

## **Syllabus**

### **Cause Consulting II: Strategic Communications Implementation**

**MPPR-910-01**

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Meeting: Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Term: Spring 2010

### **Course Description**

During the first semester of the Cause Consulting: Strategic Communications Planning course, students focused on learning and applying the fundamentals of strategic communications planning and became knowledgeable about their clients and the nonprofit sector. During the second semester of this course students will implement key portions of their strategic communications plan and expand their leadership potential by focusing on how they can create positive social and economic impact throughout their careers. The semester culminates with the students providing their clients with sustainable communications systems, tools and recommendations going forward. Students who complete both semesters will be recognized as Cause Consultants and are eligible to conduct communications training sessions for nonprofits in conjunction with the Center for Social Impact Communications at Georgetown.

Prerequisite: Students must have completed Cause Consulting I: Strategic Communications Planning to enroll in this course.

### **Books Required:**

Because students will be fine tuning messages, evaluating the success of their plans, and continuing to give presentations, it is strongly recommended that they keep the books they read during the first semester. In addition, the students will be required to read several articles and discuss their relevance to their clients. The articles will be provided during class.

Bivins, T.

Public Relations Writing: The Essentials of Style and Format

2007 (6<sup>th</sup> Edition)

McGraw Hill

Wilson, L., & Ogden, J.  
Strategic Communications Planning  
Kendall Hunt Publishing Company  
2008, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition  
ISBN: 978-0-7575-4887-1

Leet, Rebecca K.  
Message Matters: Succeeding at the Crossroads of Mission and Market  
2007  
ISBN-13: 978-0-940069-63-3

Goodman, A.  
Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes  
2006  
ISBN 0-9763027  
Download at  
[http://www.agoodmanonline.com/publications/how\\_bad\\_presentations\\_happen/index.htm](http://www.agoodmanonline.com/publications/how_bad_presentations_happen/index.htm)

**Recommended but not required:**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association  
ISBN-10: 1557987912  
ISBN-13: 978-1557987914  
Publisher: American Psychological Association (APA)  
July 2001; Fifth Edition

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this class you should be able to:

- Successfully work with a client to implement a strategic communications plan
- Understand individual leadership qualities and how you can apply them in the nonprofit sector
- Knowledge of contemporary tools used to implement communication strategies
- Have a deeper understanding for the influences that communications strategies can have on impacting positive social change
- Have gained real world experience working as a communications consultant.

**Teaching Philosophy**

This course is based on real time application of the curriculum through active participation by all members of the group. To achieve this goal, it is critical that you come to class prepared for this requirement. The curriculum supports the client projects you are working on. This means that beyond completing client work and other assignments you will be asked to apply and demonstrate what you have learned in all aspects of our work together including class discussions, client

relationships and team work.

### **Attendance**

Plan ahead so that you arrive to class before it begins and ready to start work. Attendance is necessary for success in this class. If you frequently arrive late or miss more than one class, your final grade will drop by one letter grade. Special circumstances should be discussed immediately to receive consideration. In the event you need to be late or miss a class, please notify Joy by e-mail prior to the start of the class. It will be your responsibility to get the notes and announcements from a fellow classmate.

### **Client Time Commitment**

The MPS program specifies that classes are two hours in length. Outside of class time students are expected to spend six hours a week studying for class. Due to the applied nature of this class, we expect that you will spend those six hours dividing your time between the readings and client work. If you encounter any challenges working with your client please let Joy or Jennifer Gilman know. They are here to help you work with your clients.

### **Group work**

Throughout the semester you will be working closely with your team. It is important that early on you share schedules with your teammates. It is up to you to determine the best times to work together on the project outside of class. If there are any problems that arise within your team please see Joy immediately. Teams will be assessing team member participation and effort at the end of the semester. Your teammates' assessments of you can impact your grade.

### **Work Submitted and Presented**

You are expected to submit work on time and of high quality. Two points per 24 hour period will be deducted for late assignments. All typed text should be in 12-point font, double spaced and referenced following APA guidelines. Please include your group name, the assignment title, page numbers and the date on all written submissions. When using PowerPoint please make sure that the slides are legible and clear. Please bring a hard copy of your assignment to class the night it is due and also email a copy to Joy prior to the start of class. When emailing your assignment/client deliverable, please title the document as follows: client or student name, assignment/deliverable, and date if appropriate. For example: UnitedWay.MessageGuide.1.29.09 or Boyle.IndividualPresentation.

### **Honor System**

Students are expected to abide by the Georgetown University Honor System. If you have not already done so, please familiarize yourself with the material and information posted on the Honor Council's website: <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/index.html>

### **Georgetown University Honor Pledge**

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: to be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and

work together.

### **Academic Resource Center**

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center ([arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

### **The Writing Center**

Clear, concise writing is essential to effective communications. Students experiencing difficulty in their writing should visit the Georgetown University Writing Center ([writingcenter.georgetown.edu](http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu)), a free writing resource open to all Georgetown students. Graduate and undergraduate students trained in teaching writing are available to assist you at any stage of your writing process. The Writing Center offers assistance in topic development, general organization, guidance on paper revisions, and specific or recurring structural problems with writing. Consultants are not trained to proofread papers for grammar or spelling errors, but rather to help individuals improve their own critical thinking, revision, and editing skills.

### **Summary of Grades:**

#### Individual Grades

Class discussion and participation:	20
Wiki contributions	10
Midpoint Implementation Presentation	20
Individual Presentation	50
Final Presentation	20
Team Evaluation	10

#### Team Grades

Communications Implementation Plan Summary, Part A	20
Communications Implementation Plan Summary, Part A, Refined	30
Midterm Implementation Presentations	20
Midterm Deliverables	TBD
Final Communications Binder:	
• Primary Plan Deliverables (Part A) and Evaluation (Part B)	25
• Recommendations for client	50
• Deliverables - Copies of all client work produced to date	TBD
• Executive Summary	50
Final Presentation	20
Client Evaluation	10

**Total Points:** **380 + deliverables**

**Class discussion and participation: 20 points**

Frequent class participation is expected. Every student will start the class with 20 points. Rather than gaining points for participating, students will lose points for not participating over the course of the semester. Points will not be calculated on a weekly basis but observations will be noted each week. Active participation should reflect a student's ability to listen to class discussion and proactively contribute to the class whether it's through a discussion point, or by sharing a relevant article/website with the professor and class. Students will have ample opportunity to contribute to class discussion, particularly on the night when we discuss a variety of articles, as well as after each students' individual presentation.

**Client Evaluation: 10 points**

Your clients will conduct an evaluation of your team's performance at the end of the semester. Clients will evaluate teams based on such qualities as their professionalism, ability to provide counsel, think strategically, provide high quality deliverables, meet deadlines, anticipate client needs and respond to feedback.

**Wiki contributions: 10 points**

Contributions to the Cause Consulting Wiki are expected. Every student will start the class with 10 points. Rather than gaining points for contributing to the Wiki, students will lose points for not contributing on a regular basis. Contributions will be judged on quality, not quantity or length, and the extent to which they will be useful to fellow cause consultants. Contributions could include a news article or case study that is relevant to what is being learned and discussed in class. Students will be expected to contribute to the Wiki as part of a larger discussion of assigned readings.

**Communications Plan Implementation Summary -- Timetable and Conditions (Part A): 20 points**

The *Communications Plan Implementation Summary* will serve to guide you throughout the semester so that you set realistic implementation goals and timelines. You will have opportunities to refine and update Part A throughout the semester; Part B is due at the end of the semester. Each time Part A is submitted to the instructor the students should track the changes in the document. The first draft that will be graded will be turned in on January 27 and will be worth 20 points.

**Midterm Implementation Presentation: Team -- 20 points; Individual -- 20**

Each team will prepare a 15 minute presentation that will update the class on the status of your implementation. It is possible that some teams will have encountered difficulties in delivering on the tactics proposed in the communications plan. Students will need to demonstrate what they have done and have tried to do to deliver on the items described in Part A of the *Communications Plan Implementation Summary*.

**This should include:**

- Details and examples on what deliverables you have developed
- What measures of success you can report
- Challenges or obstacles overcome and any you expect to encounter
- The remaining objectives your team plans on achieving prior to the end of the semester.

**You also will need to turn in:**

- Implementation Summary Timetable and Conditions (Part A) Refined: 30 points
- A binder with all deliverables your team has developed for your client to date. (Points TBD)
- Copy of the team's presentation

**Criteria for grading will be:**

- Clarity/organization of material
- Quality of deliverables and improvements made
- Creativity
- Is the team on schedule, and if not, is there documentation to demonstrate why?

**Individual Presentation: 50 points**

The purpose of the individual presentation is for each student to demonstrate his or her strategic thinking and ability as a consultant regarding an issue or organization other than their client. Each student will research and deliver an eight to ten minute presentation on an issue, cause or organization of their choice (ideally one that they are passionate about), its communications challenge or opportunity, and strategic recommendations for addressing it. The presentation should not present a plan step by step; rather, the student should offer strategic insights as to how communications can help achieve a social mission and what steps could be taken to improve an organization's communications and why. A template or set of questions to be addressed will be provided for further guidance. Following the presentation, the student will field questions from fellow students for about 10 minutes.

Each student will provide the instructor with a two to four sentence explanation of their chosen topic by February 3. The grading of the presentation will be based on the following criteria: demonstration of the student's strategic thinking; ability to answer questions and make a convincing case for your observations and recommendations; relevance to strategic communications planning and implementation; and effective presentation skills (clear and well-structured, effective use of visuals, limited use of notes, enthusiasm, interaction with the audience, and other skills associated with being an effective presenter). Students will be able to earn extra credit for their succinct, high quality analysis and feedback they provide to and about each presenter.

**Final Communications Binder: 250 points**

A final binder containing all of the team's work during this semester will be submitted to both the professor and the clients. The binder will include:

- **Final Communications Plan Implementation Summary**, including Part B, which includes a recap of the goal, objectives achieved and measurements of success (50 points)
- **Recommendations** -- Recommendations for how the client can continue implementing the communications plan to achieve the goal (50 points)
- **Deliverables** -- Copies of all work produced to date, e.g., message guide, templates (Points TBD)
- **Executive Summary** -- This will be a two page, descriptive summary of the team's experience and contributions to the client over two semesters. (50 points)

**Final Presentation: 20 points (individual); 20 points (team)**

The students will deliver a final presentation at Georgetown University to all of the clients. The content of presentation is to be determined but may include: a review of each team's communications plan goals, objectives achieved results to date and final recommendations.

**Team Evaluation: 10 points**

You will be working in teams throughout the course of the semester. At the end of the semester you will be asked to evaluate yourself and of your teammate based on each team member's overall effort.

**Proposed Schedule for the Semester:**

Due to the nature of this course the schedule is subject to change.

Week	In Class	Readings & Assignments Due that Day	Client work due:
Wednesday, January 20	<p>Introduction to Cause Consulting II: Strategic Communications Implementation</p> <p>Team reports on implementation planning</p>		<p>Implementation Summary Part A (not graded). Please bring hard copies for all students (15), Joy and Jennifer. Draft will be reviewed in class with additional feedback to follow.</p>
Wednesday, January 27	<p>Developing Client Communications Tools: Message Guides, Media templates, FAQs, etc.</p>		<p>Implementation Summary Part A</p>
Wednesday, February 3	<p>Training: Messaging and Communications Tools</p>	<p>Individual presentation topics due</p>	
Wednesday, February 10	<p>Social Media Guest Speaker: Peter Panepento</p>		
Wednesday, February 17	<p>Partnership Development</p> <p>Class discussion on readings</p>	<p>Readings TBD</p>	

Wednesday, February 24	Midpoint Implementation Presentations (3)		Part A-Refined  Copies of all deliverables completed to date
Wednesday, March 3	Midpoint Implementation Presentations (2)		Part A-Refined  Copies of all deliverables completed to date
Wednesday, March 10 (SPRING BREAK)	No class	No class	No class
Wednesday, March 17	Individual Presentations (4)		
Wednesday, March 24	Individual Presentations (4)  Binder Basics		
Wednesday, March 31	Individual Presentations (3)  Measurement, Sustainable Communications & Evaluation		
Wednesday, April 7	Individual Presentations (4)		Draft Binder - Evaluation, Recommendations, Deliverables and Executive Summary due

Wednesday, April 14	Final Presentation planning		
Wednesday, April 21	Final Presentation planning		
Wednesday, April 28	Final Presentations		Final Binder Final Presentation