



DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Division of State Fire Marshal
Bureau of Fire Standards and Training

Title: Syllabus for Public Information Officer

Revision: Aug. 2022

Section I - Course Information

Course Title: Public Information Officer

Course Number(s): BFST/FFP/ATPC2706

Class Days/Time: If being taught at the Florida State Fire College Campus 11655 NW Gainesville Road, Ocala, FL 34482 Bldg. C – Classrooms - Monday-Friday 8 a.m.- 5 p.m. 5 additional hours out of class work may be required.

Section II - Points of Contact

Training Supervisor:

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Section III – Course Description

This program will introduce the participants to the public information function and the role of the PIO in the public safety/emergency management environment. It will consider the value of communication before, during and after an incident. It will help PIOs identify critical audiences, both internal and external. Finally, the course will outline the communications needed for different incidents and define the roles of the PIO within ICS.

Section IV - Course Material, Grading and, Attendance

Recommended Book: Used by FSFC – G0289/GO290/GO291 Public Information Officer Awareness FEMA. Course book can be purchased at the BFST Bookstore

Prerequisite(s): None

Contact Hours: This class has 45 contact hours

Continuing Educations Units (CEU's): 45 hours towards Fire Codes Administrator, Fire Safety Inspector, Instructor I, II, III

Pre-Course Assignment: None

Required Materials: Paper, pens, USB portable storage device (thumb drive)

Grading: Students must achieve a minimum cumulative score of 70% to pass this course. Course grades are determined from assignments and activities including, to homework, projects, quizzes, exams, and presentations. Below is the breakdown of the final accumulative grading:

- Individual Exercises 10 points
- Group Exercises 40 points
- Final Group project 20 points
- Final Written Exam 20 points

Attendance: Students are required to attend all sessions of the course.

- Excused absences - Students are permitted excused absences totaling no more than 10% of class (4.5 hours maximum); the instructor shall be the sole determining authority in the determination of an excused absence and may assign supplemental work to make up for missed class time.
- Unexcused absences - The instructor shall be the sole determining authority in the determination of an unexcused absence (i.e. "no call, no show"). The instructor has no obligation to offer the student an opportunity to make up assignments, including quizzes and/or exams, but may do so at his/her discretion.

Section V - Instructor Qualifications

As per Chapter Florida Administrative Codes, (Rule) *Programs of Study and Vocational Courses*, instructors must meet the following qualifications to be authorized to teach this course:

Rule: 69A-37.065(3)(b)(3) Instructor Qualifications:

- a. An Instructor I must hold a certificate of competency as a Fire Safety Inspector II.
- b. Instructor II or III may teach provided he or she has successfully completed the course.

Section VI - Job Performance Requirements

Given information from discussion and reading materials, the student will satisfy the Job Performance Requirements (JPR) of the applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, any applicable skill sheets, and the applicable Fire and Life Safety Initiatives of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation *Everyone Goes Home* program.

NFPA 1035, *Standard for Public Information Officer*, 2015 Edition

7.1 General Requirements. The Public Information Officer (PIO) shall meet the JPRs defined in Sections 7.1 and 7.2.

7.1.1 General Requisite Knowledge. Effective writing skills; professional appearance; use of people-first language in writing and when speaking; time management skills; media characteristics and processes; methods for information gathering; message development, dissemination, and monitoring; information technology; internal and external audiences; community relationships and resources; incident management system; organizational emergency and nonemergency functions, responsive and proactive message opportunities; responsible use of social media; organizational messages; nationally standardized fire and life safety themes and messages reflecting current best practices; program management; budget preparation and management; marketing; and applicable public information laws, standards, and policies.

7.1.2 General Requisite Skills. Use verbal and written communication skills, exhibit professional demeanor, manage interaction with the media, utilize various means of information technology, articulate organizational messages, identify applicable laws, develop and recommend pertinent policies and guidelines.

7.2.1* Conduct media interviews, given incident information, PIO worksheets, and organizational policies, so that all information compiled on worksheets is accurate and disseminated in a specified time to the media.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Interview methodologies.

(B) Requisite Skills. Demonstrate interview skills, collect information, complete PIO worksheets.

7.2.2 Establish a media area, given incident or event information, organizational policies, and types of media present, so that the area provides for the safety of all media and facilitates effective communication.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Incident management system, incident command system, safety considerations, other agencies.

(B) Requisite Skills. Manage media area participants, coordinate communication between the organization and the media.

7.2.3 Coordinate dissemination of information to specific community groups, given organizational policies and methods for contacting other groups and organizations, so that the information is communicated to the groups accurately and in a timely manner.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Awareness of community groups.

(B) Requisite Skill. Develop, maintain, and strengthen relationships with community groups.

7.2.4* Prepare a news release, given an incident, a situation, or event information and organizational policies, so that the news release is pertinent, on time, concise, and accurate.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. News release format and media requirements.

(B) Requisite Skill. Compose information in accordance with media requirements.

7.2.5* Prepare a media advisory, given an incident, a situation, or event information and organizational policy, so that the media advisory is pertinent, on time, concise, and accurate.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Media advisory formatting.

(B) Requisite Skill. Compose information in accordance with media requirements.

7.2.6 Disseminate information to the media, given a PIO worksheet; news release or media advisory; the characteristics of the local media, including deadlines, organizational policies; and methods available to reach the media, so that information is on time and accurate.

(A) **Requisite Knowledge.** Specific methods for disseminating information to the media.

(B) **Requisite Skills.** Develop, maintain, and strengthen a relationship with the media.

7.2.7* Disseminate information to an internal target audience, given an incident, a situation, or event information; organizational policies, and methods and time frame for releasing information, so that the information is on time and accurate.

(A) **Requisite Knowledge.** Specific methods for disseminating internal information.

(B) **Requisite Skills.** Maintain relationship with internal target audience and use the available information technology.

7.2.8* Coordinate a news conference, given information on an incident, a situation, an event, or issue; media characteristics and methods available for reaching the media; and organizational policies, so that a site is obtained, desired media are notified, a news conference agenda is established, a media information package is created, and participants in the news conference are notified.

(A) **Requisite Knowledge.** News conference needs.

(B) **Requisite Skills.** Establish a relationship with the media, disseminate information, coordinate site selection, and create media materials.

7.2.9* Disseminate information through applicable electronic forms of communication, including social media, given an incident, a situation, or event information; organizational policies; and methods and time frame for releasing that information, so that the information is on time, accurate, and accessible to all audiences.

(A) **Requisite Knowledge.** Specific methods for disseminating electronic information.

(B) Develop, maintain, and strengthen interaction through electronic forms of communication.

Section VII – Plan of Instruction

The following is the plan of instruction used during course offerings held at the Florida State Fire College. It also serves as the suggested instructional block format for other approved training providers who use the recommended text book. All class offerings **must** satisfy the JPRs listed in *Section VI – Job Performance Requirements* regardless of textbook used.

Date	Chapters	Activities
Monday	G0289 Units 1 thru 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roster• Paperwork• Introductions• Activities as assigned in text
Tuesday	G290 Units 1 thru 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities as assigned in text• 16 Firefighter Initiatives News Release / Talking Points Assignment
Wednesday	G0290 Units 5 thru 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities as assigned in text
Thursday	G0291 Units 1 thru 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities as assigned in text

Friday	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JIC Exercise with Structural Collapse Class FFIRS Report
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Section VIII- Final Presentation and Grading Rubric

Description of Assignment:

The final project for this class involves a group presentation in PowerPoint format. All members are expected to contribute equally. The presentation should take no longer than 15 minutes and groups must submit a written summary of their work to accompany their presentation.

Each Student will develop and present a PowerPoint Presentation, with video included of simulator house fire and being interviewed by the local new team.

Public Information Officer Rubric

	20	15	10	5	0	Score
PowerPoint Presentation	PowerPoint is well designed and presented properly. Covers all information. Work in team	PowerPoint is well described however team does not cover all information	PowerPoint is moderately described, and no members of the team reads from the screen or document in hand	PowerPoint is moderately described however team members read from the screen or document in hand	PowerPoint is barely described no matter if team members read from the screen or document in hand or not.	
Lesson Plan	Lesson Plan is easy to understand, and all information is covered. Proper format used	Lesson Plan well designed but missing some information on subject	Lesson Plan short and missing information but proper format	Lesson Plan to short, missing information and wrong format but can understand	Lesson Plan to short, missing information, wrong format and not understood	
Life Safety Initiatives	3 LSI identified accurately and were applicable	3 LSI were identified and mostly applicable	3 LSI were identified and some applicable	Up to 3 LSI were identified however marginally applicable	Up to 3 LSI were identified however are not applicable	
Hand Outs	All Hand Outs in easy to read and nice format Well designed	Some Hand Outs easy to read others need some work	Not easy to read and understand Forms	Not easy to read and understand Forms	No Hand Outs Presented	

Video Presentation	Voice easy understand and good interview	Some voice not clear but good interview	Somewhat easy to understand the interview	Not easy to understand the interview	No interview	
					Total Score	

Section IX – Review Date and Author

July 24, 2017	Unknown
May 17, 2018	Frank Ennist
October 20, 2019	Frank Ennist
November 3, 2020	Frank Ennist