

**SYLLABUS**  
**PUR 6005 (9499)—THEORIES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**Instructor:**

Dr. Kathleen Kelly, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Professor  
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**Traditional Office Hours:**

T & W – Period E1 (7:20-8:10 p.m.)  
W – Period 8 (3–3:50 p.m.)  
or by Appointment

**Virtual Office Hours (E-mail):**

M – Period E1+ (7:20–8:30 p.m.)

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

PUR 6005—Theories of Public Relations: Theories that dominate the field. Evolution of theories, their critiques, and current standing.

**COURSE PURPOSE & GOAL:**

PUR 6005 is a required core course in the public relations master’s curriculum. The purpose of the course is to develop an understanding of the theoretical body of knowledge in public relations and its application to professional practice. The overall goal of the course is to help students gain an intellectual foundation in theories of public relations.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

In support of its overall goal, the course will enable students to: distinguish between empirical and experiential knowledge; understand how theory informs the professional practice of public relations; assess the current status of public relations in regard to theory building, professional standards, and ethics in the field; and appreciate public relations as an organizational function that fosters civil society.

The course supports – to some degree – all 12 professional values and competencies required of graduates by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), which are stated below.

By graduation, all students of the College of Journalism and Communication should be able to:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the US
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

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*ACEJMC Values & Competencies Cont.*

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**COURSE FORMAT:**

The course primarily follows a seminar format consisting of lectures and class discussions. Each student will make an oral presentation and lead a class discussion. Several guest speakers will join the class to share their expertise in theoretical development and managerial practice. A high degree of student interaction is expected.

**COURSE TEXTS:**

**Required:** Botan, C. H., & Hazleton, V. (2006). *Public relations theory II*. New York: Routledge.

**Recommended:** Strunk, W. (1918). *The elements of style*. Available online at <http://www.crockford.com/wrrld/style.html>.

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA; 6<sup>th</sup> ed.). (For free online assistance, go to <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/>).

Chapters from the required text and additional assigned readings for each week are listed on the attached “Readings List,” which is keyed to the “Weekly Course Plan.” The additional readings are available online (through the UF Libraries) or will be e-mailed to you. All readings must be **read in advance** of the class dates for which they are listed. 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.

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

A **Team Research Paper** will account for 25% of the course grade. Working in teams of two, students will produce a research study proposal of approximately 12 text pages. The paper will consist of the first two and one-third sections of a typical thesis: (1) Purpose of the Study, including background on the problem and a problem statement; (2) Review of the Literature, including previous studies on the problem and studies related to it; and (3) Methodology, including a description of the population selected for study and a proposed method for collecting data. The paper can be on any public relations topic that is important to public relations practice, as demonstrated by practitioner literature. Student teams must submit a “Check-Up Form” by Wednesday, November 7, which must be approved by the instructor before proceeding with the paper. The grade received for a team’s research papers 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 paper. As in real life, team members will be dependent on each other to complete the assignment successfully. A separate handout on producing the research paper will be distributed early in the semester.

**As with all written assignments for this course, the research paper must be typed in 12-point font, double spaced on one side of white paper, have one-inch margins, and stapled (no covers or binders, please). Points will be deducted for spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.**

*Grade Distribution Cont.*

A Semester **Examination** will account for 20% of the course grade. The Exam will be given during class hours in Week 8 of the semester. The exam will measure students' mastery of content covered in the readings and lectures/discussions up to the week it is given.

A **Discussion Leader/Practitioner Article** assignment will account for 20% of the course grade. Each student will serve as discussion leader during one week/class session during the semester. The oral presentations will last approximately 45 minutes. Discussion leaders have four responsibilities:

1. Prepare a PowerPoint® or Prezi® presentation covering all readings assigned for that topic and class session.
2. Create activities (e.g., questions, exercises, quizzes, contests, games) that lead and stimulate discussion among classmates
3. Identify and research one public relations practitioner article that ties public relations practice to a theoretical topic of the week. Recent articles from the last two to five years are preferred.
4. Integrate slides on the practitioner article into the PowerPoint® or Prezi® presentation on readings, analyzing how the article relates to a specific public relations theory. The final PowerPoint® must be e-mailed to the instructor no later than 12 midnight on the day of the presentation.

A **Scholar Interview** and oral presentation of findings will account for 15% of the course grade. Students will select a scholar of their choice, typically from the authors of the assigned readings (UF faculty are ineligible). The oral presentations, lasting about 20 minutes, should take the form of a summary and analysis of the scholar's work, including criticism. They will include a PowerPoint®/Prezi® presentation and an enactment of the scholar's persona (role playing). All presentations will be made during the Week 11 class session. Students should e-mail the instructor with their scholar selection and citations of two of his or her publications other than the assigned readings as early in the semester as possible, no later than Sept.26. The "first come, first served" rule will be employed to avoid duplication of scholars.

**Class Participation** will account for 10% of the course grade, as determined by such efforts as class attendance, discussing assigned readings, asking questions, and bringing timely and relevant issues to the attention of the class.

Finally, each student will attend one **Professional Meeting** of the Gainesville Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA) on Thursday, Sept. 20, Oct. 18, or Nov. 15 (the meetings are listed in the "Weekly Course Plan"). Information and reservations can be found/made at <http://fpragainesville.com/>. Cost for non-member students is \$15. This assignment will count as 5% of the course grade. To earn credit, students must obtain the business card of one practitioner attending the meeting and staple the card to a one-page, typed summary of the meeting, with a focus on major points made by the meeting's main speaker.

Summarizing, the course grade will be determined on a 100-point scale as follows:

FPRA Professional Meeting	5%
Class Participation	10%
Scholar Interview/Oral Presentation	15%
Discussion Leader/Practitioner Article	20%
Semester Examination	25%
Research Paper	25%

Grading for the course follows current UF grading policies for assigning grade points (see <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>).

Grading Scale: 92-100 = A, 90-91 = A-, 88-89 = B+, 82-87 = B, 80-81 = B-, 78-79 = C+, 70-77 = C, 60-69 = D, 59 or less = E.

**MAKEUPS AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS:**

Course policy dictates that 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. Any make-up exams or late assignments will be graded lower than work turned in on time.

### **ABSENCES:**

Attendance is mandatory. Each student is allowed one excused absence for the semester, which should be sufficient for illnesses, transportation problems, family crises, etc. Absences beyond one will result in a reduction of the course grade at the rate of one-third grade level for each absence beyond the number permitted. 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.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

Students are expected to observe the University of Florida's policy on academic honesty in fulfilling all course requirements. The penalty for violation of academic honesty is an "E" for the course, at minimum.

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").

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/>).

### **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.

### **CLASSROOM CONDUCT:**

The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school and professional decorum is expected at all times. This means the instructor and students adhere to workplace norms for collegial and respectful interaction. Students are expected to arrive on time and not leave the classroom until announced breaks or the end of the class.

#### **Diversity:**

All discussions will be ruled by mutual respect—for people and their opinions. Effective public relations practice is dependent on gathering and understanding diverse viewpoints. Furthermore, professionalism requires an appreciation for the multicultural society and global economy in which students plan to work. Effectiveness in both practice and scholarship relies on an ability to recognize and embrace diversity in all its forms. Throughout the course, students will have opportunities to learn from the information and ideas shared by their classmates.

#### **Other Rules:**

- Cell phones must be turned off during class.
- Photos and other recordings are prohibited unless approved in advance by the instructor.
- Laptops and electronic tablets may be used in class for note taking; this privilege will be revoked for all students if one student is caught using the device for personal purposes.
- 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 if they have questions or are having problems. Office Hours are listed on p. 1 of the syllabus. Short conversations immediately following class are welcomed.

*Classroom Conduct Cont.*

- E-mail inquiries to the instructor should be limited to questions that are not answered elsewhere (e.g., the syllabus). Formal composition and clear and concise writing are required. E-mail messages generally cannot be answered in less than one day, so plan ahead.
- Telephone calls are encouraged for quick questions (when leaving a voice-mail message, slowly state your name, telephone number, and reason for calling; repeat phone number).

**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.

**UF RESOURCES:**

- University counseling services and mental health services: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> or 392-1575
- University Police Department: 392-1111 or 911 for emergencies.

**FINAL CAVEAT:**

This syllabus is subject to change as the instructor deems appropriate and necessary.

-Weekly Course Plan Follows-



**WEEKLY COURSE PLAN:**

<i>Week #1</i> Aug. 22	<b>Topics:</b>	Introduction to the Course. Overview of Requirements. Fundamentals of Studying Theories of Public Relations. Discussion Leader Assignment.
<i>Week #2</i> Aug. 29	<b>Topics:</b> <b>Readings:</b> <b>Assign:</b>	Theoretical Frameworks for Understanding Public Relations. See Readings List. Select week/topic to serve as Discussion Leader.
<i>Week #3</i> Sept. 5	<b>Topics:</b> <b>Readings:</b>	Excellence & Role Theories. See Readings List.
<i>Week #4</i> Sept. 12	<b>Topics:</b> <b>Readings:</b>	Effectiveness & Measurement; Relationship Theory. Scholar Interview Assignment. See Readings List.
<i>Week #5</i> Sept. 19	<b>Topics:</b> <b>Readings:</b> <b>Field Trip:</b>	ROPES Process Model. See Readings List. <i>Only 1 of 3 Required:</i> Thursday, Sept. 20 – FPRA Gainesville Chapter Meeting, Sweetwater Branch Inn (625 E University Ave.), 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.).
<i>Week #6</i> Sept. 26	No Class. <b>Due:</b>	Work on Scholar Interviews. Selected Scholar & Two Citations for Scholar Interview Assignment by 12 midnight.
<i>Week #7</i> Oct. 3	<b>Topics:</b> <b>Readings:</b>	15 Theories and Key Concepts. Review for Semester Exam. See “Theories & Key Concepts” Handout.
<i>Week #8</i> Oct. 10 5:35 p.m.	<b>EXAM:</b> <b>Guest Speaker:</b>	<b>Semester Exam – 4:05 – 5:20 p.m.</b> TBA (5:45-7:05 p.m.).
<i>Week #9</i> Oct. 17	<b>Topics:</b> <b>Dis. Leader:</b> <b>Readings:</b> <b>Field Trip:</b>	Global & International Theories. Feminist, Gender, & Diversity Theories. Exam Results.  See Readings List. <i>Only 1 of 3 Required:</i> Thursday, Oct. 18 – FPRA Gainesville Chapter Meeting, Sweetwater Branch Inn (625 E University Ave.), 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.).

*Weekly Course Plan Cont.*

*Week #10*  
Oct. 24

**Topics:** Media Theories: Agenda Building, Agenda Setting, & Innovative Media. Philanthropy & Fundraising Theories. Team Research Paper Assignment.  
**Dis. Leaders:**  
**Readings:** See Readings List.

*Week #11*  
Oct. 31

**Topics:** Happy Halloween! Oral Presentations on Scholar Interviews (All Students).

*Week #12*  
Nov. 7

**Topics:** Activism & Conflict Resolution. Digital Social Advocacy.  
**Dis. Leaders:**  
**Readings:** See Readings List.  
**Guest Speaker:** Dr. Linda Hon, Professor, Public Relations, UF (4:05-4:45 p.m.).  
**Due:** Team Research Proposal Check-Up Form at 4:05 p.m.

*Week 13*  
Nov. 14

**Topics:** Public Relations Crisis & Corporate Social Responsibility Theories. Research Papers Q&A. The Gender Gap: Salary Negotiation.  
**Dis. Leaders:** & Dr. Kelly.  
**Readings:** See Readings List.  
**Field Trip:** *Only 1 of 3 Required:* Thursday, Nov. 15 – FPRA Gainesville Chapter Meeting, Sweetwater Branch Inn (625 E University Ave.), 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.).

*Week #14*  
Nov. 21

No Class Thanksgiving Holiday Break.

*Week #15*  
Nov. 28  
Theories.

**Topics:** Course Evaluation. Team Research Papers Q&A. History, Legal, & Ethical  
**Dis. Leader:**  
**Readings:** See Readings List.  
**Due:** FPRA Professional Meeting Summary by 4:05 p.m.

*Week #16*  
Dec. 5

**Topics:** Team Research Paper Presentations (5-8 minutes). End-of-Semester Celebration (Location TBD).  
**Due:** Research Paper due Wednesday, Dec. 5, at 4:05 p.m.

***Happy Holidays!***