

PUR 6005 Public Relations Theory

Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Linda Hon

Email: Lhon@ufl.edu

Phone: 352-294-2745

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 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.

Teaching Philosophy:

This course is designed for those working in public relations 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. Theory is fluid and full of debate and contradictions, which makes it interesting and exciting. 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.

You will read articles that trace the development of a major theoretical program of research and/or research articles about important trends in industry. When reading these articles, you should focus on the main ideas and takeaways at the conceptual level--not the particulars of the research methodology. And, for each week, we will connect the week's topic(s) to some "real-life" example.

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.

Course Structure:

- The course structure revolves around weekly **Discussions** that are designed to move you through various steps in the learning process—**Watch, Read, Connect, Discuss, and Respond (WRCDR)**—for each course topic.
- Since each weekly assignment is interactive, all of the course materials for each week’s **WRCDR** can be found under the Discussions tabs.
- For your convenience, I also have uploaded PDFs of all of the course readings under a **Pages** tab that you can access by clicking on **Pages** to the left of your Canvas screen and then clicking on **View All Pages** at the top of your screen.
- The instructor will post a brief video for each week under **Watch**. The purpose of these videos is only to provide overall context for the week’s topic. The videos are not an outline of the week’s materials.
- There is one additional video—an introduction to the course that reviews the syllabus. **Please watch this video and introduce yourself on the Canvas site under Discussions during the first week of class.**
- You are expected to read all the course materials each week under **Read** and review the material under **Connect**.
- Students will **Discuss** by answering the questions under **Discuss** by **Friday, 11:59 p.m., EST**. You will be graded according to how well you incorporate specifics from each video (**Watch**), the readings for each week (**Read**), and the (**Connect**) material that demonstrate mastery of the material. You will be evaluated on how well you address **all** of the materials from class that week by **explaining in your own words**. So, you should balance addressing all of the course materials for each week, not concentrate on, for example, one reading. **In the Discuss post, please do not include your own opinion, examples from work experience, or materials from another class. The Discuss post should be as close as possible to 750 words.**
- Students will **Respond** to another student’s **Discuss** post by **Sunday, 11:59 p.m., EST**. Address the prompts listed. **This post should be a minimum of 250 words. In the Respond post, you are encouraged to share examples from your work experience and/or relevant links to material outside of class.**
- You will receive **one overall grade** for the entire **WRCDR** each week. I will enter a numerical grade and leave written comments in Canvas. The numerical grade will be final **only after** you respond to my comments. Your response does not have to be long—please just acknowledge that you have seen and read my comments. Please complete your response within a week of receiving my comments.

Assessments:

The Mid-term and Final Assessment will be open-book, two-step assignments that provide you the opportunity to move through the final steps of the learning process—**Synthesize** and **Create**. Detailed instructions will be provided at the time.

Grading Rubrics:

For specific grading information, please refer to “**Rubric for Discussion Group Participation and Comments on Another Student’s Post**” under the Discussion tab for each week and “**Rubric for Mid-term Assessment**” and “**Rubric for Final Assessment**” under the Discussion tab for the weeks the assessments are assigned.

Deadlines:

The new lecture starts on Monday, but **WRCDR** materials 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:

Watch, Read, Connect, Discuss**Respond**

Mid-term Assessment Step 1
 Mid-term Assessment Step 2
 Final Assessment Step 1
 Final Assessment Step 2

11:59 p.m. EST Fridays
 11:59 P.M. EST Sundays
 October 6, 11:59 p.m. EST
 October 13, 11:59 p.m. EST
 December 8, 11:59 p.m. EST
 December 11, 11:59 p.m. EST

Grading:

Your work will be evaluated according to this distribution:

WRCDR (100 points each)	60%
Mid-term Assessment (100 points)	20%
Final Assessment (100 points)	20%

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%

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

Schedule

Week 1	August 20	August 25
Week 2	August 26	September 1
Week 3	September 2	September 8
Week 4	September 9	September 15
Week 5	September 16	September 22
Week 6	September 23	September 29

Week 7	September 30	October 6
Week 8	October 7	October 13
Week 9	October 14	October 20
Week 10	October 21	October 27
Week 11	October 28	November 3
Week 12	November 4	November 10
Week 13	November 11	November 17
Week 14	November 18	November 24
Week 15	November 25	December 1
Week 16	December 1	December 8

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 you are having technical difficulties with Canvas, there are other means to submit completed work. You may email .zip files or even links to Dropbox folders to me via UF email. Students should compensate for technical difficulties by not waiting until the last minute to submit work.

Emergency and extenuating circumstances policy: If you face an emergency, such as a major personal medical issue, a death in the family, serious illness of a family member, or other situations beyond your control, please notify me as soon as possible. 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 your classes. Your academic advisor is Tiffany Robbert, and she may be reached at trobbert@jou.ufl.edu .

Part I: Frameworks for Understanding Public Relations Theory

Week 1: Course Introduction

1. Watch Course Introduction Video: Explanation of course requirements and assignments.
2. Introduce yourself on the Canvas site.

Week 2: Historical Theoretical Perspectives

Learning Objective:

--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.

Week 3: Open-Systems and Excellence

Learning Objectives:

--Explain how empirical research is conducted and how theory is developed.
--Compare and contrast the symbolic-interpretive paradigm of public relations theory and practice with the strategic management paradigm.

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.

--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.

Week 4: 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.

--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.

Week 5: 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.

--Allagui, I. & Breslow, H. (2016). Social media for public relations: Lessons from four effective cases. *Public Relations Review*, 42, 20-30.

Week 6: Crisis and Corporate Advocacy

Learning Objectives:

--Understand Situational Crisis Communication Theory and its relation to organizational legitimacy.
--Identify and distinguish among the major types of corporate advocacy.

Required Readings:

- Veil, S. R. & Anthony, K. E. (2017). Exploring public relations challenges in compounding crises: The pariah effect of toxic trailers. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 29(4), 141-157.
- Gaither, B. M., Austin, L., & Collins, M. (2018). Examining the case of DICK's Sporting Goods: Realignment of stakeholders through Corporate Social Advocacy. *Journal of Public Interest Communications*, 2(2), 176-201.

Weeks 7 & 8: Mid-term Assessment

Instructions and grading rubric are found under the Discussion Tab, Mid-term Assessment.

Part II: Applications of Public Relations Theory

Week 9: 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.

Week 10: International/Global

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the issues related to standardization versus localization in global public relations and understand the steps in a decision-making model for localization.
- Based on the Global Capability Framework, understand the scope and role of the profession throughout the globe.

Required Reading:

- Molleda, J-C., Kochhar, S., & Wilson, C. (2015). Tipping the balance: A decision-making model for localization in global public relations agencies. *Public Relations Review*, 41, 335-334.
- Gregory, A., & Fawkes, J. (2019). A global capability framework: Reframing public relations for a changing world. *Public Relations Review*, 45, 101781.

Week 11: Feminist and Gender

Learning Objectives:

- Trace the development of feminist theory in public relations.
- Apply feminist theory to gender and work-life balance issues in practice.

Required Reading:

- Golombisky, K. (2015). Renewing the commitments of feminist public relations theory from Velvet Ghetto to social justice. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 27(5), 389-415.
- Gilkerson, N. Anderson, B. Swenson, R. (2018). Work-life balance 2.0? An examination of social media management practice and agency employee coping strategies in a 24/7 social world. *Public Relations Journal*, 12(2), 1-26.

Week 12: Leadership and Engagement

Learning Objectives:

- Explain how leadership has been conceptualized and measured in public relations and apply theory to the entrepreneurial context.
- Conceptually and operationally define the concept of engagement in public relations.

Required Readings:

- Men, L. R., Chen, Z. F., & Ji, Y. G. (2018). Walking the talk: An exploratory examination of executive leadership communication at startups in China. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 30(1-2), 35-56.
- Dhanesh, G. S. (2017). Putting engagement in its proper place: State of the field, definition and model of engagement in public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 43, 925-933.

Week 13: 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:

- Auger, G. (2014). Trust me, trust me not: An experimental analysis of the effect of transparency on organizations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 26(4), 325-343.
- Molleda, J-C. & Jain, R. (2013). Testing a perceived authenticity index with triangulation research: The case of Xcaret in Mexico. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 7(13), 1-20.

Week 14: Activism and Postmodernism

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the strategies of activism in the context of issues management.
- Evaluate the efficacy of postmodernism in the digital era.

Required Readings:

- Woods, C. L. (2019). From an “outside group” to a catalyst for corporate change: Examining activists’ legitimation strategies. *Public Relations Review*, 45, 332-347.
- Cisek, E., & Logan, N. (2018). Challenging the dialogic promise: How Ben and Jerry’s support for Black Lives Matter fosters dissensus on social media. *Journal of Public Relations Research* 30(3), 115-127.

Week 15—Thanksgiving

Week 16: Final Assessment

Instructions and grading rubric are found under the Discussion Tab, Final Assessment.

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 with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

****Netiquette: Communication Courtesy:**

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

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 professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-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.

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