

Public Relations Course Summaries Portfolio

Public Relations (PR) serves as a crucial hinge connecting people to information, organizations, and each other. Student projects focus on helping communities deliver the right message to the right audience at the right time. In the PR Campaigns courses, students have an opportunity to develop a professional portfolio presentations and review. Course objective include applying theory, skills, and a team-based approach to researching, planning, presenting, and implementing a campaign for a client. A selected portfolio of PR Campaigns from SCYP community partnership follows.



What is the Sustainable City Year Program?

The Sustainable City Year Program is an innovative university-community partnership program founded by the Sustainable Cities Institute at the University of Oregon in 2009-10. In this unique model, existing courses, faculty, and students from across campus are purposefully directed toward a single Oregon community over an academic year to address vexing issues identified by the partner. SCYP and the students, faculty, and communities it engages with are an example of Oregon innovation, leadership, and how leveraging resources can contribute to meaningful, additional, and society-wide value. SCYP creates a conduit for translating knowledge into practice, and provides significant workforce development opportunities for students, adding 'hard' and 'soft' skills and hands-on experience to all levels of students' education.





WINTER 2024

Image Credit: Ron Cooper

Pump Up Salem

Partner: City of Salem

Instructor: Atilla Schillinger

Project Description: Students created a public relations campaign to educate City of Salem residents on heat pumps and their benefits to support the City’s sustainability initiatives. Students developed a two-part strategy: a storytelling community approach and enabling residents to overcome common barriers. The first part involved showcasing local heat pump users and using simple language to inform others. The second part focused on addressing obstacles like cost through action-oriented language and local partnerships. Various deliverables supported these strategies, including a new website, marketing materials, event flyers, and social media content, all with a defined budget and timeline.

Recommendations: The recommendations for the City of Salem included both short-term and long-term strategies to promote the adoption of heat pumps and enhance energy efficiency.

Short-term recommendations:

- Host an Energy Efficiency Summit to educate landlords, property owners, and agents about the economic benefits of heat pumps.
- Organize monthly “Pump Up” Salem Pop-Up booths at local markets for hands-on interaction and educational material.
- Feature a news segment on heat pumps showcasing the story of an early adopter to spread awareness and education.

Long-term recommendations:

- Maintain active social media accounts and regularly post educational content about heat pumps on platforms like Facebook.
- Conduct postcard send-outs featuring stories of early adopters to sustain interest and engagement.
- Organize a Heat Pump Home Showcase where homes with heat pumps display stickers and yard signs, extending the initiative beyond the campaign period.
- Establish a partnership with a local bank to create a payment plan for heat pumps, providing ongoing financial assistance.
- Create and update a dedicated website section for heat pumps to offer residents easy access to current educational resources.

Salem Community



SPRING 2024

Image Credit: Jack Peebles, Xander Ruth,
John Wright

Salem City Spin

Partner: City of Salem

Instructor: Atilla Schillinger

Project Description: The Salem City Spin campaign focused on encouraging residents to shift from personal vehicles to active transportation, specifically biking. This initiative aimed to reduce traffic congestion, lower carbon emissions, and promote a healthier lifestyle. The campaign emphasized the environmental, health, and economic benefits of biking while addressing challenges like infrastructure limitations, weather, and cultural resistance to change. The report included a thorough analysis of the situation, provided strategies and tactics for engaging the community, and outlined goals to increase bike use and create a biking culture in Salem.

Recommendations: The recommendations for the City of Salem included both short-term and long-term strategies to promote the adoption of heat pumps and enhance energy efficiency.

- Collaborate with local bike groups to organize a weekly community biking event, held from May to September.
- Increase visibility of biking infrastructure by publishing and promoting information about bike routes in Salem.
- Work with local organizations to educate the community on safe biking practices.
- Revamp the Salem Bike and Walk website to provide up-to-date information and resources for cyclists.
- Implement a summer youth camp focused on bike safety and education, including week-long sessions where kids learn bike maintenance and explore local educational sites.
- Utilize promotional materials like posters and QR codes to drive engagement and web traffic.
- Measure success through key performance indicators (KPIs) such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing participation in biking events.

IDLE DOWN CLEAN UP THE TOWN

FALL 2023

Image Credit: Liz Blodgett

The Lowest Hanging Cherry: Stopping Idling

Partner: City of Salem

Instructor: Atilla Schillinger

Project Description: Students developed anti-idling campaign to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable transportation and in Salem, Oregon. The campaign was structured around three key strategies: leading by example with city employees, educating youth about the environmental impact of idling, and raising public awareness of health risks associated with idling. To support these efforts, the project included a comprehensive media plan, proposed partnerships with local businesses, and developed strategic messaging in high-traffic areas like drive-throughs and parking lots.

Recommendations: The recommendations for the anti-idling campaign in Salem included:

- City Leadership: Encourage city employees to stop idling through training, leadership involvement, and media promotion.
- Youth Education: Educate students about environmental responsibility through school programs and social media campaigns.
- Public Awareness: Raise awareness about the health risks of idling by partnering with media outlets and placing messages in high-traffic areas.
- Alternative Transportation: Promote walking, biking, and public transit to encourage sustainable travel.
- Fleet Transition: Transition the Cherriots fleet to low-emission or electric vehicles.
- Data-Driven Interventions: Monitor idling hotspots to enable targeted interventions.



WINTER 2021

Explore Troutdale Outreach, Phases 1 and 2

Partner: City of Troutdale

Instructor: Dean Mundy

Project Description: Public Relations students collaborated with the City of Troutdale on its Explore Troutdale campaign. The team sought to attract visitors and retain residents in Troutdale. They conducted extensive research on the town and identified primary and secondary target audiences. Choosing social media as the primary approach, they created engaging visual and written content for platforms like Instagram and developed the Travel Troutdale website. Additionally, the team crafted “how-to” guides to assist Troutdale’s staff in managing content post-project. Their comprehensive efforts aimed to equip Troutdale with effective tools and strategies to achieve its communication goals and future implementation needs.

Recommendations:

- Introducing “Little” the Trout as the mascot for Troutdale, utilizing existing trout sculptures and potentially commissioning more to engage residents and tourists.
- Organizing a scavenger hunt for the trout sculptures, incorporating a social media campaign to drive participation and offering incentives such as coupons for local businesses.
- Reposting user-tagged pictures from Troutdale on social media to enhance engagement and encourage visitors to share their experiences.
- Developing a comprehensive restaurant guide to provide visitors with information on local eateries, including menu items, safety protocols, and booking options, particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Implementing “Feature Fridays” to promote local businesses and individuals within the community, fostering connections with residents and tourists.
- Showcasing testimonials from current residents to attract new residents and prospective business owners to Troutdale, highlighting the town’s appeal and community spirit.



SPRING 2021

Promoting Troutdale through Instagram

Partner: City of Troutdale

Instructor: Dean Mundy

Project Description: Students collaborated with Troutdale city staff to devise a public relations plan aimed at boosting tourism through the establishment of a social media presence. Troutdale recently emphasized centering “Explore Troutdale,” the city’s travel and tourism site. Central to this strategy is the establishment of a robust social media presence on Instagram under the Explore Troutdale brand. Through research and analysis, students provided strategies and recommendations for implementing Instagram and other social channels to effectively strengthen its brand and attract visitors to experience the beauty and vibrancy of Troutdale.

Recommendations: Recommendations included creating a social media calendar for guidance on posting timing, content, and audience targeting, as well as using tools like Hootsuite. One recommendation proposed creating relationships with other local businesses and to repost followed accounts’ content to reach broader audiences. To address Troutdale area residents and their possible concerns about tourism, students suggested highlighting community members in the campaign through audience profiles that will represent Troutdale from community perspectives. Students also implemented a targeted plan that included videos, photographs, and posts for Instagram and Tiktok, which the city used to kickoff their Explore Troutdale social media accounts.



WINTER 2020

Image Credit: Gallon House Covered Bridge, Travel Salem

Catalyzing Community Feedback and Engagement in Silverton

Partner: City of Silverton

Instructor: Dean Mundy

Project Description: The class collaborated with the City of Silverton to devise a comprehensive public relations plan to address the City's communication needs. The proposed plan, spanning six months with a budget of \$4,500, integrates ideas from different groups within the class. Evaluation measures include a community event in the final month to gauge engagement. Notably, the plan was completed before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, so adjustments for pandemic-related challenges are not explicitly included but could be considered for future outreach efforts.

Recommendations: Students research found the Silverton Community Survey revealed a lack of representation from young people, renters, and parents aged 35-50 due to low response rates. Conversely, adults aged 55-75 showed high response rates, comprising nearly half of the survey responses. Based on this data, student groups developed plans to address this, which have been consolidated into a sample six-month plan outlined in the document. Student recommendations included:

- Introduce a digital survey option alongside traditional surveys for easier data collection and increased engagement with those who prefer digital participation.
- Include questions tailored to specific target audiences to ensure their opinions are considered.
- Expand Silverton's social media presence, utilizing tools like social media calendars for streamlined posting.
- Engage with community members online by sharing town news, business updates, and events regularly.
- Increase visibility at community events through tabling and merchandise.
- Host additional events to encourage community conversations and boost attendance at city meetings.
- Explore opportunities to reach commuters by appearing on local radio shows.
- Foster partnerships with local businesses to promote surveys, conduct focus groups, and organize community engagement events.



WINTER 2020

Image Credit: Edmund Garman

Crisis Communications Plans For Silverton

Partner: City of Silverton

Instructor: Dean Mundy

Project Description: In addition to producing community outreach strategies for various target populations, students also produced a crisis communications PR plan for Silverton. Students conducted primary and secondary research to identify potential threats and created an effective messaging plan to combat them.

Recommendations: Students identified that the most likely crisis Silverton will face is wildfires. Short-term recommendations included alerting the media and residents of Silverton about the current state of the fire, and providing information about shelter, food, and water for people displaced by the fire utilizing the Silverton Community Center as refuge. Long-term recommendations included addressing how the City is preparing to fix the damage caused by the fire and following up with people who were impacted.



SPRING 2018

Image Credit: Megan Banks

Newberry Country Trail Strategic Public Relations

Partner: City of La Pine

Instructor: Margaret Parker

Project Description: Students worked with the City of La Pine to create a comprehensive plan of tactics and implementation strategies to assist in the launch and longevity of the Newberry Country Trail public relations campaign. The overarching goal of the plan focused on boosting, not only to the Newberry Country Trail, but also to the City of La Pine. The plan provided a framework for ongoing promotion beyond the initial implementation, fostering the trail's development into a prominent travel destination in Oregon. The team envisioned that by leveraging these initiatives, the trail could attract more visitors over time, contributing to the region's economic growth and recognition.

Recommendations:

- Short-term recommendations focused on branding consistency for the Newberry Country Trail, including uniformity across platforms and interaction with followers to build an online audience. Website improvements and distribution of a news release to relevant media sources were also advised.
- Mid-term goals entailed hiring a social media intern, collaborating with influencers and brands, and securing media placements. Additionally, establishing trail signage was recommended.
- Long-term strategies involved increasing trail awareness throughout Oregon, encouraging visitor reviews on the website, and partnering with tourism organizations like Travel Oregon for broader exposure and promotion.
- Implementation pieces included a logo and slogan, a social media calendar and tactics, a basic website with suggested content, a news release to announce the trail, and travel package bundle samples.



WINTER 2017

Image Credit: M.O. Stevens

Communications Plan for Albany Parks & Recreation

Partner: City of Albany

Instructor: Kelli Matthews

Project Description: The City of Albany's Parks & Recreation Department wanted to address community engagement and trust issues among residents. Five student teams developed plans focusing on different aspects such as social media, strategic partnerships, event planning, media relations, and content creation. These plans targeted different demographics including children, adults, senior citizens, and the Latino community.

Recommendations: Report suggestions included utilizing the Hispanic Advisory Committee to bridge the gap and better understand the Latino community. Developing partnerships with local Latino-owned businesses was also emphasized. Other tactics included social media, radio communications, event planning, media relations, promotional materials, and content creation. By utilizing the suggested tactics, the City of Albany can successfully increase engagement and trust with the community.



WINTER 2017

Historic Preservation Campaign

Partner: City of Albany

Instructor: Lance Robertson

Project Description: The City of Albany passed an ordinance in 1985 requiring buildings listed on the historic registry to undergo a review process for renovations, aiming to preserve their appearance and authenticity. However, the City's communication strategy regarding historic preservation primarily relies on its website, which lacks proactive outreach. Although the Historic Preservation Department strives to successfully communicate with Albany residents, challenges exist. These challenges are compounded by difficulty navigating the City's website. Students conducted a SWOT analysis that highlights the need for new informational materials to inform residents about the benefits and regulations of owning and renovating historic homes. Students found that addressing these communication gaps can enhance community engagement and preservation efforts in Albany.

Recommendations: The student's primary recommendation included hiring interns from nearby universities to handle graphic design and marketing for the historic homes district. Utilizing a student intern is cost-effective and ensures the city stays current with communication trends. Long-term recommendations included regular updates of regulations and forms through social media channels to address misconceptions. Community relations can be improved by participating in local events to distribute informative materials and by establishing connections with real estate agents to educate new homeowners about historic homes' value and requirements. These actions aim to enhance communication, awareness, and community engagement within Albany.



WINTER 2016

Image Credit: City of Redmond

City of Redmond Community Engagement Plan

Partner: City of Redmond

Instructor: Wendy Ames

Project Description: Students collaborated with City of Redmond officials to devise strategies aimed at enhancing civic engagement among residents. Targeting individuals aged 25-45, the project aimed to increase awareness of city events and foster online civic engagement. Through this initiative, students sought to bridge the gap between the public and city hall, ultimately fostering stronger community involvement.

Recommendations: In the short-term, students recommended that the City of Redmond continue sending news releases about events to their established media contact list, highlighting its effectiveness in disseminating information and raising awareness. Additionally, they suggested creating visually appealing event flyers for upcoming public events and distributing them to the Redmond School District to reach a broader audience. Moreover, students proposed implementing a program where city officials visit local schools to educate and engage children and families about community issues and events. For long-term engagement, recommendations included upgrading to Hootsuite Pro for efficient content sharing across social media platforms, hiring a communications intern to assist with social media management, establishing brand consistency across Twitter and Facebook cover photos, creating an Instagram account to engage younger audiences, and consistently sharing video blogs to relay important messages to residents, ultimately maintaining engagement over time.



WINTER 2016

Image Credit: Visit Redmond

Redmond Professional Business Medical District Initiative

Partner: City of Redmond

Instructor: Wendy Ames

Project Description: The Redmond Professional Business Medical District Initiative in Redmond, Oregon, seeks to establish a designated area for new business development, aiming to enhance the city's economy and residents' quality of life. However, there is a general lack of awareness about the district and the many opportunities it can provide the region. To address this issue, students developed a communication plan and created cohesive promotional material to advise city officials on how to effectively draw new business to the area.

Recommendations:

- **Website:** Students created a website as the primary location for information about the Professional Business Medical District Initiative. It was then developed into a digital holding place for all the deliverables created for this campaign.
- **Contact List:** Students developed a list of 26 contacts intended as a starting point for the City of Redmond to begin networking with potential business developers and commercial real estate agents.
- **Promotional Materials:** To disseminate information quickly and effectively, students chose to develop two forms of promotional material, tailored to each key public.



WINTER 2016

Image Credit: Visit Redmond

Strategic Public Relations Plan & Client Materials: Redmond Wastewater Division

Partner: City of Redmond

Instructor: Margaret Parker

Project Description: Students conducted primary and secondary research to enhance their understanding of the Redmond Wastewater Division, how it operates, and its position in the City of Redmond and the larger realm of public utilities. This research led the team to better advise the City of Redmond on raising awareness of wastewater best practices.

Recommendations: The campaign included sending PSAs to radio stations, updating the city website with infographics, starting a Facebook campaign, and distributing infographics to residents via mail preferences. Medium-term plans involved continuing the Facebook campaign, sending existing PSAs, creating new ones if successful, and distributing infographics as needed. Pre- and post-implementation surveys will assess the campaign's success. Long-term recommendations focused on maintaining awareness of fats, oils, and greases (FOGs) and non-flushables, potentially shifting to composting or informing about stormwater. Strategies include tracking Facebook analytics, continuing PSA creation, and evaluating infographic distribution methods.



FALL 2015

Image Credit: Visit Redmond

Civic Engagement Strategies for The City of Redmond

Partner: City of Redmond

Instructor: Dave Remund

Project Description: Students collaborated with the City of Redmond to increase civic engagement in the community. After researching perceived engagement issues, students developed eight plans targeting different demographics, including working-class families, parents, high school students, and Hispanic/Latino(a) communities. Student generated materials include situation analyses, SWOT analyses, key messages, strategies, tactics, implementation considerations, and evaluation methods. With budgets ranging from \$100 to \$8,000 and timelines from three months to one year, the plans encompass various tools such as social media, special events, marketing materials, community outreach, and online applications. Implementation of these strategies is expected to result in increased civic engagement in Redmond.

Recommendations: Based on the analysis and research conducted by students in this course, students offered the following recommendations:

- Initiating an “Our Redmond” photo contest to engage citizens
- Creating City of Redmond staff profiles for personal connection
- Launching “Redmond Connect” community engagement portal
- Enhancing presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and implementing Snapchat geotag
- Organizing events like Parents Night Out and Family Camping 101 to cater to different demographics
- Arranging Back-to-School events and farmer’s market booths
- Distributing an e-newsletter, establishing programs like Parent Network of Redmond
- Creating bilingual infographics, designing postcards, posters, flyers, and other promotional materials to reach diverse audiences



FALL 2015

Image Credit: BBT Architects

Redmond Water Utilities Strategic Communication Plans: Creating Environmentally Conscious K-12 Students

Partner: City of Redmond

Instructor: Laurie Honda

Project Description: The Redmond Wastewater Division (RWD) collaborated with the course, to raise awareness and educate elementary, middle, and high school students in Redmond about water conservation and contamination. The focus was on preventing the growth of severe issues related to flushing fats, oils, and greases (FOGs) down the drain. Students, organized into five teams of three to four members each, developed original strategic communication plans.

Recommendations: Students created a variety of tactics targeted at K-12 students, to include:

- Making a multi-layered drink to explain how water aquifers work.
- Using Play-Doh to demonstrate how water pipes become clogged due to FOGs.
- Handing out an infographic that allowed for better understanding of how the community can help keep water clean.
- Taking students on field trips to see and understand clogged pipes.



FALL 2013-SPRING 2014

Image Credit: Medford Fire-Rescue

Medford Fire-Rescue: Public Relations Campaign

Partner: City of Medford

Instructor: Pat Curtin

Project Description: Students conducted primary and secondary research to learn more about issues related to Medford's Police and Fire Facilities. Students utilized the research conducted to identify strategic communications issues and developed a public relations campaign designed to assist Medford in addressing their identified issues.

Recommendations: Students recommended clarifying the difference between a tax and utility fee, as student research suggested residents did not know the difference, leading to frustrations in the community. Additionally, it was recommended that Medford employ a third party, such as a public information officer, to communicate with citizens as opposed to police or Fire-Rescue. Students also recommended employing a visual aid to maximize communication efficiency that allows residents to see the poor conditions of the facilities, which will help the community understand the reasoning behind the utility fee.



FALL 2013-SPRING 2014

Rogue Valley Transportation District Public Relations Plan

Partner: City of Medford

Instructor: Margaret Parker

Project Description: Students in Strategic Communications Research (J495) conducted primary and secondary research focusing on the Rogue Valley Transportation District (RVT) focusing on its need to expand services and potential levy increases to fund this expansion. In subsequent terms, students applied prior term research findings to identify strategic communication challenges and devised a comprehensive public relations campaign aimed at helping RVT tackle their communication challenges, such as targeting diverse demographics and low awareness of RVT services.

Recommendations: The recommendations for RVT focused on several key areas to improve its appeal and effectiveness, including:

- Provide bus information at locations where RVT services can be beneficial, such as auto-body shops and doctor's offices, to reinforce RVT as a reliable transportation option.
- Expand weekday and Saturday service times and stops, including a stop at Table Rock campus.
- Consider adding Sunday service to meet rider demand and demonstrate commitment to customer satisfaction.
- Highlight the benefits of passing the levy, such as reduced wait times and extended routes.
- Address concerns raised in focus groups about RVT's cleanliness and accessibility by promoting a clean and safe bus system to dispel hesitations and installing hand sanitation dispensers on each bus.
- Shift advertising focus from television to the internet and newspapers, as data shows the target audience prefers receiving news through these channels.



WINTER 2012

Image Credit: Willamalane

Strategic Public Relations Plan: Willamalane Center for Sports and Recreation

Partner: City of Springfield
Instructor: Margaret Parker

Project Description: Students created a strategic public relations plan for the Willamalane Center for Sports and Recreation geared towards the two target audiences: regular renters and potential renters. The public relations plan outlines the key messages, objectives, strategies, tactics, and evaluations conducted. Students also prepared an implementation toolkit to aid in the potential execution of the plan.

Recommendations: The recommendations for improving communication and outreach efforts at Willamalane encompass various strategies aimed at enhancing engagement with both regular and potential renters. For regular renters, strategies involve implementing email outreach campaigns, creating an interactive website, and launching social media initiatives to increase engagement. For potential renters, strategies include developing comprehensive toolkits, conducting presentations, and collaborating with external partners such as Travel Lane County to promote the center.



SPRING 2012

Strategic Public Relations Plan: Springfield Public Library

Partner: City of Springfield
Instructor: Margaret Parker

Project Description: The Springfield Public Library, a longstanding institution in Springfield for over a century, is planning to transition to a new facility. In response, students developed a Strategic Public Relations Plan for the launch of the new facility based on research surveys and stakeholder interviews. The analysis revealed opportunities to improve the library's communication methods.

Recommendations: Students developed a plan that aims to attract both primary and secondary audiences by identifying key messages, devising appropriate strategies and tactics, and outlining evaluation techniques, budget, and timeline. Specific recommendations included:

- Create a dedicated donor email LISTSERV to improve communication and engagement with donors.
- Forge partnerships with non-library affiliated groups to attract new patrons and strengthen ties within the Springfield community.
- Enhance social media presence by sharing library events, services, and success stories.
- Develop and promote programs tailored to the interests and needs of teenagers and adults to enhance their engagement with the library.
- Utilize traditional media such as monthly newsletters and email blasts to reach patrons who may not be active on social media.



FALL 2012

Lane Transit District West 11th Expansion

Partner: City of Springfield

Instructor: Kevin Brett

Project Description: Public relations students conducted research to determine why there was such strong opposition to the proposed BRT expansion project along West 11th Avenue in Eugene. Students evaluated how LTD's communication strategies and techniques could be improved to enhance cohesion between LTD and the community.

Recommendations: Students recommended LTD be more active on social media and prioritize strategic use. They suggested creating project-specific pages, posting rules about profanity and abuse of other users, and addressing negative comments and feedback as they arise. Students also recommended emphasizing a focus on vision and key messages. Research conducted suggests that the public would respond better to information that is less technical and easier for the common person to understand. Additionally, students suggested LTD partake in more face-to-face contact with businesses to promote transparency and allow LTD to combat misinformation being spread to potential partner businesses.



FALL 2011

Strategic Public Relations Plan: Springfield's Adopt-A-Waterway Program

Partner: City of Springfield
Instructor: Margaret Parker

Project Description: Springfield identified a lack of awareness as a significant contributor to resident pollution, and launched the Springfield Environmental Services Division Adopt-A-Waterway program. Students conducted a public relations campaign to promote the program's appeal to residents. The Public Relations Plan outlines strategies tailored to five key groups: middle and high school science teachers and students, church and service group leaders, and all Springfield residents. These strategies aim to raise awareness and engagement with the Adopt-A-Waterway program among these audiences.

Recommendations: Research findings indicate that traditional media outlets like newspapers, online news sites, and television news programs are the most effective channels for reaching the Springfield community. To attract volunteers, the Environmental Services Division should target middle and high school science teachers and advisers, along with church group leaders, focusing on the most reachable audiences.