

# SPCM 390H (Applied Communication)



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Department of Speech Communication  
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

## Fall 2005 Syllabus

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**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The last date for adding PRSSA hours this semester is Sept. 7, 2005. No *closed class slips* will be signed after this deadline. The last day for paying PRSSA dues (\$55) for this semester is Sept. 14, 2005. If dues are not paid by this date, then you will need to drop SPCM 390H. Hours cannot be dropped after the deadline for dropping a semester-length course.

### Meeting Times

General Meetings: Every Wednesday (except the first week of classes and on designated holidays) at 4:30-5:45 p.m., Cambria Room, Student Center.

Pyramid Meetings: Every Wednesday (except designated holidays) at 6:00-7:00 p.m. Saline Room, Student Center.

Executive Board Meetings: Every Monday (except designated holidays) from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m., in Comm. 2005.

### Learning Objectives

The primary objective of SPCM 390H is to help students who are preparing to become PR practitioners gain knowledge and hands-on experience so that they can become marketable candidates for the profession as well as produce materials for their personal portfolios. PRSSA is a pre-professional student organization that serves as the formal link between PRSSA members and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the nation's premier trade association for the PR profession. Other specific learning objectives include:

- Developing students' understanding of the principles and practices of public relations
- Stimulating and encouraging awareness of and appreciation for their chosen field
- Instilling an overall professional and ethical attitude

### Payment of Dues

There are no required texts for this course; however, all members are required to pay local and national dues which total \$55. This payment includes two semesters (one calendar year). Dues need to be paid whether or not you are taking 390H for credit.

## Being in a Committee

All members of PRSSA will be in Committee. There are six Committees:

- Activities
- Records
- Professional Planning
- Fundraising
- Publications
- Community Service

There will be some set projects that will have to be accomplished by each Committee during the course of the semesters (see hand-out). Incompletion of projects will affect grades.

### Difference Between PRSSA and Pyramid

The entire organization is referred to as PRSSA. Pyramid, the student-run public relations agency, is a component of our PRSSA chapter. Each semester, Pyramid services clients in the community and on campus. Pyramid is organized into account teams. All Pyramid members have to be members of PRSSA, but all PRSSA members do not have to be in Pyramid. In order to work for Pyramid, you will have to go through a "hiring" process.

### Working for PYRAMID

Entry into Pyramid will be selective. The goal of Pyramid is to provide focused and high quality PR service to clients. Hence we must ensure that Pyramid employs people who are qualified to and interested in providing such service. All those interested in working for Pyramid must submit a cover letter (explaining why Pyramid should hire you) and resumé to the VPO no later than Sept. 7, 2005.

## Credit Hour Policies

- In order to gain one credit hour for 390H, a member must complete 35 clock hours of PRSSA/Pyramid work during the course of the semester

**Note:** Hours can only be earned for actual PR work. No hours can be earned for:

- Attending PRSSA social events
- Making donations of any sort

### Special cases:

- National conference = 35 clock hours
- Regional conferences are decided on a case basis (usually 20 clock hours)
- St. Louis PRSA luncheons (need to attend entire event) and other out-of-town day events = 10 clock hours
- Members who do not complete the required number of clock hours will receive an "Incomplete" grade. They must complete their hours in the next consecutive semester (PRSSA is not active during the summer) in order to avoid an "F" grade.
- Members who exceed the number of clock hours they are required to complete can apply these extra hours in the next consecutive semester, i.e., these hours roll over.
- NOTE: If you do not register for 390H credit hours and still attend, then your hours do not roll over.

## Documentation of Hours

Each member is required to record his/her hours, verified by the signature of his/her immediate peer supervisor, on a weekly basis (at the general meetings) on the time sheet provided in the introduction packet. Failure to do this will lower the final grade.

## Attendance

- All executive board members are required to be present at all weekly Executive Board meetings.
- All general members are required to be present at every Wednesday general meeting.

NOTE: Attendance will be taken up until 4:30. You do not need to log your weekly meeting hours since we will get that from our attendance records.

- All Pyramid members are expected to attend all Pyramid meetings.
- All Pyramid Account Managers and PRSSA Committee Heads are required to be present at all Account Manager and Committee Head meetings.

## Accountability in Positions of Leadership

*(Whether or not enrolled for credit in 390H)*

If you are in a position of leadership in PRSSA (such as Account manager, Committee Head, Executive Board member), you are also in a position of responsibility. Failure to carry through with your responsibilities until the end of the semester will be recorded as unprofessional conduct (and this could significantly hurt your final grade).

## A Point of Confusion

In the past, there has been some confusion about SPCM 390H hours and SPCM 494 (Internship) hours. These are NOT interchangeable, i.e., you cannot sign up for SPCM 390H hours and assume that they may be applied towards SPCM 494, and vice versa.

## Assignments

There will be weekly committee (and account if you're in Pyramid) work for each member which will have to be completed outside general meeting hours (e.g., preparing for a fund-raiser, working on campaigns, writing press releases, arranging for speakers and so on)

**TUESDAY EMAIL UPDATES:** Whether or not you're taking PRSSA for credit, every Tuesday (before the Wednesday meeting), every general member, Account Manager, Committee Head and Executive Board member will e-mail a brief report of work assigned and completed during the past week to her/his immediate peer supervisor (see end of syllabus for guidelines). If lacking, the member will be put on a two-week probation to catch up to speed. *A final decision to keep or drop a person on an account/committee or in a position of leadership will be made at the end of this probation period.* If "dropped" the member will be responsible for "finding work" for the rest of the semester.

Final paper (not required if not taking PRSSA for credit): One final paper (2-3 pages) will be due on Dec. 7, between 4:30 and 5:45 p.m. at the Cambria Room. Briefly, this paper will be an essay on what you accomplished as a PRSSA/Pyramid member during the semester, what you learned about PR by being a member, and an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of our chapter. You're expected to attach samples of work completed during the semester.

Your paper will be graded on content, quality of writing (grammar, composition, organization) and the amount of work accomplished during the semester. Detailed guidelines will be handed out later in the semester.

## THE COMPETITION

Committee Presentations: Each PRSSA committee and Pyramid Account Team will do a short competitive presentation (5-7 mins.) at the end of the semester. This presentation will cover what that committee/account accomplished during the course of the semester (40% of grade for those only in committees). This means that committees/accounts will have to set realistic goals very early in the semester. Each Committee Head/Account Manager will be in charge of making sure that the goals are met.

*Best Committee and Account Awards will be decided based on these presentations. The panel of judges will comprise a PR practitioner from the area, the faculty advisor, the professional advisor, the graduate advisor and VPO or Vice President.*

### Grade breakdown:

Final Paper = 10%

Professionalism = 10%

Committee Performance = 40%

Completion of Required Clock Hours = 40%

Total = 100%

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Even if you're unable to complete your required clock hours, you will still need to turn in your paper, participate in the committee/account competition and complete the peer evaluations. Failure to do so by the above deadline will result in an "F" grade.

### Grading Scale

90-100% = A

80-89% = B

70-79% = C

60-69% = D

0-59% = F

This course is not an "easy A." We believe in working hard and enjoying the work we do.

**NOTE:** Please go through all the materials in your introduction packet carefully. This packet contains important information about how our PRSSA chapter functions. Careful attention to packet materials will help avoid confusion and misunderstandings about what the expectations in SPCM 390H are. Ask questions when in doubt.

### **Guidelines for Tuesday email updates (starting Sept. 13):**

<u>General Members</u> To Committee Head	<u>Pyramid Account Managers</u> To VPO
<u>Exec Board Members</u> To President	<u>Pyramid Account Members</u> To Account Head
<u>Committee Heads</u> To Vice President	

**NOTE:** If you are in Pyramid, you will have TWO updates due each week.

## Tentative Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
<u>Week 1</u> 8/31	First General Meeting <i>Introduction/Divide into Committees</i>	
<u>Week 2</u> 9/7	General meeting <i>Last day for signing up for PRSSA</i> <i>Last day for handing in application for Pyramid</i>	
<u>Week 3</u> 9/14	General meeting <i>Last day for paying PRSSA dues</i>	
<u>Week 4</u> 9/21	General meeting	
<u>Week 5</u> 9/28	General meeting	
<u>Week 6</u> 10/5	General meeting	
<u>Week 7</u> 10/12	General meeting Mid-semester performance review (all members incl. Executive Board)	
<u>Week 8</u> 10/19	General meeting	
<u>Week 9</u> 10/26	General meeting Follow-up (and "drop" decisions) on mid-semester performance review	
<u>Week 10</u> 11/2	General meeting	
<u>Week 11</u> 11/9	General meeting	
<u>Week 12</u> 11/16	General Meeting	
<u>Week 13</u> 11/23	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
<u>Week 14</u> 11/30	General meeting <i>Guidelines for Committee/Account</i> <i>Presentations and final paper will be handed out</i>	
<u>Week 15</u> 11/27	General meeting <i>Committee/Account Competition</i>	Final papers and time sheets due

*Have a great semester!*

