



SYLLABUS – PUR3801 PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY*

Fall 2025

Tuesdays, period 8 (3:00 p.m. – 3:50 p.m.); Thursdays, periods 8-9 (3:00 p.m. – 4:55 p.m.)

Classroom: ONLINE via ZOOM

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

Office hours: by appointment via ZOOM, please email for an appt.

Email (preferred): mickey.nall@jou.ufl.edu

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 in-person and via 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:

- 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”

Required Books

Smith, R. D. (2017). *Strategic planning for public relations* (5th ed.). New York: Routledge. Please be sure to get the 5th edition.

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 35% [175 points]**
 - Strategic plan and peer review 25% [125 points]
 - Presentation to the “client” 10% [50 points]
- **Examinations 40%**
 - First exam 20% [100 points]
 - Second exam 20% [100 points]
- **Attendance – 5% [25 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

Weekly Discussions, 10 weeks, 10 points each (via CANVAS) – 100 points.

These follow our lectures and readings as assigned in the syllabus. There are no make-ups on discussions. You will receive a weekly reminder on the day the discussion is available and then have 24 hours to complete the Discussion. No late work accepted.

Service-learning project: [Group project]

Situation Analysis and Strategic Plan - 125 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. You will also conduct a peer review – 25 points of the 125 points for the project.

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.

Exam 1 and Exam 2 – these two exams, 100 points each (total 200 points), are based on our text, lectures and discussions. They are multiple choice exams and will be held via CANVAS.

Attendance/participation (camera on) is MANDATORY and is taken in each class session (25 points).

Course total = 500 points.

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, discussions, 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>.

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](#).

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

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.](#)

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)

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/) 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.

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.
- 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.”
- 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.

Tentative Course Schedule and Reading:

Date	Class Discussion	Readings	Assignment Due/Notes
WEEK 1 Class Date: Aug. 21	Course Introduction; overview of the project	Syllabus & other course materials	
	The strategic process	Smith, Introduction	
WEEK 2 Aug. 26 & 28	Strategic process continued		
	Analyzing the situation	Smith, step 1	
WEEK 3 Sept. 2 & 4	Analyzing the situation cont.	Smith, finish step 1, begin step 2	Discussion 1 via CANVAS
WEEK 4 Sept. 9 & 11	Analyzing the organization; Analyzing the publics; Guidelines for project.	Smith, steps 2, 3	Assign Groups – identify group liaison for project. Discussion 2 via CANVAS
WEEK 5 Sept. 16 & 18	Establishing goals and objectives	Smith, step 4	Discussion 3 via CANVAS
WEEK 6 Sept. 23 & 25	Formulating action and response strategies	Smith, step 5	Review for Exam 1 Discussion 4 via CANVAS
WEEK 7 Sept. 30 & Oct. 2	EXAM 1 (Thursday, Oct. 2, via CANVAS), no ZOOM class on Thursday.	Smith, introduction, steps 1 - 4	EXAM 1 will occur via CANVAS on Thursday, October 2
WEEK 8 Oct. 7 & 9	Developing the message strategy	Smith, step 6	Discussion 5 via CANVAS

WEEK 9 Oct. 14 & 16	Selecting communication tactics	Smith, step 7	Discussion 6 via CANVAS
WEEK 10 Oct. 21 & 23	Implementing the Strategic Plan	Smith, step 8	Discussion 7 via CANVAS
WEEK 11 Oct. 28 & 30	Evaluating the Strategic Plan/Groups Progress Reports	Smith, step 9	Discussion 8 via CANVAS
WEEK 12 Nov. 4 & 6	Exam 2 review		Discussion 9 via CANVAS
WEEK 13 Nov. 11 & 13	EXAM 2, Thursday, Nov. 13 via CANVAS)	Smith, Steps 5-9	No ZOOM class on Thursday Nov. 13 – take EXAM 2 via CANVAS
WEEK 14 Nov. 18 & 20	Strategic Plan discussion Final instructions for completing project		Discussion 10 via CANVAS
WEEK 15 Nov. 25 & 27	Thanksgiving Week NO CLASSES	No classes	No classes
WEEK 16 Dec. 2	You are to finalize and RECORD your presentation by deadline, this Tuesday, Dec. 2nd, 11:59 p.m.	All items due Tuesday, Dec. 2 by 11:59 p.m.	STRATEGIC PLAN DUE recorded and delivered to Professor Nall

Fall 2025 Holidays:

Monday, Sept. 1, 2025, Labor Day
Friday/Saturday, October 17-18, Homecoming
Tuesday, November 11, 2025, Veterans Day
Monday – Saturday, November 24-29, 2025, Thanksgiving Break