

## **PUR 4243 Industry Perspectives - Retail Industry PR & Communications**

Instructor: Ian Bailey

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**Wednesday, 11:45am –**

**12:35pmET over Zoom - ALL CLASSES ALWAYS OVER ZOOM**

Zoom Link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/91466754625?pwd=0a9moZ1nfWwlTtzW72K2AxKkGHHK9m.1j>

**Virtual Office Hours:** By Appointment

### **Required Texts**

There are no required textbooks for this class. Reading assignments or videos will be provided through Canvas. Some requirements are listed below, but I may assign additional short assignments through Canvas on a periodic basis.

### **Course Description and Objectives**

The purpose of Industry Perspectives is to provide insight into a particular industry topic area or focus within public relations.

This course will focus on the complex and fast-moving world of retail, particularly consumer and lifestyle brands, and the role communications professionals can play in managing corporate reputation – either as a member of an organization’s C-suite/leadership team or as a direct support to the executive team. The course will focus on publicly traded companies and brands selling directly to consumers.

This class will also examine and evaluate the public relations strategies of companies that have successfully built trust with stakeholders, those that have lost it, and those that have successfully rebuilt trust after crises originating from within or outside a company (e.g., COVID-19, global supply-chain-issues, financial distress), or a combination of both.

Through examination of case studies, and table-top exercises, and participation from guests, who are leading experts from the retail industry, class participants will have the opportunity to discuss and identify potential risks and opportunities for retail brands/organizations and offer recommendations to manage reputation and build (or rebuild) trust.

Upon completing this course, students will:

- Understand the wide range of complexities of operating as a retailer and managing (a) consumer-facing brand(s) in a globalized supply chain world and 24/7 media and social media environment, and their potential impact on reputation, including:
  - Ethical and sustainable sourcing
  - The changing role of diversity, equity, and inclusion within a company and with external stakeholders, e.g., suppliers and customers etc.
  - Corporate social responsibility, as it relates to philanthropy, community affairs, non-profit partnerships, and giving back strategies

- Customer/public and staff interactions in a 24/7 livestreamed world
- Large distributed global employee populations with distinct cohort groupings and behaviors e.g., physical stores vs. distribution centers vs. ‘corporate’
- Non-governmental organizations (NGO) and activist/pressure groups
- Key industry trade bodies, metrics, and data
- Be able to identify and map out an organization’s key stakeholders, and prioritize and develop basic strategies and tactics for a multi-stakeholder approach comprising internal and external audiences for both proactive measures to enhance reputation and reactive to protect reputation.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply-critical thinking skills to recent brand and corporate crises in retail and consumer lifestyle brands
- Understand the key functional partners in a retail organization necessary for successful:
  - PR activities, including evaluating the merits of a standalone PR initiative vs. part of an integrated marketing communications campaign, and trend or ‘newsjacking’
  - Issues and crisis management
  - Internal stakeholder mapping for ongoing story ‘mining’
  - Building your ambassador bench strength
- Know the key elements for building credibility with and serving as a trusted advisor to CEOs and other C-level execs in a retail/lifestyle brand organization, where there may be competing functional and brand priorities and interests
- Demonstrate an understanding of the retail media landscape and the basics concepts of:
  - Developing an integrated media plan leveraging retail industry, consumer / product / entertainment, and business/financial media verticals
  - Crafting drafts of tactical deliverables for specific audiences e.g., media pitches – retail beat business/financial journalists vs. specialist trades media, corporate vs. brand social media posts, employee talking points, etc.
- Possess a foundational understanding of the key investment community stakeholders for a publicly traded retailer, and the basics of financial communications and investor relations, including preparing for quarterly earnings
  - Explore how external communications/PR can be a strategic lever to show progress around growth strategies in between the earnings cycle

### **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

### **Provisional Schedule**

*Further detail on topics to be added; order of weeks/content from February onwards will shift depending on guest availability for Industry Perspectives*

**Week 1:** Introductions and course overview/Intro to Comms & PR in Retail  
**January 15**

**Week 2:** The complex multi-stakeholder world facing retailers today  
**January 22**

**Week 3:** The complex multi-stakeholder world facing retailers today – Part II  
**January 29**

**Week 4:** Integrated communications and PR, and partnering with marketing  
**February 5**

**Week 5:** The role of proactive media relations and earned media  
**February 12**

**Week 6:** Playing defense: Issues Management and Crisis Communications  
**February 19**

**Week 7:** Internal communications in a global, multi-stakeholder organization  
**February 26**

**Week 8:** Setting the tone from the top: CEO Communications  
**March 5**

**Week 9:** Industry Perspective: Ethical and Sustainable Sourcing  
**March 12** Chief Sustainability Officer's Perspective

**Week 10:** Spring Break - No Class  
**March 19**

**Week 11:** No Class - Individual Assignments  
**March 26**

**Week 12:** Industry Perspective: Brands taking Stands  
**April 2** The Changing Role of Corporate Responsibility and DE&I - Chief Impact Officer's Perspective

**Week 13:** Industry Perspective: Investor Relations & Quarterly Earnings -  
**April 9** An IRO's Perspective on corporate storytelling

**Week 14:** Industry Perspective: A Strategic Communications Agency Leader's Perspective  
**April 16**

**Week 15:** Industry Perspective: An In-house Communications Leader's Perspective  
**April 23**

**Grading will be established based upon the following:**

**Attendance and Active Participation: 15%**

Attendance and active participation are mandatory. Students are expected to be engaged and actively participate in class discussions, including being on camera, particularly when guest speakers are spending time with the class. I may set the class short reading assignments, videos to view or research assignments that will inform our discussions and should be completed prior to class.

You are responsible for notifying me in advance of the cause of your absence when possible and, if it is due to illness, provide a note from your medical provider. For further information on attendance policy, please consult: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

**Individual Assignments: 30% (3 at 10% each)**

I will assign two brief (300-350 word) written assignments involving your personal selection of a retailer and conducting research on a given topic on two occasions during the semester when we do not have a scheduled class.

**Topic of the Week: 20% (5 at 4% each)**

I will post a statement or question on a current retail topic on the Canvas discussion board on by Wednesday evening after class that requires a 200-250 word response post by midnight the following Monday.

**Final Project (Overview): Case study: 35%** Develop a case study examining a business challenge or

crisis in a retailer of your choosing from a company that has made headlines this year related to their business practices, industry issues, or external events. Your case study subject should be approved in advance and will need to cover the following elements:

- a. Background and description of business issue
- b. Describe the impact(s) on the company
- c. Describe impact on/reaction from key audiences/stakeholders (internal and external)
- d. Evaluate the company's initial response (e.g., what worked, what didn't, was it successful overall?)
- e. Provide your Communications and PR recommendations for the company overall and specific next steps/tactics for engagement with three key stakeholder groups.

*N.B. You should include sources where appropriate - can be links to videos, articles, books, etc.*

**Grading follows current UF grading policies and the grading scale for the course is as follows:**

A 94.0-100%	C 74.0-76.99%
A- 90.0-93.99%	C- 70-73.99%
B+ 87.0-89.99%	D+ 67.0-69.99%
B 84.0-86.99%	D 64.0-66.99%
B- 80.0-83.99%	D- 60.0-63.99%
C+ 77.0-79.99%	E below 60%

**Key Course Policies**

**Late or Missed Work:**

Deadlines for each assignment will be given and students are expected to meet them. Late assignments will automatically lose a full letter grade for each day it is late (e.g. B to a C). Some consideration, however, might be given (at the discretion of the instructor) if there are extenuating circumstances such as prolonged hospitalization, family death, or extended individual sickness; however, you need to notify me before the deadline is missed, not after the fact.

**Attendance:**

This course focuses on class participation and group discussion. Your attendance is an important aspect of this course. Excessive absences will harm your grade. You are responsible for notifying me in advance of the cause of your absence and, if it is due to illness, provide a note from your medical provider. For further information on attendance policy:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

**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 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 me.

I will document and report all honor code violations, including cheating and plagiarism. The minimum penalty for a violation of the honor code is a zero on the assignment or exam but may be higher depending on the severity of the violation.

**Students Requiring Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center at <https://disability.ufl.edu/> 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.

**Availability**

Please feel free to speak with me during the semester about any questions or concerns you have by appointment and/or over email.

**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 via Zoom, not leave early, and wait for the class to end before signing off. Cell phones and other electronic devices may 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

**Course Evaluation:**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by

completing online evaluations here. 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 will be made available to students.

## **Standard UF Policy Information and Links**

### **Software Use:**

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

### **In-Class Recording:**

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 Policy on Course Syllabi 3 UF, Academic Affairs, July 28th, 2021 Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## **Campus Resources**

**U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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.

**On-Line Students Complaints:** View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.