

Course Syllabus

 **Edit**

PUR4905

PITCHING PERSUASION

Date/Time: Online Course

Location: Virtual (instructor is based in New York City)

Instructor: Amy Summers

Email: amysummers@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Virtual via Zoom Video Conference on Wednesdays or Thursdays - Schedule here:
<https://calendly.com/amysummersnyc> (<https://calendly.com/amysummersnyc>).

Phone: 212-757-3419

Course Description:

Learn how to leverage your voice through the skill of pitching and persuasion to secure interviews, job opportunities, sell an idea, expand your network and more. Sharpen your soft skills in communications while building your confidence to work with professionals in the real world. This immersive course will be taught using smart voice technology, allowing you to prepare, practice and produce your pitch all through the spoken word. The ability to persuade is powerful. Perfecting your pitch is the first step.

Course Objectives:

During this course students will learn the art of pitching and persuasion for media relations or in any area of their personal or professional lives. By the end of the course students will have honed their skills in the following areas to improve pitching outcomes:

- Organization
- Research
- Relationships
- Communication
- Networking
- Presentation

- o Closing Ratio
- o Self-Motivation



Course Schedule & Assignments:

****All assignments due weekly by 11:59 p.m. on Friday****

Week 1 (Aug. 31-Sept. 4):

Organization: Dissect the Punctuation Problem and Clock It

Learn: If you are 2 minutes late for this it can cost you the opportunity. Learn to stop blame-shifting tardiness and arrive on time.

Week 2 (Sept. 5-11):

Research: Listen Before Pushing

Learn: Are you skipping the research step because you're in love with your content? Learn how to discover what your audience really wants.

Week 3 (Sept. 12-18):

Relationships: Hit the Pause Button on Gratitude

Learn: Technology has made everything in our lives quick and convenient, even our gratitude, but it can also diminish the human touch of showing someone how much they really mean to you. Learn how to celebrate a win by taking the time to show thoughtful gratitude.

Week 4 (Sept. 19-25):

Communication: Pick Up The Phone and Pitch

Learn: Technology has made it easier for everyone to avoid talking to each other, but pitching with your live voice is making a comeback. Learn how to perfect your phone pitching skills.

Week 5 (Sept. 25-Oct. 2):

Networking: Make Time for Old-School Face Time

Learn: With today's technology, do we need to make time for traditional face time? Learn how authentic face time can give you an advantage.

Week 6 (Oct. 3-9):

Presentation: What's the Pitch of Your Pitch?

Learn: This could be the most boring flash briefing or the one you simply can't miss. Tone and inflection matter in pitching. Learn how to get the outcomes you really want through your own voice.

**Week 7 (Oct. 10-16):****Closing: News Peg - Why Now?**

Learn: A solid news peg is important when pitching media but the same concept behind the news peg can apply to any pitch. Learn how to create urgency or relevance for a timely response.

Week 8 (Oct. 17-23):**Motivation: Embrace Rejection**

Learn: Not everyone is going to say, “yes,” so when they say, “no,” ask “why.” Learn how to use rejection to improve your pitching confidence.

Week 9 (Oct. 24-30):**Organization: Deadlines Keep It Moving**

Learn: If someone still hasn't gotten back to you, it might be your fault. Learn how to move your request to the top of someone's to-do list.

Week 10 (Oct. 31-Nov. 6):**Research: Remedy For: You Don't Know What You Don't Know**

Learn: Getting a degree in the school of hard knocks? Ask open-ended questions to improve in areas you didn't realize you needed.

Week 11 (Nov. 7-13):**Relationships: It's Not About Who You Know, It's About What You Know**

Learn: Your connections may not be as strong as you think. Learn how to set aside the relationship with the person you are pitching to get what you really want.

Week 12 (Nov. 14-20):**Communication: Say It In A Sound Bite**

Learn: It's becoming increasingly difficult to grab someone's attention in today's fast-paced world. Learn how to use sound bites in your pitch to get to the point quicker, but in a more memorable way to increase the likelihood of your pitch being reviewed.

Week 13 (Nov. 17-27): *This week will unlock early to allow extra time for completion prior to the holiday

Networking: Do More Than Click Connect

Learn: In case you didn't know, LinkedIn is not a dating app. Learn how to expand your LinkedIn network with the proper pitch.

**Week 14 (Nov. 28-Dec. 4):****Presentation: Prevent a Virtual Hot Mess**

Learn: It's my least favorite pitching platform and can be a disaster if you don't spend time on the prep. Learn how to create an ideal studio space for your next virtual pitch.

Week 15 (Dec. 2-Dec 11):*This week will unlock early to allow extra time for completion prior to reading days

Closing: Persistence Pays

Learn: Don't give up so easily. Master the pitching skill of persistence and your competition will be nowhere in sight. Learn how to develop a persistence pitch plan that keeps you top of mind.

Week 16 (Dec. 11-18):**Motivation: Dear Mentor or Mentee, Don't Lose Me**

Learn: I live for Pitch Reunions. Learn how a mentee, mentor relationship may possibly be your most valuable career asset.


Course Evaluation:

The evaluation of coursework will be based on the student's performance in four areas, each of which constitutes a proportion of the final grade. These include: completion of assignments; creativity; application; and presentation. The allocations for each are as follows and will be applied to each weekly assignment:

Completion of Assignments – 30% Your ability to complete weekly assignments are crucial to the successful completion of this course. Each assignment could take several days during the week to complete as they are designed to give you hands-on experience with weekly pitch challenges. Waiting until the last minute to complete weekly assignments is not advised. Late assignments that miss the weekly deadlines will not be accepted.

Creativity – 20% This course is in large what you make of it. The weekly pitch challenges are designed to help you immerse yourself in real life experiences to gain and strengthen skills you will need to become more confident and at ease with pitching and persuasion techniques. Creativity in how you find ways to apply the assignments for real world application will make up part of your grade.

Application - 20% Applying the soft skills taught in this course will give you an advantage in your future career. The weekly immersion recommendations will guide you to find real life experiences in which you can practice the skills taught throughout this course. A portion of your grade will

evaluate how well you immersed yourself into the weekly assignments to put the pitch challenge to the proper test. 

Presentation – 30% Although this is an on-line course, all assignments completed will be sent via video MP4 or audio MP3 files, and no written documents will be accepted, making each weekly assignment a virtual presentation. How professionally you articulate your answers to each week's assignment questions will be evaluated as part of your grade.

The grading scale for the course is:

A 93-100%

A- 90-92%

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%

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

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

Availability:

I'm excited to help mentor you through your pitching journey. All meetings will be conducted via video conference using Zoom. Virtual office hours are available to students on Wednesdays and Thursdays by scheduling on my calendar:

<https://calendly.com/amysummersnyc> (<https://calendly.com/amysummersnyc>)

Students Requiring Accommodations:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting

<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.



Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://gatorevals.aa.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://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>.

Course Professionalism:

The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school, and professional decorum is expected at all times. You must conduct yourself in an honest, ethical and courteous manner with other students and me, abiding by the UF Student Conduct & Honor Codes.

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 (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conducthonor-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.

Respect for Diversity:

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any of our assignment deadlines conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make accommodations for you. Furthermore, I would like to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) To help accomplish this, if you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official UF records, please let me know! If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to schedule a meeting with me. I want to be a resource for you. Although I am not physically based on campus at UF, I went to school at UF CJC too and I grew up in the

Gainesville area, so I'm very familiar with your current atmosphere and potential challenges you may be facing. I'm also very connected with many community and university leaders, and I'm a member of the UF CJC Advisory Council and serve on the national board of the University of Florida Alumni Association. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you feel your voice is not being heard.

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.

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, [352-392-1575](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), or visit [U Matter, We Care website \(https://umatter.ufl.edu/\)](https://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 the Counseling and Wellness Center website \(https://counseling.ufl.edu/\)](https://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 the Student Health Care Center website \(https://shcc.ufl.edu/\)](https://shcc.ufl.edu/).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website \(https://police.ufl.edu/\)](https://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; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website \(https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center\)](https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center).

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk \(http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/\)](http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu. (<mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu>)

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

[Library Support \(https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask\)](https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.




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

[Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information \(https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/\)](https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/).

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process \(https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/\)](https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/).

Course Summary:

Date	Details	
Fri Sep 4, 2020	 Week 1 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4287891)	due by 11:59pm
	 Welcome to Pitching Persuasion! (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4326967)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 11, 2020	 Week 2 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4303958)	due by 11:59pm



Date	Details	
Fri Sep 18, 2020	 Week 3 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4320910)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 25, 2020	 Week 4 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4320920)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 2, 2020	 Week 5 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4320921)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 9, 2020	 Week 6 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4320922)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 16, 2020	 Week 7 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4322841)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 23, 2020	 Week 8 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4322857)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 30, 2020	 Week 9 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4322860)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 6, 2020	 Week 10 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4322862)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 13, 2020	 Week 11 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4323049)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 20, 2020	 Week 12 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4323050)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 27, 2020	 Week 13 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4320923)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Dec 4, 2020	 Week 14 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4323063)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Dec 11, 2020	 Week 15 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4323052)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Dec 18, 2020	 Week 16 Application (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/405265/assignments/4323065)	due by 11:59pm