

**PRAD Senior Capstone Seminar**

Online Section

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**Course Description:**

PRAD 396 integrates the knowledge gleaned from the major and the Liberal Studies Program in a professional and critical framework tailored to the fields of public relations and advertising (PRAD). This highly interactive course is offered in the online learning environment as a means of preparing students for today's team-driven, digitally focused workplace in which employees are often managed by a supervisor in another location.

This required senior capstone course developed specifically for PRAD students features learning activities that promote student reflection upon and engagement with the following central themes: value consciousness, critical and creative thinking, and a multicultural perspective. For example, students will create a "pecha kucha"—a presentation methodology developed in Tokyo, Japan focused on 20 slides each with a maximum of 20 seconds of narration to capture in a concise, fast-paced format their most significant academic insights and influences. Students will also read practical and theoretical articles on public relations and advertising to help fine-tune their ethical and socially responsible decision-making skills. Students will capture key insights about the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century public relations and advertising professions through targeted writing exercises, critical reflection on readings and video presentations, and participation in discussion boards.

**Course Objectives:**

Students enrolled in PRAD 396 will explore the fields of public relations and advertising, and will gain critical insight into their relationship to these strategic communication practices as citizens, consumers, and future practitioners. This class will help students:

- To reflect upon central theories, methods and concepts from the PRAD major and the Liberal Studies Program (LSP) and how that body of knowledge can be applied in contemporary professional settings
- To serve as a socialization agent to help students transition from the academic environment to the professional world of work and to their new roles as engaged global citizens
- To consider the importance of multicultural awareness in global communications settings and the need to create targeted messages that respect differing racial, ethnic, religious, socio-economic and gender identities
- To develop a communication career plan for the critical post-graduation period.

**Required Texts:**

No required textbook. Book chapter, journal and periodical articles as specified on the weekly course schedule which appears below. All required readings are available as PDF files on the course D2L site.

## Course Policies:

**Participation:** You are expected to participate fully as a member of this class. In the online classroom, it is obvious to everyone if you are participating in the course conversation. It is not as simple as showing up to a face-to-face class where you get some credit simply for being in the room. You are expected to contribute to our conversations and to contribute not just by echoing what others have said, but through sharing original ideas and relevant examples that deepen course discussion and advance our collective conversations. **Please note that course participation makes up a substantial part of your course grade.** See more about participation below in the Grading Policies section of the syllabus.

**Assignment Deadlines:** Late assignments (worth 10 points each) will be marked down one-half point (aka half a letter grade off) for each day that they are late. Without a documented medical or university-m approved excuse, late assignments will be accepted no more than three days past the original due date. If you have a documented medical or university excuse, we will work out a mutually acceptable new due date for the missed assignment. In this instance, please contact me before the deadline to determine the new due date.

**Original Work:** Plagiarism is the appropriation or presentation of someone else's ideas, language or designs as your own. All student work submitted online is reviewed through a plagiarism filter which includes an exhaustive online database, including all DePaul student work submitted via the dropbox, which means re-purposing previous student work, even if it your own, is a violation of the academic integrity policy. You should be aware of the strong university sanctions against plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity as stated in the DePaul University Student Handbook, in the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) available online.

All work turned in for credit in this course—including postings to our discussion boards and contributions to our discussions—must be your original work. Anyone caught plagiarizing in this course will be subject to full disciplinary action, including a grade of F in the course. Always ask your professor if you are unsure about how to use and acknowledge source material.

**Discussion Etiquette:** While you probably know how to be professional and polite in a face-to-face discussion, there are certain guidelines for online interaction that might be unfamiliar. Here are some tips regarding online etiquette or "netiquette" when interacting with your instructor and fellow students online.

- Re-read and spell check your writing for typos. Consider your tone before posting. In some cases, you will not be able to modify your comments after you post.
- Add your comment in the right place. If you are responding to Joe or Jane Doe's comment, make sure their comment is the one you see when you click the "reply" button.
- Change the subject line of your post to something that reflects your specific contribution. This will make it easier for people to follow-up on discussions that are of the most interest to them.
- Add something new and justify your position. When responding to others' comments, don't just say, "Yeah, I agree." Instead, say, "Yes, but we also need to consider. . ." Or, "I don't agree because. . ."
- Don't use CAPITAL LETTERS to emphasize text. This is equivalent to shouting in person and it can make text difficult to read. To emphasize a word, phrase, or idea, use italics, bolding, or place an asterisk before and after the text.
- Avoid offensive language, off-color jokes, and personal attacks. Make comments about ideas, not people.

**Sexual Harassment/Discrimination/Incivility:** The online classroom environment at DePaul University must be free of discrimination and all forms of sexual and gender harassment which diminish the dignity or impede the academic freedom of any member of the University Community. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, any unwelcome sexual advances, direct or indirect, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. If you require additional information, please consult the undergraduate [Academic Handbook](#).

Incivility will not be tolerated. You are expected to conduct discussions in a manner that is respectful towards all class members. Difference of opinion is welcome here, and you may challenge other students' points of view. However, we will do this in the context of debate and discussion, without resorting to insult-trading or name-calling, or any form of personal attack.

**D2L and your Email Address:** The professor will use the D2L program to communicate with all students by email. You are responsible for making sure that the email address that the University has on file for you with CampusConnect is current. **You are responsible for checking that email account daily to ensure that messages from the professor are received.** The professor will send a test message to all students via D2L at the start of the quarter. If you do not receive this message, you are responsible for registering a working email address with CampusConnect, such as your depaul.edu address, as your official university email account.

### Grading Policies:

#### 1) Standards for Written Work

Your writing will be graded not only on content and quality of expression, but also on technical proficiency. Strong writing is critical in the PRAD field. Assignments containing errors in spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation will be downgraded. Your written work will be graded using the following criteria:

- **A** designates work of exceptional quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive analysis of the public relations/advertising question at hand; presents a clear thesis and ideas that are well-supported by examples, argument, and evidence; response includes creative approaches and when appropriate, such supporting materials as relevant images or quotes; mechanics of writing are excellent, without typos or grammatical errors; writing style is clear and cogent.
- **B** designates work of high quality; reflects substantial analysis and development; response to the public relations/advertising question is well-organized and well-supported with thorough development of ideas; includes creative elements and when appropriate, supporting materials; writing style and mechanics are generally solid, although some areas may require improvement.
- **C** designates work that meets the basic requirements set forward in the assignment, but does so in more limited ways; the analysis requires additional development and is not persuasively presented; the organization may be unclear; arguments or main points are presented in simplistic ways that do not satisfy the complexity of the public relations and advertising question at hand; style and mechanics are flawed.
- **D** designates work of poor quality that does not meet minimum requirements set for the assignment; the analysis requires extensive additional work; there is no recognizable thesis or development of main ideas; style and mechanics are poor.
- **F** designates work that does not meet the minimum standards, including incomplete assignments. Students may also receive an F for a late paper (see policies above).

#### 2) Class Participation

The success of this class will depend on the active participation of all students. This is a seminar-style online class where we all contribute to the intellectual climate of the virtual classroom. Class participation includes structured class exercises as well as discussion of your own homework assignments and those of other students.

**For Module 1, discussion will be the only graded activity for the module** and students will receive a participation grade for this module based on a combination of:

- Quality and frequency of posts
- Intellectual engagement
- Error-free posts submitted by the deadline

Quality participation includes offering substantive comments on reading and lecture topics, bringing in relevant examples from the advertising and public relations industries, and fostering substantive debate in the online setting by commenting cogently and insightfully on classmates' observations and peer work.

For all other modules, grades for class participation will be calculated using the above criteria at three separate points in the quarter. At the end of the quarter, the professor will average these three scores to arrive at a participation grade:

- Calculation 1 – Modules 3 and 5
- Calculation 2 – Modules 6 and 7
- Calculation 3 – Module 9 and “watercooler” discussion board

For the “watercooler” discussion board, the instructor and students will post timely public relations and advertising-related content, such as trade articles, as well as stories and tips about getting an internship or entry-level position in the advertising or public relations fields. **During the quarter, students are expected to post at least one content item (by Sunday, January 17) and at least three comments related to another student’s post (or another content item) as part of Calculation 3 (first response post by Sunday, Feb. 7; second response due by Sunday, Feb. 28; and third response due by Sunday, March 13).**

**Weekly Deadlines for Discussion Posts:**

During the Winter 2016 Quarter, each week (or class module) begins on Monday (at 12:01 am CT) and ends on Sunday at 11:59 pm CT. **IMPORTANT: Unless noted, each module has the following discussion deadlines: (1) the first discussion post is due each week by Thursday night at 11:59 pm CT and (2) at least one response to another student’s post is due by Sunday at 11:59 pm CT.** Students are encouraged to participate in the discussion several times through the week to benefit from a richer, more rewarding exchange.

**3) Percentages for Final Grade**

Your final grade in PRAD 396 will be determined by the following chart:

Module #	Module	% of Course Grade
	Class participation – Evaluated three times per quarter	10%
0-1	Introduction and Managing Yourself – Your Time & Your Career	5%
2	Reflective Reading and Writing	10%
3	Business Basics & Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	5%
4	Perspectives on Ethics in PR and Advertising	10%
5	How Teams Work and Informational Interview Plan	5%
6	My DePaul/College Experience, My Career - Pecha Kucha	15%
7	Vision and Goal Setting; Preparing for the Job Interview	10%
8	Informational Interview	10%
9	Identifying and Promoting Your Skills and Personal Values	10%
10	Acing the Job Interview and Succeeding on the Job	10%
Total		100%

**Grading Scale:**

A	93-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-92	C	73-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-86	D+	67-69
B-	80-82	F	below 65

## Course Schedule

*\*\*Note: The professor reserves the right to modify this schedule as needed. All schedule changes will be announced. Additional readings may be assigned throughout the quarter, especially regarding current events that mirror our subject matter.*

### **Modules 0 and 1: Course Introduction and Self-Management: Your Time & Career**

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**Week of January 4-10, 2016 (Happy New Year!)**

#### **Module 0: Course Introduction**

- Overview of course
- Carefully review the syllabus and course policies

#### **Video:**

- Watch PRAD faculty introductory video
- Watch instructor (Prof. Matt Ragas, Ph.D.) welcome video

#### **Module 1: Self Management: Time Management & Career**

##### **Readings (articles and book chapters posted on D2L):**

##### **Self Management**

1. “Managing Oneself” by Peter Drucker
2. “Align Your Time Management with your Goals” by the Harvard Business Review Staff
3. “Lean In,” Chapters 1 and 2, by Sheryl Sandberg

##### **Informational Interview Preparation**

4. Informational Interview assignment sheet – Review assignment sheet and Career Center video to plan for informational interview deliverables **Sun., Feb. 7, (week five) and Sun., Feb. 28, (week eight)**

#### **Videos:**

- Career Center video on preparing for and conducting an informational interview

#### **Module 0 and 1 Deliverables:**

- View PRAD faculty and instructor welcome videos **by Mon., Jan. 4, by 11:59 pm CT** (*NOTE: all deadlines assume Central time (aka Chicago time!)*).
- Read syllabus **by Mon., Jan. 4, by 11:59 pm.**
- Post a current photo to D2L and an introductory message on the discussion board **by Wed., Jan. 6, by 11:59 pm.** Please return to comment on at least one student’s post **by Thurs., Jan. 7, at 11:59 pm.**
- Complete student survey on course expectations **by Wed., Jan. 6, by 11:59 pm.**
- Schedule an in-person meeting with instructor using the Google document calendar **by Wed., Jan. 6, at 11:59 pm. Meetings must be completed by Fri., Jan. 22.** If a face-to-face meeting is impractical, please email the professor for alternative arrangements.
- Review the Ungraded Writing Sample Submission guidelines and submit an existing writing sample in the dropbox **by Wed., Jan. 6, at 11:59 pm (or at least two days before your in-person meeting).** **Your writing will not be graded,** but will be discussed in our meeting. Since many employers request a writing sample, select one you might submit for that purpose. A press release might be a good choice for PR students. Ad students might submit a paper that reflects your critical thinking or analytical skills.
- Participate in online discussion about the **Self Management** readings with the **first post due by Thurs., Jan. 7, by 11:59 pm** and at least one response **due by Sun., Jan. 10, at 11:59 p.m.**
- View Informational Interview Career Center video and read assignment sheet **by Sun., Jan. 10, at 11:59 pm.** Start planning ahead for your interview which will take time to schedule and conduct.

## Module 2: Reflective Reading/Writing on a Major PR or Advertising Campaign

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*Week of January 11 – 17*

### **Readings (on D2L):**

- Basic Reflective Writing: A Basic Introduction.
- Choose either Wendy's Bacon Pretzel Cheeseburger (PR) campaign or the GoDaddy (advertising) campaign and read articles posted about your campaign.

### **Module 2 Deliverables:**

- Choose a campaign and write a 2-page analysis **by Sun., Jan. 17, at 11:59 p.m.**
- On the "Watercooler" discussion board, post one piece of content related to the course or the PR or advertising industries **by Sun., Jan. 17, at 11:59 pm.** This may include a current news story, trade article, or tips for how to secure an internship.

## Module 3: Business Basics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

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*Week of January 18-24*

### **Readings (on D2L):**

- Business basics:
  - Gentry, J. K. (2011). *Understanding financial statements*. Lawrence, KS: The University of Kansas.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):
  - Rawlins, B. L. (2005). Corporate social responsibility. In B. Heath (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Public Relations* (vol. 1, pp. 210-214).
  - Kelly, G. (2011, May). Citizenship and Southwest Airlines. *Spirit*, 12.
  - As foundation for discussion, choose CSR articles for one of the following companies: Amazon, H&M, McDonald's
- View narrated Powerpoint lecture on business basics.

### **Videos:**

- Discover Financial Services PR professionals on importance of business basics.
- Al Golin, Founder and Chairman, GOLIN, on corporate social responsibility (CSR).

### **Module 3 Deliverables:**

- Participate in online discussion evaluating the effectiveness of the CSR efforts by Amazon, H&M, or McDonald's. The first post is **due by Thurs., Jan. 21, at 11:59 pm** and at least one response post **by Sun., Jan. 24, at 11:59 pm.**
- Complete **graded quiz** on Business Basics and CSR **by Sun., Jan. 24, at 11:59 pm.**

## Module 4: Perspectives on Ethics in PR and Advertising

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*Week of January 25 – 31*

### **Readings:**

- Potter Box Model of Ethical Reasoning by Rashmi
- Choose either the NFL Head Injury or Uber cases and read articles posted on D2L

### **Module 4 Deliverables:**

- Write a two-page analysis of the NFL Head Injury or Uber case applying the Potter Box approach to ethical decision-making **due Sun., Jan. 31, by 11:59 pm.**



## Module 5: How Teams Work and Informational Interview Plan

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*Week of February 1 – 7*

**Readings:**

- Wisdom of Teams abstract
- Conquer Team Dysfunction and Model by Patrick Lencioni

**Module 5 Videos:**

- Watch “Little Miss Sunshine” (film – 103 minutes)
- Watch career Center video on preparing for and conducting an informational interview

**Module 5 Deliverables:**

- Participate in online discussion group regarding “Little Miss Sunshine” and the high-performance qualities and dysfunctional traits of teams with first post **by Thurs., Feb. 4, at 11:59 pm** and at least one response post **by Sun., Feb. 7, at 11:59 pm**.
- Write a plan for conducting your informational interview **by Sun., Feb. 7, by 11:59 pm**.
- On the “Watercooler” discussion board, post a response to another student’s article (or submit another piece of content) **by Sun., Feb. 7, at 11:59 pm**.

## Module 6: My DePaul/College Experience, My Career – Pecha Kucha

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*Week of February 6 – 14*

**Readings:**

- Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery

**Video:**

- Daniel Pink Pecha Kucha example on emotionally intelligent directional signs

**Module 6 Deliverables:**

- Create a Pecha Kucha presentation (20 slides with 20-seconds of narration per slide or about 30 words written as notes in your PPT presentation). Your Pecha Kucha will summarize your DePaul and college experiences. **Due Sun., Feb. 14, at 11:59 pm**.
- After you submit your Pecha Kucha’s, you will participate in an online discussion about the personal insights you discovered as you developed your Pecha Kucha. The first post is **due by Tues., Feb. 16, at 11:59 pm** and at least one response post is **due the next day by Wed., Feb. 17, at 11:59 p.m**. **These deadlines are intentionally inconsistent with the traditional Thursday/Sunday discussion deadlines so we can also meet the deadlines for Module 7.**

## Module 7: Vision & Goal Setting; Preparing for a Job Interview

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*Week of February 15 – 21*

**Discussion Videos:**

- Interviews with PR and advertising human resource (HR) professionals discussing how new hires can distinguish themselves to secure an interview
- Interviews with Discover Financial Services’ in-house PR staff on what they look for in new hires
- Interviews with recent DePaul PRAD grads on how they built their professional networks and secured interview opportunities
- Sima Dahl, social media coach, on promoting your brand through social media

**Vision and Actionable Goals, Strategies and Tactics Timeline Video:**

- Watch DePaul Career Center video on outlining career and life goals, strategies and tactics

**Module 7 Deliverables:**

- Submit your first post on the Pecha Kucha discussion board **by Tues., Feb. 16, at 11:59 pm**. At least one response post is **due the next day by Wed., Feb. 17, at 11:59 pm**.
- Participate in an online discussion that reflects on the video interviews. The first post is **due by Thurs., Feb. 18, at 11:59 pm** and at least one response post is **due by Sun., Feb. 21, at 11:59 pm**.
- Write a Vision statement and develop an Actionable Goals, Strategies and Tactics timeline **due by Sun., Feb. 21, at 11:59 pm**.

## **Module 8: Conducting an Informational Interview**

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*Week of February 22 – 28*

**Video:**

- Career Center video on preparing for and conducting an informational interview

**Module 8 Deliverables:**

- Write a 2-3 page summary of your key learnings from your informational interview **due Sun., Feb. 28, by 11:59 pm**.
- On the Watercooler discussion board, post a response to another student’s article (or another piece of content) **by Sun, Feb 28, by 11:59 pm**.

## **Module 9: Identifying and Promoting Your Skills and Personal Values**

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*Week of February 29 – March 6*

**Module 9 Deliverables**

- Develop an “elevator speech” and using the D2L voice tool, post your elevator speech to the discussion board **by Thurs., March 3, at 11:59 pm**.
- Participate in a discussion (after listening to classmates’ elevator speeches) providing constructive feedback to a classmate’s elevator speech. First post is **due by Thurs., March 3, at 11:59 pm** with a response post **due by Sun., Mar. 6, at 11:59 pm**.
- Write a one-page cover letter to a specific firm that outlines why you want to work at the firm and why you’re an excellent candidate **due by Sunday, March 6, at 11:59 pm**.

## **Module 10: Acing the Job Interview and Succeeding on the Job**

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*Week of March 7 – 13*

**Readings:**

- Developing an interview checklist and a timeline: [Pre-interview Checklist](#).
- DePaul Career Center tips on preparing for an interview [Interview Prep](#).

**Videos:**

- Interviews with PR and advertising Human Resources (HR) professionals on how to showcase your strengths during an interview.
- Recent PRAD graduate interviews on preparing for a job interview and succeeding on the job.
- Video congratulations from the PRAD faculty!

**Module 10 Deliverables:**

- Develop a job interview Q&A document (**due by Sun., March 13, at 11:59 pm**) including:
  - Anticipated ten questions the interviewer will ask with answers
  - List of questions the student will ask the interviewer
- On the Watercooler discussion board, please post a response to another student’s article (or another piece of content) **by Sun., March 13, at 11:59 pm**.

**\*\*\* Finished! Hello, graduation! \*\*\***