

PUR 4243 - Industry Perspectives - Fall 2025

Course number: 20711
Time: Fridays, 4:05 PM - 4:55 PM (Virtual)
Prerequisite: PUR3000 with a C or better

Instructor: Elgin Watts II
Email: ewatts1@ufl.edu
Virtual Office Hours: By appointment, Mondays, Wednesdays through Thursdays

Required Texts/Materials

None! I may recommend free or easy to access articles relevant to a session but otherwise, no extra expenses required.

No extra materials or fees.

Course Description

In Industry Perspectives: No Expectations, you will learn about day-to-day experiences in the agency world, develop both soft and hard skills that are vital to succeed in the industry, and you will begin to think critically about the path you want to carve out for yourself.

Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, students should understand:

- Practical research skills in a working environment and creating client-worthy outputs
- The importance of timesheets, utilization rates, and administrative tasks
- Practical methods to connect with clients and coworkers beyond the work
- Strategies to successfully network and navigate the wider industry
- Balancing client work with non-client internal agency initiatives
- The importance of work life balance and how to operate as an individual

Key Course Policies

Helpful Tips for Contact

Email me any time to set up time for an office hours chat. Note that my schedule varies, but I will schedule any time to chat to the best of my availability. May be scheduled any time between 8 AM to 6 PM, pending my availability.

I will plan to respond to any email within 24 hours Monday through Friday, between 8 AM and 6 PM. If I do not get back to you within 24 please email me

again, especially if it is an urgent request or concern.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is not required and there will be no discussion points. Attendance is HIGHLY ENCOURAGED, as there will be a few classes during the semester that have related assignments based on the discussion that we had that day. Again, I do highly encourage you to attend every class as it will be easier to complete certain assignments if you attended the session that day.

Late or Missed Work

Every assignment will have deadlines so please do your best to meet them (usually the morning of a class session, but some deadlines vary; please see the schedule towards the bottom of the syllabus).

For every day late, a letter grade will be deducted. If you foresee an issue with getting an assignment in on time, please email me at your earliest convenience so we can make accommodations and avoid letter grade deductions. Health issues, family bereavement and more are real things, so please reach out if anything may affect an assignment.

We can discuss makeup work on a case by case basis. Again, please reach out to me as soon as possible so we can make proper accommodations.

Professionalism

You get what you put into this class. Please take the opportunity to connect with your fellow classmates and get to know them. They'll be your peers, professional connections, and you will likely cross paths again! I highly encourage you to engage in our riveting discussions, treat each other with respect, and show up as your best self when you can. If you only have 50% to give that day, give the full 50%!

University Honesty Policy:

Please see the following link for all academic policies and resources:

<https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>

If there are any questions, please reach out to me.

Grade Overview

Research Presentation - 50%

Final Project - 25%

Assignments - 25%

Grading Scale

93.0 - 100% A

90.0 - 92.9% A-

87.0 - 89.9% B+

83.0 - 86.9% B
80.0 - 82.9% B-
77.0 - 79.9% C+
73.0 - 76.9% C
70.0 - 72.9% C-
67.0 - 69.9% D+
63.0 - 66.9% D
60 - 62.9% D-
<60% F

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1 Aug 22	Course Overview + Intro to Research Presentation Assignment Get to know me and we'll get to know each other, I'll provide a general overview of the course, intro the live Research Presentation (Due Oct 22, 11:59 PM), intro the Final Assignment (Due Dec 10, 11:59 PM) and we'll preview our first module. <i>Assignment: Syllabus Quiz - Due Aug 29, 11 AM ET</i>
Week 2 Aug 29	Practical Research Pt. 1 Overview of some common tools and practical tactics to conduct research.
Week 3 Sep 5	Practical Research Pt. 2 Types of research reports, what they're used for, and common asks.
Week 4 Sep 12	Practical Research Pt. 3 Taking a request and turning it into a client ready output/how to determine the best way to display something. <i>Assignment: Using the sample account team research request email I will provide, come up with a professional response detailing the best way you plan to address the query and which research report you might utilize - Due Sep 19, 11 AM ET</i>
Week 5 Sep 19	Admin, Admin, Admin The importance of timesheets, billability and utilization rates, alongside common administrative tasks and other inner agency workings. <i>Assignment: Admin Quiz detailing concepts introduced in today's class - Due Sep 26, 11 AM ET</i>
Week 6	Industry Chat - Let's Talk A.I. OR "The Rise of the Clankers"

Sep 26	Open discussion on the use of A.I.. I want to hear your thoughts on its impact on the industry and if you think it will hurt or harm our field. <i>Assignment:</i> Find an article from an industry outlet or publication on the impact of A.I. in the industry. Write half a page agreeing or disagreeing on the article's perspective, and explain why you took that position as a future PR Professional - Due Oct 3, 11 AM ET
Week 7 Oct 3	Navigating the Workplace Learn how to get involved, connect with your coworkers and clients, and make an impact beyond just the client work. <i>Assignment:</i> How would you make an impact beyond just client work at your future agency? Make a creative, 2 - 5 minute video on how you envision making an impact in the future, or how you are making an impact now - Due Oct 10, 11 AM Pick any concept or method, but must include the following - • How you will make an impact • Why you want to make an impact in that way • What you hope to accomplish
Week 8 Oct 10	Navigating the Industry Get insight into navigating industry events, networking, and finding your own path to success. <i>Assignment:</i> Now that you have a better idea of navigating, choose the most interesting thing you learned during today's class. Draft a one slide digital vision board, explaining why you thought it was interesting and how you plan to make it happen. BE CREATIVE. Use fun images and show your personality - Due Oct 20, 11 AM (Extra time due to Homecoming!!)
Week 9 Oct 17	Homecoming (No Class!!!) - Mix and Mingle Event (Attendance Optional and no weighting on grade, but you'll get free food if you show up)
Week 10 Oct 24	Research Presentations Pt. 1 <i>Order of presentations to be assigned, decks/Powerpoints will be due to me before any presentations kick off</i> Reminder, the presentation you will be presenting during these next 4 sessions is due Oct 22, 11:59 PM

Week 11 Oct 31	Research Presentations Pt. 2 <i>Order of presentations to be assigned, decks/Powerpoints will be due to me before any presentations kick off</i>
Week 12 Nov 7	Research Presentations Pt. 3 <i>Order of presentations to be assigned, decks/Powerpoints will be due to me before any presentations kick off</i>
Week 13 Nov 14	Research Presentations Pt. 4 <i>Order of presentations to be assigned, decks/Powerpoints will be due to me before any presentations kick off</i> If we get through presentations quicker than expected, we can have a chat on the following: Industry Chat - Let's Talk Public Relations Open discussion on what Public Relations means to you. What did you know about it going in? Are you familiar with all the holding companies?
Week 14 Nov 21	Last Class!! "No Expectations" Roundtable with Current Industry Practitioners - TBA Based on Schedules) Please come with questions or be ready to participate to gain some valuable insights in what it's like to be in the industry right now. <i>Final Assignment:</i> After reflecting on the roundtable conversation and the class as a whole, create a deck around what "No Expectations" means to you. Come up with a creative theme to show off your character. Did the roundtable conversation and the course overall change your conception of the field? Did it confirm things you already knew? Share how you think it will impact your future career. Must be client ready. Due Dec 10, 11:59 PM
Week 15 Nov 28	THANKSGIVING BREAK (No Class!!!)