

Syllabus Updated January 8, 2018

**Course:** **Public Relations Strategy—PUR 3801, Section 4922**

**Class Meetings:** **Tuesday 1:55-3:50**  
**Thursday 3-3:50**  
**Weil 0234**

**Instructor:** **Ann Christiano**  
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**Communications**  
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**Office Hours: Wednesday, 2-4 pm and by appointment**

**S/U:** **No**

### **Course Overview**

In this course, you will master the core elements of developing a public relations strategy 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. I have 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.

You will have the opportunity to work both independently and as part of a group to complete your work.

This is a demanding course that provides a critical foundation for your career. Many students find that this is the course in which they begin to fully understand public relations as a unique discipline that is distinct from marketing and advertising.

### **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 be able 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 be able to apply research to formulate strategy.
8. You will be able to develop budgets and timelines.
9. You will be able to develop a plan to evaluate a campaign.
10. You will understand the relationship between public relations theory and effective strategy in a practical and tangible way.
11. You will be able to build support for your strategy with colleagues and managers.

### **Appointments**

Please come meet with me to discuss the class, your career objectives or to get course advising. I am happy to schedule meetings outside my regular office hours, and am often in my office if you'd like to drop in.

### **Technology**

**You may not use laptops, phones or tablets to take notes in this class. There will be days when you'll need your laptops to complete specific worksheets in class, and I will make an announcement on those days through Canvas. If you are texting, using Facebook, or engaging in other distracting communication unrelated to class, I will ask you to leave.**

### **Course Professionalism**

This College is a professional school and professional decorum is expected. 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 unless I have specifically directed you to. 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 apply in 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. Each statement you make must be supported by evidence.

### **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, or if you have a letter from the DRC.

### **Class Attendance Policy**

I will take attendance in each class. Your class attendance contributes to your participation grade. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to take initiative to make up lost work, get notes from another student and otherwise ensure that you have learned anything you missed.

### **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.

Plagiarism includes passing off language created by someone else as your own. If you use more than three words in a row of someone else's writing, you must put it in quotes and attribute it.

Students often get into trouble when they incorporate graphics into reports or presentations that they have not created themselves and failed to attribute, or when they

review a client's resources, including web sites, and copy and paste language into their papers.

I will use turn it in, and a range of additional resources to confirm that the work you submit is your own.

If you plagiarize, you will fail this course.

## **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. Using Facebook, texting and otherwise using electronic devices unless I have asked you to will significantly harm your participation grade.

### **Quizzes and Worksheets 30 percent**

A strategist is engaged and understanding of the context of the change he or she is trying to effect. I expect that you will regularly read the New York Times, which is available online. These quizzes will not be announced. Additionally, I will conduct quizzes on assigned readings. These quizzes are noted on the syllabus. Your average grade on the quizzes and worksheets will be your grade for this aspect of the class.

### **Assignment 1 10 percent**

### **Presentation 10 percent**

### **Final Exam 15 percent**

### **Final Project 20 percent**

## **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 or 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 surprise quiz due to an unexcused absence, you will receive a zero for that day's quiz.**

### **Required Readings:**

1. *Made To Stick*, Chip and Dan Heath
2. *Resonate*, Nancy Duarte
3. "See, Say, Feel, Do" available free online at fenton.com
4. "The Back-of-the-Envelope Guide to Communications Strategy" available free online at SSIR.org

Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester and posted on Canvas

Books are available on amazon.com.

## Course Discussion and Assignment Schedule

### Module 1: Introduction and Overview

- January 9 Syllabus Review, course schedule and structure
- January 11 Overview of the strategic planning process
- January 16 Role of research: casual, secondary, primary
- January 18 UF Library Resources

### Module 2: Making Great Presentations

- January 23 **Quiz 1, Resonate**  
Tools for making great presentations  
Dates drawn for presentations
- January 25 Making presentations visual

### Module 3: The Strategic Planning Process

- January 30 **Quiz 2: The Back-of-the-Envelope-Guide to Strategic Communications Planning**  
  
Discuss and apply Question 1
- February 1 Setting measurable objectives

**February 6 Assignment 1 Due: Client Identification and Situation Analysis**

**February 8—NO CLASS**

### Module 4: Understanding Your Audience

- February 13 Tools for understanding your audience—Guest Speaker: April Hines
- February 15 **Complete and turn in “Understanding Your Audience” worksheet**

February 20 Discuss and apply Question 2

February 22 Team assignments and Topics

### **Module 5: Developing Your Message Strategy**

February 27 **Quiz 3, Made to Stick**  
The Science of Messages

March 1 Discuss and apply Question 3

**March 6 No Class, Spring Break**

**March 8 No Class, Spring Break**

March 13 The Science of Story Building

March 15 Organizational Storytelling and the Sacred Bundle

### **Module 6: Identifying and Implementing Tactics**

March 20 Question 4 overview and discussion  
Introduction to tactics  
**Turn in Worksheet 2—The 4-Question Guide**

March 22 Controlled Media and Tactics

March 27 Controlled media and tactics, continued

March 29 Uncontrolled media and tactics

March 29 Uncontrolled media and tactics, continued

### **Module 7: Budgets and Timelines**

April 3 How to create a budget

April 5 Building a timeline and project management

## **Module 8: Evaluation**

April 10	<b>Quiz 4: See, Say, Feel, Do</b> Applying the See, Say, Feel, Do framework to your project
April 12	Planning for final presentations, advocating for your strategy
April 17	Final Project Due Final presentations
April 19	Final presentations
April 24	Final Exam

**The following assignment sheets and worksheets will be available on Canvas:**

**Assignment 1: Client Identification and Situation Analysis**

**Presentation Assignment, Rubric and Guidelines**

**Worksheet: Identifying and Understanding Your Audience**

**Worksheet: The 4-Question Strategic Communications Guide**

**Final Project Assignment**