



**College of Journalism
and Communications**
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

SYLLABUS – PUR4905 Competitive Reports – Fall 2019

Mondays period 5 (11:45-12:35); Room: Weimer 2050

Professor: Dr. Marcia DiStaso, APR, Associate Professor and Chair Public Relations Department

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Telephone: 352-273-1220

Office hours – 2085 Weimer Hall: Thursdays, 10:00 –12:00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description

In Competitive Reports you will keep up to date on current events and news related to public relations. The main focus of the course is to complete the competitive submission for the PRWeek Outstanding Public Relations Student Award.

Prerequisite: PUR3000

Course Format

The classroom is intended to be an interactive learning environment where sharing of opinions and ideas is encouraged. You must keep up with the reading assignments to fully understand issues and intelligently contribute to classroom discussion. It is in your best interest to fully engage yourself because what you learn will help you make important decisions in the future.

Required Readings

Students are expected to regularly read industry news, examples include: [PRWeek](#), [The Holmes Report](#), [IPR Research Letter](#), and [PR News](#).

Additional readings may be assigned over the semester.

Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should:

- Have a strong familiarity of current topics and events related to public relations.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the process of creating and evaluating effective campaign.

College of Journalism and 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.

Course Evaluation

The evaluation of coursework will be based on the student's performance in two areas, each of which constitutes a proportion of the final grade.

Your grade will be calculated by the following:

Report – 80%

Complete the report for the PRWeek Outstanding Public Relations Student.

Attendance & Class Participation – 10%

You are expected to be an active member of the class. It is important to remember that it is not enough to simply attend the class. You need to critically think about the concepts we discuss in class and be prepared to ask questions and share your views in class. We only meet once a week so missing class is a big deal!

The grading scale for the course is:

A 92-100%	C 72-77%
A- 90-91%	C- 70-71%
B+ 88-89%	D+ 68-69%
B 82-87%	D 62-67%
B- 80-81%	D- 60-61%
C+ 78-79%	E below 60%

Follows current UF policies (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>).

Availability

Please feel free to speak with me at any time during the semester about any questions or concerns you have. You can stop by during my office hours or make an appointment to see me at another time during the week. I'm also available by email and will try to get back to you within 24 hours.

Course Professionalism

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Carefully consider how you participate and the assignments you submit. You can use humor and demonstrate creativity, but think ahead to how it will reflect on you. Use your best professional judgment. Projects should not contain nudity, profanity, illegal activities or situations that would put you or others in danger. Students are expected to arrive on time, not leave early, and wait for the class to end before packing to leave. Cell phones and other electronic devices must not be used during class. In the event of an emergency, notify me at the start of class. Laptops may be used for assignments or as a note-taking device. Surfing the Internet, checking or sending email or texts, playing games, and other online activities not related to class are strictly prohibited.

Online Course Administration — e-Learning in Canvas

<http://elearning.ufl.edu/> will be used to administer the course communication, materials, and grades.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, 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.

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 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 ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/.

University Honesty Policy

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 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." The Honor Code (sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TA in this class.

Campus Resources

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit umatter.ufl.edu/ to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit counseling.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit shcc.ufl.edu/](https://visitshcc.ufl.edu/).

University Police Department: Visit police.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling [services career.ufl.edu/](https://services.career.ufl.edu/).

Library Support: cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. teachingcenter.ufl.edu/

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/

Student Complaints On-Campus: sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-codestudent-conduct-code/