



## SYLLABUS – PUR3801 (19676) PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY\*

Fall 2020 – ONLINE due to COVID-19.

We'll meet via ZOOM every Tuesday, 1:55 – 3:50 p.m. – with a break. Our original Thursday time (3:00 -3:50 p.m.) will now be delivered asynchronously via CANVAS – this will be a weekly discussion question and serve as group time for you to schedule as the semester moves forward. So, ZOOM on Tuesdays and online via CANVAS on Thursdays.

**Instructor:** Mickey G. Nall, M.A.M.C., APR, Fellow PRSA, Professional in Residence, Department of Public Relations

**Virtual Office hours:** by ZOOM appointment only this semester, please email for an appt.

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### Course Description

The development of skills in strategic public relations management based on an analysis of current and historical case studies.

Prerequisites: PUR 3000 Principles and PUR 3500 Research with minimum grades of C. If you do not have these prerequisites, you are advised to drop this class. Failure to do so or to obtain the instructor's permission to remain in the course may mean the departmental office will drop you.

\* This syllabus is subject to change as the instructor deems appropriate and necessary.

### Method of Instruction

This learner-centered course will primarily use class discussions delivered via ZOOM and CANVAS, service-learning projects, presentations, and hands-on instructions to engage in the learning process. We will rarely simply recount what is stated in the readings, but rather use them as a springboard for expanded discussion. We will emphasize *interactivity* and *collaboration* and classes will move in a seminar format much like the collaborations that operate in the professional world. This course is outcomes-based, and you will be evaluated

primarily on your ability to transfer the theory and knowledge shared in class into workable solutions. It is essential that you keep up with the reading schedule and come to class with the assigned reading's concepts in your memory and in your written notes. Not all of the materials that you read will be discussed or explained in class, therefore, if you need further explanations or clarifications please take advantage of office hours. If you have a problem, see the professor sooner, not later.

## **Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes**

As a result of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of public relations and its strategic process.
- Identify and explain the concepts and theories on which strategic public relations is based.
- Apply the knowledge and experience gained in this course as well as that from course prerequisites to the development of a service-learning project for a client organization, which should become part of students' professional portfolios.
- Write and formulate fundamental components of a public relations strategic plan, including situation analysis, objectives, and selection of strategies and tactics.
- Define publics appropriate for specific client organizations and appreciate differences that affect programming.
- Recognize the importance of primary and secondary research in public relations practice.
- Demonstrate understanding of conceptual foundation and professional skills competency related to strategic management process of the public relations function.
- Demonstrate proficiency in written and oral communications.

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 Books

Smith, R. D. (2017). *Strategic planning for public relations* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

## Additional Readings – as assigned.

## Course Evaluation

The evaluation of coursework will be based on the student's performance in four major areas, each of which constitutes a proportion of the final grade. These include weekly discussions and active participation (via CANVAS), two exams, and one team presentation. The area and allocations for each are as follows:

- **Weekly discussions beginning Week 3 (in CANVAS) – 10 points each discussion 20 % [100 points]; NOTE: These will be due each week they are assigned. See Course Schedule.**
- **Service-learning project 40% [200 points]**
  - Strategic plan 30% [150 points]
  - Recorded Presentation to the “client” 10% [50 points]
- **Examinations 40%**
  - First exam 20% [100 points]
  - Second exam 20% [100 points]

Grading for the course follows current UF grading policies for assigning grade points (see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>).

*The grading scale for the course is as follows:*

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

*Letter grades for this course will be based on the total points earned over the term. For further information about grades and grading policy, please consult:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>*

**(\*)** The two exams of the term will be held during the regularly scheduled class periods. Exams are designed to test the student's knowledge of the main ideas covered in each of the readings, handouts, and class discussions as specified in the syllabus. The exams will be multiple-choice and **non-cumulative**. Exam grades will be posted on Canvas.

### **There Are No Make-Up Exams**

If you miss an exam you will receive a grade of zero for that test. Documented exceptions for extreme circumstances will be considered and must be discussed with the instructor. Material turned in late will be penalized by one letter grade per day. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### **Assignments**

**Service-learning project: [Group project]**

#### **Situation Analysis and Strategic Plan - 150 points**

This is a summary of the analysis of the client organization, its main challenges, its existing communications, and its targeted publics. It should be supported by secondary research, including reviewing paid, earned, shared and owned media. The analysis should include a variety of reliable sources and corporate information. The main components of this analysis

are: problem/opportunity statement, background of the situation, background of the organizations (internal and external environments/impediments and public perceptions), existing communication techniques and efforts (strategic key messages), and the description of targeted publics. A SWOT analysis is encouraged. The situation analysis should be the base for this strategic plan. It must include a central theme, goals and objectives, the formulation of action and response strategies, messaging, and the selection of tactics. *Smith* (2017) should guide these parts of the assignment.

### **Final presentation – recorded – 50 points**

The presentation of the strategic plan to the “client” will last 20 minutes. This presentation includes the analysis of the organization, challenge/opportunity, and target publics, as well as the planned objectives, strategic messaging, and tactics.

### **APA Style**

All references must follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA Style). For those not familiar with APA, the following webpages might be helpful:

- <http://flash1r.apa.org/apastyle/basics/>
- <https://www.library.cornell.edu/research/citation/apa>

### **Course Professionalism**

The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school and professional decorum is expected at all times. Therefore, the student and the professor adhere to workplace norms for collegial and respectful interaction. Students are expected to arrive on time, not leave early unless prior permission is granted, and wait for the class to end before packing to leave.

Further, students are expected to conduct themselves in an honest, ethical, and courteous manner — with classmates, guests or the professor. **Eating, drinking, and privately chatting in class do not demonstrate professional behavior. Chatting while the instructor, the teaching assistant, or another student is talking is unacceptable behavior; such actions can result in being asked to leave the classroom and will result in a lowering of your class participation grade.**

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off completely during class; silent mode or vibrate is not considered off. In the event of an emergency situation, notify the professor at the start of class. **Laptops may be used only as a note-taking device. Surfing the Internet, checking or creating email, playing games, and other online activities not related to class are strictly prohibited.**

The conduct of students will be measured against what is expected of a public relations professional in an agency or in-house department. Students are encouraged to keep this in mind.

## **The Honor Pledge**

The University of Florida Honor Code applies to all work related to this class. All students are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. Students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, and participate in class discussions. Assigned readings should be completed prior to class, and students should be prepared to discuss the assigned material. Any material discussed in class and/or covered in the assigned readings may be included on examinations. Students will not be allowed to make up exams. Exceptions to this policy will be limited to documented exceptional (as defined by the professor) circumstances and at the discretion of the professor. Students arriving more than 10 minutes late to an exam will not be allowed to take the exam.

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 (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

Furthermore, you are obliged to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

## **Online Course Administration — e-Learning in Canvas**

<http://lss.at.ufl.edu/> will be used to administer the course communication, materials (e.g., PowerPoint files, additional readings, handouts, assignment guidelines, evaluation forms), and grades. For instance, an electronic file of this document is posted on Canvas. You can access the site by using your GatorLink username and password. Please check the site for announcements and/or threads of comments from classmates and the professor.

## **End of Course Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide feedback during specified times (usually last two or three weeks of the semester) on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

## Students with Challenges

We are committed to helping students with special challenges overcome difficulties with comprehending the subject matter, while abiding by the standard code of confidentiality. In order to address academic needs, we must be informed of the student's circumstance at the beginning of the semester *before* performance becomes a factor. This is not to imply that standards of fairness will not be generally applied when evaluating student work; only that reasonable and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that officially recognized challenges do not become a hindrance to a student's ability to succeed in this course.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (Disability Research 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 or teaching assistant when requesting accommodation. Students with challenges should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Phone number and contact site for university counseling services and mental health services: 392- 1575, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>.

**University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.**

## Other Important Notes

- The instructor reserves the right to make changes, if necessary, to the grading system, schedule, or other matters pertaining to the class. The students will be informed of these changes in a timely manner.
- The instructor may be reached via e-mail and the telephone, but please be aware that the professor will not be able to respond immediately to your communication. **As a rule, allow up to 48 hours for a response. Therefore, barring an emergency situation, it is advisable to contact the instructor well in advance of an exam or a deadline in order to give the professor adequate time to respond you.**
- **Students are not to consume food or beverages in the classroom or to use laptop computers for other than to take class notes or follow PowerPoint presentations. Mobile telephones or other electronic devices are not allowed to use during class.**
- Students are not permitted to bring guests to class unless special arrangements have been made with the professor prior to class.
- If you notice yourself having trouble in the course, it is crucial that you see the instructor immediately. Please feel free to approach the instructor or teaching assistant about any

concerns or comments you might have about this class. I will be happy to meet with you during my office hours, or by appointment.

- You are expected to arrive promptly for class, fully prepared to discuss the assigned readings. While I understand the problems created by a large campus, it is your responsibility to arrive in class in a timely manner. Anyone arriving more than 10 minutes late for class will be noted as absent, and his or her class participation grade will suffer as a result.
- Any evidence of plagiarism or cheating will result in an “E” for the course and possible disciplinary action.
- Do not submit the same work to more than one class without prior written permission from both instructors. Do not adapt work from another class for this class without my prior written permission. Do not adapt someone else's work and submit it as your own. This course requires original work, created at this time, for this purpose.
- Spelling counts. So does grammar, punctuation and professional presentation techniques.
- An assignment turned in passed the deadline will be penalized one letter grade for each weekday it is late. This is a business where deadlines count. You can't make excuses to your boss or a client if your work is late.
- In addition to the required and recommended readings, you are expected to maintain comprehensive class notes because class lectures often contain information that is not contained in the readings. You will be tested on this information on examinations.
- Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.



**Tentative Course Schedule and Reading – Zoom class meeting date is in the right-side column, all Zoom meetings occur on Tuesdays at 1:55 p.m.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Discussion</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignment Due/Notes</b>
<b>Week of August 31 – Sept. 4 WEEK 1</b>	Course Introduction; overview of the project	Syllabus & other course materials	<b>Zoom, Sept. 1</b>
	The strategic process	Smith, Introduction	
<b>Week of Sept. 7 – Sept. 11 WEEK 2</b>	Strategic process continued		<b>Zoom, Sept. 8</b>
	Analyzing the situation	Smith, step 1	
<b>Week of Sept. 14 – Sept. 18 WEEK 3</b>	Analyzing the situation cont.	Smith, finish step 1, begin step 2	<b>Zoom, Sept. 15 Discussion 1 via CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of 21 – Sept. 25 WEEK 4</b>	Analyzing the organization; Analyzing the publics; Guidelines for project.	Smith, steps 2, 3	<b>Zoom, Sept. 22</b> Assign Groups – identify group liaison and group judge for final presentations <b>Discussion 2 via CANVAS</b>
<b>Sept. 28 – Oct. 2 WEEK 5</b>	Establishing goals and objectives	Smith, step 4	<b>Zoom, Sept 29 Discussion 3 via CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of Oct. 5 – Oct. 9 WEEK 6</b>	Formulating action and response strategies	Smith, step 5	<b>Zoom, Oct. 6; Review for Exam 1 Discussion 4 via CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of Oct. 12 – 16 WEEK 7</b>	<b>EXAM 1</b>	Smith, introduction, steps 1 - 4	<b>EXAM 1 will occur via CANVAS on Tuesday, Oct. 13 at 1:55 p.m.</b>
<b>Week of Oct. 19 – Oct. 23 WEEK 8</b>	Developing the message strategy	Smith, step 6	<b>Zoom, Oct. 20 Discussion 5 via CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of Oct. 26 – Oct. 30</b>	Selecting communication	Smith, step 7	<b>Zoom, Oct. 27 Discussion 6 via</b>

<b>WEEK 9</b>	tactics		<b>CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of Nov. 2 – Nov. 6 WEEK 10</b>	Implementing the Strategic Plan	Smith, step 8	<b>Zoom, Nov. 3 Discussion 7 via CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of Nov. 9 – Nov. 13 WEEK 11</b>	Evaluating the Strategic Plan	Smith, step 9	<b>Zoom, Nov. 10 Discussion 8 via CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of Nov. 16 – Nov. 20 WEEK 12</b>	Group progress reports/discussion Exam 2 review		<b>Zoom, Nov. 17 Discussion 9 via CANVAS Exam 2 Review</b>
<b>Week of Nov. 23 – Nov. 27 WEEK 13</b>	<b>EXAM 2, Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 1:55 p.m. via CANVAS</b>	Smith, Steps 5-9	<b>Exam 2 on Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 1:55 p.m. via CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of Nov. 30 – Dec. 4 WEEK 14</b>	Strategic Plan discussion during Zoom – you are to complete your plan		<b>Zoom, Dec. 1 Discussion 10 via CANVAS</b>
<b>Week of Dec. 7 – Dec. 9 WEEK 15</b>	Strategic Plan discussion during Zoom – you are to finalize and RECORD your presentation		<b>Zoom, Dec. 8</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY, December 9 by 6 p.m.</b>			<b>STRATEGIC PLAN DUE recorded and delivered to Professor Nall</b>

Holidays:

Monday, September 7 – Labor Day

Homecoming: Oct. 2 – 3

Wed., Nov. 11 – Veterans Day

Wed. – Fri., Nov. 25-28 – Thanksgiving Holiday

Reading days: December 10 – 11

Finals week,

WEEK 16: Dec. 14 - 18