

## SYLLABUS

### PUR 3500 (7298)—PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH

**Instructor:**

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Doctoral Student  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

PUR 3500—Public Relations Research: A minimum of “C” in PUR 3000 and statistics; junior standing in the college. If you do not have these prerequisites, you are advised to drop this class unless you have permission from the instructor.

**COURSE FORMAT:**

First-hand experience through a series of team projects will be central to this course. Classroom time will be spent using a combination of lecture and activities. **A high degree of student interaction is expected. Assigned readings and videos must be reviewed to excel in this class.**

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To gain knowledge of the social scientific research perspective.
2. To learn the strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research methods.
3. To become aware of the different uses of research in public relations.
4. To understand, design, implement, and present an applied research project.
5. To become familiar with the SPSS software.

**COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:**

**Required:**

Wimmer, D., & Dominick, J.R. (2014). *Mass media research: An introduction (10<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Access to **SPSS data analysis software**: A free 14-day trial is available online for download, or a copy may be purchased at the Hub. Computer labs in Weimer Hall also provide access to SPSS, as does the UF Apps page: [info.apps.ufl.edu](http://info.apps.ufl.edu).

Access to **Lynda.com** tutorials: These video tutorials are free to access via [lss.at.ufl.edu](http://lss.at.ufl.edu) under “Teaching Tools,” although you must be logged into the system.

**Additional materials** may be found on e-Learning (**Sakai**) under “Resources.”

**Recommended but not required:** Austin, E. W., & Pinkleton, B. E. (2006). *Strategic public relations management: Planning and managing effective communication programs (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Lawrence Erlbaum.

### TESTS AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

The course grade will be determined on a 100-point scale as follows:

#### **Group Assignments (Individual grades weighted by team evaluations):**

- 15% Qualitative Research Report
- 15% Quantitative Research Report
- 20% Final Team Paper and Presentation

#### **Individual Assignments:**

- 20% Individual assignments  
(5% Casual Research, 10% Secondary Research, 5% SPSS Quiz)
- 10% Midterm
- 15% Final Exam
- 5% Attendance and participation

Grading for the course follows current UF grading policies for assigning grade points (see <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>).

**Grading Scale:** 91-100 = A, 89-90 = A-, 88 = B+, 82-87 = B, 80-81 = B-, 78-79 = C+, 72-77 = C, 70-71 = C-, 60-69 = D, 59 or less = E.

### MAKEUPS, LATE ASSIGNMENTS, AND EXTRA CREDIT:

Policy of the course is that **there will be no make-up exams, early exams, or extensions of deadlines.** Dates have been announced in advance in the Weekly Course Plan. Exceptions will be rare and made only in cases of extraordinary, documented circumstances, as determined by the instructor. No extra credit will be given for additional work.

### ABSENCES:

Attendance is mandatory. Each student is allowed three excused absences for the semester. **Absences beyond three—for any reason—will result in a reduction of the course grade at the rate of one point off the final course grade for each additional class missed.** Students are responsible for all class work missed. They should consult with classmates, rather than the instructor, to obtain information on lectures, assignments, and other matters.

### ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Students are expected to observe the University of Florida's policy on academic honesty in fulfilling all course requirements. The penalty for violation of academic honesty is an "E" for the course, at minimum.

**Academic dishonesty includes the following: use of materials from another author without citation or attribution,** extensive use of verbatim materials from another author *with* citation and attribution, and extensive use of one's own writing from past assignments or from assignments in other, current classes (called "double dipping").

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in Fall 1995. The Honor Code reads as follows:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the

Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. **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."**

For more information about the student honor code, violations, and sanctions, go to the Judicial Affairs Web site at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>.

#### **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTION:**

Lectures given in this course, including handouts and PowerPoint® presentations, are the property of the instructor and the University of Florida. Class lectures may not be recorded in any form without prior permission from the instructor and any guest lecturers that may speak to this class. Recordings, including class notes, may not be used for commercial purposes.

#### **CLASSROOM CONDUCT:**

The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school and **professional decorum is expected at all times**. Students are expected to arrive on time and not leave the classroom until announced breaks or the end of the class.

#### **OTHER RULES:**

**Cell phones must be turned off and put away during class.**

**Laptops and tablets may NOT be used during class, with exceptions noted in the syllabus.**

Students are urged to meet in-person if they have questions or are having problems. Office Hours are listed on p. 1 of the syllabus.

E-mail inquiries to the instructor should be formally written and must be limited to questions that are not answered elsewhere (e.g., the syllabus). In anything regarding team projects, **the account executive and appropriate group members must be copied on emails to the instructor.**

#### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office, which will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide the documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Requests should be made at a private meeting during the instructor's office hours.

#### **FINAL CAVEAT:**

This syllabus is subject to change as the instructor deems appropriate and necessary.

**WEEKLY COURSE PLAN:**

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Introduction to the course. What is media research?
August 25, 27, 29	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 1: Science and research
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Social research in the context of public relations
September 3, 5	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 16: Research in public relations "PR Measurement Standards" on Sakai > Resources > Supplemental Readings <b>Team assignments finalized; Team meeting times due September 5 (Participation)</b>
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Key concepts and definitions in social research
September 8, 10, 12	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 2: Elements of research <b>Team Member Introductions due September 12 (Participation)</b>
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Secondary Research
September 15, 17, 19	<b>Assignments:</b>	Become familiar with APA style, paying special attention to references: <a href="http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx">http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx</a> <b>**Please bring laptops and tablets to class all three days**</b> <b>Casual Research Report Due September 19</b>
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Drawing a sample
September 22, 24, 26	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 4: Sampling
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Qualitative methods: Focus groups, in-depth interviews
Sept. 29 Oct. 1, 3	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 5: Qualitative research <b>Secondary Research Annotated Bibliography due October 1</b>
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Qualitative methods: Wrap up focus groups; Start case studies, etc.
October 6, 8, 10	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 5: Qualitative research, continued <b>Qualitative Research Protocol due October 10</b>
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Review, midterm
October 13, 15		<b>***** Midterm October 15 *****</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Survey research methods
October 20, 22, 24	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 7: Survey research <b>Qualitative Research Report due October 24</b> <b>Midterm Team Evaluations Due October 24</b>
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Introduction to statistics: Describing the sample
October 27, 29, 31	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 10: Introduction to statistics Lynda.com: SPSS Statistics Essential Training 1, 2, and 5 <b>Survey Draft due October 31</b>
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Generalizing from the sample
November 3, 5, 7	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 11: Hypothesis testing Lynda.com: SPSS Statistics Essential Training 6 (recommended: start # 8 early)
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Relationships among variables; Comparing groups
November 10, 12, 14	<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 12: Basic statistical procedures Lynda.com: SPSS Statistics Essential Training 8

		<b>SPSS quiz / in class assignment November 12 – location TBA</b>
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Comparing groups with different treatments; Studying texts
November 17, 19, 21	<b>Assignments:</b>	Chapter 9: Experimental research; Chapter 6: Content analysis
		<b>Survey Data Analysis due November 21</b>
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Studying texts
November 25		Chapter 6: Content analysis, continued
		<b>Happy Thanksgiving!</b>
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Final Presentations, Review
December 1, 3, 5	<b>Assignments:</b>	<b>Team Presentations</b>
		<b>Final Team Papers due December 5</b>
		<b>Final Team Evaluations due December 5</b>
<b>Week 16</b>	<b>Topics:</b>	Review, Final Exam
December 8, 10		***** <b>Final Exam December 10</b> *****

*This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.*

*Portions of this syllabus were adapted from materials created by Dr. Kathleen Kelly and Dr. Juan-Carlos Molleda*