



PUR 3500
Public Relations Research (Section 01HA)
Summer A 2016

Department of Public Relations
College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida

Class Meeting: M 2-3rd (9:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.)
W 2-4th (9:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m.)
Weimer Hall 1078

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Office Hours: W 5-6th (2:00-4:45) or by appointment

Course Descriptions

Welcome to Public Relations Research! This course is designed to introduce public relations students to social science research methods, with a focus on the application of those methods to public relations. This course is intended to help students understand why research is essential in identifying problems and issues of concerns, guiding strategic planning, message development, and evaluating public relations campaigns. The course focuses on different types of research-qualitative, quantitative research, and online research.

The objectives of this course guide you:

- To understand the role of research in public relations management.
- To introduce basic concepts and methods in public relations research
- To analyze issues related to measurement in public relations research and make appropriate measurement choices.
- To understand the assumptions of various research methods in public relations.
- To learn how to apply research methods to specific situations in public relations campaign management.
- To learn how to write persuasive research reports and deliver the results successfully in a professional oral presentation.

Course Format & Expectation

For effective understanding of the role of research in public relations management, each course period will incorporate some in-class activities (e.g., case study and Internet/Web research). In-class activities and assignments will be sometimes given in order to facilitate the learning process. It is in students' long-term interest to complete thoroughly, because the material is cumulative.

Throughout the courses, students are expected to attend each class and arrive on time and be committed to learning/studying during the class time. Laptops or smartphones are allowed to participate in the in-class activities, but are NOT to be allowed for texting, checking emails/social media or surfing the Web. **Attitude is fundamental and crucial thing wherever you go and whatever you do**, and I can't emphasize I believe become an Every student is expected to read the assigned materials before coming to class and actively participate in class discussion and activities. There are no wrong questions, and you always learn and remember better when you ask.

Required Reading

- Stacks, D.W. (2011). *Primer of Public Relations Research*, (2nd Ed.). New York: Guilford.
- Lecture notes and class materials will be available on Canvas.

Course Grading

Your evaluation in this course will be based on the following components:

Team research report and presentations (2)	230 points	46%
Exams (2)	200 points	40%
Attendance and in-class assignments	70 points	14%
Total	500 points	100%

Final letter grades will be assigned based on your final point total at the end of the semester.

Letter Grade	100 Scale (100%)	500 Scale (total points for this class)
A	94-100%	470-500 points
A-	90-93.9%	450-469 points
B+	87-89.9%	435-449 points
B	84-86.9%	420-434 points
B-	80-83.9%	400-419 points
C+	77-79.9%	385-399 points
C	74-76.9%	370-384 points
C-	70-73.9%	350-369 points
D+	66-69.9%	330-349 points
D	64-66.9%	320-329 points
D-	60-63.9%	300-319 points
E	66-69.9%	Below 0-299 points

To be fair to all students, **all numbers are absolute and will not be rounded up at any stage** (e.g., a B+ will be inclusive of all scores of 435 through 449.999). My hope is that you will focus on learning rather than grades in this class. **What I won't do is negotiate grades.** My goal is to be fair to everyone in the class, which means I will hold everyone to the same standards.

Grading Criteria

1. Team Research Report and Presentations (46%)

- Research Report and Presentations (20% × 2 = 40%):

Because public relations professionals work in teams, you will be placed in “research teams” throughout the semester to develop a public relations research report (details will be given in class). Each team will submit **TWO (2) research projects** during the semester. Each team will apply various types of research methodologies and techniques—such as (1) secondary (Internet) research and (2) focus group—to the development of a strategic public relations research plan.

You are on agency research team (of approx. 4-5 team members depending on enrollment). The grade is a team grade, meaning that each team member receives the same grade. For each research project, the grade is divided between the team research report grade (80 points) and the team presentation grade (20 points) (100 points × 2 = total 200 points).

Project due and presentation dates:

- **Secondary Research (Internet Research) Project: May 23rd (Monday)**
- **Focus Group: June 15th (Wednesday)**

Each group should provide a report based on the findings and make a 10-minute presentation regarding the research findings, with an additional 5 minutes for questions from the class. The question and answer sessions at the end of each presentation are a very important part of this course. Be prepared for questions. Have responses planned – maybe even supplementary slides.

All research reports and presentation slides should be submitted to Canvas under “Assignment” by the beginning of class on the due date. The research report and presentation grade rubric will be available on Canvas.

I will ask individuals to give audience feedback via forms/surveys that I will provide to the class. This feedback will then be given to each team in order to help them self-assess their performance.

- Peer Evaluation (3% × 2 = 6%):

Peer evaluation will be conducted to assess each group member's contributions to the project. While your team research report and presentation grades are the same for all team members, your peer evaluation grade (30 points in total) differs. Your peer evaluation grade is subject to adjustments according to your average peer evaluation.

If your team does not think you have put forth the same amount of effort and the same quality of work as they have throughout the length of the project, your peer evaluation will negatively influence your final grade. **If you have any problems with your group or a particular group member, you need to address and resolve it immediately.**

*All reports, presentation ppt files, and peer evaluations should be uploaded before the class of the presentation date (**Before 9:30 a.m. of May 23rd and June 15th**). Not turning one in on the due date is a **5 point deduction** for any document.

2. Exams (20% × 2 = 40%)

Exam is designed to test your knowledge and application of the main ideas covered in the textbook, assigned readings, lecture material, class discussions, team presentations, videos, and guest lectures. **You are responsible for everything covered** in the previously stated areas.

Throughout the semester there will be **TWO exams**, which will be held in class during the regularly scheduled class period. The exams will be primarily made up of multiple-choice questions, true/false, and short answer questions.

NO early exam or make-up opportunities will be offered unless there are extremely exceptional cases officially approved by the university.

Exam Dates:

- **Exam 1: May 25th (Wednesday)**
- **Exam 2: June 15th (Wednesday)**

3. Attendance and In-class Assignments (14%)

There is a high correlation between regular class attendance and the best grade. Only excused absence will be allowed, and unexcused absence will result in a loss of points per absence and may affect the student's grade. Students are responsible for any information missed during an absence. **Coming after 9:45 a.m. (More than 15 mins late for a class) will lead to 2 point deduction for each time.**

In order to receive an excused absence, you must let me know you will miss class **BEFORE** the class meets except in certain (rare) emergency situations. Explain why you will not be in class, and bring in a written documentation to verify your excuse when you come back to class. Make sure to make a photocopy of the documentation if you need it for other classes.

Excused absences include:

- Religious holidays (only the holiday).
- Documented, dated, necessary medical excuse or official documented legal excuse (a dated doctor's note or prescription). The Student Health Center will provide you a specific kind of note that indicates they think you should've missed class or will need to miss additional days.
- University competitive events (that means athletes).

The following is a partial list of the types of situations that are **NOT** considered excused absences:

- Social events, meetings, entertaining out-of-town guests, holiday/travel plans, weddings, etc.

Several in-class assignments will be provided to encourage you to learn how to apply concepts learned in class and research methods into public relations practice. These assignments will consist of questions based on the lecture and/or reading assigned for the class.

All assignments are to be typed. Team and individual assignments and are **due by the beginning of class on the due date**. If you have a conflict with the deadline, alert me and turn it in early.

Late work policy:

Public relation is a deadline business. All due dates for assignments, once set, are final. If an assignment or activity is not received prior to the deadline, **a 2 point will be deducted** unless PRIOR arrangements are approved by me. If prior arrangements are not possible due to the circumstances of the absence, an excused absence must be requested in writing and documentation provided for verification. If an excused absence is granted, late work may be accepted with penalties assessed for late submission.

Academic Honesty

Students must regard academic honesty as crucial and essential part of your academic life. The instructor treats the academic honesty as a serious issue. All your works for this course should be created on your own, and you are required to follow appropriate citation methods and guidelines. False information (fabrication) also leads to fail of this course. Please find appropriate information and guideline such as Purdue Owl

(<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>) to avoid plagiarism. Your academic dishonesty will be reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, which might ask you additional penalties. Plagiarism will result in an automatic zero point and The University's guidelines regarding academic honesty can be found at:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Religious Holy Days

By UF policy, a student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day must notify me of his or her pending absence prior to the date of a religious holy day, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment or activity within a reasonable time after the absence.

Course and Instructor Evaluation

It is important to participate in the evaluation of every class in order to improve class by providing your feedback on the quality of instruction. Regarding the course evaluation, you will receive an email reminder or you will be able to assess evaluation system to complete it at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Your feedback will be appreciated and helpful to advance this course further. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at:

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>

Students with Challenges

Students who requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office, Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students will

provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must meet take action immediately to ensure requested accommodations can be provided.

Counseling Services

University counseling services and mental health services are available at <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>; 392-1575, University Police Department 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This course outline is tentative and subject to change

Week 1:

5/9 (M): Welcome & Course Overview, Understanding Research
5/11 (W): Public Relations Research, Measuring Outcomes, **Project 1 Guide** Chap. 1,2,3

Week 2:

5/16 (M): Secondary Research, Qualitative Research,
5/18 (W): Qualitative Research (cont), Sampling, Writing a Research Report Chap. 7,8,9

Week 3:

5/23 (M): **Secondary Research Presentation**, Content Analysis, Review for
Exam 1 (****Secondary Research Report & PPT & Peer Evaluations Due***) Chap. 6,10,12
5/25 (W): **Exam 1**, Experimental Research, **Project 2 Guide**

Week 4:

5/30 (M): Memorial Day (no class)
6/1 (W): Experiment & Survey Research, Questionnaire Design & Qualtrics Chap.11,12

Week 5:

6/6 (M): Descriptive Statistics, Statistical Reasoning & Data Analysis (SPSS)
6/8 (W): Statistical Reasoning & Data Analysis, Review for Exam 2 Chap. 4,13,15

Week 6:

6/13 (M): Team Project-Research Day
6/15 (W): **Exam 2, Focus Group Presentation, Course Evaluation**
(*Focus Group Report & PPT & Peer Evaluations Due)