

PUR 3801: PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY
Section 6286 – Course Syllabus – Spring 2016
M – Periods 3-4 (9:35 – 11:30 a.m.)
W – Period 3 (9:35 – 10:25 a.m.)
Weimer 3200 (AHA Lab)

Instructor

Leticia Solaun
Department of Public Relations, College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida
Weimer GO38
lsolaun@ufl.edu
Office Hours in Weimer 3200 before and after class
M – Period 2 (8:30–9:20 a.m.)
W – Period 4 (10:40-11:30 a.m.)
Or by Appointment

Course Description

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 and that will be critical to you as a public relations practitioner. This course is centered on you and your learning needs, with ample time and opportunity for hands-on learning.

This course is designed to educate students in the strategic management of public relations through a systematic problem-solving process based on theory and research. Through readings, lectures, exercises, handouts, and discussions, students will study in-depth the essential steps of the process: research, objectives, programming, evaluation, and stewardship. Several guest speakers will join the class to demonstrate how scholarly principles are related to the professional practice of public relations. Using case studies, students will analyze and evaluate actual public relations campaigns related to the various sub-functions of public relations, such as media relations and employee relations.

Student Learning Objectives

As a result of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of public relations and the process through which it is practiced strategically
- Apply the problem-solving process of ROPES to diverse organizations and situations
- Identify and discuss concepts and theories relevant to effective public relations practice
- Think critically, creatively, and independently about public relations problems

- Write and formulate fundamental components of a public relations campaign plan, including objectives and budget
- Define publics appropriate for specific campaigns and appreciate differences that affect programming
- Recognize the importance of formative and evaluative research in public relations practice
- Demonstrate proficiency in written and oral communication

The course specifically supports 7 of the 12 professional values and competencies required of graduates by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC):

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to public relations
2. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
3. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles, and work ethically
4. Think critically, creatively and independently
5. Conduct research and evaluate information by appropriate methods
6. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the public relations profession
7. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts

Required Texts

There is one required text for this course.

Smith, R. (2009). *Strategic planning for public relations*. New York, NY: Routledge

Chapters from the text are assigned in the Weekly Course Plan section of this syllabus. Additional assigned readings related to student presentations on current events may be issued throughout the semester. They will be handed out in class, available online, or e-mailed to you. All readings must be **read in advance** of the class dates for which they are assigned. Students also are expected to monitor trade publications and the mass media for local, national, and international news related to public relations, which will be used in class discussions.

Assignments, Exams, and Grade Distribution

The course grade will be determined on a 100-point scale as follows:

PRSSA Speaker Event	5%
Attendance and Class Participation	10%
Individual Case Analysis	15%
Team Campaign Analysis	20%
Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	30%

PRSSA Speaker Event (5%)

Students will attend one PRSSA Speaker Event (or Skills Seminar) during the semester and submit a one-page, double-spaced, typed summary of the featured speaker's presentation, which will account for 5% of the course grade. UF's Alpha Chapter of PRSSA sponsors a total of approximately five speaker events and skill seminars on Wednesday evenings (see "Events" at <http://ufprssa.org/>). To verify attendance, students will submit a second sheet containing the student's name, date of the meeting, and the signature of one Alpha Chapter officer stapled to the summary. Any substitute meetings must be approved in advance by the instructor.

Attendance and Class Participation (10%)

Attendance and class participation counts toward 10 percent of the student's final grade. Students are expected to arrive to class on time. Class participation is determined by such efforts as discussion of assigned readings, performance in ungraded in-class exercises, and participation in raising timely and relevant issues to the attention of the class.

Arriving five minutes after the start of class or leaving early will result in the lowering of the student's grade. There are three excused absences for this class. Beyond the first three, each unexcused absence will result in a loss of one percentage grade for each unexcused absence from the total attendance/participation grade. However, perfect attendance does not ensure that the student will receive the full 10 percent for class participation. Students must be fully present during class, contribute to discussions and demonstrate through their comments that they have read and understood assigned readings and benefited from previous class discussions. It is the student's responsibility to sign in. If the student's signature is not on the sheet for that day, the student will be marked absent.

Individual Case Analysis (15%)

Students will produce an Individual Case Analysis of a public relations case study. The written analysis will be four to five pages in length, double-spaced and typed. It will account for 15% of the course grade. Details of this first major assignment are given in the handout, "Individual Case Analysis Packet" which will include examples of possible case study topics will be distributed during the third week of class. **Please cite all sources meticulously using in-text citations and a compiled list of sources at the end of your written work.**

Team Case Analysis (20%)

A Team Campaign Analysis accounts for 20% of the course grade. Students will be assigned to small teams for their presentation; the number and size of teams will be determined once the final class size is known after the drop/add period. Each team will analyze a public relations campaign conducted by an organization. The team will produce a written report of approximately 25 pages and a 25-minute oral presentation, which includes an executive summary to be distributed to the class during the day of the presentation. The grade received for a team's analysis is not necessarily the grade individual team members will earn. Utilizing confidential forms, team members will evaluate each other's contributions. Peer evaluations will weigh heavily in determining individual grades for the project. As in real life, team members will be dependent on each other to complete the project successfully. A detailed assignment packet, which includes the "Team Evaluation Form," will be distributed during the eighth week of class. **Please cite all**

sources meticulously using in-text citations and a compiled list of sources at the end of your written work.

Exams (50%)

Two Exams will account for a total of 50% of the course grade. Exam #1 will be given on February 17, 2016 and Exam #2 will be given on April 18, 2016. The exams will cover all course readings (textbook), handouts, class discussion, guest speakers, and student presentations. Exam grades will be posted on eLearning.

Make-up exams must be approved and scheduled in advance and are only available for students who provide documented and acceptable excuses. Failure to provide a documented excuse prior to the exam date will result in a grade of zero on the exam.

Grades

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

Grade	Percent
A	91-100
A-	89-90
B+	88
B	82-87
B-	80-81
C+	78-79
C	72-77
C-	70-71
D	60-69
E	59 or less

Each assignment will be graded on a 100-point scale and weighted accordingly. Letter grades are based on the total points accumulated over the term. Students who earn a “C” or better will fulfill the PUR 3801 requirement for graduating with a degree in public relations and will not be required to retake the course.

Appointments

Please stop by during my office hours to discuss assignments, materials or other concerns related to the course. Students may also schedule a meeting with me via email. My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus. I have an open door policy to meet with my students!

Speakers

During the semester, the class will have the opportunity to discuss aspects of the public relations strategic planning process with senior public relations practitioners. The purpose of inviting speakers to participate in class is to provide hands-on perspectives on realities, challenges, and opportunities when the process is placed in practice. Students are encouraged to consider speakers and develop discussion questions and topics. One of the students providing topics or questions will be asked to follow up with a thank you email to the speaker.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Each student is allowed three excused absences for the semester. Absences beyond three will result in a reduction of the course grade by one percentage grade for each unexcused absence from your total attendance/participation grade. Students are responsible for all class work missed. They should consult with classmates, rather than the instructor, to obtain information on lectures, assignments, and other matters

Makeups, Late Assignments, and Extra Credit

The practice of public relations hinges on meeting deadlines. Missing deadlines not only can damage a public relations professional's credibility, but also can lead to termination of a relationship with a client or to dismissal. Thus, deadlines are treated seriously in this class. All written assignments are due by the date of the deadline, unless otherwise instructed. A student may not submit a late assignment and will receive a grade of zero for that assignment. There will be no make-up exams or extensions of deadlines. Dates have been announced in advance in the Weekly Course Plan so that students can schedule other activities around these deadlines. Exceptions will be rare and made only in cases of extraordinary, documented circumstances, as determined by the instructor. No extra credit will be given for additional work.

Academic Honesty

The University of Florida is committed to the highest standards of academic and professional ethics and expects its students to adhere to those standards. Each student is bound by the academic honesty guidelines of the University and the student conduct code. The penalty for violation of academic honesty is an "E" for the course, at minimum.

Students are expected to observe the University of Florida's policy on academic honesty in fulfilling all course requirements. 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. Having someone else do your work or sign your name/initials on the attendance sheet is considered academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes the following: use of materials from another author without citation or attribution, extensive use of verbatim materials from another author with citation and attribution, and extensive use of one's own writing from past assignments or from assignments in other, current classes (called "double dipping"). 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.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." On all work submitted for credit, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

Furthermore, students are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. For more information about the student honor code, violations, and sanctions, go to the Dean of Students Office website at

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Intellectual Property Protection

Lectures given in this course, including handouts and PowerPoint® presentations, are the property of the instructor and the University of Florida. Class lectures may not be recorded in any form without prior permission from the instructor and any guest lecturers that may speak to this class. Recordings, including class notes, may not be used for commercial purposes.

Diversity

All discussions will be ruled by mutual respect—for people and their opinions. Effective public relations practice relies on the ability to recognize and embrace diversity in all its forms, including viewpoints. Furthermore, professionalism requires an appreciation for the multicultural society and global economy in which students plan to work. Throughout the course, students will have opportunities to see how different life experiences and cultural perspectives influence public relations practice. You are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities in your own work and to learn from the information and ideas shared by other students.

Course Professionalism

This College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school and professional decorum is expected at all times. I expect you to adhere to workplace norms of collegial and respectful interaction. That specifically means 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 for anything other than note taking.

Classroom Conduct

- Cell phones must be turned off during class.
- Photos and other recordings are prohibited unless approved in advance by the instructor.
- Students may only leave the classroom during official breaks (notify the instructor of emergencies).
- Reading unrelated material or talking while others are speaking is prohibited.
- Anyone violating these rules or disrupting class in other ways will be asked to leave the classroom.
- Students are urged to meet in-person with the instructor or teaching assistant if they have questions or are having problems. Office hours for both are listed on p. 1 of the syllabus. Conversations immediately following class are welcomed.

Format for Written Assignments

All written work submitted for this course must be coherent, logical, and carefully edited. Writing proficiency is necessary to pass this course. Misspellings, syntax and grammar errors as well as other writing problems are unacceptable in upper-division college writing, especially in work by public relations students. Please do not submit materials with editing marks on them; all assignments must be “client-ready.”

Unless otherwise specified, all written assignments must be typed with a 12-point serif font (e.g., Times, Palatino, or Times New Roman), in APA style, double-spaced, and framed by one-inch margins. No additional consideration will be given to written work accompanied by artwork or

any other kind of design element. However, a well-designed piece for your portfolio will be an advantage as a tool to assist in an internship or job search.

Additional Final Notes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary to the grading system and schedule for this course.

Computers are great tools, and we'll obviously be using them in this course. But they can also be distracting! **Laptop computers and iPads are welcome in class only for taking notes.** Because your classmates and the professor and guest lecturers will need your full attention during our brief class time together, you may not eat, chat, email, text message, tweet, surf, check Facebook, etc. during class time. If you simply must engage in these activities, please excuse yourself from class or you'll be asked to leave.

Students are not permitted to bring guests to class unless special arrangements have been made with the professor prior to class. You are expected to maintain comprehensive class notes because class lectures and discussions often contain information that is not contained in the readings or PowerPoint slides.

Online Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online and typically are conducted during the last two weeks of the semester. Time has been allocated in the Weekly Course Plan for students to complete their evaluations. Summary results of assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office, which will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide the documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Requests should be made at a private meeting during the instructor's office hours.

Useful University of Florida Services

Disability Resource Center: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Reading and Writing Center: <http://www.at.ufl.edu/rwcenter/>

Counseling Center: <http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/>

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Weekly Course Plan

Week #1

Jan. 6 **Topics:** Syllabus Review and Introduction to the Course. The Public Relations Manager of the 21st Century.

Week #2

Jan. 11 & 13 **Topics:** Quiz on class syllabus. Modern History of Public Relations. Comparison of Process Models. Introduction to Systems Theory. ROPES Model of the Public Relations Process.

Readings: - Smith (2013), Introduction (pp. 1-18).
 - Kelly (2001), “Stewardship: The Fifth Step in the Public Relations Process” (e-mailed to students).

Assign: **Know ROPES Process Model (Kelly, 2001, 2011)**

Week #3

Jan. 20 **Topics:** Individual Case Analysis. Writing Rules. Phase 1: Formative Research: Analyzing the Organization.

Readings: - Handout: “Individual Case Analysis” Packet
 - Smith’s (online) “Part 3: Modern History of Public Relations,” at <http://faculty.buffalostate.edu/smithrd/PR/history3.htm>;
 - Smith (2013), Phase One – Formative Research (pp. 19-20); Step 2 (pp. 41-56).

Assign: **Research speaker organization; develop questions**

Week #4

Jan. 25 & 27 **Topics:** Individual Case Analysis Q&A. Phase 1: Formative Research: Analyzing the Situation and Publics. Phase 2: Strategy: Formulating Goals and Objectives.

Readings: - Smith (2013), Step 1 (pp. 21-40); Step 3 (pp. 57-92); Phase Two - - Strategy (pp. 93-94); Step 4 (pp. 95-122).

Class Exercise: Identifying Research and Formulating Objectives.

Guest Speaker: Silvia Raccagni, Senior Sustainability Communicator, adidas Group, Germany (by Skype)

Week #5

Feb. 1 & 3 **Topics:** Research Methods, Goals, and Objectives: Review. Individual Case Analysis Q&A. Phase 2: Strategy: Formulating Action and Response Strategies.

Readings: Smith (2013), Step 5 (pp. 113-171).

Class Exercise: Analyzing Cases of Actions and Responses

Weekly Course Plan Cont.

Week #6

Feb. 8 & 10

- Topics:** Individual Case Analysis Q&A. Strategy: Developing the Message Strategy. Theories. Tactics - Traditional.
- Readings:** Smith (2013), Step 6 (pp. 172-224); Phase Three – Tactics (pp. 225-226); Step 7 (pp. 227-263).
- Assign:** **Know Grunig’s Four Models of Public Relations & Kelly’s Hierarchy of Tactics/Techniques.**
- Due:** **Individual Case Analysis at 12 Noon, Friday, Feb 12**

Week #7

Feb. 15 & 17

- Topics:** Individual Case Analysis Results. Review for Exam #1.
EXAMINATION #1 (Feb. 17)

Week #8

Feb. 22 & 24

- Topics:** Team Campaign Analysis and Q&A. Organization of Teams. Sub-Functions of Public Relations. Exam #1 Results. Tactics cont. Digital.
- Readings:**
-Handout: “Team Campaign Analysis” Packet
-Smith (2013), Step 7 (pp. 264-303)
-Smith (2013), Step 8 (pp. 304-328).
- Class Exercise:** Devising and Selecting Appropriate Strategies & Tactics. Formatting Expense Budgets.

Week #9

Feb. 29 – Mar. 4

SPRING BREAK – No classes

Week #10

Mar. 7 & 9

- Topics:** Implementing the Strategic Plan. Planning Tools. Budgeting. Evaluative Research: Evaluating the Strategic Plan.
- Readings:** -Smith (2013), Phase Four – Evaluative Research (pp. 329-330)
- Class Exercise:** Scheduling and Budgeting

Week #11

Mar. 14 & 16

- Topics:** Team Campaign Analysis Q&A. Stewardship Step.
- Readings:**
-Review Kelly (2001)
-Smith (2013) Step 9 (331-358).
- Exercise:** Devising Stewardship Plans and Applying Stewardship Step as a Check on Plans.
- Guest Speaker:** Madeline Almodovar, Stakeholder Engagement Lead, U.S. Navy Vieques Restoration Project

Week #12

Mar. 21 & 23 **Topics:** Client Expectations of Practitioners; Reporting on Strategic Plans; Practitioner's Role in Implementation; Case Studies
Readings: Independent Research (To be discussed)
Class Exercise: Situation Response and Strategy Impacts

Week #13

Mar. 28 & 30

Topics: Team Presentations and Team Working Sessions
Due: **Team Presentations and Executive Summaries (Presentations in Class)**
Assign: Team Evaluations Due

Week #14

Apr. 4 & 6

Topics: Deconstructing the Team Campaign Analysis Process – What Worked for the Teams and Lessons Learned; Leadership and Initiative for Young Professionals.
Due: **Team Campaign Analysis Written Report due by 12 Noon, Friday, Apr. 8**
Class Exercise: Giving and Receiving Feedback.

Week #15

Apr. 11 & 13

Topics: Career Tracks and Opportunities for Public Relations Practitioners; Course Evaluation. Review for Exam #2.
Guest Speakers: Panel of speakers representing international development communication, political communication, financial communication, public interest, and environmental communication.

Week #16

Apr. 18 & 20

Topics: **EXAMINATION #2 (Apr 18).** Exam #2 Results. Wrap-Up.