

PUR3000 Principles of Public Relations – Spring 2026

Instructor: Ashleigh Kathryn White

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Office Hours (Virtual ONLY): By appointment only. See <https://calendly.com/ashleighkathrynw/15min> (Links to an external site.) to schedule an appointment. Note, I often add extra times to meet each week so just grab a time that works for you.

Course Description

In Principles of Public Relations, you will learn about the theory and practice of public relations, how public relations operates in organizations, its impact on publics, and its functions in society. You will study the professional development of the field; concepts, issues, and principles in the practice; and models and theories guiding the practice. You will apply course materials to public relations program planning and management by working in a group on a strategic planning project.

For those planning public relations careers, this course provides a foundation for the public relations major. The course also meets the needs of those planning other professional and managerial careers that can benefit from an understanding of public relations concepts and management practices. You must earn no lower than a "C" in the course to successfully complete the course and move on to other upper-level public relations courses.

Prerequisite: Sophomore standing

Course Format

This course will include only asynchronous components. Each week you will have readings, posted lectures to watch/listen to, and assignments. All of this comes together in your three exams and the large project due at the end of the semester. You must keep up with the readings to fully understand issues and intelligently complete your assignments and exams. It is in your best interest to fully engage yourself because what you learn will help you make important decisions in the future.

** This syllabus is subject to change as appropriate and necessary. Updates will be posted on Canvas.*

Required Book

Tom Kelleher, *Public Relations*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2026)

Additional Readings as Assigned

Students are expected to regularly read industry news, examples include: [PRWeek](#), [The Holmes](#)

[Report](#), [IPR Research Letter](#), and [PR News](#).

Additional readings may be assigned over the semester.

Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should:

- Have gained a historical perspective of the public relations discipline and profession.
- Understand the basic theories, principles, concepts and practices relevant to public relations.
- Understand key processes involved in public relations, including goal, research, planning, strategy, implementation, and evaluation.
- Gained an international perspective of public relations.
- Gained insights into the different types of public relations industries and careers.
- Demonstrated proficiency in written and oral communications.

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:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the US
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts; and
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

Attendance

This is an asynchronous class so we will not have an attendance requirement, BUT staying on top of the weekly materials and assignments is essential because the semester will go fast! Requirements for make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course follow UF policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Evaluation of Coursework

Evaluation of Coursework

The evaluation of coursework will be based on the student's performance in three major areas, each of which constitutes a proportion of the final grade:

Assignments: 20%

Public Relations is not something you can simply read about or attend a class and know. It takes a lot of work. Throughout this course, we will do a variety of assignments. This work will not only count toward your grade, but also help give you experience applying what you are studying. In public relations, deadlines are extremely important, so I typically do not accept late work. Each assignment is worth 100 points. Every assignment marked late in Canvas will be considered late. Don't put off your assignments!

Three Exams:

The exams will be over the modules listed. Each exam will be 50 multiple-choice questions. Exams are only open during a 24-hour window that starts at 12:01 am on the day it is due and will close at 11:59 pm that day. You can only take it once (no repeats). If you have any technical difficulties, please contact the Honorlock technical support and me immediately. Failure to take the exam on the day it is scheduled will result in a 10-point deduction for each 24-hour period it is late.

- Exam 1: 20% - Feb. 10: Closed-book and cover Modules 1, 2, 3 & 4 (Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4)
- Exam 2: 20% - March 17: Closed-book and cover Modules 6, 7, 8, & 9 (Chapters 5, 6, 7 & 8)
- Exam 3: 20% - April 21: Closed-book and cover Modules 11, 12, 13, 14, & 15 (Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13)

Public Relations Report: 20% - DUE April 12

This assignment is to research a particular organization (for-profit or nonprofit) for its public relations elements. This can be someplace you would like to learn more about to aid your career search or just someplace you are interested in. The report does a deep dive into the organization and its competitors. This is something you can start thinking about right away. Details will be distributed soon. Late Reports will not be accepted.

The grading scale for the course is:

A 94.0-100%	C 74.0-76.99%
A- 90.0-93.99%	C- 70.0-73.99%
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- 61.0-63.99%
C+ 77.0-79.99%	E below 61.0%

Follows current UF policies (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> (Links to an external site.)) Additional Syllabus Policies here: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>

NOTE: To continue taking public relations courses (PUR) you must pass this class with a C or better.

AI Policy

In this course you may be asked to use generative AI for some assignments. AI is commonly used in the profession, so familiarity with generative AI tools is important. However, do not let your creative thinking and editing skills lapse! When AI is allowed or encouraged in assignments, you will need to document how AI was used. This could include providing your original prompts, showing the editing that you did to the created content, or using appropriate citation of information obtained via generative AI. If you are using AI when not explicitly allowed, that is considered a violation of the honor code as you are presenting content as your own that was not fully created by you. There are various AI detection tools available (built within Canvas and externally such as ZeroGPT), and many AI platforms follow very formulaic response patterns. If I am concerned that your work is not your own, I will try to verify the originality of your work. If unable to do so, I may ask you to resubmit the assignment detailing how you arrived at your submission.

Availability

Please feel free to reach out to me any time during the semester. I'm available by email and will try to get back to you within 24 hours. If you would like to set an appointment, you can see times I have available here: <https://calendly.com/ashleighkathrynw/15min> (Links to an external site.)

Course Professionalism

Students are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional manner. 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.

Student Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share your accommodation letter with me and discuss your access needs, 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://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>. 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://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>.

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 the instructor or TA in this class.

Campus Resources

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](#).

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](#).

Course Schedule and Readings

MODULE 1 Week: 1/12-18	Principled Public Relations READ: Chapter 1
MODULE 2 Week: 1/19-25	PR Models Through the Ages READ: Chapter 2 Assignment ONE
MODULE 3 Week: 1/26-2/1	Convergence & Integrated Communication READ: Chapter 3
MODULE 4 Week: 2/2-8	Relationship Management READ: Chapter 4 Assignment TWO
MODULE 5 2/10	EXAM 1
MODULE 6 Week: 2/16-22	Research READ: Chapter 5
MODULE 7 Week: 2/23-3/1	Planning READ: Chapter 6 Assignment THREE
MODULE 8 Week: 3/2-8	Implementation READ: Chapter 7
MODULE 9 Week: 3/9-15	Evaluation READ: Chapter 8 Assignment FOUR
MODULE 10 3/17	EXAM 2
MODULE 11 Week: 3/23-29	Writing READ: Chapter 9
MODULE 12 Week: 3/30-4/5	Social Media & Mobile READ: Chapter 10 Assignment FIVE
MODULE 13 Week: 4/6-12	Legal READ: Chapter 11 PR Report Due
MODULE 14 Week: 4/13-19	Global READ: Chapter 13
MODULE 15 Week: 11/24-30	Issues & Crises READ: Chapter 12
MODULE 16 Week: 4/20-22	Careers READ: Chapter 14 Exam 3

I reserve the right to modify this timeline as appropriate throughout the course*