

**PUR 3000: PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS – Section 4059**  
**Course Syllabus – Fall 2012**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Period 4 (10:40 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.)  
Weimer 1064

**Instructor:** Weiting Tao  
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College of Journalism and Communications

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**Office Hours:** Wednesday – 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
Friday – 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
or by pre-scheduled appointment

**Appointments.** Please visit the instructor's office during designated office hours to discuss assignments, class-related materials, or any other academic concern. Or, schedule an alternate appointment by e-mail. When the instructor is out of her office, e-mail will be the best way to reach her.

**Purpose & Course Overview.** The course is designed to introduce the field of public relations to undergraduate majors and non-majors. For those majoring in public relations, this course serves as the foundation of the public relations curriculum. For those planning careers in other areas, the course provides an overview of public relations practice and will address the consistent use and value of public relations in influencing business decision-making on a daily basis in a variety of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations and situations.

**This learner-centered course** will employ various teaching strategies (e.g., lectures, class discussions, video clips, group activities, individual presentations, etc.) to **engage in the learning process**. We will rarely simply recount what is stated in the readings, but rather use them as a springboard for expanded discussion. We will emphasize *interactivity and collaboration* and classes will move in something of a seminar format.

This course is outcomes-based. You will be evaluated primarily on your ability to: 1) master the theory and knowledge shared in class, and 2) transfer them into workable solutions. Since there is no one single solution to any public relations problem, we will be looking at public relations from a variety of angles throughout the semester. Topics will include the development of the public relations field; the role of public relations in organizations and society, nationally and internationally; ethical and legal considerations involved in the practice of public relations; special topics; and contemporary trends and issues.

Guest lecturers will share the individual perspectives of public relations professionals across different practice specializations and industry arenas.

**Sakai System (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>) will be used for the course. All class materials, assignments, and student grades will be posted on Sakai.** Students will be responsible for keeping up with the class assignments and materials and monitoring their progress via student records on Sakai.

**Course Objective.** To attain knowledge and understanding of the following central concepts:

- Role and functions of public relations in an industrialized society
- Concepts of public relations, audience analyses and persuasion
- Basic process of public relations—research, planning, communication,
- Evaluation—and the use of communication strategies to achieve
- Organizational objectives
- Practical guidelines for utilizing written, spoken and visual techniques to
- Reach selected audiences
- Understanding of public relations activities in firms, corporations, social agencies, trade organizations, government, education, not-for-profits and sports and entertainment.
- Historical evolution/new directions for public relations practice, career opportunities in the field, and professional, ethical and legal responsibilities
- Develop good listening skills and increase problem-solving abilities
- Increase professional verbal and written communication capabilities
- Expand presentation skills experience

**Required Text & Materials.**

Wilcox, Dennis L., Glen T. Cameron. *Public Relations Strategies and Tactics*, **Tenth Edition**. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 2011.

**Reading Assignments.** While there is only one required text for the course, additional required readings will be assigned, as needed.

**Students may quickly fall behind and, therefore, are strongly advised to stay current with the reading assignments. Major reading assignments have been listed in the course schedule (see P. 7-8). Assigned readings should be completed prior to class; students should come to class with the assigned reading's concepts both in memory and in written reading notes, i.e., prepared to discuss them intelligently in class.**

Students, particularly public relations majors, should consider regularly reading the following publications: *Public Relations Tactics*; *Public Relations Strategist*; *PR Week*; *Communication World*; *Harvard Business Review*; *The Wall Street Journal*; *The Washington Post*; and *The New York Times*.

**Course Professionalism.** The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school and professional decorum is expected at all times. Therefore, **both the instructor and students adhere to workplace norms for collegial and respectful interaction**. Students are expected to **arrive on time, not leave early unless prior permission is granted and wait for the class to end before packing to leave**.

Further, students are expected to conduct themselves in an honest, ethical and courteous manner – with classmates and the instructor. Eating, drinking and privately chatting in class do not demonstrate professional behavior. Talking while the instructor or another student is talking is unacceptable; such actions can result in being asked to leave the classroom and will result in a lowering of your final grade.

**Cell phones, pagers, beepers, BlackBerry, androids and other devices, iPods, iPhones, iPads, etc. must be turned off completely during class; manner mode or vibrate is not considered**

**off. Laptops may be used only as a note-taking device.** Surfing the Internet, checking or creating email, playing games, reading, studying and other activities not related to class are strictly prohibited. Anyone who engages in these activities will be requested to leave the laptop in the instructor's care.

**The instructor reserves the right to penalize (via a 5-point final grade deduction for each occurrence) any student who disrupts class.**

### **Grading.**

The course grade will be based on **the following components minus any penalties incurred** as a result of failing to follow class rules:

- **Attendance, Participation, In-Class Quizzes:** 30%
- **Class Discussion Leader Assignments:** 20%
- **Exam One** (Chapter Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12 & other sources ): 25%
- **Exam Two** (Chapters 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21 & other sources): 25%

All grades will be based on the following 100-point scale:

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| 90 – 100 | A   |
| 80 – 89  | B   |
| 70 – 79  | C   |
| 60 – 69  | D   |
| 0 – 59   | E/F |

**Note: The instructor does not round grades up or provide extra credit other than participation in designated research opportunities.** If you are concerned about a grade received on a given quiz, exam or assignment, please prepare a short paragraph outlining your position; submit that paragraph to the instructor for review. You will receive a response within 7 to 10 days. The instructor will be available for a follow up discussion during regular office hours, if needed.

**Attendance.** Because what we do in class meetings is so integral to the course, **prompt attendance at all class meetings is essential.** Anything else will negatively affect your grade. Please be seated and prepared for class to begin on time. Lectures will not be postponed to allow for unpacking. Students may pack to leave only when the instructor has dismissed the class; premature packing is unacceptable and disruptive to fellow students.

**Please be aware that a student who attends class irregularly, comes to class late, leaves class early, fails to complete assignments on time or neglects assigned readings can normally expect to earn a low grade.**

**Missed Class.** Let the instructor know via email as soon as you realize you will need to miss class, preferably at the beginning of the semester, as it allows critical assignments or guest lectures to be properly planned.

**If you miss class for any legitimate reason, including sickness or university-related travel, you must contact the instructor before class meets (email is preferred) and, then, provide documentation of the reason for your absence at the next class meeting.**

Students missing class must obtain class notes from another student. Notes and/or PowerPoint slides are not available directly from the instructor. **PowerPoint slides will be posted on Sakai.**

**Participation.** Because this is a learner-centered course, **student participation in class discussions and activities is essential.** Individual assignments also contribute to this portion of your grade.

The instructor's role in this course is one of collaborator, facilitator, coach. In other words, share thoughts, suggestions, criticisms, disagreement...but, whatever you do, talk in class – one person at a time. This portion of the grading is subjective, and you can only earn full credit if you consistently contribute to the class. Keeping up with the required reading will make contributions in this area more meaningful. Your participation efforts should be steady throughout the course. **At the end of the course, participation grades will be based on instructor's assessments.**

**Quizzes:** There will be in-class quizzes. These quizzes will **NOT** be announced in advance. **Bring a #2 pencil with you to every class in case there is a quiz. Students arriving late to an in-class quiz will not be permitted to take the quiz and will receive a grade of zero.** Possible exceptions may include properly documented medical emergencies or university-related travel provided upon arrival in the class. Quizzes contains true/false and multiple choices questions

**Class Discussion Leader Assignments.** Class discussion leader assignments will focus on the topics covered in **Chapter 8, 12, 17 from your textbook and a workshop on creativity.** In other words, **there will be four discussion leader assignments throughout the semester (See p. 7-8, "Course Schedule" for their deadlines).** For each assignment, students will be asked to:

- Study and do research on specific topics chosen by the instructor (i.e., different students will be assigned to different topics, unless otherwise notified).
- Provide a detailed outline on what you have learned during your study and research on the assigned topics.
- Present and share your knowledge and thoughts on your assigned topics in class.
- Lead class discussion on these topics during your presentation.

Each student will be required to **print out and submit a hard copy of the topic outline for each discussion leader assignment. The outlines are due by the start of the class period on the date of the topic discussion. No electronic copy will be accepted.** Basic requirements on the format of the outlines have been stated in the following session of the syllabus. More requirements will be given by the instructor later in class. **Please keep the length of your topic outline within one page.**

Due to the limited time in class, it is not practical for each student to give presentations and lead discussions. Therefore, the instructor will **randomly appoint some students to present** a specific topic and lead class discussions. Students who are not chosen as the presenters/discussion leaders should actively participate in class discussion and share thoughts on the topics concerned. **Please remember the quality of your topic outlines, presentations, plus the degree of your engagement in class discussion will affect your grades.** Discussion leaders are strongly encouraged to use visual aids such as PowerPoint, Prezi, etc. to facilitate their presentations and class discussions. Each discussion leader should **keep their presentations (including class discussion time) within 10 to 15 minutes, unless otherwise specified.** Be professional and creative!

**Additional instructions regarding discussion leader assignments will be provided in separate handouts and will be posted on Sakai.**

**Deadlines.** Missing deadlines not only can damage a public relations or other professional's credibility, but also can lead to termination of a relationship with a client or to dismissal by an employer. Thus, **deadlines are treated seriously in this class. All assignments are due by the start of the class period on the date of the deadline**, unless otherwise instructed.

**ANY LATE ASSIGNMENT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL BE GIVEN A GRADE OF ZERO.**

**Format.** All written work submitted for this course must be **coherent, logical, and carefully edited**. Writing proficiency is necessary to pass this course. **Misspellings, syntax and grammar errors as well as other writing problems are unacceptable** in college writing. Do not submit materials with editing marks on them; all assignments must be **"client-ready."** Students may be referred to the Writing Center for more intensive work on specific writing skills.

Unless otherwise specified, **all written assignments must be typed with a 12-point Times New Roman font, single-spaced and framed by one-inch margins. APA style guidelines must be followed. Any written assignment that does not follow the format guidelines will not be accepted and will be given a grade of zero.** No additional consideration will be given to written work accompanied by complicated artwork or other such design elements. However, a professional appearance for written assignments is expected and additional design elements are always appreciated.

**Mechanics & Fact Errors.** Strong mechanical writing skills are expected from all students. Any assignment containing a **major factual error will receive a grade of 50**. A major factual error is defined as one that gives the wrong information to the audience, including such things as misspelling terms and expressions, or incorrect identification of key sources. Errors which do a minor disservice to the reader will be graded somewhat more leniently, but remember **all factual errors will be considered serious**.

**Exams.** There will be **two pre-announced exams** given during the semester, none are cumulative. The course is based on readings in the textbooks, class lectures, and discussions, students' presentations, videos, other assigned readings and lectures by guest speakers. Whether or not material in the textbook is discussed in class, students are responsible for all assigned readings. **Exam questions will come from all of these sources.** Exam questions will be in the form of true/false and multiple choices.

**On exam days, bring a #2 pencil and your UF student ID.**

**Students arriving late to an exam will not be permitted to take the exam and will receive a grade of zero.** Possible exceptions may include properly documented medical emergencies or university-related travel provided upon return to class.

**NO MAKEUP QUIZZES OR EXAMS OR EARLY EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN.**

**Extra Credit Opportunities.** Each student may be offered extra credit opportunities to participate in research studies staged in or outside the class period. The principal investigators of these studies will verify your participation. Descriptions of the research studies will be posted on Sakai, along with dates, times and locations.

**Academic Honesty.** The work you submit must be your own work and it must be original for this class. You must not use direct or paraphrased material from any other source, including web sites, without attribution. You cannot submit anything that a peer wrote for this class, you wrote for another class, at an internship, as a volunteer or in another academic or professional setting. The instructor will handle any incident of academic dishonesty in accordance with the University of Florida policy, such as the UF Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Guidelines that have examples of cheating, plagiarism, bribery, misrepresentation, conspiracy and fabrication.

Plagiarism (literary or artistic theft), copying someone else's work or other forms of dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any case of academic dishonesty will be considered grounds for an automatic failing grade in the course. University guidelines will be followed for any offenses.

**Having someone else do your work for you is considered academic dishonesty.**

When completing any of your written assignments for this class, it is important to clearly attribute where you obtained your information, whether it's from a web site or from an organization's internal or external document. To clarify, you **cannot** copy anything word for word from any source without putting quotes around it, even if it is given to you from the organization that is your client. This includes web site copy, mission statements, etc. In these situations, **you must paraphrase and cite the source as you write or simply quote it.**

**In short, please don't try to cheat, it's just too painful for both you and me!**

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. For the specifics of the Honor Code, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.html>.)

**Diversity Statement.** Effective public relations practice relies on the ability to recognize and embrace diversity in all its forms, including viewpoints. Throughout the class, students will have opportunities to see how different cultural perspectives influence public relations. You are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities in your own work and to learn from the information and ideas shared by other students.

**Students with Special Needs.** 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 provide a documentation letter to the instructor when requesting accommodation.** Please notify the instructor at the **beginning of the semester and schedule an appointment** to deliver the documentation letter and to discuss requests for special provisions.

### **Final Notes**

**The instructor reserves the right to make changes if necessary to the syllabus, grading system, schedule, and requirement for this class.**

## Tentative Course Schedule

*Course schedule is subject to change, as the instructor deems appropriate and necessary. Students should complete the reading assignments listed below prior to class.*

### **Week 1: Aug. 22 & 24**

Course introduction and overview of requirements  
Chapter 1: What is Public Relations

### **Week 2: Aug. 27, 29, & 31**

Chapter 1: What is Public Relations?  
Chapter 2: Evolution of Public Relations

### **Week 3: Sep. 3 (no class on Monday), 5 & 7**

No class on Sep. 3, Monday (Labor Day)  
Chapter 3: Ethics and Professionalism

### **Week 4: Sep. 10, 12, & 14**

Chapter 4: Public Relations Departments and Firms  
Chapter 12: Public Relations and the Law (Student Presentation)  
**Due on Sep. 14, Friday: Class Discussion Leader Assignment #1 (topics in Chapter 12)**

### **Week 5: Sep. 17, 19, & 21**

Chapter 12: Public Relations and the Law (Student Presentation)  
Chapter 5: Research

### **Week 6: Sep. 24, 26, & 28**

Chapter 6: Program Planning

### **Week 7: Oct. 1, 3, & 5**

Chapter 7: Communication  
Chapter 8: Evaluation (Student Presentation)  
**Due on Oct. 5, Friday: Class Discussion Leader Assignment # 2 (Topics in Chapter 8)**

### **Week 8: Oct. 8, 10, & 12**

Chapter 8: Evaluation (Student Presentation)  
Guest lecture

**Week 9: Oct. 15, 17, & 19**

Chapter 9: Public Opinion and Persuasion

Chapter 10: Conflict Management: Dealing with Issues, Risks, and Crises

**Exam One on Oct 17, Wednesday: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12 & other sources**

(For info on other sources, see P. 5, the “Exams” section)

**Week 10: Oct. 22, 24, & 26**

Chapter 10: Conflict Management: Dealing with Issues, Risks, and Crises

Chapter 13: The internet and social Media

**Week 11: Oct. 29, 31, & Nov.2**

Chapter 15: Radio and Television

Workshop on creativity (Student Presentation)

**Due on Oct. 31, Wednesday: Class Discussion Leader Assignment # 3 (Topics on creativity)**

**Week 12: Nov. 5, 7, & 9 (No class on Friday)**

Chapter 20 Global Public Relations

No class on Nov. 9, Friday (Homecoming)

**Week 13: Nov. 12 (no class on Monday), & 14, 16**

No class on Nov. 12, Monday (Veterans Day)

Chapter 21 Nonprofit, Health, and Education

Guest lecture

**Week 14: Nov. 19 & 21, 23 (No class on Wednesday and Friday)**

Chapter 17: Corporations (Student Presentation)

**Due on Nov. 19, Monday: Class Discussion Leader Assignment # 4 (Topics on Chapter 17)**

No class on Nov. 21 & 23 (Thanksgiving)

**Week 15: Nov. 26, 28, & 30**

Chapter 17: Corporations (Student Presentation)

Workshop on other topics in public relations

**Week 16: Dec. 3 & 5 (Dec. 5 is the last day of the class)**

Workshop on other topics in public relations

**Exam Two on Dec. 5, Wednesday: Chapters 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21 & other sources** (For info on other sources, see P. 5, the “Exams” section)