

Public Relations Theory

Spring 2019

Instructor: Dr. Linda Hon

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Course Website: <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>

Technical Help: For technical issues with course access or e-learning in Canvas, contact UF Helpdesk at <http://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml> / (352) 392-HELP (4357) / Learning-support@ufl.edu

Course Communication:

The best way to reach me for questions is to email me directly at the email account listed above. I try to answer as soon as possible. My students are my first priority. If you do not hear from me within 24 hours, please resend your email.

Course Description:

This course covers main emphases in public relations theory and their applications to practice.

Course Goals:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Possess comprehensive knowledge of major areas of public relations theory and how those areas have been developed through empirical research.
- Be acquainted with major professional resources in public relations related to theory and application.
- Apply abstract theoretical models and concepts from public relations scholarship to their own public relations practice with the goal of increased effectiveness.

Expectations:

Students are expected to complete work on time and participate in class discussions in a professional manner while respecting the instructor and fellow students. These discussions are not limited to the Canvas shell, but all platforms that involve coursework.

Readings:

Readings are listed in the course schedule and in each weekly module on Canvas.

Technical Requirements:

This course will require you to create a video presentation in a digital, shareable format. To successfully complete these course assignments, students will need to have access to, and working knowledge of, the following software and web platforms:

- Microsoft Word, PowerPoint
 - UF students can download Office 365 Pro Plus software for free at <http://www.it.ufl.edu/gatorcloud/free-software-downloads-office-365-proplus/>
- YouTube or Vimeo account to upload and host presentations
- Video recording device
 - Computer webcam (desktop or laptop)

Teaching Philosophy:

This course is designed for those working in the profession or wanting to enter the profession and who aspire to be a critical and strategic thinker. I see myself as a facilitator. My experience and background

provide me with expertise in public relations theory and practice. However, there are no facts in public relations theory that I can communicate to you. The course materials I have selected and the assignments I have developed are designed to introduce you to main areas of public relations theory so you can make the connection from academic research to public relations practice.

Instructional Methods:

Because theory is based on empirical (data-based) scholarship, much of the class involves reading research literature. All the literature comes from peer-reviewed journals, particularly the main journals focusing on public relations, or book chapters in leading scholarly texts.

Based on my years of experience in the field and teaching UF's in-residence and online public relations theory class, I have selected foundational articles that trace the development of a major theoretical program of research and/or research articles about important trends in industry. And, for each week, I have developed an assignment that is designed to elaborate on the reading material by linking it to professional practice.

I hope much of the learning in this class is peer-to-peer. Each student brings his or her life history and work experience to the class. Therefore, you will be sharing your discussion posts with one another and providing constructive feedback to one another.

Coursework:

Coursework should be submitted through Canvas.

- Discussion Posts
- Reaction Assignments
- Final Project

Deadlines:

The new lecture starts on Monday, but the discussion post and reaction assignments will be available on the Friday before at 7:00 a.m. in case you want to work ahead. The deadlines for graded material are as follows:

Discussion Post to Instructor Prompt*	11:59 PM EST Thursdays
Comment on Another Student's Post	11:59 PM EST Sundays
Reaction Assignments	11:59 PM EST Sundays
Final Presentation**	11:59 PM EST, Sunday, March 24, PowerPoint file and Script sent to me
	11:59 PM EST, Friday, March 29, upload recorded presentation)
	11:59 PM EST Sunday, March 31 (comment on another student's presentation)

***Because the Discussion Post to Instructor Prompt and the Comment on Another Student's Post are graded as one assignment, you will only see the Sunday deadline on the Canvas site. However, remember the Discussion Post to Instructor Prompt is always due Thursday, 11:59 p.m., EST.**

****Because the Recording and Comment on another Student's Presentation are graded as one assignment, you will only see the Sunday, March 31 deadline on the Canvas site. However, remember the Recording is due Friday, March 29, 11:59 p.m., EST.**

Grading:

Your work will be evaluated according to this distribution:

Discussion Posts (100 points each)	40%
Reaction Assignments (100 points each)	40%
Final Presentation (100 points each)	
PowerPoint Presentation and Script	15%
Recording and Comment on Another Student's Presentation	5%

The final grade will be determined as follows. Grades will be rounded up (e.g., 89.5 becomes 90).

A	100%	to	93%
A-	< 93%	to	90%
B+	< 90%	to	87%
B	< 87%	to	83%
B-	< 83%	to	80%
C+	< 80%	to	77%
C	< 77%	to	73%
C-	< 73%	to	70%
D+	< 70%	to	67%
D	< 67%	to	63%
D-	< 63%	to	60%
F	< 60%	to	0%

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Weekly Lectures:

- The instructor will post a lecture video for each week.
- The purpose of these videos is only to provide overall context for the week's topic. The lectures are not an outline of the week's readings or the reaction assignment.
- There is one additional video—an introduction to the course that reviews the syllabus.
- It is your responsibility to watch each of the videos and include information from the lecture video in your discussion post.

Weekly Discussion Posts

- You are expected to read all the course materials each week.
- Students will post an answer to the instructor prompt about the lecture and readings by 5:00 p.m. Thursday. Since there are no exams, you will be graded according to how well you incorporate specifics from each lecture and all the readings for each week that demonstrate mastery of the material. **For the Instructor Prompt, please address the material from class, not your own insights and/or work experience. The post should be as close as possible to 750 words.**
- Students will respond to another student's post by 11:59 p.m. Sunday of each week. Address the prompts listed in the Assignment/Discussions tabs. **This post should be a minimum of 250 words.**

For specific grading information, please refer to "Rubric for Discussion Participation and Comments to Another Student's Post."

Reaction Assignments:

- Students will post a response to the weekly reaction assignment by Sunday, 11:59 p.m.
- Since there are no exams, you will be graded according to how well you incorporate specifics from the content in the reaction assignment that demonstrates mastery of the material.

For specific grading information, please refer to “Rubric for Reaction Assignment.”

Discussion Posts and Reaction Assignments are posted in the weekly pages in Canvas.

Final Presentation

The capstone assignment for the course will be a PowerPoint presentation that you develop for a professional audience. The title will be “Applying Public Relations Theory to Practice: Bridging Academic Research with Professional Challenges and Opportunities.” Your intended audience will be your choice—your employer, your dream employer, or any organization you are interested in. The project will be divided into two steps:

(1) Final Presentation (due week 12, March 24, 11:59 EST)

- You will create a PowerPoint presentation of 24 slides. You must use the template that is provided.
- Following the categories on the template, fill in with your original content.
- The Final Presentation and Script must include meaningful insights with quantitative and or qualitative data from a **minimum of 15 of the course readings and/or sources from the reaction assignments.**
- Must include in-text citations to course materials using APA format. **Citations are embedded in the PowerPoint presentation.**
- The Script is a verbatim narrative of what you will say in the Final Presentation. You will submit this as a **separate Word file**. The script should be **10 pages, double-spaced, 12-point type, one-inch margins.**
- Must verbalize at the beginning the intended audience for the presentation.
- Must include title, agenda, main points for each course topic, actionable recommendations based on main points, key overall takeaways (closing), and References slide.
- Must include some graphical elements such as pictures, images, tables, and figures.
- Please feel free to be creative by using animations.
- You will submit the PowerPoint Presentation and Script to me only.
- After I review your Final Presentation PowerPoints slides and Script, you then will make any needed changes before uploading your presentation.

(2) Recording and Comment on Another Student’s Presentation (due Week 12, Recording due March 29, 11:59 p.m., EST; Comment on Another Student’s Presentation due March 31, 11:59 p.m., EST)

- Record your presentation and upload it to YouTube or Vimeo by March 29, 11:59 p.m., EST.
- You can be seen (as I am in the class lectures) or embed your narrative.
- Check your recording for quality issues before uploading it.
- Share the link to recording of report delivery (submit under the Discussions tab).
- After March 29, 11:59 p.m., EST, chose one of your classmate’s presentations.
- Watch the video in its entirety and provide comments on the video using the questions provided by March 31, 11:59 p.m., EST.

For specific grading information, please refer to “Rubric for Final Presentation and Reaction to Classmate’s Presentation.”

Schedule

Start Date	1/7/2019	
End Date	4/7/2019	
Week 1	1/7/2019	1/13/2019
Week 2	1/14/2019	1/20/2019
Week 3	1/21/2019	1/27/2018
Week 4	1/28/2019	2/3/2019
Week 5	2/4/2019	2/10/2019
Week 6	2/11/2019	2/17/2019
Week 7	2/18/2019	2/24/2019
Week 8	2/25/2019	3/3/2019
Week 9	3/4/2019	3/10/2019
Week 10	3/11/2019	3/17/2019
Week 11	3/18/2019	3/24/2019
Week 12	3/25/2019	3/31/2019

Course Policies:

Late Work and Make-up Policy:

Deadlines are critical to this class. All work is due on or before the due date. Extensions for deadlines will only be for preapproved emergencies. Grade deductions for late work include the following:

- Less than an hour late 5 points off
- More than an hour late but less than 24 hours late 10 points off
- More than 24 hours late but less than 48 hours late 15 points off
- More than 48 hours late 25 points off
- A week or more late Not accepted at all

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. Students 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.

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. Your academic advisor is Tiffany Robbert, and she may be reached at trobbert@jou.ufl.edu .

Requirements for class attendance in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalogue at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Requirements for all graded course assignments are consistent with university attendance policies that can be found in the online catalogue at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Course Introduction:

1. Watch Course Introduction Video: Explanation of course requirements and assignments.

Week One: Historical Theoretical Perspectives

Learning Objectives:

Distinguish among common misconceptions in public relations history and a more complex account of the development of the field as a profession.

Required Reading:

--Lamme, M. O. & Russell, K. M. (2010). Removing the spin. Toward a new theory of public relations history. *Journalism and Communication Monographs*, 11(4), 281-362.

1. Introduce yourself on the Canvas site.
2. Watch Lecture.
- 3. For this week only, there is no discussion post assignment.**
4. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Two: Open-Systems and Excellence

Learning Objectives:

Explain how empirical research is conducted and how theory is developed.

Differentiate between the dominant message-centered focus of public relations practice with the strategic management perspective.

Required Readings:

--Broom, G. M. (2006). An open-system approach to building theory in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 18(2), 141-150. doi: 10.1207/s1532754xjpr1802_4.

--Grunig, J. E. (2006). Furnishing the edifice: Ongoing research on public relations as a strategic management function. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 18(2), 151-176. doi: 10.1207/s1532754xjpr1802_5

1. Watch Lecture.
2. Complete Discussion Post:
Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.

3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Three: Persuasion and Listening

Learning Objectives:

Identify and explain the major tenets of persuasion theory.

Recognize and reconcile gaps in public relations theory related to listening.

Required Readings:

--Porter, L. (2010). Communicating for the good of the state: A post-symmetrical polemic on persuasion in ethical public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 36, 127-133. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2009.08.014

--Macnamara, J. (2016). Organizational listening: Addressing a major gap in public relations theory and practice. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 28, 3-4, 146-169.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2016.1228064>

1. Watch Lecture.

2. Complete Discussion Post:

Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.

3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Four: Social Media

Learning Objectives:

Understand the role of social media as strategic and disruptive communication.

Apply principles of effective social media management to specific case studies.

Required Readings:

--Smith, B. (2015). Situated ideals in strategic social media: Applying grounded practical theory in a case of successful social media management. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 9, 272–292. doi: 10.1080/1553118X.2015.1021958

--Allagui, I. & Breslow, H. (2016). Social media for public relations: Lessons from four effective cases. *Public Relations Review*, 42, 20-30. dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2015.12.001

1. Watch Lecture.

2. Complete Discussion Post:

Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.

3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Five: Crisis and Corporate Advocacy

Learning Objectives:

Explain the development of crisis theory in public relations.

Identify and distinguish among the major types of corporate advocacy.

Required Readings:

--Coombs, W. T. (2010). Crisis communication: A developing field. In E.L. Heath (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of public relations* (pp. 477-488). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

--Wettstein, F. & Baur, D. (2016). "Why should we care about marriage equality?": Political advocacy as a part of corporate responsibility, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 138, 199–213. doi: 10.1007/s10551-015-2631-3

1. Watch Lecture.
2. Complete Discussion Post:
Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.
3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Six: Ethics and Values

Learning Objectives:

Identify the ethical issues inherent in public relations.

Understand the role of values in driving attitudes and behaviors and consequences for effective public relations management.

Required Readings:

-- Bowen, W. T. (2010). The nature of good in public relations: What should be its normative ethic? In E.L. Heath (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of public relations* (pp. 569-583). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

--Trayner, G. (2017). Why values matter – how public relations professionals can draw on moral foundations theory. *Public Relations Review*, 43, 123-129. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.10.016>

1. Watch Lecture.
2. Complete Discussion Post:
Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.
3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Seven: Social Responsibility

Learning Objectives:

Develop a framework for dimensions of social responsibility communication.

Identify public expectations for social responsibility and implications for corporate social responsibility communication.

Examine perceptions of social responsibility communication among practitioners in the nonprofit sector.

Required Readings:

--Kim, S. and Ferguson, M. T. (2014). Public expectations of CSR communication: What and how to communicate CSR. *Public Relations Journal*, 8(3), 1-22.

--Waters, R. D. and Ott, H. K. (2014). Corporate social responsibility and the nonprofit sector: Assessing the thoughts and practices across three nonprofit subsectors. *Public Relations Journal*, 8(3), 1-18.

1. Watch Lecture.
2. Complete Discussion Post:
Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.
3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Eight: Global/International

Learning Objectives:

Explain the status of international public relations research in terms of trends, themes, and theoretical paradigms.

Identify opportunities for growth and change in global public relations.

Required Readings:

--Jain, R., De Moya, M., & Molleda, J. C. (2014). State of international public relations research:

Narrowing the knowledge gap about the practice across borders. *Public Relations Review*, 40, 595-597.
--Sriramesh, K. (2010). Globalization and public relations: Opportunities for growth and reformulation. In R. J. Heath (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of public relations*, (pp. 691-707). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

1. Watch Lecture.
2. Complete Discussion Post:
Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.
3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Nine: Leadership and Engagement

Learning Objectives:

Explain how leadership has been conceptualized and measured in public relations.
Conceptually and operationally define the concept of engagement in public relations and understand engagement's connection to organizational relationships, internal reputation, and effective leadership.

Required Readings:

--Meng, J. Berger, B. Gower, K. K., & Heyman, W. C. (2012). A test of excellent leadership in public relations: Key qualities, valuable sources, and distinctive leadership perceptions, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 24(1), 18-36. doi:10.1080/1062726X.2012.626132
--Men, L. R. (2015). Employee engagement in relation to employee-organization relationships and internal reputation: Effects of leadership communication. *Public Relations Journal*, 9(2), 1-22.

1. Watch Lecture.
2. Complete Discussion Post:
Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.
3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week Ten: Transparency and Authenticity

Learning Objectives:

Conceptually and operationally define the concepts of authenticity and transparency in public relations scholarship.
Compare and contrast theoretical understandings of transparency and authenticity with major themes and examples in practice.

Required Readings:

--Rawlins, B. (2008). Give the emperor a mirror: Toward developing a stakeholder measurement of organizational transparency. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 21(1), 71-99. doi: 10.1080/10627260802153421
--Molleda, J-C. & Jain, R. (2009). Testing a perceived authenticity index with triangulation research: The case of Xcaret in Mexico. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 21(3), 318-340. doi: 10.1080/10627260802520462

1. Watch Lecture.
2. Complete Discussion Post:
Respond to Instructor Prompt. Respond to another student's post.
3. Complete Reaction Assignment.

Week 11

1. Submit Final Presentation by March 24, 11:59 p.m., EST.

Week 12

2. Upload Recording of Final Presentation by March 29, 11:59 EST, and Submit Comment on Another Student's Final Presentation by March 31, 11:59 p.m., EST.

Disclaimer:

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, if anything in these plans changes, I will communicate that to you clearly and with advance notice.

University Policies

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams.

Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

University counseling services and mental health services:

****Netiquette: Communication Courtesy:**

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. <http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

Class Demeanor:

Mastery in this class requires preparation, passion, and professionalism. Students are expected, within the requirements allowed by university policy, to meet deadlines. Work assigned in advance of class should be completed as directed. Full participation in online discussion is expected.

My role as instructor is to identify critical issues related to the course, direct you to and teach relevant information, assign appropriate learning activities, create opportunities for assessing your performance, and communicate the outcomes of such assessments in a timely, informative, and professional way. Feedback is essential for you to have confidence that you have mastered the material and for me to determine that you are meeting all course requirements.

At all times it is expected that you will welcome and respond professionally to assessment feedback, that you will treat your fellow students and me with respect, and that you will contribute to the success of the class as best as you can.

Other Resources:

Other are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/> getting-help for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
 - <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/> 352-392-1575

- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please contact your program director and/or student support coordinator at distancesupport@jou.ufl.edu or visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.

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 at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>

University Policy on Academic Misconduct:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:

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. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. 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."

For more information about academic honesty, contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 352-392-1261.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All graduate students in the College of Journalism and Communications are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they know and understand the requirements of every assignment. At a minimum, this includes avoiding the following:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas or expressions of another as his or her own. Students must always credit others' ideas with accurate citations and must use quotation marks

and citations when presenting the words of others. A thorough understanding of plagiarism is a precondition for admittance to graduate studies in the college.

Cheating: Cheating occurs when a student circumvents or ignores the rules that govern an academic assignment such as an exam or class paper. It can include using notes, in physical or electronic form, in an exam, submitting the work of another as one's own, or reusing a paper a student has composed for one class in another class. If a student is not sure about the rules that govern an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to ask for clarification from his instructor.

Misrepresenting Research Data: The integrity of data in mass communication research is a paramount issue for advancing knowledge and the credibility of our professions. For this reason any intentional misrepresentation of data, or misrepresentation of the conditions or circumstances of data collection, is considered a violation of academic integrity. Misrepresenting data is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.

Any violation of the above stated conditions is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.

Students are expected to adhere to the University of Florida Code of Conduct
<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>

If you have additional questions, please refer to the Online Graduate Program Student Handbook you received when you were admitted into the Program.