

PUR 4932

Special Topics: Entertainment Communications

FALL 2025

M 11:45-1:40 (periods 5-6), section ENTM

Class Location: Weimer Hall Room:1078

Instructor: Frank Sutura

Email: franksutura@ufl.edu

Office: 2093 Weimer

Office hours: Fridays 4PM – 6PM or by appointment

Phone: 352 392-0966

Prerequisite: PUR3000 with a C or better

Required Texts

All readings will be provided on Canvas. Selections will be from the following textbook:

Entertainment Public Relations: Communicating with Audiences Author: Carol Ames

I will provide or assign additional reading materials (e.g. media articles or book chapters) over the course of the semester. Generally, assigned reading (book chapters or other articles) in the syllabus should be read in advance of the class for which they are listed. Be prepared for the professor to call on you in that class to discuss the assigned readings. Quizzes will also be given based on assigned readings.

Course Goals

The goal of Entertainment Communications is to introduce you to the various aspects of the entertainment industry, with a focus on the role of **Publicity**, the term used in the industry for the role of *Public Relations, Press, PR* or *News*. You will be introduced to speakers who work in the entertainment industry, in a number of different roles, including Agents, Producers & Show Runners, Actors & Actresses, Publicists, and more. They will speak to you about their paths to success, how Publicity plays a role in their lines of work, and how you might apply their lessons to your future career in the entertainment industry.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completing this course, students will:

- Have a thorough understanding of the entertainment industry as a whole
- Understand the various roles that factor into a communications plan for a film, tv, radio, sports or other project or property
- Learn about the role of Publicity from various perspectives within the industry, hearing first-hand from current experts in entertainment, including successful Actors & Actresses, Show Runners and Executive Producers of hit television shows, Publicists from TV, Film and Sports, On Air Talent (hosts), TV and Radio Station Owners, Production Company Executives
- Apply what is learned over the course of the semester to create a publicity campaign for a film or television program

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

KEY COURSE POLICIES

Instructor Interaction

Please feel free to stop by my office during office hours (Fridays 4PM – 6PM) or make an appointment to see me. The best way to reach me is by e-mail franksutera@ufl.edu. I check my e-mail account regularly, but please do not expect a response by e-mail after normal business hours/over the weekend. If I have not written back within 48 hours, please send your email again. As my email is considered a state public record, I do not discuss grades or any student records issues via e-mail. Please schedule a meeting with me to discuss these issues. The classroom is typically not an appropriate place for these discussions.

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 the instructor before the deadline is missed, **not after the fact.**

Attendance

This course focuses on class participation and group discussion. **Your in-person, on-time attendance is an important aspect of this course. If you arrive later than 10 minutes into class it will be considered an absence.** Absences will harm your grade. You are responsible for notifying the professor **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, please consult: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

Email Policy

Happy to answer questions via email. We're all busy, so if you shoot me an email I will do my best to revert ASAP. Use common sense when emailing.

Academic Policies and Resources

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

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.

Professionalism

As PR students I expect you to maintain a high level of professionalism in all of our interactions. This includes being courteous and respectful to all members of the course. Being respectful includes making sure you are not distracting to others via your cell phone or computer usage, talking with others during lecture, arriving late or leaving late – practice your professionalism. We will be having a number of guest speakers that you will be engaging with. These are not only professionals, they are my friends. I therefore expect your utmost respect and attention while they are giving us their time.

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.).

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENT

Grading

I will be as fair and impartial as is humanly possible in the grading process. Each of you will be graded on the same criteria. Because of this, no extra work or special assignments will be given. Normally, by the time I return your graded assignment, I have looked at each person's work at least several times and feel comfortable with the grade assigned to it. Grades are earned; they are not gifts. Grades are awarded on the basis of quality, not the amount of time expended. I don't round up (e.g., if you get 89.9 points, you earn a B+ not an A-). I will keep grades posted on Canvas - it is your responsibility to check on your progress throughout the semester.

Grade components are

Attendance and Active Participation: 25%

- Attendance and active participation are mandatory. Students will be expected to participate in various interactive exercises and to be fully engaged at all times unless cleared in advance with the professor. Each absence after the drop/add period will result in reduction in the grade for attendance. After due warning, the professor may prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a lower or failing grade for excessive absences (please note: more than two unexcused absences during the semester will be considered "excessive absences." You are responsible for **notifying the professor 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, please consult: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.
 - Speakers Questions: You will be expected to both listen to and engage with our guest speakers. This includes preparing questions for them, real-time, as they speak. You will at times be called upon to ask directly to the guest speaker, time permitting.

Individual Assignments: 25%

- Individual assignments will provide an opportunity for you to explore various aspects of Publicity in the entertainment industry. These will include:
 - You will be required to submit 3 questions, based on any in-class presentations, to the Professor at the end of that class.
 - Brief reports on selected topics (selected in consultation with professor) – these will be based on topics discussed in class, takeaways from presentations by speakers, and readings.

- A brief precis on elements of assigned readings or topics covered in class
- Segments of your Final Project
- Internships / Career Research and Applications

Quizzes: 25%

- Quizzes will be designed to test the students' understanding of key concepts of entertainment communication essentials addressed in the course, textbook and/or in supplemental readings, and those discussed in class by the professor and/or guest lecturers.

Final Project: 25%

- You will be required to create a Publicity campaign for a yet-to-be-released Film or TV project. This will be based on what is learned, and to some extent, created, over the course of the semester.

Grading for the course follows current UF grading policies for assigning grade points (see [here](#)).

The grading scale for the course is as follows:

A = 93.0-100%
 A- = 90.0-92.99%
 B+ = 87.0-89.99%
 B = 83.0-86.99%
 B- = 80.0-82.99%
 C+ = 77.0-79.99%
 C = 74.0-76.99%
 C- = 70.0-73.99%
 D+ = 67.0-69.99%
 D = 64.0-66.99%
 D- = 60.0-63.99%
 E = below 60%

Further information about grades and grading policy may be found [here](#).

Tentative Course Schedule
*(*Subject to change based on availability of Guest Speakers)*

August 22 Episode 1 - Course Overview
Entertainment Publicity – An Overview

- Players
- Roles
- Terms
- Campaigns

Homework - Read Chapter 1 and 2 in Entertainment Public Relations

August 29 Episode 2 – Hollywood & The Importance of Publicity

- *Guest Speaker – Katy Farzanrad – Co Executive Producer - RuPaul’s Drag Race All Stars*

Homework – Read Chapter 3&4 in Entertainment Public Relations

September 5 Episode 3 On Air – Publicity and Hosting

- *Guest Speaker – Paul Costabile, Host of Beat The Clock!, E! News Correspondent, Host of NBC’s New York Live*

Homework – Read Chapter 7 in Entertainment Public Relations

September 12 Episode 4 - The Actor’s Experience - Press & Premieres

- *Guest Speaker(s) – Dajuan Johnson, Actor, BOSCH / Beth Dover Actress Orange is the New Black*
- *Quiz 1 - Topics covered in week 1 and Chapters 1, 2 & 3*

Homework – Read Chapter 11 in Entertainment Public Relations

September 19 Episode 5 - Video Game Publicity

- *Have Read: Chapter 9 in Entertainment Public Relations*
- *Guest Speaker – Ryan Schneider, Head of Franchise Strategy & Studio Relations, Insomniac Games*

Homework – Read Chapter 10 in Entertainment Public Relations

September 26 Episode 6 - Entertainment Marketing, Sponsors and Partnerships, Podcasts

- *Guest Speaker – Jeremy Delaplane – Vice President of Strategic Partnerships, iHeartMedia*
- *Quiz 2*

Homework – Read Chapter 12 in Entertainment Public Relations

October 3 Episode 7 - Publicity in Radio, Syndicated TV Shows and Cable

- Guest Speaker – Neal Ardman, President NIA Broadcasting, President, Broadcast Partners

Homework – Read Chapter 5 in Entertainment Public Relations

October 10 Episode 8 - Network Television Publicity

- Guest Speaker – Clay Newbill – Executive Producer and Showrunner - *SHARK TANK*

Homework – Read Chapter 9 in Entertainment Public Relations

October 17 UF HOMECOMING – NO CLASS

October 24 Episode 9 - Sports Publicity

- Guest Speaker – Chris Doering – ESPN Analyst, SEC Network Host, SEC This Morning on Sirius XM Radio
- Final Project Selection
- Quiz 3

Homework – Read Chapter 6 in Entertainment Public Relations

October 31 *HALLOWEEN* – Episode 10 - International Publicity

- Guest Speaker – Susanna Voets, International Publicity Lead, Apple TV

Homework – Read Chapter 8 in Entertainment Public Relations

November 7 Episode 11 - Motion Picture Publicity. Awards Season.

- Guest Speaker – TBD Motion Picture Publicist
- Final Project Q&A
- Quiz 4

November 14 Episode 12 - Final Project Presentations Part 1

November 21 Episode 13 - Final Project Presentations Part 2

Standard UF Policy Information and Link

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.)

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](#)

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 support, 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.).