

Syllabus Updated April 15, 2013

Course: Public Relations Strategy—PUR 3801

Class Times: As scheduled

Instructor: Professor Ann Christiano
3057 Weimer Hall
achristiano@jou.ufl.edu
(609) 647-3877

Course Overview

In this course, you will master the core elements of strategic public relations through case studies and the application of theory. I will teach this course from the perspective of a practitioner and make use of extensive real-life examples. As much as is possible in a classroom environment, I will try to make the lessons relevant to the contemporary practice of public relations and public interest communications

This course represents an opportunity to learn the fundamental and critical functions that are part of effective communications. This course is centered on you and your learning needs, with ample time and opportunity for hands-on learning.

In this course we will adhere to AP style. All work completed for this course must be your own *original* work. There is a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism, and I expect that you are familiar with the University's policy on academic honesty and will follow that policy without exception. Factual and grammatical errors will not be tolerated, and will count against your grade for the given assignment. These include mathematical errors, misspellings of the client's name or misuse of terms associated with relevant content or research.

Course Objectives

1. You will understand and be able to complete the components of a successful strategic communications plan, including formative research, measurable objectives, message strategy, effective tactics, implementation and evaluation.
2. You will gain the ability to command the attention of an audience through effective presentation and persuasive storytelling.
3. You will be able to critically analyze a strategic communications campaign.
4. You will be able to create an effective message strategy.
5. You will be able to formulate and articulate an effective communications strategy.
6. You will be able to apply the core principles of effective strategy in a contemporary and dynamic environment powerfully affected by new types of social engagement.
7. You will understand the relationship between public relations theory and effective strategy in a practical and tangible way.

Appointments

Please don't hesitate to ask to meet. I am on this trip to spend time with you, and I am always happy to meet with students!

Course Professionalism

This College is a professional school and professional decorum is expected at all times—even during study abroad. I expect you to adhere to workplace norms of collegial and respectful interaction. That specifically means that you will arrive on time, not speak when another student or the instructor are speaking or use cell phones, lap tops or other electronic devices. I expect that you will welcome and treat with respect the diverse perspectives of your fellow students, as will I. Violations of this expectation may result in students being asked to leave class and a lowering of your grade.

A Few Notes about Writing for this Course

I expect that you will demonstrate excellent writing throughout this course. I will grade written assignments with great care, and expect that you will write with the same care and precision you applied to your writing classes. You will use AP Style. I will subtract points for violations of AP Style, factual errors and misspellings of names, organizations or other terms. Everything you write for this course must be coherent, logical and carefully edited. Misspellings, syntax and grammatical errors are unacceptable in upper-level college writing, particularly writing by public relations students.

Students with Special Needs

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must submit a documentation letter to the professor when requesting accommodation. Please notify me at the beginning of the semester if you would like to discuss requests for special provisions.

Class Attendance Policy

Unexcused absences are unacceptable. Attendance for this course is required. I will distribute an attendance sheet at the beginning of class or take attendance. Please make sure you sign next to your name. Signing in another student is a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy. Arriving late or leaving class early will result in an absence for that class. Each unexcused absence will result in a loss of five percentage points from your grade.

Academic Honesty

The work you submit for this course must be your own. It must be original for this course. You must never use direct or paraphrased material from any source, including Web sites, without attribution. You may not submit anything that you wrote for another class, or that you wrote as a volunteer or intern. You may not submit anything that was written for any purpose other than the given assignment. I will handle any incident of academic dishonesty in accordance with the University of Florida policies that address cheating and unethical academic behavior, specifically the UF Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Guidelines.

Any case of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. I will follow University Guidelines for any offense.

Any time you complete an assignment for this course you will clearly attribute the source of your information, including information obtained from organizations' Web sites or internal documents. You cannot copy anything word for word, regardless of the source without putting quotes around it and attributing the source.

Grading Policy

Class Participation 15 percent

Class participation counts toward 15 percent of your final grade. Perfect attendance does not ensure that you will receive the full 15 percent for class participation. You must be fully present during class, contribute to discussions and demonstrate through your comments that you have read and understood assigned readings and benefited from previous class discussions.

Quizzes 20 percent

I will conduct quizzes on assigned readings. These quizzes are noted on the syllabus. Your average grade on the quizzes will be your grade for this aspect of the class.

Short Response Paper 15 percent

You will draft a memo outlining a strategy for a particular client.

Exam 25percent

The final exam will comprise 30 percent of your grade.

Final Project 25 percent

You will write a final paper, due when we return.

Grading

Each assignment will be graded on a 100-point scale and weighted accordingly. I will first grade for content, and then subtract points for errors in AP style, grammar and factual errors. Each grammatical or spelling error will count for five points off. AP style violations will count for 10 points off your grade, and factual errors including misspellings of client names or misuse of core terms associated with the field in which your client works will count for 50 points off. I will award points based on your demonstrated understanding of the assignment, the level of creativity, and your ability to write compelling, accurate and precise copy. Please cite all sources meticulously using footnotes.

Grades

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

- A 90-100 percent
- B 80-89 percent
- C 70-79 percent
- D 60-69 percent
- E 0-59 percent

Late Work

No assignments will be accepted after the due date. Quizzes may not be made up. If you miss a quiz due to an unexcused absence, you will receive a zero for that day's quiz.

Required Materials:

1. *Made To Stick*, by Chip and Dan Heath
2. *Here Comes Everybody*, by Clay Shirky

Both are available on amazon.com.

Class Discussion and Assignment Schedule:

Wednesday, May 15	Course overview, objectives and requirements Nine steps to creating an effective public relations plan Steps 1-3, Formative Research
Thursday, May 16	Step 4, Strategy, SMART objectives; Step 5, Action and response strategies
Monday, May 20	QUIZ: Made To Stick, Step 6, Creating a message strategy
Wednesday, May 22	Step 7, Choosing and executing tactics
Thursday, May 23	Applying Theory to Strategy
Friday, May 24	FIELD TRIP
Wednesday, May 29	Step 8, Implementing the Strategy: Budgets and Timelines Step 9, Evaluating Your Strategy
Distributed May 30	Quiz: Here Comes Everybody, Chapters 1-5 Quiz due
June 7-8	Take home final exam
June 15	Final paper due