

# **SYLLABUS: PR 3500 Public Relations Research**

## **Course Goal**

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The goal of this course is to present an overview of the role that research plays in the field of public relations. This includes an introduction to the various measurement tools and methodologies for gathering and analyzing data, as well as some practical applications. Increased awareness of ethical issues involved in research is also a primary goal.

**Instructor information and virtual office hours:** Judith Donohue **352-603-3941 (cell)**

You can call me any day, 7 days a week, between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. **Please** do not call after 8 p.m. If I am not available when you call, leave your name and phone number and I will return your call within a few hours if possible.

## **My Teaching Philosophy**

As a communication professional who has spent several decades working in journalism and public relations, I understand the importance of being able to articulate ideas and information clearly and accurately. Thus, teaching students to write succinctly is a top priority. It matters little how much one knows if one cannot communicate it well. I encourage "plain talk," free of inflated language, clichés, buzzwords and corporate-speak. I believe I have an obligation to apply the highest standards of writing excellence in my classes. To that end, I spend a significant amount of time correcting and commenting on written assignments. Discussion postings should adhere to the same high writing standards.

I focus on engaging students through interesting, informative lectures and stimulating discussions. I encourage students to read the work of professionals in the field and to build on that knowledge, continually looking for ways to extend learning. Students are also encouraged to share their ideas and learn from their peers, exploring and applying new ideas and methods.

I am committed to being both approachable and available, ready to offer guidance and encouragement as needed.

Communication ethics are woven throughout these lessons. I believe it is my job to create an awareness of the ethical issues inherent in every aspect of communication.

I believe that learning should be a pleasant experience, both for the teacher and the student. My ultimate goal is to create an environment where students are inspired to be excellent business communicators, guided by sound ethical principles.

**Description:** This 14-week course provides an overview of Public Relations

research. The course material is presented in readings, videos and lectures. Student mastery of the material is measured through discussions, written assignments, quizzes and a final research project.

*(Note: There are only 13 modules, since Week 10, March 5-11, is spring break.)*

**The goal is to develop an understanding of the role research plays in the planning, program development, and evaluation process in the field of PR.** We will study techniques and applications of various formal and informal research methods. Among the specific topics to be covered are sampling, scales, computer data analysis, quantitative and qualitative research, content analysis, case studies, surveys and focus groups. Assignments will include both theoretical and hands-on applications. By the end of this course, students will be able to create a research study in the field of public relations, using the tools learned throughout the semester.

1. **Course Textbook: Primer of Public Relations Research by Don Stack, third edition.** (ISBN 978-146-2522-705) **(Note that the chapters are not assigned in consecutive order.)**
2. **Two Harvard Business School case studies** Follow this link and go to the Harvard Business School site, then register to get the reduced student rate of \$4.25 per article. The readings, which are used in weeks 9 and 12, will be located in a UF CoursePak on the Harvard Business School site. **<http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/56520494>**

You will also be exploring professional journals and academic publications in the field which are available online through the UF Library.

<http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/>

**Technology requirements:** A reliable computer and internet access

**Course Goals:** Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Compare various types of research methodologies and tools, stating the benefits and shortcomings of each
- Apply various research methodologies and tools used to actual situations
- Analyze the results of research and develop programs based on the findings
- Design and execute a research project using the methods learned in the class.

**Assignments will be weighted as follows:**

- Participation in **7 online discussions**, with “substantive” posts (not just “I agree.”) - 20 percent (*Note: Students will receive a single discussion grade at the end of the course. This grade will be the average of grades from all 7 discussions, based on the rubric.*)
- **7 written assignments** – 45 percent (5@ percent and 2@10 percent)
- **5 quizzes** - Total 10 percent (2 percent each) (**Quiz scores available as soon as the quiz closes Saturday night at 11 p.m.**)
- **Final research project** (15-20 pages) - 25 percent

**NOTE:** Points will be deducted for basic spelling and grammatical errors. Since you are earning a degree in COMMUNICATION, the highest standards of writing excellence are expected. I am passionately committed to **plain speaking**. Avoid clichés and buzz words. I also deduct one point for every vague, meaningless word, such as “very,” “rather,” and “quite.” ( I usually give one free pass in this category.)

**Grading is based on 100 points. Here is the grading scale:**

The final grade will be awarded as follows:

A	100%	to	92.5%
A-	< 92%	to	89.5%
B+	< 89%	to	86.5%
B	< 86 %	to	82.5%
B-	< 82%	to	79.5%
C+	< 79%	to	76.5%
C	< 76%	to	72.5%
C-	< 72%	to	69.5%
D+	< 69%	to	66.5%
D	< 66%	to	62.5%
D-	< 62 %	to	59.5%
F	<59 %	to	0%

**Honesty and Integrity:** The highest standards of ethical behavior and integrity are expected in this class. Students are expected to comply with the letter and the spirit of the UF Honor Code which reads as follows:

**Student Honor Code** Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. The quality of a University of Florida education

is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

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

**Academic Honesty Guidelines** All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines which have been accepted by the University. The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect.

Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines

will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XIV of the Student Conduct Code. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1-4.017).

For more information about academic honesty, contact the Dean of Students Office. You can review UF's academic honesty guidelines in detail at: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php> (University of Florida Honor Code, 2008)

You are assumed to be the sole author of all work presented. Submitting work written by another or stolen from another (i.e. plagiarized) is not only unethical, it is foolish, embarrassing and may result in course failure. When quoting the work of others, be sure to credit the author properly. **I will be using software to detect plagiarism.**

### Mental Health or Emergency Resources

You can reach the University Counseling Service at 352-392-1575 or go to this link. <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

(For emergencies, call 9-1-1)

### **NETIQUETTE GUIDE FOR ONLINE COURSES**

It is important to recognize that the online classroom is in fact a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected when you communicate with both your peers and your instructors. These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as netiquette.

## Security

- Don't share your password with anyone.
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it.

## General Guidelines

When communicating online, you should always:

- Treat the instructor with respect, even in email or in any other online communication.
- Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if you in doubt use Mr. or Ms.
- Unless specifically invited, don't refer to them by first name.
- Use clear and concise language.
- **Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar.**
- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you."
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or ☐
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post.
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and others).
- Do not send confidential information via email.

When you send an email to your instructor, teaching assistant, or classmates, you should:

- Use a descriptive subject line.
- Be brief.
- Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them.
- Avoid HTML in favor of plain text.
- Think before you send the e-mail to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
- Be sure you REALLY want everyone to receive your response when you click, "reply all."
- Be sure that the message author intended for the information to be passed along before you click the "forward" button.

## Message Board Netiquette and Guidelines

When posting on the Discussion Board in your online class, you should:

- Make posts that are on topic and within the scope of the course material.
- Take your posts seriously and review and edit your posts before sending.

- Always give proper credit when referencing or quoting another source.
- Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying.
- Don't repeat someone else's post without adding something of your own to it.
- Avoid short, generic replies such as, "I agree." You should include why you agree or add to the previous point
- Always be respectful of others' opinions even when they differ from your own.
- When you disagree with someone, you should express your differing opinion in a respectful, non-critical way.
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks.
- Be open-minded.

### **When you need technical HELP!**

Please note that there are several good places to go for help. There are tutorials posted on the e-learning Support Services site, [https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help/Student\\_Faq](https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help/Student_Faq). You can also call the UF Computing **Help Desk** at 352-392-4357 or visit <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>. Often you can get help from your classmates on the course discussion board. **I will not be your source for technical help.**

All email should go through the Canvas tool. No private emails will be exchanged. I will respond to your email within 48 hours, and probably within 24 hours.

In the unlikely event of a UF system-wide technology failure, any quizzes or other deadlines will be postponed until the system is up and running again. Otherwise, internet problems and computer problems on your end will not be considered as an excuse for missing deadlines.

Other policies: Online tests will be timed and once a test is posted, you may not go back and make changes. You will get test scores immediately.

Unless otherwise indicated, **deadlines for papers and discussion postings will be Saturdays at 11 p.m. Late work is not accepted and no extra credit work is offered.** If you are expecting a problem, please let me know in advance so that we can make special arrangements.

**Free advice:** Log into the course often and stay on top of the assignments and discussions.

**Issues with uploading work for a grade is not an excuse.** If a student is having technical difficulties with Canvas, there are other means to submit completed work. Student may email .zip files or even links to Dropbox folders to Instructor via UF email. Students should compensate for technical difficulties by not waiting until the last minute to submit work.

**Suggested technical issue policy:** Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up. Contact UF helpdesk

(352) 392-HELP.

**Emergency and extenuating circumstances policy:** Students who face emergencies, such as a major personal medical issue, a death in the family, serious illness of a family member, or other situations beyond their control should notify their instructors immediately.

Students are also advised to contact the Dean of Students Office if they would like more information on the medical withdrawal or drop process: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/care/medical-withdrawal-process/>.

**Students MUST inform their academic advisor before dropping a course**, whether for medical or non-medical reasons. Your advisor will assist with notifying professors and go over options for how to proceed with their classes.

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**See the weekly modules below.**

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**Prior to module 1, watch the introductory lecture explaining the logistics of the course.**

## **MODULE 1 What Is Research and Why Bother?**

### **Introduction**

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In this first module, we will define what research is and how it plays a role in our everyday lives in general and in the field of Public Relations specifically.

*There will be a quiz on the material in Modules 1 and 2 at the end of Module 2.*

### **Objectives**

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By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 1.1 Describe the value of research in the field of public relations.
- 1.2 Contrast the difference between theoretical and applied research.
- 1.3 Explain the concepts of RACE and ROPE.

### **Readings & Videos**

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**Read:**

Chapter 1 in textbook: Understanding Research

**Watch:**

Donohue **lecture**: *What is research and why is it important?*



## **Discussions**

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Discussions are an important part of this course. You are expected to read all the comments of your classmates and to **respond** to at least **two** with substantive posts.

*(Reminder: There will be a single discussion grade at the end of the semester, averaging your grades for all discussion posts.)*

### **Discussion Rubric:**

#### **Discussion #1**

Please tell us a little about yourself. (e.g. where you are from; your short and long term goals; family life; your job, if you are working; special interests)

Post to the **discussion** link on the left of the page.

#### **Written Assignment #1**

Your client wants to launch a new program in the health care community, but does not want to spend the time or money for research. He feels he knows his industry and can trust his experience and his instincts. In one or two paragraphs, what reasons would you give the client to justify investing in research? (300-500 words) (100 points)

Post to the **assignment** link on the left of the page. (100 points)

#### **Assignment Rubric:**

## **Looking Ahead: Final Project (25 percent of grade)**

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### **Due by end of Module 13**

You will design and execute a public relations research project on a topic of your choice. Start thinking now of something you would like to research. It can be for an actual client/organization that you are connected to or a fictional one. (Actual clients are preferable.) Your paper should start with an **executive summary** or abstract which includes a brief statement of the problem, a statement about your results. This should be a **succinct** summary. (*You will be examining other research papers during the semester to see examples of executive summaries/abstracts.*)

You must use **two** methodologies--qualitative or quantitative research, including focus groups, surveys, content analysis, interviews, observation. Your paper should be between **16 and 20 pages long, double-spaced**, and should include these elements, each in a separate section: a brief **executive summary/abstract (with results)**; an **introduction with background** explaining the reason for the research, i.e. the problem; a **brief review of the literature** (a minimum of **four** previous related research studies from peer-reviewed scholarly journals ( not articles from magazines) on the topic you choose; **the methodology**, including an explanation of the sampling method you used; and a **data analysis, with results/conclusion**. If you used an instrument, such as a survey, you should include that instrument. If appropriate, you should also include a paragraph about the **strengths and weaknesses of the methodology** you chose and **suggest ideas for further research** on the same or a related topic.

You should use APA style for citations.

**CHAPTER 16, pages 327-332** has suggestions on how to write your research report. It would be helpful to read these few pages early in the semester and again during the last module. *Note: Along the way to the final project, there will be several assignments that will give you the skills and knowledge you need. You will learn about various measurement tools and methodologies; you will do a short literature review, conduct a focus group and create and administer a survey. If you choose your final topic early in the course, you may apply all these assignments to your final project.*

**Final project rubric:**

## Module 2 Managing the Research Process

### Introduction

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Often the PR professional's challenge is to identify the problem and then develop the strategies and tactics to fix it. This module looks at ways to develop the goals and objectives needed to tackle that challenge, guided by the principles of scientific research.

### Objectives

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By the end of this module students will be able to:

- 2.1 Distinguish between informational, motivational and behavioral objectives.
- 2.2 Differentiate between quantitative and qualitative research.
- 2.3 Summarize various types of "publics" addressed by PR research.

### Discussion #2

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Keeping in mind the definition of the scientific method in research, in what way do you think the term "research" is sometimes abused in public relations? Give specific examples.

### Readings and Videos

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#### Read:

- Chapter 2 in textbook
- <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/09/a-scientific-look-at-bad-science/399371/>

#### Watch:

- **Donohue lecture #2:** *PR Research and the Scientific Method*
- Ted Talk about "bad" research  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/ben\\_goldacre\\_battling\\_bad\\_science?language=](https://www.ted.com/talks/ben_goldacre_battling_bad_science?language=)

**Quiz #1:** Take Quiz 1 on material in Modules 1 and 2.

## Module 3 Measuring Outcomes

### Introduction

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More than ever before, public relations professionals are being required to demonstrate the impact of their efforts in concrete ways, demonstrating measurable results. This week we look at various scales and measurement tools used to accomplish this.

*There will be a quiz at the end of Module 4 covering material in Modules 3 and 4.*

### Objectives

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By the end of this module, students will be able to

- 3.1 Recognize the importance of measurement in the field of public relations.
- 3.2 Identify and describe three types of measurement scales.
- 3.3 Explain the concepts of reliability and validity.

### Readings and Videos

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#### **Read:**

- Chapter **4** in textbook- *Measuring Outcomes*
- **In preparation for your final project**, locate and scan research articles in at least two academic peer-reviewed communication journals, such as the *Institute for PR* or *PR Journal*. Notice the various sections: *abstract, background/reason for research, methodology, discussion, results, conclusion, suggestions for future research.*

#### **Watch:**

Donohue **lecture #3** *Looking at Scales*

#### **Written Assignment #2: Likert Scale**

Create a Likert scale to measure a topic of your choice. (You might want to relate it to your final project.) Provide a **brief** explanation of the scale and post to the **assignment** link. (300-500 words) (100 points)

## Module 4 Data Analysis and Statistics

### Introduction

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Statistics help us understand the data collected in research investigations so that we

can make inferences and draw conclusions about a population. This module will introduce some of the common mathematical methods that researchers use to collect, organize and analyze data.

*There will be a quiz at the end of Module 4 covering material in Modules 3 and 4.*

## **Objectives**

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By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

4.1 Explain the terms mean, median and mode.

4.2 Identify some of the more common terms used in analyzing and interpreting data, including descriptive analysis, data distribution, inferential statistics, parametric data, continuous data.

## **Readings & Videos**

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### **Read:**

Chapter **6** in textbook *Descriptive Statistical Reasoning and Computer Analysis*

### **Watch:**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADDR3\\_Ng5CA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADDR3_Ng5CA)

**Quiz #2:** Take quiz 2 on material in Modules 3 and 4.

## **Module 5 Ethics in Public Relations Research**

### **Introduction**

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Ethical concerns are paramount when planning, conducting and evaluating public relations research. Since most public relations research involves humans, we must be vigilant in protecting the rights of participants. In this module, we will explain ethical issues in detail, and examine the guidelines for dealing with those issues.

*There will be a quiz at the end of Module 6 covering material in Modules 5 and 6.*

### **Objectives**

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By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 5.1 Summarize the four basic ethical principles of research
- 5.2 Recognize ethical challenges when gathering data on the internet.
- 5.3 Demonstrate awareness of who owns results of research.

## **Readings & Videos**

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### **Read:**

- Chapter **7** in textbook *Ethical Concerns in Public Relations Research*
- [UF Institutional Review Boards \(Links to an external site.\)](#) This is required reading for all research students, **especially IRB-02.**

### **Watch:**

**Donohue lecture** *Ethical Issues in PR Research*

## **Discussion #3**

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What ethical challenges do you see with gathering research data on Facebook? Post your thoughts on the discussion link. Include some specific examples of challenges, using the textbook, the lecture and outside resources with proper citations.

## **Module 6 Content Analysis**

### **Introduction**

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Content analysis is the systematic analysis of existing materials. This approach is popular with public relations researchers because it allows qualitative research to be presented quantitatively. It is an efficient and cost-effective way to investigate how a company or client is perceived by its various audiences. We will explore the advantages and challenges of this approach, including its place in internet research.

### **Objectives**

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By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 6.1 Define content analysis and articulate how it can be used in public relations research.
- 6.2 State the advantages and limitations of content analysis as a research method.
- 6.3 Explain the steps in the coding process.

## **Readings & Videos**

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### **Read:**

- Chapter **8** in textbook
- Institute for PR white paper: *A New Model for Media Analysis*  
<http://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/MediaContentAnalysis.pdf>

*Disclaimer: Although this article is more than 10 years old, it contains an excellent analysis of current thought on content analysis. JHD*

## **Discussion #4**

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Explain the steps in the coding process. What are the challenges associated with gathering data by content analysis? Please give a specific example of possible pitfalls with this research method. Post your thoughts on the discussion link.

**Quiz #3:** Take quiz 3, covering material in Modules 5 and 6.

## **Module 7 Historical and Secondary Research**

### **Introduction**

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Most of us probably would start a research project by doing historical and secondary research to see what has already been said or done on the topic we are exploring. In this module, we learn how to gather information and reexamine it in the light of our current objectives, to gain additional insight.

*There will be a quiz at the end of module 9 covering material in Modules, 7, 8, and 9.*

### **Objectives**

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By the end of this module, students will be able to:

- 7.1 Define historical and secondary research.

7.2 Articulate ways to analyze documents to determine their validity for use in research.

## **Readings and videos**

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### **Read:**

- Chapter **9** in textbook
- *What is a literature review?* <http://guides.library.ucsc.edu/write-a-literature-review>

**Note:** If this were a graduate course, your final project would include a full literature review. This week's video gives you an idea what that would entail. For your final project, you will be doing a **modified literature review**, looking at just four scholarly works related to your final project.

### **Written Assignment #3:**

How do researchers analyze data collected from secondary research? Discuss the critical standards that should be met when assessing a document. Post to assignment link. (Min. 500 words) (100 points)

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## **Module 8 Case Studies**

### **Introduction**

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In this module, we will explore how to use case studies as tools to gather valuable data. Case studies can be invaluable in public relations research. They allow the researcher to “go deep” into a topic to learn about people, situations, events and processes. Case studies can provide rich detail on situations and problem-solving techniques used previously.

*There will be a quiz at the end of module 9 covering material in Modules, 7, 8, and 9.*

### **Objectives**

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By the end of this module, students will be able to

- 8.1 Demonstrate the value of case studies in public relations research.
- 8.2 Recognize three types of research questions that can be answered by case studies.
- 8.3 Analyze a case study to collect data and apply it to a new situation.



## Readings and videos

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### Read:

- Chapter **10** in textbook *Qualitative Research Methodology: Case Studies*
- *Aircraft Carriers Alliance* case study

<https://www.cipr.co.uk/sites/default/files/2%20Internal%20Communications%20Campaign.pdf>

## Discussion #5

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You are the internal communication manager for a large supermarket chain in Florida. You are planning a PR campaign for the opening of the chain's 1,000<sup>th</sup> store, making it the largest grocery store chain in the southeast. What strategies and tactics you read about in the Aircraft Carrier Alliance **case study** might you adapt/apply to the supermarket situation to build company pride and enthusiasm among the grocery chain's 150,000 employees? Post your thoughts to the discussion link.

## Module 9 Methods of Observation

### Introduction

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In this module we will discuss various ways that researchers conduct qualitative research in an attempt to observe people and gain an in-depth understanding of their behavior. Qualitative research typically goes deeper than quantitative research, investigating the *why* and *how* of decision making, not just the *what*, *where*, *when*. We will explore three types of qualitative research methods: **field observation, focus groups and interviews**.

### Objectives

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By the end of this module students should be able to:

- 9.1 Recognize how field observation, interviews and focus groups can be used to gather reliable data.
- 9.2 Differentiate between various types of questions used in interviews and focus

groups.

- 9.3 Lead a focus group and analyze the results.

## **Readings & Videos**

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### **Read:**

- Chapter **11** in textbook *Qualitative Research: Methods of Observing People*
- *Harvard Business Review* article: *Making Exit Interviews Count (buy in Harvard Coursepak for \$4.25)* <http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/56520494>

### **Watch:**

- **Donohue lecture** : *Observation as a PR tool*
- **Sample focus group**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gR1zu7i0-E>

**Discussion #6:** The HBR article says that many organizations are “missing the boat” in terms of gathering valuable information from exit interviews? Why do you think this is the case? What types of questions could be used to elicit valuable data? Post your thoughts to the discussion link.

## **Written Assignment #4 – Focus Group** (10% of grade)

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Select a public relations research topic and conduct a one-hour focus group of at least five people -- use your family, friends, classmates or co-workers. (Emailing several people separately for their opinion is not a focus group. Interaction among participants is key in a focus group. A group Skype meeting is acceptable.) Remember that open-ended questions work best in this method. Describe the sample, including the demographics of your group. Be sure to include the four types of questions you read about in Chapter 9: *introductory, key, probe, transition*. Take good notes, then write a summary describing the experience, including the conclusions and challenges. How did you analyze the data you gathered? Post your paper assignment page. (*no minimum or maximum word requirement*) (100 points)

**Quiz #4** Take Quiz 4 on material in Modules 7, 8, and 9.

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**Module 10 Sampling** (Starts 3/12, after spring break)

## **Introduction**

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Although some scientific research examines every member of a population, usually that is not possible. Instead, researchers depend on a sample, a subset of the population that is representative of the entire population. As one researcher put it, you only need to taste a spoonful of the sauce to know what the whole pot tastes like. In this module we will explore several different kinds of samples and sampling techniques used in public relations research.

*There will be a quiz at the end of Module 11 covering material in Modules 10 and 11.*

## **Objectives**

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By the end of this module students will be able to:

- 10.1 Differentiate between probability and non-probability sampling.
- 10.2 List the various types of sampling and the advantages of each.
- 10.3 Describe how to gather probability and non-probability samples.

## **Readings & Videos**

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### **Read:**

Chapter **12** in textbook *Quantitative Research: Sampling Messages and People*

### **Watch:**

#### **1. Five minutes about sampling:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=be9e-Q-jC-0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=be9e-Q-jC-0) (Links to an external site.)

#### **2. More about sampling:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOBYsdgGhVw>

## **Written Assignment #5 Sampling**

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Briefly explain the difference between probability and non-probability samples. Then, **using the topic that you plan to research as your final project**, explain how you

might gather a probability sample and a non-probability sample for your project. Max. 300 words. (no minimum). Post your assignment to the assignment link.

## Module 11 Quantitative Research: Surveys and Polls

### Introduction

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In this chapter we will delve into the world of survey research, learning about both descriptive and analytical surveys. We will learn how public relations researchers design effective questionnaires that will elicit the information they need.

### Objectives

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By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 11.1 Distinguish between various kinds of surveys.
- 11.2 Recognize the advantages and disadvantages of various kinds of surveys.
- 11.3 Design and execute a survey.
- 11.4 Collect, analyze and report on data obtained through surveys.

### Readings and videos

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#### Read:

Chapter **13** (*Survey and Poll Methods*)

#### Watch:

**Guest lecturer** from The Agency (UF) – *Using Marketing Research to Reach Millennials.*

### Written Assignment #6 Conduct a survey (10% of grade)

Please design and administer your own survey on the topic of your choice using the **Qualtrix** platform and administer it to at least 20 people. (It makes sense to do your survey on the same topic as your final project, but this is not required.) You should have at least 10 questions. **Please answer these questions** in your assignment:

1. What were your results?
2. Did you do a descriptive or analytical survey?

3. What was the biggest challenge you encountered?
4. How might you change the format or questions in a future survey?.

Write a 2-3 page summary of your research and post to the assignment link, **along with a copy of your survey instrument.**

**Quiz #5** Take Quiz 5, covering material in Modules 10 and 11.

## **Module 12 PR Research and Social Media**

### **Introduction**

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The role of social media in PR research is expanding rapidly. Although social media can be a rich source of valuable data, it comes with challenges. In this module we will explore ways to gather and analyze social media data ethically and effectively.

### **Objectives**

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By the end of this module, students will:

- 12.1 Recognize both the positive and negative effects that social media has had on the field of PR research.
- 12.2 Enumerate ways that social media can be used to gather useful data.
- 12.3 Analyze the ethical issues inherent in gathering data from social media.

### **Readings and videos**

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**Read:**

- <http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/56520494> (Harvard Business School article about how to do a social media audit.)
- **How Millennials use social media**  
<https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/publications/reports/survey-research/millennials-social-media/>

### **Discussion #7**

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What are the major advantages and disadvantages of doing research on

social media? How can a social media audit help with development of the PR plan? What ethical issues need to be considered?  
Post your thoughts to the discussion link.

### **Written Assignment #7 – Executive Summary**

Submit the executive summary/abstract for your final project. (300-500 words)  
(100 points)

*Note: The executive summary/abstract should clearly and concisely state the reason for the research, the research question or hypothesis, the methodology and the results of the research.*

## **Module 13 Course Finale**

### **Introduction:**

The final module is the culmination of the course, an actual research project incorporating the tools and methodologies learned throughout the semester.

### **Objectives:**

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

- 13.1** Design a research project based on methodologies covered in the course.
- 13.2** Demonstrate an understanding of basic research concepts.
- 13.3** Write a cohesive report integrating the research concepts covered in the course.

### **Read:**

Textbook Chapter 16— pp. 327-332. Writing the research report.

### **Watch:**

Donohue wrap-up **lecture**

**Assignment: Submit final project by 11 p.m. April 8.** (25% of grade)



