PUR4243: Industry Perspectives -- Strategic Public Affairs
2025 Summer B: July 1 – August 8, 2025

Instructor: Marc Vielledent
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Office Hours: By appointment (Virtual or In-Person)

Course Schedule
Dates: July 1 – August 8, 2025
Class Meetings: Tuesdays & Thursdays | 1 hour each
Live Zoom Sessions:
- July 1 – Welcome: *The Digital Shift in Public Affairs*
- July 8 – *Strategic Narrative & Messaging in the AI Age*
- July 15 – *Guest Speaker: Speechwriting in the Modern Era*
- July 22 – *Crisis Communication in the AI Era*
- August 5 – *Final Presentations*

No Class:
- July 3 – Independence Day (Observed)
- July 31 – Final Prep Drop (Asynchronous)

Course Description
This immersive summer course explores the evolving field of strategic public affairs through the lens of AI, digital media, and institutional leadership. Students will study real-world cases, ethical dilemmas, and adaptive strategies in a communication environment increasingly shaped by machines, metrics, and misinformation.

Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will be able to:
- Analyze how AI and automation are transforming public affairs strategy
- Identify key audiences and stakeholder needs across digital platforms
- Evaluate risks and crisis scenarios in a hyperconnected world
- Apply storytelling, speechwriting, and influence principles in public leadership
- Develop communication strategies aligned with ethical and institutional values

Prerequisite: PUR3000 with a C or better

Required Texts/Readings

Any readings will be posted on Canvas or distributed in class, no textbook purchase required.

Weekly Topics & Format

Date	Topic	Format
July 1 (Tues)	Welcome: The Digital Shift in Public Affairs	**Live Zoom**
July 3 (Thurs)	No Class – Independence Day (Observed)	N/A
July 8 (Tues)	Strategic Narrative & Messaging in the AI Age	**Live Zoom**
July 10 (Thurs)	AI & Audience Segmentation: Who's Really Listening?	Asynchronous
July 15 (Tues)	Speechwriting in the Modern Era (Guest Speaker)	**Live Zoom**
July 17 (Thurs)	Campaigns, Bots & Influence Operations	Asynchronous
July 22 (Tues)	Crisis Communication in the AI Era	**Live Zoom**
July 24 (Thurs)	Ethics, Deepfakes & Boundaries of Trust	Asynchronous
July 29 (Tues)	Public Affairs in the Wild: Coalitions, Grassroots, and Influence	**Live Zoom**
July 31 (Thurs)	Final Project Drop – Watch Anytime, No Class	Asynchronous
August 5 (Tues)	Final Presentations	**Live Zoom**

Grading Breakdown

Component	Points	Weight
Participation & Engagement	50	25%
Weekly Discussion Posts	50	25%
Final Presentation	100	50%

Final Presentation

Students will deliver a ~10-minute presentation (4–5 slides + Q&A) on a real-world strategic communication challenge, integrating lessons on audience, AI, ethics, and institutional strategy.

- Presentation Date: August 5
- Prompt Drop: July 31 (Canvas)
- Format: Live via Zoom

Course Policies

- Attendance: Required for 5 live sessions. More than 1 unexcused absence is considered excessive.
- Professional Standards: Clear, AP-style writing and engaged discussion are expected.
- Discussion Posts: Required for each asynchronous module; due prior to the next class.
- Recordings: Only instructor-posted materials are permitted. No personal recordings without prior permission.
- Academic Integrity: University standards for honesty and conduct apply to all coursework.

Standard UF Policy Information and Links

UF Grading Policy
http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades (Links to an external site.)
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx (Links to an external site.)

Students Requiring Accommodations
Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure 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://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals (Links to an external site.). 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://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/ (Links to an external site.).

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-conduct-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 the instructor or TAs in this class.

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.

Student Privacy
There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see: http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html (Links to an external site.)

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness
U Matter, We Care:
If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc (Links to an external site.), and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)
Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or http://www.police.ufl.edu/ (Links to an external site.).

Academic Resources
E-learning technical suppor*t*, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml (Links to an external site.).

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. https://www.crc.ufl.edu/ (Links to an external site.).

Library Support, http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask (Links to an external site.). Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/ (Links to an external site.).

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall*,* 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ (Links to an external site.).

Student Complaints
Campus*:* https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf (Links to an external site.).

On-Line Students Complaints*:* http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process (Links to an external site.).