

**PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH (PUR6506, SEC 12DD)
FALL 2014**

**Tuesday, 5-7th period. 11:45-1:25, Weimer 3020
& 1:55-2:45, Weimer 2056**

Dr. Mary Ann Ferguson

maferguson@jou.ufl.edu

Public Relations Department

College of Journalism and Communications

Office: 2044 Weimer Hall, Phone: 392-6660, 376-0876

Office Hrs: T 10:30-11:30 a.m. & 2:45-4 p.m. plus by appointment

PURPOSE OF COURSE: The purpose of Public Relations Research for graduate students is to learn about the relationships among public relations processes and public relations research. The course provides an introduction to and experience with research methods in public relations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Requirements include: attending class, reading assigned materials, participating in class discussions, submitting assigned research and data analyses experiences, participating in a class research project and completing course tests.

EXCELLENCE IN CLASS PARTICIPATION (20 POINTS): Excellence in participation is evaluated by your attendance, participation in research experience opportunities, quality of work for the class research project, and quality of class participation.

Attendance (10 points): You are expected to attend class. There is no such thing as an “excused” or “unexcused” absence for this class. If you know you will be absent from class, you must let me know by e-mail before the class meets. ***You are allowed one absence without credit penalty.*** After that, without exception, you will lose 2 participation points for each absence beyond one, up to 10 points. Attendance will be taken regularly and it is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet. If you arrive late, you must take personal responsibility for signing the attendance sheet before you leave the classroom. If your signature is not on the sheet on the date of the class, you will be counted absent. There are no exceptions to these rules, so please don't ask.

Research Depth Experience (5 points): To earn these points you will submit a two-page paper by Nov. 18th. The paper will be a critique of a published research paper in an academic communications journal. You will evaluate the paper based on the principles for good research that you are learning in this class. (The paper should be single-spaced.)

Quality of Class Participation (5 points): The full five points for quality of class participation are given only to students whose attendance is exemplary and participation is exceptional. Consequently, only a small number of students earn all these points. You are expected to complete the assigned readings BEFORE the date indicated as you will be called on to discuss them in class. (Cell phones must be turned off in class; failure to do so will result in loss of opportunity for participation points.) Students who habitually come late to class should not expect to earn any participation points. Because this is a judgment of the totality of your performance, the instructor will make the judgment about the points you will earn for your quality of class participation at the end of the semester, after all other grades are calculated.

RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS PROJECT (35 POINTS): Each student will participate in a research project. The project product will count for 35% of your grade, with 10% coming from peer evaluations and 25% from your project report. Each person in a team shares the team grade, thus if the project report and the team's work earns a C, the entire team earns a C for the project regardless of individual efforts. The grade for the project comes from the instructor's evaluation of the quality of the team's work on the project and the quality of the report. The peer evaluations come from members of your own team and other teams, where appropriate.

EXAMS (45 POINTS): .This course has three in-class exams, all of which are based on lecture materials, class discussions, textbook readings, and other assignments. If you miss one of the exams, you may not take it later. These exams count for 45% of your grade.

DEADLINES AND MAKEUP TESTS: No post-exam (make-up) tests are given in this course. No late assignments are accepted.

| GRADING: | Points |
|---|-----------|
| 3 Exams—3 X 15 points each | 45 |
| Research & Data Analysis Project (Peer Evaluation 10% & Project Report 25%) | 35 |
| Attendance and Excellence in Participation | <u>20</u> |
| Total Points | 100 |

This course will be graded on the following grading system:

- A 92 and above
- A - 88-91
- B + 85-87
- B 82-84
- B - 78-81
- C + 75-77 (and as above for lower grades)

REQUIRED TEXT: *PRIMER OF PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH, 2ND ED., STACKS, DON W., GUILFORD PRESS, 2011, ISBN 978-1-59385-6*

Recommended Webpages: <http://www.instituteforpr.org/>, <http://www.instituteforpr.org/topic/research-methods-standards/>, <http://www.instituteforpr.org/topic/measurement-and-evaluation/>

COMPUTER SOFTWARE: For the data analyses part of this course you will use SPSS-PC (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and Excel. Both the College and CIRCA have SPSS/PC for Windows available for your use or you can purchase a student version from the bookstore. It is your responsibility to be sure you have access to a computer for the data analysis experience, so plan ahead.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Be sure you review the university policies on plagiarism and academic integrity. In this course each student is expected to complete the assignments on his or her own; **you may not submit someone else's work as your own for the Research Depth Experience.** For the exams you may not share information about the content of the exam with other students. No breach of these policies will be tolerated in this class.

| Date | Course Outline | Readings | Exams & Other Dates |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| <u>WEEK 1</u> Aug 26 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction, pick up syllabus. | | |
| <u>WEEK 2</u> Sep 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Objectives and Requirements | Ch. 1 Understanding Research: An Introduction with Public Relations Implications | |
| <u>WEEK 3</u> Sep 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a Research Problem Research Ethics | Ch. 2 Management of Research in Public Relations Ch. 5 Ethical Concerns in Public Relations Research | |
| <u>WEEK 4</u> Sep 16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Measurement Metrics Measurement Reliability and Validity | Ch. 3 Measuring Outcomes | |
| <u>WEEK 5</u> Sep 23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurement Levels Scales and Indices SPSS Inferential Statistics Data Coding | Ch. 4 Descriptive Statistical Reasoning and Computer Analysis | |
| <u>WEEK 6</u> Sep 30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content Analysis | Ch. 6 Qualitative Research Methodology-Content Analysis | Exam 1, Weeks 1-5, Sep 1, (Chs. 1-5) |
| <u>WEEK 7</u> Oct 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical Methodology Secondary Analysis Business Case Studies | Ch. 7 Qualitative Research Methodology, Historical, Secondary Ch. 8 Case Studies | |
| <u>WEEK 8</u> Oct 14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus Groups Participant Observation In-depth Interviews | Ch. 9 Methods of Observing People | |
| <u>WEEK 9</u> Oct 21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probability Sampling Non-probability Methods Sampling Strategies Panel and Trend Studies | Ch. 10 Quantitative Research Methodology: Sampling Messages and People | |
| <u>WEEK 10</u> Oct 28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey Research & Questionnaires Interviewing | Ch. 11 Quantitative-Survey and Poll Methods | Exam 2, Weeks 6-9 Oct 28 (Chs. 6-10) |
| <u>WEEK 11</u> Nov 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Causation Experimental Design Threats to Internal and External Validity | Ch. 12 Quantitative-Experimental Method | |
| <u>WEEK 12</u> Nov 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Processing and Analysis Descriptive Analysis Relational Analysis Inferential Statistics | Ch. 13 Quantitative Statistics: Advanced Inferential Statistical Reasoning and Computer Analysis | Research Journal Paper Critique, Nov 18 |
| <u>WEEK 13</u> Nov 25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing the Request for Proposals Writing the Thesis Proposal | Ch. 14 Writing and Evaluating the Request for Research Proposal | |
| <u>WEEK 14</u> Dec 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graphics in Research Presentations The Oral Presentation Writing the Report for Sponsors | Ch. 15 Writing and Presenting the Final Research Report | Exam 3, Weeks 10-14, Dec 2 (Chs. 11-15) |
| <u>WEEK 15</u> Dec 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Presentations | | Final Project Due 12/9 |

Additional Resources for Public Relations Research and Evaluation

- Babbie, E. R. (2003). *The Practice of Social Research* (10th ed.) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Broom, G. M. (1977). Coorientational measurement of public issues. *Public Relations Review*, 3(4), 110-119.
- Broom, G. M. (1983). An overview: Evaluation research in public relations. *Public Relations Quarterly*, 28(3), 5-8.
- Calder, B. J., L. W. Phillips & A. M. Tybout (1981), "Designing Research for Application," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 8, 197-207.
- Campbell, D. T. & D. W. Fiske (1959). "Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait Multimethod Matrix," *Psychological Bulletin*, 56, 81-105.
- Campbell, D. T. & J. C. Stanley (1963). *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Design for Research*. Chicago: Rand McNally (Bobbs-Merrill reprint).
- Caro, F.G. (1977). *Readings in Evaluation Research*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Cochran, W. G. (1977). *Sampling Techniques*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Cook, T. D. and D. T. Campbell (1979). *Quasi-Experimentation: Design and Analysis Issues for Field Settings*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Cronbach, L. J. & P. J. Meehl, (1955). "Construct Validation in Psychological Test," *Psychological Bulletin*, 52, 281-302.
- Emmert, P. & L. L. Barker, (1989). *Measurement of Communication Behavior*. New York: Longman.
- Ghiselli, E. E., J. P. Campbell, & S. Zedeck (1981). *Measurement Theory for the Behavioral Sciences*, W. H. Freeman & Co.
- Hage, J. (1973). *Techniques and Problems in Theory Construction*. New York: Wiley-Interscience.
- Hon, L. (1997). What have you done for me lately? Exploring effectiveness in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 9(1), 1-30.
- Hovland, C. (1959). *Reconciling Conflicting Results Derived from Experimental and Survey Studies of Attitude Change*. (Bobbs-Merrill reprint).
- Johnson, M. and Zinkhan, G. M. (1990). Defining and measuring company image. *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 13, 346-350.
- Keppel, G. (1982). *Design and Analysis: A Researchers Handbook*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- Kerlinger, F.N. (1973). *Foundations of Behavioral Research*. (2nd ed.) New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Kidder, L. H. & C. M. Judd (1986). *Research Methods in Social Relations*. (5th ed.) New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Kirk, R. E. (1982). *Experimental Design: Procedures for the Behavioral Sciences*. (2nd ed.) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Inc.
- Krueger, R. A. (1988). *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Lynch, J. G. (1982). "On the External Validity of Experiments in Consumer Research," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9, 225-239.
- McGuire, W. J. (1983). "A Contextualist Theory of Knowledge: Its Implications for Innovation and Reform in Psychological Research," *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 16, L. Berkowitz, ed., Academic Press, Inc.
- Milliken, G. A. & D. E. Johnson, (1984). *Analysis of Messy Data*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.
- Reeves, B., & Ferguson-(DeThorne), M. A. (1984). Measuring the effect of messages about social responsibility. *Public Relations Review*, 10, 40-55.
- Reynolds, P. D. (1971). *A Primer in Theory Construction*. Bobbs-Merrill.
- Roberts, D. F. & N. Maccoby, (1985). "Effects of Mass Communication," *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Vol. II.
- Rosenthal, R. & R. Rosnow (1975). *Primer of Methods for the Behavioral Sciences*. New York: Wiley.
- Rossi, P.H., & Freeman, H.E. (1993). *Evaluation: A systematic approach*. Newbury, CA: Sage.
- Stempel, G. H., III., & B. H. Westley (Eds.) (1981) *Research Methods in Mass Communication*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Tan, A. S. (1981). *Mass Communication Theories and Research*. Columbus, OH: Grid Publishing Inc.
- Warwick, D. & C. Lininger. (1975). *The Sample Survey: Theory and Practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

REQUIRED UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS FOR ALL COURSE SYLLABI

"Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation."