

**PUR 3801 Public Relations Strategy
Course Syllabus
Fall 2021**

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Course Logistics: Fall 2021, Class Number 19829, Section 72EC, 3 credit hours

Course Meeting Days/Times:

- In person Wednesdays 9:35-11:30am Weimer Hall 1078
- 1 credit hour online- asynchronous (detailed later in syllabus)

Office Hours*:

- In person- Wednesdays 12:30-2:30pm (Office)
- By appointment (either over Zoom or in person)

*Any changes to office hours will be announced ahead of time

For emails associated with PUR3801, please include PUR3801 Fall 2021 within the email subject for timely replies.

Course Description

This course deals with critical issues related to contemporary public relations practice and strategy. The class is based on the analysis of existing current and historical cases, in-depth discussion, situation analysis, and strategic planning. During the semester, students are expected to conduct a case study and present it to their peers. We will carefully examine the cases, policies, principles and trends of the public relations profession. This course will offer important insights into the development of public relations and communications strategies. The course is aimed at developing and enhancing both students' practical knowledge of the public relations field as well as critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Note: This class will primarily use class discussions, case studies, experiential learning projects, presentations, and hands-on instructions to engage in the learning process instead of simply recounting what is stated in the readings. While I will go over the readings and key points for each week, I will not be just going over the readings in detail. I expect that you will have read and prepared for class beforehand. I will be emphasizing interactivity and collaboration as much as possible to take the content out of the textbook and apply it to the real 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 prepared with the assigned readings' concepts in your memory and in your 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 the posted office hours. If you have a problem, see me sooner, not later.

Course Objectives

This course will help you to:

1. carefully examine the cases, policies, principles and trends of the public relations.
2. demonstrate a keen knowledge of theory and application of public relations through case studies and class discussions.
3. develop and enhance both the practical knowledge of the public relations field as well as critical thinking and problem solving skills.
4. conduct original case studies from conceptualization to final presentation of findings.
5. apply the knowledge and experience gained in this course as well as that from course prerequisites to the development of an experiential learning project for a client organization, which should become part of students' professional portfolios.
6. write and formulate fundamental components of a public relations strategic plan, including situation analysis, objectives, and selection of strategies and tactics.

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:

- apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located;
- demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts;
- present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work

COURSE FORMAT & CONTENT

This course has both an in-person component and online component. We will meet in person on Wednesdays this semester for two hours. You will also have about one hour of work outside of class in the manner of readings and a discussion post. There will also be an individual project, group project, and two exams throughout the semester.

It is very important for you to keep up with all the parts of the course. These will be key to successful completion of the course. I will generally use Canvas for all course communication and will make

announcements and reminders on Wednesdays during the in person component of class. Canvas can also remind you of upcoming due dates. Please check the site regularly to make sure you are keeping pace.

REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

Required Text: Smith, R. D. (2017). Strategic planning for public relations (5th ed.). Routledge.

Recommended: AP Stylebook (available online through [UF Library](#))

Additional Readings – as assigned, available on Canvas.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments must be “client-ready,” which means they have been proofread, reviewed and formatted so that they are ready to submit to your client – or in this case, to your instructor.

Everything you write for this course must be coherent, logical and carefully edited. Misspellings, syntax and grammatical errors are unacceptable and will affect your grade. This is a key skill for future public relations professionals.

Assignments will be completed either individually or as a group. Groups for the final project will be assigned for the semester.

Late Policy, Technical Issues and Make-Up Assignments

Manage your time wisely. Please do not wait until the last minute to start working on your assignments. Public relations professionals are often bound by tight, important deadlines and missing these can damage their and their clients’ credibility.

Please keep track of when assignments are due as they vary during the semester. Late assignments will not be accepted. It is your responsibility to make sure that your assignments are uploaded properly. Blaming technology is not acceptable. Additionally, blaming a group member is also not acceptable.

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 this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

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

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues must be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You must e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

For any technical issues, you may contact the UF Help Desk, which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

- <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>
- (352) 392-HELP (4357)

- helpdesk@ufl.edu

COURSE PROFESSIONALISM The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school, and professional decorum is expected at all times. Students will conduct themselves in an honest, ethical and courteous manner with students and the instructor, abiding by the UF Student Conduct & Honor Codes.

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in email messages, threaded discussions and chats. You may review the Netiquette Guide for Online Courses here: <http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The work you submit for this course must be your own. You must never use direct or paraphrased material from any source, including websites, without citation. Citation means providing attribution within the text for any ideas, insights or facts that are not your own. To clarify, you may not copy anything word for word from any source without putting quotes around it and attributing the source. This includes organizations' or companies' websites, internal documents and materials.

For this class, we will use the APA in-text citation method. This applies to all discussions, assignments and projects. You must also list your sources in a works cited for all assignments. Additionally, all work should follow AP Style.

All work submitted must be original work for this course. You may not submit anything that you wrote for another class, an internship, as a volunteer or in another academic or professional setting. You may not submit anything that was written for any purpose other than the given assignment. Plagiarizing another student's work or having another student complete the assignment for you is considered academic dishonesty.

I will handle any incident of academic dishonesty in accordance with the UF Honor Code that provides examples of unethical academic behavior, such as cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation and fabrication. Any case of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. I will follow university guidelines for any offense. 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 of this class.

You may review the Student Conduct & Honor Codes here: sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/

CONTACTING ME

I will be available to answer questions and provide feedback via email.

Please be aware that email is considered formal communication, and it is important to practice professionalism. Make sure that you do not treat email as text (i.e., don't use text abbreviations) and never email something that you would not say to your boss' face.

I generally check email once in the morning and once in the evening. I will respond within 48 hours excluding weekends. Emails sent after 4pm on Fridays and/or during weekends will be responded to the following Monday. If you do not receive a reply within 72 hours please resend your inquiry. Please do not email me with a question about your assignment within 24 hours of the due date.

If you want a prompt response, please do not email me in Canvas, use my email address listed at the top of the syllabus

If my posted office hours (either in person or via Zoom) do not fit your schedule you can contact me to set up a meeting outside of these times.

Please utilize proper etiquette when sending emails. This includes an appropriate "Subject" heading, proper greeting/salutation, grammatically correct message body, and proper closure. **I EXPECT professionalism from you. Inappropriate or etiquette-deprived emails will be returned with a suggestion to revise & resend.**

CLASS RECORDING POLICY

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture **does not** include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

COVID-19 Practices, Policies, and Expectations

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.
- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Following these practices is our responsibility as Gators.
 - Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
 - Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom.
- If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website](#) for more information.
 - Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.
 - If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.
- Continue to regularly visit coronavirus.UFHealth.org and coronavirus.ufl.edu for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

It is my intention that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives are served well in this course. I hope that the diversity the students bring to this class regarding our experiences and interests will be a resource, strength, and benefit, so we can learn from each other. That being said, in this course, please be considerate of the ideas of others, and treat everyone in class with kindness, tolerance and respect, regardless of how vehemently you disagree with their views. I intend for materials and activities in this course to be respectful and appreciative of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. If you have suggestions regarding how to improve the effectiveness of this course for you personally, or for other students, or student groups, please let me know. Overall, this semester I hope to create a welcoming environment that supports diversity of thought, perspectives, and experiences while also honoring your identities.

To help accomplish this:

- If you use a name or pronouns that differ from those that are in the official university records, please let me know so that way I can use them.

- If you feel like experiences outside of this class are affecting your participation in this course, if you feel comfortable please come talk to me. You can also submit feedback during the anonymous surveys I send out during the semester. If you prefer to speak to someone outside of the course, please reach out to the UF health and wellness or academic resources listed in this syllabus.
- Like many people I am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something is said in class (by anyone) that makes you feel uncomfortable, please reach out to me about it. Additionally if you do not feel comfortable informing me of the issue and discussing with me, I encourage you to seek out another trusted source (like an academic advisor, another trusted faculty member, or peer) so they can inform me of the issue.

STUDENTS WITH CHALLENGES

Students requesting classroom accommodation should first register with the Dean of Students Office's Disability Resource Center. The Dean of Students Office will provide an accommodation letter that must be presented to me when requesting accommodation. Students should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

To contact the Disability Resource Center, visit www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/ or call 352-392-8565.

COURSE EVALUATION POLICY

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 Grades

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 Canvas discussions, two exams, the individual project, and the group service learning project.

Discussion Posts 10% (100 points) 10 total

Individual SWOT Analysis 5% (50 points)

Service learning project 45% (250 points total)

- Situation Analysis 15% (75 points)
- Strategic Plan 20% (100 points)
- Presentation to the "Client" 10% (50 points)
- Peer Evaluation 5% (25 points)

Exams 35% (200 points total)

- Exam 1 15% (100 points)
- Exam 2 20% (100 points)

Final Grades

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 93-100%	C 72-77%
A- 90-92%	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%

Assignment Descriptions

This serves as a general description of assignments. More detailed descriptions and rubrics will be provided separately.

Discussion Posts

Each week, beginning in Week 2, you will be asked to participate in an online discussion related to topics for the course. You will read example case studies and other related materials each week and provide a response to the question or topic posed. Your post must be thoughtful and detailed. Posts must be at least 400-500 words. You should also post a response to 1 other classmate's post, though additional responses to others are encouraged. Responses should be around 250 words. Both posts are due by 10pm on Tuesday nights (day before our class meeting). Do not wait until the day before to post both parts of the assignment.

Individual SWOT Analysis

This project will be completed individually. You will choose any brand (for profit or non-profit) you would like and complete a SWOT analysis. For this assignment you will be completing secondary research about the brand you choose, paying attention to the internal and external influences of the brand and start thinking of where solutions can be developed for them. This will be approximately 3 pages single-spaced, Times New Roman 12, margins 1".

Service Learning Project (Group Project)

Situation analysis

Minimum five (5) single-spaced pages, Times Roman 12, margins 1". 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 and productive exchanges with your client. 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. In addition to the outline in Smith (2017), it is highly recommended to reach the internet for good professional examples of situation analysis.

Strategic plan

The situation analysis should be the base for this second written assignment. 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

The presentation of the strategic plan to the client will last 25 minutes. This presentation includes the analysis of the organization, challenge/opportunity, and target publics, as well as the planned objectives, strategic messaging, and tactics.

Exams

Two exams will be given 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 noncumulative. Exam grades will be posted on Canvas.

Please note that the exams will be taken online and will use the Respondus Lockdown Browser. Further instructions will be provided to you when appropriate.

Tentative Course Schedule*

**Schedule is subject to change, any changes will be announced*

Date	Class Topic	Readings	What is Due?
Week 1 August 25	Course Introduction; overview of the projects and policies	Syllabus	Getting to know you assignment- Due by Monday August 30 by noon
Week 2 Sept 1	The Strategic Process Project groups assigned	Smith, Introduction	Client Choices due by Tuesday Sept 7 Discussion Post 1
Week 3 Sept 8	Analyzing the situation	Smith Step 1	Discussion Post 2
Week 4 Sept 15	Analyzing the organization	Smith Step 2	Discussion Post 3
Week 5 Sept 22	Analyzing the Publics	Smith Step 3	Discussion Post 4
Week 6 Sept 29	Establishing goals and objectives	Smith Step 4	Individual SWOT due Discussion Post 5
Week 7 October 6			Exam 1 (Steps 1-4)
Week 8 October 13	Formulating action and response strategies	Smith Step 5	Discussion Post 6 Situation Analysis Due
Week 9 October 20	Developing the message strategy	Smith Step 6	Discussion Post 7
Week 10 October 27	Selecting communication tactics	Smith Step 7	Discussion Post 8
Week 11 November 3	Implementing the Strategic Plan	Smith Step 8	Discussion Post 9
Week 12 November 10	Evaluating the Strategic Plan	Smith Step 9	Discussion Post 10 Strategic Plan Due
Week 13 November 17			Exam 2 (Steps 5-9)
Week 14 November 24	Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class Meeting		
Week 15 December 8	Final Presentations		Final Strategic Plan and PowerPoints due by start of class

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, or visit U Matter, We Care website 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 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.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website 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.

Academic Resources 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.

Library Support: 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.

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.