



University of Florida
Department of Public Relations
College of Journalism and Communications
Public Relations Research
Fall2018
PUR 3500, Section 19588
W, Period 08-10 (3 – 6 p.m.)
Weimer Hall 1078
Instructor: Lawrence M. Clark, MBA
Office hours: After class or by appointment
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305-450-1744

Course Description

This course is intended to provide opportunities to students to understand why research is essential in Public Relations campaign development, monitoring of PR programs and evaluation of campaign effectiveness. You will learn different types of qualitative research, quantitative research, traditional research, and online research. Through assignments and class-discussion, you will get hands-on experience of PR project. Also, at the end of semester, you will produce a high-quality report as professional consultants.

Public relations research techniques focuses on applications to strategic planning, message evaluation, opinion research, and theory testing of public relations programs. Emphasis is placed on qualitative and quantitative methods and data analysis.

You are expected to display an ability to integrate research components into PR campaign development and to become prepared for higher level courses such as PR strategy and PR campaigns.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

· Course objectives are:

- (1) to understand how research is practiced in public relations;
- (2) to ask appropriate research questions;

- (3) to practice research in an ethical manner;
- (4) to design research programs and employ appropriate research methods;
- (5) to critically appraise research results; and
- (6) to effectively communicate research results. Students must possess a basic understanding of techniques such as basic statistical methods of information analysis and be able to present results (or critique others' presentations) in an informative and appealing manner.

College of Journalism and Mass Communications Objectives

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that by graduation all students 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.

REQUIRED TEXT

- “Primer of Public Relations Research,” 3rd edition (2017); Don W. Stacks; Guilford Press, New York. ISBN: 978-1462522705 (hardcover); ebook available.

“A Practitioner’s Guide to Public Relations Research, Measurement, and Evaluation,” 2nd edition (2014); Don W Stacks and David Michaelson; Business Expert Press, New York. ISBN-9781-60649-101-0

Academic Honesty -- All students are expected to be honest in all their academic work. Failure to uphold the standards of honesty will result in the appropriate disciplinary action by the University of Florida. As a result of completing the registration form at the

University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement:

“I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the university.”

It is your responsibility to be familiar with the academic student code. You can review the honor code and sanctions for violations to the code in the following link: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/studenthonorcode.php>

Plagiarism will not be tolerated! If you use information from a publication, you must attribute a source to it.

Intellectual Property Protection

Lectures given in this course, including handouts and PowerPoint® slide decks, 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.

Diversity

All discussions will be ruled by mutual respect—for people and their opinions. Effective public relations practice relies on the ability to recognize and embrace diversity in all its forms, including viewpoints. Furthermore, professionalism requires an appreciation for the multicultural society and global economy in which students plan to work. Throughout the course, students will have opportunities to see how different life experiences and cultural perspectives influence public relations practice. You are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities in your own work and to learn from the information and ideas shared by other students.

<u>Grading</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Prof. Eval.	10
Quizzes	10
Assign.	10
Exam 1	20
Exam 2	20
Final Proj.	30
Total Points	100

*Includes student’s professional demeanor, attendance and participation.

GRADING CRITERIA

Attendance & Participation

You **MUST** treat class attendance as an academic appointment that must be met. Each day of class, it is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet.

Absences

Because my teaching approach emphasizes student teacher interaction, attendance is critical to success. Each student is allowed two excused absences for the semester without penalty to the final attendance point total. Absences beyond TWO—for any reason—will result in a reduction of the course grade up to and including failure of the class. Students are responsible for any information missed during an absence.

If you have a valid and unavoidable reason for missing class, you will need to provide me with proper documentation (e.g., a doctor's note or hospitalization record) for your absence on your first day back.

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).

Situations that are NOT considered excused absences include: social events, meetings, entertaining out-of-town guests, holiday/travel plans, weddings, etc.

Participation Requirements

- Attend class.
- Read appropriate materials BEFORE the assigned class session so you can contribute to class discussion in manner that can benefit everyone in class.
- Participate actively in discussions.
- Be punctual for the start of class.
- Students may NOT complete work for other courses during class or read any materials unrelated to class.
- Laptops can be used for note taking. Using the Internet is not allowed.
- Texting and using the Internet with your phone are not allowed.
- Unprofessional/inappropriate behavior during class meetings may result in a significant reduction of class participation point.

Pop Quizzes

Unannounced and announced quizzed based on lecture notes will be given. The purpose of this category is to encourage students to prepare for the class in advance and to check your understanding of materials covered in the class. The general pop quiz format is a combination of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer.

Background Research & Research Plan

- You will need to submit a 7-page (at least) background research report about your client using marketing and media databases, and online resources (websites, blogs, and your favorite search engines).
- The report should include background research about your client (e.g. description and

brief history of your client, mission statement of the client, a summary of news coverage about the client for the past six months, SWOT analysis of the client/industry, analysis of its competitors etc.) and the possible topics of the research project.

- Research needs and research questions should be included in the research plan. Description of research methods is also expected to articulate.

- The research plan should also include a timeline for research project.

Exam 1 and 2

A mid-term and a late-term exam will be given to assess your comprehension of materials covered in the course. The exam will cover material from lectures and book chapters.

The general exam format is a combination of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer. **No make-up exam will be given!**

Final Research Project Report

- You are responsible to conduct a focus group research or an in-depth interview (qualitative research) as well as a survey research (quantitative research) as a group project.

- The procedure and structure of the research project will be decided based on your group topic.

- Writing should be clear and visual aids (e.g. tables, graphs etc.) are expected to be included in the report.

- Everyone in your group is equally responsible for producing the final report.

Final Presentation

During the final week of the course, each group will make a 30-minute formal presentation of research findings and campaign plan.

- Appropriate visual aids such as tables and graphics are required for presenting your final report.

- The explanation and justification of the research procedure should be comprehensive.

- The explanation of main findings should be clear and precise.

- The limitations of the study and the suggestion for further studies should be included in the final report and the presentation.

Peer Evaluation

You are required to participate in many group projects and assignments in this course. In order to assess each team member's contributions to the project, twice peer evaluations will be conducted. Points will be reduced any member of a group who has not fulfilled his/her responsibilities according to the consensus of the other members of the group.

LATE WORK

There will be no extensions of deadlines. Due dates have been announced in advance in the "timeline for classes" so that you can schedule other activities around these deadlines. After the deadline, 10% of the assignment's grade will be deducted each day the assignment is turned in late.

GRADING SCALE: 100 Scale (100%)

A 92-100

A- 90-91.9

B+ 87-89.9

B 82-86.9

B- 80-81.9

C+ 76-79.9

C 72-75.9

C- 70-71.9

D+ 66-69.9

D 60-65.9

*****NOTE: Final grades are not negotiable. After the course is over, asking for special consideration is never appropriate, and I will not respond to such inquiries. There is NO Extra Credit Opportunity.**

	Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments	
Week 1	8/22	Syllabus: Introduction to Course Role of Research/Asking Questions [An introduction to the course and the role of research in public relations. Focus is on what and why we do in the research process and the types of questions best answered by what research methods and analytical procedures.]	S: Chpt. 1	S&M: Chpt. 1
Week 2	8/29	Research Management [An analysis of the public relations research process, from asking questions, to stating objectives, to establishing the research time-line. Focus is on setting measurable objectives that meet the business goals for the organization or client.]	S: Chpt. 2	S&M: Chpt. 2
Week 3	9/5	Measurement [Measurement and its reliability and validity are introduced; "data" are defined; and attitude and belief measures are discussed.]	S: Chpt. 3	S&M: Chpt. 3
Week 4	9/12	Descriptive Statistics/Reporting Data [The primary mode of analysis — descriptive statistics — are explored. The concept of quantitative "data" is explored and both categorical and continuous variables are analyzed. Categorical (frequency, percentage, proportion), continuous (mean, median, mode, variance, standard deviation, z-score, correlation) statistics are computed and analyzed. How data are reported, and how it can be misrepresented are discussed. SPSS is introduced for computational statistics and graphical presentation.]	S: Chpt. 4	S&M: Chpt. 8
Week 5	9/19	Ethics/Historical & Secondary Research/Researching Online [The treatment of human beings as research targets is discussed in detail. The ethics in reporting data is also discussed. The research dealing with the	S: Chpt. 5, 7	S&M: Chpt. 4

Week 14 Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15 In class work on final project
11/28

Week 16 Class Presentations
12/5

Reading Days start 12/6

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Print this page, sign and return with information required below:

I have received and read the syllabus for PUR 3500.

SIGNED: _____

PRINT NAME: _____

DATE: _____