UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Public Relations Theory and Structure

Code: 103136
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Advertising and Public Relations	OB	2

Contact

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the end of this document.

Prerequisites

No prior requirements are necessary.

Objectives and Contextualisation

- To explore the discipline from its theoretical foundations, conceptualisation and historical origins.

- To understand the professional dimension of public relations practice.

- To become familiar with the different areas of specialisation within the field of public relations.

- To acquire knowledge of the basic tools used in public relations.

- To understand the principles and ethics that underpin professional practice within organisational contexts.

Learning Outcomes

1. CM13 (Competence) Incorporate codes of ethics and the ethical principles of self-regulation into advertising and public relations activities.
2. CM14 (Competence) Optimally combine the different professional profiles involved in the planning of advertising campaigns and public relations campaigns.
3. KM13 (Knowledge) Define the theories that characterise persuasive communication in the field of the production, distribution and reception of advertising messages and public relations campaigns.
4. KM15 (Knowledge) Recognise professional profiles and their responsibilities in advertising and public relations.
5. SM12 (Skill) Analyse advertising campaigns and public relations actions based on the theories and concepts of the discipline.

Content

Unit 1: Public Relations: Origins, Foundations, and Conceptualisation

- Conceptualisation and definition of public relations
- Origin and evolution of public relations
- Public relations and its relationship with other disciplines

Unit 2: Key Concepts and Fundamental Elements of Public Relations

- Identity, image and reputation
- Publics in public relations

Unit 3: The Profession and its Development within Organisations

- Models of Public Relations
- The structure of the public relations profession
- The public relations professional sector

Unit 4: Areas of Specialisation in Public Relations

- Areas of specialisation in public relations
- Public relations tools

Unit 7: Principles and Ethics of the Public Relations Professional

Note: The course content will be sensitive to issues related to gender perspective and the use of inclusive language.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures and practical seminars	52	2.08	CM13, CM14, KM13, KM15, SM12, CM13
Type: Supervised			
Tutorials and presentation of assignments	6	0.24	CM13, CM14, KM15, SM12, CM13
Type: Autonomous			
Readings, preparation of practicals and tests, and completion of assignments	84	3.36	CM13, CM14, KM15, SM12, CM13

This course includes directed activities delivered via lectures and practical sessions, complemented by independent student work and supervised activities.

Directed activities: These comprise lectures and practical sessions.

- Lectures: a thorough presentation of the theoretical content of the syllabus, with a focus on the key concepts of the subject. These sessions provide the theoretical foundation required for students to confidently undertake subsequent learning activities.

- Practical sessions: the class will be divided into smaller groups for more personalised work with the seminar tutors. In these sessions, students will carry out group exercises directly related to the topics covered, employing methods such as case studies, communication problem-solving and the analysis and discussion of specialised articles.

Independent student work: Includes both group and individual activities outside the classroom.

Supervised activities: Includes group tutorials, oral presentations of assignments and assessment tests.

Students will find supplementary content for each thematic block on the Virtual Campus. These materials must be read and reviewed in advance, both to undertake the practical sessions and to prepare for the final theoretical assessment.

A detailed schedule outlining the content of each session will be presented on the first day of the course and will be available on the course's Virtual Campus, where students will find all teaching materials and necessary information for effective course monitoring. Should the teaching modality change for reasons of force majeure according to the competent authorities, the teaching staff will inform students of any modifications to the course schedule and teaching methodologies.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Final project	30%	3	0.12	CM14, KM15
Practical activities	30%	3	0.12	CM13, CM14, SM12
Written test	40%	2	0.08	CM13, KM13, KM15

Continuous assessment

The subject evaluation system is based on the following percentages:

A) 40% Knowledge control: theoretical test. The theoretical test must be passed (5.0 or above) in order to pass the course (an indispensable condition).

B) 30% Completion and presentation of practical exercises. Practicals will be conducted in class and are compulsory. Failure to submit practical activities on time and in the correct format will result in a mark of 0.0. The overall mark for criterion B will be calculated as the average of all practical activity marks.

C) 30% Completion of the final project: a study of the management and structure of the public relations function within an organisation, based on primary sources (interview with a Public Relations officer). Failure to submit the final project on time and in the correct format will result in a mark of 0.0.
A(40%) + B (30%)+ C (30%) = 100% FINAL GRADE OF THE SUBJECT

Continuous re-evaluation

a) According to regulations, in order to participate in the catch-up process, students must have been previously assessed at least 2/3 of the total valuable activities of the subject and must have achieved a weighted average mark of at least 3.5.

b) The theory can only be recovered if the student student originally sat the theoretical exam and scored between 3.5 and 4.9. The resit will consist of a theoretical knowledge examination.

c) Students who received a D in any practical activity-either due to failure or non-submission (provided this is for duly accredited or acceptable reasons as determined by the teaching team)-will have the opportunity to resit each practical during the designated period. Each practical resit will involve the resolution of a communication case or problem in class (date and time to be confirmed).

d) The final project (30%) is an evaluable activity that cannot be resat if failed. This is because it is practically impossible to produce another project of this nature within the time available in the resit period.
According to point 9 of article 266 of the UAB Academic Regulations: if a student is deemed unable to provide sufficient evidence of assessment, the course must be graded as "not evaluable". This course will not be considered evaluable if the student fails to complete at least 75% of the scheduled practicals.

Single assessment

The single assessment system for the subject is based on the following percentages:

A) 40% Knowledge control: oral theoretical test. The theoretical test must be passed (5.0 or above) in order to pass the course (an indispensable condition).

B) 20% Resolution of four case studies and/or communication challenges.

C) 40% Completion of the final project: a study of the management and structure of the Public Relations function within an organisation, based on primary and secondary sources (interview with a Public Relations officer).

A(40%) + B (20%)+ C (40%) = 100% FINAL GRADE OF THE SUBJECT

Single assessment re-evaluation

a) According to regulations, in order to participate in the recovery process, students must have previously been evaluated at least 2/3 of the total valuable activities of the subject and must have achieved a weighted average mark of at least 3.5.

b) The theory can only be recovered if the student originally sat the theoretical exam and scored between 3.5 and 4.9. The resit will consist of a written theoretical knowledge examination.

c) The mark obtained for the resolution of case studies or communication challenges will contribute to the weighted average of the final grade. Only if this test is failed, and if the student so wishes, may they opt to resit it with a similar examination.

d) The final project (40%) is an evaluable activity that cannot be resat if failed. This is because it is practically impossible to produce another project of this nature within the time available in the resit period.

PLAGIARISM

If a student commits any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade of an assessment activity, that activity will be graded 0, regardless of any disciplinary proceedings that may be initiated. If multiple irregularities occur in the assessment activities of the same course, the final grade for that course will be 0.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

For this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is permitted exclusively for initial exploration of information or ideas and for grammatical correction of text. Teaching staff will indicate the permitted type of use for each practical or activity undertaken in the course. Students must clearly identify the parts generated by these technologies, specify the tools used, and include a critical reflection on howthey have influenced both the process and the final outcome of the activity. A lack of transparency regarding the use of AI in this evaluable activity will be considered academic dishonesty and may incur a partial or total mark penalty for the activity, or more severe sanctions in cases of serious breach.

Bibliography

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Wilcox, Dennis L., Cameron, Glen T. y Xifra, Jordi (2012). *RelacionesPúblicas. Estrategias y Tácticas* (10ma ed.). Mexico: Pearson

Xifra, Jordi (2003). *Teoría y Estructura de las Relaciones Públicas.* Madrid: McGraw-Hill.

Xifra, Jordi (2011): *Manual de Relaciones Públicas e Institucionales.* Madrid; Tecnos.

Software

No specific software is used in this course.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(SEM) Seminars	51	Spanish	second semester	afternoon
(SEM) Seminars	52	Spanish	second semester	afternoon
(TE) Theory	5	Spanish	second semester	afternoon