

A-4 Roundtable: Inadvertantly International Studies, Intentionally True-to-World Experience

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Panel Abstract:

During the spring term of 2007, the public relations campaigns course presented a relatively unique opportunity by way of two international studies students – one from Denmark and the other from Mexico. Students in the course are traditionally tasked with working as a team to generate a campaigns book, a full-fledged public relations program addressing an actual problem experienced by a client. Using an agency model, students work in account groups. The international students along with three fellow students operated as an agency account team to create a “student-run design firm model and promotions” for the University. Creative problem solving, of course, often means thinking outside of the box – or at least, outside of the country. It was the latter case that allowed students in this group to learn more than just public relations problem solving. And in so doing, the students also had the opportunity to obtain even more true-to-life experience than perhaps they realized at the time.

This panel combines the perspectives of the professor managing the course, the students forming the account team, the client for whom the students created their problem-solving campaigns book and an external public relations agency executive. For the professor, the course became inadvertently international largely because the opportunities abounded with students representing international studies and other countries. These students opened the door for the professor intentionally to maximize the campaigns experience for all students in the class. The student perspective will also be presented based on the product as well as the opportunities inherent in an “internationalized” approach. The client perspective is represented by the faculty advisor of an existing, single-discipline, student-run public relations firm. Finally, a practitioner and president of an independent Atlanta firm with international affiliation will link the academic experience to the local and global practice of public relations. It is hoped that this discussion will allow for audience interaction leading to an exchange of a variety of ideas for both intentional international studies opportunities and intentional true-to-life experiences in the class.