

**PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH--PUR6506  
(SEC 12DD, CLASS # 14420)  
FALL 2018**

Tuesday 5-7<sup>th</sup> period. 11:45-1:25, Weimer 3020  
& 1:35-2:25, Weimer 2056

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Office Hrs: T 2:30-3:30 p.m. R 2-4 p.m. plus by appointment

**PURPOSE OF COURSE:** The purpose of Public Relations Research for graduate students is to learn about the relationships among public relations processes and public relations research. The course provides an introduction to and experience with research methods in public relations.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Requirements include: attending class, reading assigned materials, participating in class discussions, submitting assigned research and data analyses experiences, participating in a class research project and completing course tests.

**EXCELLENCE IN CLASS PARTICIPATION (20 POINTS):** Excellence in participation is evaluated by your attendance, participation in research experience opportunities, quality of work for the class research project, and quality of class participation.

**Attendance (10 points):** You are expected to attend class. There is no such thing as an "excused" or "unexcused" absence for this class. If you know you will be absent from class, you must let me know by e-mail before the class meets. **You are allowed one absence without credit penalty.** After that, without exception, you will lose 2 participation points for each absence beyond one, up to 10 points. Attendance will be taken regularly and it is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet. If you arrive late, you must take personal responsibility for signing the attendance sheet before you leave the classroom. If your signature is not on the sheet on the date of the class, you will be counted absent. There are no exceptions to these rules, so please don't ask.

**Research Depth Experience (5 points):** To earn these points you will submit a two-page paper. The paper will be a comparative critique of the Standards for Public Relations Research. <http://www.instituteforpr.org/public-relations-research-standards/>. You should review the web pages published on the Institute for Public Relations website cited above. Try to compare these standards with those in marketing and advertising research. (The paper should be single-spaced.)

**Quality of Class Participation (6 points):** The full six points for quality of class participation are given only to students whose attendance is exemplary and participation is exceptional. Consequently, only a small number of students earn all these points. You are expected to complete the assigned readings BEFORE the date indicated as you will be called on to discuss them in class. (Cell phones and laptops must be turned off in class; failure to do so will result in loss of opportunity for participation points.) Students who habitually come late to class should not expect to earn any participation points. Because this is a judgment of the totality of your performance, the instructor will make the judgment about the points you will earn for your quality of class participation at the end of the semester, after all other grades are calculated.

**RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS PROJECT (40 POINTS):** Each student will participate in a research project. The project product will count for 40% of your grade, with 10% coming from peer evaluations and 30% from your project paper. Each person in a team shares the team grade, thus if the project paper and the team's work earns a B the entire team earns a B for the project regardless of individual efforts. The grade for the project comes from the instructor's evaluation of the quality of the team's work on the project and the quality of the paper. The peer evaluations come from members of your own team..

**EXAMS (39 POINTS):** .This course has two in-class exams, and one take-home exam, all of which are based on lecture materials, class discussions, textbook and other readings, and other assignments. If you miss one of the exams, you may not take it later. These exams count for 39% of your grade.

**DEADLINES AND MAKEUP TESTS:** No post-exam (make-up) tests are given in this course. No late assignments are accepted.

**GRADING:**

	Points
3 Exams—3 X 13 points each	39
Research & Data Analysis Project (Peer Evaluation 10% & Project Report 30%)	40
Attendance and Excellence in Participation	<u>21</u>
Total Points	100

This course will be graded on the following grading system:

- A 92 and above
- A - 88-91
- B + 85-87
- B 82-84
- B - 78-81
- C + 75-77 (and as above for lower grades)

**REQUIRED TEXT: *PRIMER OF PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH, 3<sup>ND</sup> ED., STACKS, DON W., GUILFORD PRESS, 2016, ISBN 978-1-46252270-5***

Recommended Webpages: <http://www.instituteforpr.org/>, <http://www.instituteforpr.org/topic/research-methods-standards/>, <http://www.instituteforpr.org/topic/measurement-and-evaluation/>  
<http://www.instituteforpr.org/public-relations-research-standards/>

**COMPUTER SOFTWARE:** For the data analyses part of this course you will use SPSS-PC (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and Excel. Both the College and CIRCA have SPSS/PC for Windows available for your use or you can obtain a student version from the university. It is your responsibility to be sure you have access to a computer for the data analysis experience, so plan ahead.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Be sure you review the university policies on plagiarism and academic integrity. In this course each student is expected to complete the assignments on his or her own; **you may not submit someone else's work as your own for the Research Critique.** For the exams you may not share information about the content of the exam with other students. No breach of these policies will be tolerated in this class.

**REQUIRED UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS FOR ALL COURSE SYLLABI**

“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 then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.”

Date	Course Outline	Readings	Due Dates for Class Research Project & Assignments
<u>WEEK 1</u> Aug 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction, pick up syllabus.</li> <li>• Course Objectives and Requirements</li> </ul>	Public relations research standards. <a href="http://www.instituteforpr.org/public-relations-research-standards/">http://www.instituteforpr.org/public-relations-research-standards/</a>	
<u>WEEK 2</u> Sep 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Relations Research in Agencies and Corporations</li> <li>• Academic Public Relations Research</li> </ul>	Ch. 1 Understanding Research: An Introduction with Public Relations Implications  Ch. 3 Standards for Conducting Public Relations Research	Online research on methods used in academic research—conduct analysis of assigned journals, one pg, due Aug 30.
<u>WEEK 3</u> Sep 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing Research</li> <li>• Research Ethics</li> <li>• Developing a Research Problem</li> </ul>	Ch. 2 Management of Research in Public Relations  Ch. 7 Ethical Concerns in Public Relations Research Negotiating a research project	Public relations research standards two pg. critique due, Sep 11.  Class research project determined: 1. Project calendar developed.
<u>WEEK 4</u> Sep 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Measurement Metrics</li> <li>• Measurement Reliability and Validity</li> <li>• Measurement Levels</li> <li>• Scales and Indices</li> <li>• Learning How to Understand Big Data Use in Public Relations</li> </ul>	Ch. 4 Measuring Outcomes  Ch. 5 Data and Data Sets	Class research project: 2. Literature review. 3. Research questions/hypotheses.
<u>WEEK 5</u> Sep 25  Exam 1, Weeks 1-4, Sep 25, (Readings plus Chs. 1-5, & 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Probability Sampling</li> <li>• Non-probability Methods</li> <li>• Sampling Strategies</li> <li>• Panel and Trend Studies</li> <li>• Survey Research &amp; Questionnaires</li> <li>• Interviewing</li> </ul>	Ch. 12 Quantitative Research Methodology: Sampling Messages and People  Ch. 13 Quantitative-Survey and Poll Methods	Class research project: 4. Design research study.
<u>WEEK 6</u> Oct 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPSS</li> <li>• Inferential Statistics</li> <li>• Data Coding</li> </ul>	Ch. 6 Descriptive Statistical Reasoning and Computer Analysis	Class research project: 5. Develop measurement instruments.
<u>WEEK 7</u> Oct 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content Analysis</li> </ul>	Ch. 8 Qualitative Research Methodology-Content Analysis	Class research project: 6. Pretest class project instruments 7. Develop sample/subject pool
<u>WEEK 8</u> Oct 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical Methodology</li> <li>• Secondary</li> </ul>	Ch. 9 Qualitative Research Methodology, Historical, Secondary	Class research project: 8. Conduct study

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis</li> <li>Business Case Studies</li> </ul>	Ch. 10 Case Studies	
<u>WEEK 9</u> Oct 23  Exam 2, Weeks 5-8, Oct 23 (Chs. 6, 8-10, 12 & 13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus Groups</li> <li>Participant Observation</li> <li>In-depth Interviews</li> </ul>	Ch. 11 Methods of Observing People	Class research project: 9. Conduct study, continued
<u>WEEK 10</u> Oct 30, (Homecoming, Nov 2-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Causation</li> <li>Experimental Design</li> <li>Threats to Internal and External Validity</li> </ul>	Ch. 14 Quantitative-Experimental Methods	Class research project: 10. Begin data analysis
<u>WEEK 11</u> Nov 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Processing and Analysis</li> <li>Descriptive Analysis</li> <li>Relational Analysis</li> <li>Inferential Statistics</li> </ul>	Ch. 15 Quantitative Statistics: Advanced Inferential Statistical Reasoning and Computer Analysis	Class research project: 11. Hypotheses tests 12. Writing draft of final paper
<u>WEEK 12</u> Nov 13, (Nov 12, Holiday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing the Request for Proposals</li> <li>Writing the Thesis Proposal</li> <li>Graphics in Research Presentations</li> <li>The Oral Presentation</li> <li>Writing the Report for Sponsors</li> </ul>	Ch. 16 Putting It All Together	Class research project: 12. Continue writing draft of final paper (due to Dr. Ferguson Nov. 20)
<u>WEEK 13</u> Nov 20  Receive take home Exam 3, Weeks 9-12, due Nov. 27.	Group work on project  Thanksgiving Holidays, Nov 21-25		Class research project: 13. Draft of final paper (due to Dr. Ferguson Nov. 20) 14. Preparing tables & graphics 15. Continue with revisions to paper
<u>WEEK 14</u> Nov 27  Take Home Exam 3, Weeks 9-12, Due Nov. 27 (Chs. 11, 14-16)			16. Draft returned Nov. 27. 17. Continue with revisions to paper 18. Research plan for presentation
Week 15 Dec 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Presentation</li> </ul>		Class research project: 19. Final Project Due 12/4

## **Additional and Classic Resources for Public Relations Research and Evaluation**

- Babbie, E. R. (2015). *The Practice of Social Research*.
- Broom, G. M. (1977). Coorientational measurement of public issues. *Public Relations Review*, 3(4), 110-119.
- Broom, G. M. (1983). An overview: Evaluation research in public relations. *Public Relations Quarterly*, 28(3), 5-8.
- Calder, B. J., L. W. Phillips & A. M. Tybout (1981), "Designing research for application," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 8, 197-207.
- Campbell, D. T. & D. W. Fiske (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait multimethod matrix," *Psychological Bulletin*, 56, 81-105.
- Campbell, D. T. & J. C. Stanley (1963). *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Design for Research*.
- Cochran, W. G. (2007). *Sampling Techniques*.
- Cook, T. D. & D. T. Campbell (1979). *Quasi-Experimentation: Design and Analysis Issues for Field Settings*.
- Cronbach, L. J. & P. J. Meehl, (1955). Construct validation in psychological tests, *Psychological Bulletin*, 52, 281-302.
- Emmert, P. & L. L. Barker, (1989). *Measurement of Communication Behavior*.
- Ghiselli, E. E., J. P. Campbell, & S. Zedeck (1981). *Measurement Theory for the Social Sciences*.
- Hage, J. (1973). *Techniques and Problems in Theory Construction*.
- Hon, L. (1997). What have you done for me lately? Exploring effectiveness in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 9(1), 1-30.
- Hovland, C. (1959). *Reconciling Conflicting Results Derived from Experimental and Survey Studies of Attitude Change*.
- Johnson, M. & G. M. Zinkhan. (1990). Defining and measuring company image. *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 13, 346-350.
- Keppel, G. & T.D. Wickens, (2004). *Design and Analysis: A Researchers Handbook*.
- Kerlinger, F.N. (1999). *Foundations of Behavioral Research*.
- Judd, C.M., E.R. Smith, & L. H. Kidder. (1991). *Research Methods in Social Relations*.
- Kirk, R. E. (1982). *Experimental Design: Procedures for the Behavioral Sciences*.
- Krueger, R. A. & M.A. Casey, (2014). *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*.
- Lynch, J. G. (1999). Theory and external validity, *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*
- Milliken, G. A. & D. E. Johnson, (2009). *Analysis of Messy Data*.
- Reeves, B., & Ferguson-(DeThorne), M. A. (1984). Measuring the effect of messages about social responsibility. *Public Relations Review*, 10, 40-55.
- Reynolds, P. D. (2015). *A Primer in Theory Construction*.
- Rosenthal, R. & R. Rosnow (1991). *Essentials of Behavioral Research*.
- Rossi, P.H., M. W. Lipsey & H. H. Freeman. (2003). *Evaluation: A systematic approach*.
- Stempel, G. H., III. & B. H. Westley (Eds.) (1989) *Research Methods in Mass Communication*.
- Tan, A. S. (1985). *Mass Communication Theories and Research*.
- Warwick, D. & C. Lininger. (1975). *The Sample Survey: Theory and Practice*.
- Weisberg, H., J.A. Krosnick & B.D. Bowen (1996). *An Introduction to Survey Research, Polling and Data Analysis*.
- Wimmer. R.D. & J.R. Dominick (2013). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*.