct their viewers.
 4. Lemov, Rebecca (2012). Everywhere and Nowhere: Focus Groups as All-Purpose Devices. LIMN, Issue Number Two: Crowds and Clouds. March, 2012. <http://limn.it/everywhere-and-nowhere-focus-groups-as-all-purpose-devices>
 5. Pelevin, Victor. Generation "П". Moscow, 1999. (the English translation published by Faber and Faber, UK as Babylon, 2001, and by Penguin as Homo Zapiens, 2002).
 6. Postman, Neil (1985). Amusing Ourselves to Death. Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business. Viking Penguin Inc.

Topic 4. PR, Public Policy, and Social Development.

Lecture 4.1 PR and Civil Society.

Summary: New Media, Grassroots, Astroturfing, and Civil Society in the Digital Era. Social Networks phenomena and effects, interest groups, communities and crowds. Propaganda and counter-propaganda. Trolls, bots, drones, zombies and other digital things. The Digital as the new framework and ideology.

Keywords: new media, activism and slacktivism, crowdsourcing, vox populi vox dei.

Lecture 4.2. PR in the Global Village.

Summary: Cross-cultural communications; corporate cultures in the era of the great Barbarian Invasions. Globalization and Localization, McDonalidization, Eat local, cultural imperialism, cosmopolitanism and patriotism. Moral choice and the conflict of identities of PR-professional.

Keywords: glocalization, migrations, corporate culture, identity.

- Compulsory readings:

The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations, SAGE Publications, Inc; 2 edition (July 29, 2010).

- Further readings:
 1. Gladwell, Malcolm (2010). Small Change. Why the revolution will not be tweeted. The New Yorker. Oct. 4, 2010. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-malcolm-gladwell> (<http://www.gladwell.com/pdf/twitter.pdf>)
 2. Granovetter, Mark S. (1973). The Strength of Weak Ties. The American Journal of Sociology, Volume 78, Issue 6, May, 1973, 1360-1380
<http://sociology.stanford.edu/people/mgranovetter/documents/granstrengthweakties.pdf>
 3. McLuhan, Herbert Marshall (1964). Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man. New York: McGraw Hill.
 4. Shirky, Clay (2008). Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations. New York: Penguin Press.

2.3. Essay topics

1. Virtual Communities and Crowds as New Social Actors
2. Influence of Mass-culture Narratives on Political Ideologies
3. Missing and Overlapping Contexts in Digital Communications
4. Technological Progress and Ethical Issues

5. Digital (Generation, Gender, Cultural, etc.) Gaps in Public Relations
6. PR & Mass Media: partnership and rivalry
7. Leadership Communications in a Digital Tribe
8. Information Overload as a Factor in Decision Making
9. Tools of Social Activism in the Digital Era
10. Social Media Images of PR-professionals

Exam Questions

1. PR Audience: Crowdsourcing, Empowerment, etc.
2. PR Theories and Research Methods
3. PR & Culture: Political, Corporate, Ethnic Cultures, Subcultures, etc.
4. PR & Environment: Ecology, Economy, Urbanism, Greenwashing, etc.
5. Professional Ethics & Morality
6. PR Models and the Evolution of Concepts.
7. PR & Ideologies, Discourses, Paradigms and Narratives
8. PR & Social Order; Consensus, Conflict, Change, and Social Organization
9. Identity issues and Conflict of Interests of a PR-professional
10. Political Economy of PR

2.4. Exam timing

- Spring semester oral exam – last week of May.

2.5. Consolidated reading list (in alphabetic order)

- Compulsory readings:
 - The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations, SAGE Publications, Inc; 2 edition (July 29, 2010).
- Further readings:
 1. Baudrillard, Jean (1998). *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*. SAGE.
 2. Bernays, Edward Louis (1928). *Propaganda*. Routledge.
 3. Bourdieu, Pierre (1971). *Public Opinion Does Not Exist*.
 4. Gladwell, Malcolm (2010). *Small Change*. Why the revolution will not be tweeted. *The New Yorker*. Oct. 4, 2010. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-malcolm-gladwell> (<http://www.gladwell.com/pdf/twitter.pdf>)
 5. Graffman, Katarina (2004). *The Cruel Masses*. How producers at a Swedish commercial television company construct their viewers.
 6. Granovetter, Mark S. (1973). *The Strength of Weak Ties*. *The American Journal of Sociology*, Volume 78, Issue 6, May, 1973, 1360-1380
<http://sociology.stanford.edu/people/mgranovetter/documents/granstrengthweakties.pdf>
 7. Heath, Joseph; Potter, Andrew (2004). *The Rebel Sell: Why the culture can't be jammed*. HarperCollins.
 8. Herman, Edward S., Chomsky, Noam (1988). *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Pantheon Books.
 9. Huxley, Aldous (1958). *Brave New World Revisited*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
 10. Klein, Naomi (1999). *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*. Knopf Canada, Picador.
 11. Lemov, Rebecca (2012). *Everywhere and Nowhere: Focus Groups as All-Purpose Devices*. LIMN, Issue Number Two: *Crowds and Clouds*. March, 2012. <http://limn.it/everywhere-and-nowhere-focus-groups-as-all-purpose-devices>
 12. McLuhan, Herbert Marshall (1964). *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York: McGraw Hill.
 13. Orwell, George (1949). 1984. London: Secker & Warburg.

14. Pelevin, Victor. Generation "П". Moscow, 1999. (the English translation published by Faber and Faber, UK as Babylon, 2001, and by Penguin as Homo Zapiens, 2002).
15. Postman, Neil (1985). Amusing Ourselves to Death. Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business. Viking Penguin Inc.
16. Seabrook, John (2000). Nobrow. The Culture of Marketing. The Marketing of Culture. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
17. Shirky, Clay (2008). Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations. New York: Penguin Press.

- Films list

1. All the President's Men, 1976. imdb.com/title/tt0074119
2. Black Mirror, 2011-2015. imdb.com/title/tt2085059
3. Conspiracy, 2001. imdb.com/title/tt0146309
4. Death of a President, 2006. imdb.com/title/tt0853096
5. House of Cards, 2013 -. imdb.com/title/tt1856010
6. The Ides of March, 2011. imdb.com/title/tt1124035
7. Network, 1976. imdb.com/title/tt0074958
8. The Newsroom, 2012-2014. imdb.com/title/tt1870479
9. No, 2012. imdb.com/title/tt2059255
10. Spotlight, 2015. imdb.com/title/tt1895587
11. Thirteen Days, 2000. imdb.com/title/tt0146309
12. Wag the Dog, 1997. imdb.com/title/tt0120885
13. The West Wing, 1999-2006. imdb.com/title/tt0200276

- Case Study List

1. Louise Delage on Instagram: http://mashable.com/2016/10/06/france-instagram-louise-delage-alcohol-/?utm_cid=mash-com-fb-main-link#5kQRa08mwqpp;
<http://www.adweek.com/creativity/who-louise-delage-troubling-truth-behind-overnight-instagram-success-173792>
2. Brangelina Is Dead; Long Live Angelina:
<https://www.buzzfeed.com/annehelenpetersen/brangelina-is-dead-long-live-angelina>
3. Where Does “Your Word Is Your Bond” Come From, and Why Did Melania Steal It?
http://www.slate.com/blogs/lexicon_valley/2016/07/19/your_word_is_your_bond_history_and_origins_from_matthew_to_hip_hop.html
4. ...Every Mitt Romney tweet had to be approved by 22 people:
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2014/12/05/by-the-end-of-the-2012-campaign-every-mitt-romney-tweet-had-to-be-approved-by-22-people>
5. The Intercept, Glenn Greenwald: New Email Leak Reveals Clinton Campaign’s Cozy Press Relationship: <https://theintercept.com/2016/10/09/exclusive-new-email-leak-reveals-clinton-campaigns-cozy-press-relationship>
6. Can President Trump Learn on the Job? <http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/can-president-trump-learn-on-the-job>
7. Politicians’ plagiarism. From speeches to Ph.D.'s: Politicians called out for copying
<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/07/19/politics/politicians-plagiarism>
8. Stop blaming Facebook for Trump's election win (Cambridge Analytica, Networks, Targeting, Big Data): <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/presidential-campaign/307438-stop-blaming-facebook-for-trumps-election-win>; <http://adage.com/article/campaign-trail/cambridge-analytica-toast/305439>
9. Lego ends advertising with Daily Mail: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/lego-ends-advertising-daily-mail-stop-funding-hate-campaign-a7413361.html>
10. Ikea Built a Room in One of Its Stores to Look Like a Damaged Home in Syria:
<http://www.adweek.com/creativity/ikea-built-room-one-its-stores-look-damaged-home-syria-174472>

PART 3. FINAL REMARKS

- Plagiarism is considered a severe violation of academic rules and a breach of ethics. Plagiarism is unacceptable. Proved plagiarism results in F-mark for the course regardless of the fulfillment of all other requirements.
- Assignments are to be handed in on the due date. Late submissions result in lowering of the grade by 1/5 of a grade for each day of delay.
- Students are asked to keep a copy of all work submitted for evaluation.