

# PUR 3463 Sports Communication

Summer 2020

College of Journalism and Communications  
University of Florida

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Instructor: Eric Esterline  
Classroom: Online

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Office Hours: By Appointment

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Course Site: <https://ufl.instructure.com>

Course Text: -[\*Sport Public Relations, Managing Stakeholder Communication\*. G. Clayton Stoldt, Stephen W. Dittmore, and Scott E. Branvold. Human Kinetics, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2012.](#)

-[\*Media Relations in Sport\*. Brad Schultz, Phillip H. Caskey and Craig Esherick. FiT Publishing, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2014.](#)

\*\*\*Textbooks are **RECOMMENDED, NOT REQUIRED**\*\*\*

\*\*\*Additional Readings will be posted and available online.\*\*\*

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## Overview and Objectives

PUR 3463 offers instruction, analysis, and training in the principles and practice of public relations in sports organizations. Emphasis is on media relations and skills essential for sports communication professionals, including handling media interactions across platforms, problems, crises, and integration of positive communications strategies with strategic goals of sports organizations.

## Course Learning Objectives

After successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- (1) Demonstrate an understanding of the basic skills necessary to effectively carry out day-to-day responsibilities in sports communications and sports information professions
- (2) Demonstrate ability to generate content, including effective writing, from a sports perspective

- (3) Demonstrate ability to effectively integrate communications strategies with a sports organization's goals
- (4) Distinguish between sports communication perspectives and sports journalism
- (5) Distinguish in and among sports communication operations, issues and challenges in professional, intercollegiate and Olympic sports
- (6) Demonstrate understanding and skill strategies in handling negative publicity and communications crises in sports organizations
- (7) Demonstrate skill for assisting athletes, coaches, sports executives and owners to effectively handle media interviews
- (8) Demonstrate ability to manage use of social media by the organization, staff members and athletes
- (9) Demonstrate understanding of the ethics and values of sports communications

### **Office Hours**

Office Hours are scheduled upon an e-mail request, conducted online, and/or recorded for access by all (unless a private or in-person meeting is requested).

### **Course Communication**

Your instructor or TA will reply to e-mail as soon as possible but the maximum is 48 hours not including weekends or holidays.

### **Course Grades**

The Following table outlines the point-accruing components of the course. The total points earned from each component will be summed and divided by the total points possible in the course.

<b>Evaluation Components</b>	<b>Points Per Component</b>	<b>% of Total Grade</b>
Assignments (12)	15-20 pts each = 200 pts	18.2%
Writing Assignments (5)	50 pts each = 250 pts	22.8%
Online Discussions (10)	25 pts each = 250 pts	22.8%
Midterm (1)	100 pts each = 100 pts	9.1%
Sports Organization Project (1)	150 pts each = 150 pts	13.67%
Final Exam (1)	150 pts each = 150 pts	13.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1100 pts</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Assignment Descriptions**

**Team Assignments (12 assignments, 15-20 pts per assignment)**– Team assignments will

include research topics related to your final project. Each week you will be assigned a specific research task to complete towards building content for you final Sports Organization project and paper.

**Writing Assignments (5 writing assignments )**– Students will rely upon their research, analytical, writing, interviewing, and multimedia skills to produce press releases for six different sports events. Two of these must be attended live. Students will be graded on grammatical, form, multimedia, engagement, and story focus elements. Stories will be posted on the course WordPress site.

**Online Discussion (11 discussions, drop lowest)** - Through our class portal on Canvas we will hold online discussions surrounding various topics in sports communication. You will be required to post your thoughts and respond to classmates as well. There will be a rubric for you to follow to insure you participate properly.

Points	14-15	10-13	5-9	1-4	0
<b>Quality of Post (10 pts)</b>	Appropriate comments: thoughtful, reflective, and respectful of others postings	Appropriate comments and responds respectfully to others postings	Responds with average effort providing obvious information without further analysis	Responds, but with minimum effort. (e.g. "I agree with Bill)	No Posting
<b>Relevance of Post (10 pts)</b>	Post topics related to discussion topic; prompts further discussion of topic	Posts topics that are related to discussion content	Posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content	Makes short or irrelevant remarks	No Posting
<b>Contribution to the Learning Community (5 pts)</b>	Aware of needs of community; attempts to motivate the group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic	Attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely	Makes little effort to participate in learning community as it develops	Does not make effort to participate in learning community as it develops	No feedback provided to fellow student(s)

**Midterm (1 test; 100 points) and Final Exam (1 test; 150 points)** – Students will be tested on material covered in the course with an assortment of multiple choice, true/false and essay questions.

**Sports Organization Project (1 project)** – Students will complete a project detailing the communications operations of a professional baseball, basketball, hockey, football, or soccer organization. All organizations must be pre-approved by the instructor. Reports will provide a summary of

the staffing of the communications office along with responsibilities, examples of positive and negative publicity handled over the past two years pertaining to the organization, and examples of media coverage of the publicity. Students will be expected to provide an outside analysis of the effectiveness of communications operations with respect to the overall goals of the sports organization, incorporating concepts and principles from course discussions, readings and guest speakers. The project will require students to provide suggestions as to how the organization could have met those goals more effectively.

**Grading (grades are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number for grading purposes)**

93.5%-100%	= A	89.5-93.4 %	= A-		
86.5-89.4 %	= B+	82.5-86.4 %	= B	79.5-82.4 %	= B-
76.5-79.4 %	= C+	72.5-76.4 %	= C	69.5-72.4 %	= C-
66.5-69.4 %	= D+	62.5-66.4 %	= D	59.5-62.4 %	= D-
0-59.4 %	= F				

**Course Outline**

<b>MODULE WELCOME</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome, Introductions, Textbook, Syllabus, Canvas, ETC.</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 1</b> INTRO TO SPORTS COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro to Sports Communication and Relations</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 2</b> INTRODUCING SPORT PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introducing Sport Public Relations Lecture and Activity</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 3</b> INTEGRATING PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PR as a management tool, stakeholders and constituents, issues management, organizational reputation</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 4</b> DEVELOPING WRITING AND INTERVIEWING SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forms of Writing, Types of Releases</li> <li>Audience Awareness, Common Errors and Distribution</li> <li>Before and After the Interview</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 5</b> THE PRINT MEDIA, BROADCAST MEDIA, SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Print media history, relating with content providers for athletes</li> <li>Relating with content providers for audiences, old and new models of covering a story</li> <li>Radio and TV (national, regional and local)</li> <li>Social and New Media</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CoSIDA, Essential Skills</li> </ul>

SPORTS INFORMATION SPECIALISTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsibilities of SID, Pros and Cons</li> <li>Creating Promotional Guides</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 7</b> MIDTERM EXAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MID-TERM EXAM</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 8</b> EVENT MANAGEMENT AND MANAGING THE SPORT ORGANIZATION-MEDIA RELATIONSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lecture-The Basics and Mandatory Content, Production Schedule and Game Day Programs</li> <li>Game Management, Game Day Media Ops, Do's and Dont's in Press Box</li> <li>Press Conferences ,Media Days and Special Events</li> <li>Identifying influential media, serving media at events, developing media policy and maximizing media exposure</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 9</b> PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Stage of Campaign Development</li> <li>Continuing the Campaign and Ethical Considerations</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 10</b> CRISIS MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature of crisis and need to plan, preparing for crisis and managing a crisis, assessing crisis response</li> <li>Creating a Crisis Management Plan</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 11</b> EXPLORING UNMEDIATED COMMUNICATION TACTICS AND DEMONSTRATING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature of crisis and need to plan, preparing for crisis and managing a crisis, assessing crisis response</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 12</b> GLOBAL SPORT MEDIA RELATIONS & LAW AND ETHICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global Mega Events, Expanded Coverage, National Sports Orgs</li> <li>Law and Media Relations</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 13</b> FINAL PRESENTATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentations</li> </ul>
<b>MODULE 14</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FINAL EXAM</b></li> </ul>

## Policies

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### Late Work

You are responsible for all material covered or assigned. Your grade on late assignments will drop one letter grade for every day they are late. **If a technical problem occurs that prevents timely submission of an assignment, you should first contact your instructor and/or TA and then the UF Help Desk.** Follow up with an email to the instructor that includes an update and Help Desk Ticket #.

### Academic Integrity

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 specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. For more information visit the Honor Code web page at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> or contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

### **Students with Disabilities**

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

### **Course Evaluations**

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.aa.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.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### **Course Grading**

Students will be graded in accordance with UF policies for assigning grade points as articulated in the link that follows. <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### **U Matter, We Care**

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

**\*NOTE: Topic schedule subject to change based on guest availabilities and other factors. There will be no change in project due date or the midterm examination.**