

PUR 3211– DIVERSE VOICES – SPRING 2026

Course number: 19132 & 20663

Tuesdays, 6:15 p.m. – 7:05 p.m. on Zoom (19132)

Tuesdays, 7:20 p.m. – 8:10 p.m. on Zoom (20663)

Prerequisite: PUR3000 with a C or better

Instructor: Robyn Hankerson-Printemps

Email: rohank@ufl.edu

Virtual Office Hours: Tuesdays, 8:10 p.m. – 10:10 p.m.

Required Texts

Diverse Voices: Profiles in Leadership Edited by Shelley & Barry Spector. It is available at [Amazon](#) or [PRSA Foundation](#).

Additional Readings as Assigned

Most weeks will have an additional reading, infographic, podcast or video that will serve as the prompt for that week's class discussion. Additionally, students are expected to regularly read industry news, examples include: [PRWeek](#), [The Holmes Report](#), [IPR Research Letter](#), and [PR News](#).

Course Description

Diverse Voices is a one-credit course that assesses the vital role of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in public relations. Public relations professionals play a key role in telling stories that shape the perceptions of stakeholder groups. In this course you will gain insight and direction on ways to help create and support a diverse, equitable and inclusive work environment. We will explore the ways in which emotional intelligence and cultural competency impact your ability to make decisions that reflect the core principles of DEI. Understanding the journeys of the leaders of color who have changed the face of leadership in public relations will help outline the obstacles to and benefits of DEI in the field.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completing this course, students will:

- Use and apply the terms diversity, equity, inclusion and access correctly
- Understand the practical application of DEI principles to public relations and communications, and the role of the public relations professional in support of these principles
- Identify and analyze the challenges and opportunities in public relations from the various narratives of diverse leaders
- Understand the current climate towards DEI in the public relations sector
- Begin to develop a competency for inclusive language and communication

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

Academic Policies and Resources

Please see policies here: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolices>

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 week 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 me before the deadline is missed, not after the fact.

Group assignment requires full participation. Because group projects depend on every member, failure to complete your assigned responsibilities, contribute meaningfully, or submit your portion of the project by the stated deadline will result in an automatic zero for that assignment.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Not submitting your section of the work
- Not communicating with your group
- Not participating in planning, meetings, or collaboration
- Submitting work that is incomplete, missing, or unusable
- Waiting until after the deadline to notify the instructor of issues

Group members will complete peer evaluations, which may also impact individual grades if lack of participation is documented.

Exceptions may only be granted for documented emergencies communicated to the instructor before the deadline.

Attendance:

This course focuses on class participation and group discussion. Your attendance is an important aspect of this course, and excessive absences will harm your grade. Each student is permitted one (1) unexcused absence without penalty.

For any additional absences, you are responsible for notifying me in advance of the cause of your absence and, if it is due to illness, providing a note from your medical provider. For further information on the attendance policy, please go [here](#).

AI Policy for Student Work

In this class, I want you to produce all your own work without generative AI's assistance. It is important for me to be able to ascertain what you know and can produce unaided on your own. The use of generative AI for your assignments in this class is 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 and if evidence is found that your work is AI generated I will submit your assignment as violating the honor code.

Grading and Assignments

Grading:

Students will be graded based on their performance in four major areas, each of which constitutes a proportion of the final grade. Your grade will be calculated by the following:

Company Assessment: 25%

Teams will work together to assess a company's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts from a public relations and communications perspective. Groups will analyze how the company communicates its DEI values internally and externally, how leadership and workplace culture support or undermine these efforts, and how the organization responds to DEI-related challenges or public scrutiny.

Teams will present their findings to the class, highlighting:

- how DEI shows up in messaging, culture, and leadership behavior
- gaps or misalignments between stated values and lived experience
- opportunities for more authentic, equitable, and inclusive communication and practice

Companies and groups will be assigned. Details will be distributed soon.

LinkedIn Post: 25%

You must publish one LinkedIn post reflecting on what you learned this semester about diversity, equity, inclusion, and public relations. Your post should move beyond summary and demonstrate personal insight, professional growth, and application to the PR field.

Your post must include:

- A specific learning or insight from one of the leaders featured in *Diverse Voices: Profiles in Leadership* Edited by Shelley and Barry Spector.

- At least one link to a relevant article related to DEI, PR, media, workplace culture or leadership (article may not be one of the assigned course readings).
- A reflection on how this learning shaped or challenged your thinking, and/or how you will apply it in your future career.

This post, which must be a minimum of 200 words, should be published during Week 16 and must include the following hashtag in order to receive full credit: #DiverseVoices. It is not required, but you may also tag Robyn Hankerson-Printemps, UF Public Relations Department and any people being quoted or referenced, where possible.

Participation: 25%

Active participation is required in weekly discussions in class or via the discussion board. You will be graded on how thoughtfully you participate and contribute to class discussions. Details will be distributed soon.

Attendance: 25%

You are expected to attend class. Attendance will be taken during each class.

Grading follows current [UF grading policies](#). *The grading scale for the course is as follows:*

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-	60.0 – 63.99%
C+	77.0 – 79.99%	E	below 60%

Tentative Course Schedule*

Week 1 January 13	Welcome & Introductions Read: Equity Vocabulary Quiz Book: Forward by Harold Burson
Week 2 January 20	Diversity & Representation in PR Read: The Business Case for Diversity and Inclusion in Public Relations Book: Kim L. Hunter, Michael Sneed
Week 3 January 27	Equity vs. Equality Read: Equity vs. Equality: What's the Difference? Here's How Experts Explain It Book: Rosanna Fiske, Nyree Wright, David Albritton
Week 4 February 3	Inclusion, Belonging & Culture Read: What Should Inclusion Really Look Like in the Workplace? Book: Del Galloway, Patrice Tanaka, Felicia Blow
Week 5 February 10	State of DEI in the PR Industry Read: How Agencies Spark DEI Change Industry-Wide Book: Torod Neptune, Rochelle Tillery Larkin Ford, Lisa Chen
Week 6 February 17	DEI in Media & Public Perception: Case Studies Read: "Lady Doritos"? Pepsi Wants a Do-Over Read: Google halts AI tool's ability to produce images of people after backlash Read: A "Big Brother" Alliance Could Make History. Not Everyone is Thrilled
Week 7 February 24	Building Belonging: DEI Strategies for PR Professionals Read: Creating An Inclusive Culture: Five Actionable Ways Leaders Can Foster A Greater Sense Of Belonging Book: Mike Fernandez, Terry Edmonds, Vanessa Wakeman
Week 8 March 3	DEI Backlash, Resistance, and PR Strategy Read: Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion in PR: Moving Beyond Buzz Words to Meaningful Change Book: Andrew McCaskill, Catherine Hernandez-Blades, Brenden Lee

Week 9 March 10	Group 1 Presentation
Week 10 March 17	Spring Break – No Class
Week 11 March 24	Group 2 Presentation
Week 12 March 31	Group 3 Presentation
Week 13 April 7	Group 4 Presentation
Week 14 April 14	Group 5 Presentation
Week 15 April 21	Group 6 Presentation Due: LinkedIn Post

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

Standard UF Policy Information and Links

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 go [here](#).

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:

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](#).