

# MKT4634: FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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## Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

Fundamentals of Public Relations

### Subject Code

MKT - Marketing

### Course Number

4634

### Academic Unit

Marketing (MKT)

### College/School

College of Business (CB)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

CB2601 Marketing

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

Nil

### Exclusive Courses

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

After completing this course, students will be able:

- to understand the communication framework made up of different stakeholders and the role of public relations in business context;
- to discuss essential public relations theories and concepts;
- to adopt crisis communication tools analyse and solve organizational problems;
- to develop a holistic communication plan by employing the mix of public relations and marketing communication tools.

#### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

| CILOs |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Weighting (if app.) | DEC-A1 | DEC-A2 | DEC-A3 |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1     | Characterize the strategic role of PR in an organization as well as duties and prerequisites of PR practitioners.                                                                                                                                                         | 10                  | x      |        |        |
| 2     | Synthesize PR theories and concepts in a variety of organizational contexts.                                                                                                                                                                                              | 20                  |        | x      |        |
| 3     | Identify key issues related to PR and respond effectively to corporate crises through experiential learning.                                                                                                                                                              | 20                  |        | x      |        |
| 4     | Utilize PR as a tool complementing the effort of corporate marketing and branding by appreciating the relationships of PR and various stakeholders encompassing employees, media, investors, customers, business partners, government, public and the community at large. | 20                  | x      |        |        |
| 5     | Develop and implement a holistic PR programme to tackle a corporate problem by identifying key issues, audiences and communication channels as well as formulating appropriate strategies, key messages and tactics.                                                      | 30                  |        |        | x      |

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

#### Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

| LTAs |          | Brief Description                                                                                  | CILO No.   | Hours/week (if applicable) |
|------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| 1    | Lectures | Students will attend lectures dedicated to explain the key concepts and frameworks of the subject. | 1, 2, 4, 5 |                            |

|   |                                        |                                                                                                                                                    |         |  |
|---|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--|
| 2 | Activities (Guest Lectures, Workshops) | Students will join interactive sections with guest speakers (e.g., industry professionals) sharing their insights and running practical workshops. | 1, 2, 4 |  |
| 3 | Simulation                             | Students will engage in simulations of assignments to better prepare students for the assessment tasks.                                            | 3, 5    |  |
| 4 | Group Discussions                      | Students will engage in group discussions to ensure the comprehension of the key concepts and frameworks and apply them to real-life scenarios.    | 2, 3, 5 |  |

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

|   | ATs                                                                                                                                                                                          | CILO No. | Weighting (%) | Remarks ("- for nil entry) | Allow Use of GenAI? |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Class Discussion<br>Class activities (such as individual/group class exercises, case study discussion, etc.) will be arranged to assess students' abilities in applying the learnt concepts. | 1, 2, 3  | 15            | N/A                        | No                  |

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |      |    |                                                                 |     |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 2 | <p>Simulation</p> <p>A simulation exercise is designed for crisis management to assess students' ability in applying the learnt skills into action. Students will be rated on application of key concept and principles in handling a crisis scenario, overall coordination in defining the nature of crisis, identification of stakeholders, division of work, appointment of final decision maker and spokesperson, choice of communication channels, timeliness of communication, development of key messages, contents of communication, as well as participation.</p> | 3, 5 | 15 | Just to create some visual assets/ follow the in-class training | Yes |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |   |    |                                                                 |     |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 3 | Group Project Presentation<br>Students will be required to develop an integrated communication programme by the end of the semester by employing different tools learnt in the classes. The presentation is designed to gauge students' communication and presentation skills in delivering a PR plan and working as a team. Visual aids also count towards scoring for oral presentations. | 5 | 15 | Just to create some visual assets/ follow the in-class training | Yes |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |            |    |     |    |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----|-----|----|
| 4 | Group Project Report<br>Students will be assessed if they can show excellent command of all aspects by integrating major PR concepts to analyze the objectives, target audiences and communication channels deeply, and consolidate lots of insights and implications for strategy formulation as well as key messages and tactics development. Besides, students' ability in presenting and organizing the communication plan excellently in a business report format will be examined. | 2, 3, 4, 5 | 20 | N/A | No |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----|-----|----|

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

65

**Examination (%)**

35

**Examination Duration (Hours)**

2

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

Class Discussion

**Criterion**

1. Ability to present and communicate PR ideas in oral format to analyse issues.
2. Participation in class discussion by offering ideas and asking questions.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

1. Able to always present and communicate PR ideas excellently in oral format to analyze issues, audience, communication channels, strategies and key messages in weekly classes.
2. Proactively participate in class discussion by offering excellent and innovative ideas and asking good questions related to PR practice in business organizations.

### **Good (B+, B, B-)**

1. Able to frequently present and communicate PR ideas acceptably in oral format to analyze issues, audience, communication channels, strategies and key messages in weekly classes.
2. Proactively participate in class discussion by offering innovative ideas and asking questions related to PR practice in business organizations.

### **Fair (C+, C, C-)**

1. Occasionally present and communicate PR ideas in oral format to analyze issues, audience, communication channels, strategies and key messages in weekly classes.
2. Occasionally active when urged to participate in class discussion by offering some acceptable ideas and asking limited questions related to PR practice in business organizations.

### **Marginal (D)**

1. Occasionally present and communicate PR ideas fairly in oral format to analyze issues, audience, communication channels, strategies and key messages in weekly classes.
2. Reactively participate in class discussion by offering very limited ideas and asking very few questions related to PR practice in business organizations.

### **Failure (F)**

1. Rarely present and communicate PR ideas in oral format to analyze issues, audience, communication channels, strategies and key messages in weekly classes.
2. Rarely participate in class discussion by offering very limited ideas and asking very few questions related to PR practice in business organizations.

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## **Assessment Task**

### **Simulation**

#### **Criterion**

1. Analysis of real issues in a crisis context.
2. Application of PR concepts in key messages and handling stakeholder relations.
3. Development of alert mechanism.

### **Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

1. Show excellent analysis of the real issue, victory, trigger point, influencer, strategy and tactics in a crisis context.
2. Able to apply all PR concepts in shaping key messages and handling stakeholder relations effectively.
3. Demonstrate the development of a highly effective alert mechanism by making use of the best communication channels and ensuring the functionality of the taskforce.

### **Good (B+, B, B-)**

1. Show good analysis of the real issue, victory, trigger point, influencer, strategy and tactics in a crisis context.
2. Able to apply most of the PR concepts in shaping key messages and handling stakeholder relations effectively.
3. Demonstrate the development of a fairly effective alert mechanism by making use of the appropriate communication channels and ensuring the functionality of the taskforce.

### **Fair (C+, C, C-)**

1. Show acceptable analysis of the real issue, victory, trigger point, influencer, strategy and tactics in a crisis context.
2. Able to apply some of the PR concepts in shaping key messages and handling stakeholder relations effectively.
3. Demonstrate the development of an acceptably effective alert mechanism by making use of the appropriate communication channels and ensuring the functionality of the taskforce.

### **Marginal (D)**

1. Show marginal analysis of the real issue, victory, trigger point, influencer, strategy and tactics in a crisis context.
2. Able to apply a few PR concepts in shaping key messages and handling stakeholder relations effectively.

3. Demonstrate the development of a barely effective alert mechanism by making use of different communication channels and ensuring the functionality of the taskforce.

**Failure (F)**

1. Cannot show the analysis of the real issue, victory, trigger point, influencer, strategy and tactics in a crisis context.
  2. Unable to apply a few PR concepts in shaping key messages and handling stakeholder relations effectively.
  3. Cannot demonstrate the development of a barely effective alert mechanism by making use of different communication channels and ensuring the functionality of the taskforce.
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**Assessment Task**

Group Project Presentation

**Criterion**

1. Communication of PR plan in oral and electronic format.
2. Coverage of contents and demonstration of time management skills.
3. Quality of answering questions raised.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

1. Present and communicate a PR plan effectively and excellently in oral and electronic format.
2. Show excellent coverage of contents and demonstrate excellent time management skills.
3. Provide quality answers to questions raised in the presentation Q & A session.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

1. Present and communicate a PR plan effectively in oral and electronic format.
2. Show good coverage of materials and contents and demonstrate good time management skills.
3. Provide good answers to questions raised during the presentation Q & A session.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

1. Present and communicate a PR plan acceptably in oral and electronic format (with some areas need improvement).
2. Fair coverage of materials and contents and acceptable time management skills.
3. Provide acceptable answers to questions raised during the presentation Q & A session.

**Marginal (D)**

1. Marginally present and communicate a PR plan in oral and electronic format (with major areas need improvement).
2. Marginal coverage of materials and contents and poor time management skills.
3. Provide fair answers to questions raised during the presentation Q & A session.

**Failure (F)**

1. Poorly present and communicate a PR plan in oral and electronic format (with major areas need improvement).
  2. Poor coverage of materials and contents and poor time management skills.
  3. Cannot answer questions raised during the presentation Q & A session.
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**Assessment Task**

Group Project Report

**Criterion**

1. Integration of major PR concepts.
2. Ability to apply the PR concepts and develop a PR programme.
3. Present and organize the PR plan in a business report format.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

1. Show excellent command of all aspects by integrating major PR concepts to analyze the objectives, target audiences and communication channels deeply, and consolidate lots of insights and implications for strategy formulation as well as key messages and tactics development.
2. Demonstrate excellent ability to apply the PR concepts and develop a credit PR programme to tackle current corporate problems and issues.
3. Present and organize the PR plan excellently in a business report format.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

1. Show good command of all aspects by integrating major PR concepts to analyze the objectives, target audiences and communication channels and suggest some implications for for strategy formulation as well as key messages and tactics development.
2. Demonstrate good ability to apply the PR concepts and develop a credit PR programme to tackle current corporate problems and issues.
3. Present and organize the PR plan in an organized business report format.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

1. Show acceptable command of most aspects by integrating major PR concepts to analyze the objectives, target audiences and communication channels and partially able to link them up with for strategy formulation as well as key messages and tactics development.
2. Demonstrate acceptable ability to apply the PR concepts and develop a credit PR programme to tackle current corporate problems and issues.
3. Present and organize the PR plan fairly in a business report format.

**Marginal (D)**

1. Show marginal command of a few aspects of major PR concepts to analyze the objectives, target audiences and communication channels but unable to link them up with as well as key messages and tactics development.
2. Demonstrate marginal ability to apply the PR concepts and develop a credit PR programme to tackle current corporate problems and issues.
3. Present and organize the PR plan fairly in a business report format.

**Failure (F)**

1. Command of a few aspects of major PR concepts with difficulties to analyze the objectives, target audiences and communication channels but unable to link them up with as well as key messages and tactics development.
2. Cannot demonstrate ability to apply the PR concepts and develop a credit PR programme to tackle current corporate problems and issues.
3. Poorly present and organize the PR plan in a business report format.

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**Assessment Task**

Examination

**Criterion**

1. Identification of key PR functions and roles in different organizations.
2. Ability to recognize all aspects of the PR concepts and their applications.
3. Development of PR programme.
4. Ability to analyse PR cases.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

1. Show superior ability to identify key functions and roles of public relations in different organizations.
2. Able to recognize all aspects of the public relations concepts and their applications.
3. Show excellent command to identify the various process and procedures in developing PR programme.
4. Demonstrate excellent ability to compare the key techniques used in analyzing PR cases.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

1. Show good ability to identify key functions and roles of public relations in different organizations.

2. Able to recognize most aspects of the public relations concepts and their applications.
3. Show good command to identify the various process and procedures in developing PR programme.
4. Demonstrate good ability to compare the key techniques used in analyzing PR cases.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

1. Show acceptable ability to identify key functions and roles of public relations in different organizations.
2. Able to recognize some aspects of the public relations concepts and their applications.
3. Show acceptable command to identify the various process and procedures in developing PR programme.
4. Demonstrate acceptable ability to compare the key techniques used in analyzing PR cases.

**Marginal (D)**

1. Show marginal ability to identify key functions and roles of public relations in different organizations.
2. Able to recognize a few aspects of the public relations concepts and their applications.
3. Show marginal command to identify the various process and procedures in PR programme.
4. Demonstrate marginal ability to compare some of the key techniques used in analyzing PR cases.

**Failure (F)**

1. Cannot identify key functions and roles of public relations in different organizations.
2. Unable to recognize the aspects of the public relations concepts and their applications.
3. Show poor command to identify the various process and procedures in PR programme.
4. Demonstrate poor ability to compare some of the key techniques used in analyzing PR cases.

## Part III Other Information

**Keyword Syllabus**

Internal and external communications, corporate advertising, corporate identity, corporate culture, corporate image, branding and re-branding, event marketing, sponsorship, change management, media relations, government relations, employee relations, investor relations, labour relations, community relations, corporate social responsibilities, lobbying, audience analysis, communication channels, issue and crisis management, reputation management, corporate collaterals and publicity, corporate governance and transparency, business ethics, PR agency and PR department, Social media public relations, public relations online.

**Reading List****Compulsory Readings**

| Title |                                                                                                                                    |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | Wilcox, D. L., Cameron, G. T., & Reber, B. H. (2015), "Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics", (11th ed., Global ed.), Pearson. |

**Additional Readings**

| Title |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | Breakenridge, D. K. (2012), "Social Media and Public Relations: Eight New Practices for the PR Professional", (1st ed.), Pearson FT Press.                                                                                  |
| 2     | Newsom, D., VanSlyke Turk, J., & Kruckeberg, D. (2013), "This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations", (11th ed.), Wadsworth Cengage Learning.                                                                            |
| 3     | Scott, D. M. (2013), "The New Rules of Marketing & PR: How to use Social Media, Online Video, Mobile Applications, Blogs, News Releases, and Viral Marketing to Reach Buyers Directly:", (4th ed.), John Wiley & Sons, Inc. |
| 4     | Seitel, F. P. (2017), "The Practice of Public Relations", (13th ed.), Pearson.                                                                                                                                              |
| 5     | Strunk, W. (2020), "The Elements of Style. Open Road Integrated Media", Allyn and Bacon.                                                                                                                                    |
| 6     | Tench, R., & Yeomans, L. (2014), "Exploring Public Relations", (3rd ed.), Pearson Education Ltd.                                                                                                                            |