

PUR 3801: Public Relations Strategies
Section 6286 – Course Syllabus – Spring 2013
Monday/Wednesday/Friday – Period 6 (12:50 pm to 1:40 pm)
WEIMER 1076

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Office Hours: Monday – (1:40 pm- 3:00 pm)
Wednesday –(1:40 pm -3:00 pm)
or by pre-scheduled appointment

Course Overview

In this course, you will master the core elements of strategic public relations through case studies and the application of theory. I will teach this course from the perspective of a practitioner and make use of extensive real-life examples. As much as is possible in a classroom environment, I will try to make the lessons relevant to the contemporary practice of public relations and public interest communications. This course represents an opportunity to learn the fundamental and critical functions that are part of effective communications. This course is centered on you and your learning needs, with ample time and opportunity for hands-on learning.

The course specifically supports 7 of the 12 professional values and competencies required of graduates by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC):

- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to public relations
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles, and work ethically;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by appropriate methods;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the public relations profession
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.

Appointments

Please stop by during my office hours to discuss assignments, materials or other concerns related to the course. You may also schedule a meeting with me via email. My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus. I have an open door policy to meet with my students!

Course Professionalism

This College is a professional school and professional decorum is expected at all times. I expect you to adhere to workplace norms of collegial and respectful interaction. That specifically means you will arrive on time, not speak when another student or the instructor are speaking or use cell phones, lap tops or other electronic devices for anything other than note taking.

Diversity Statement. Effective public relations practice relies on the ability to recognize and embrace diversity in all its forms, including viewpoints. Throughout the course, students will have opportunities to see how different life experiences and cultural perspectives influence public relations practice. 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 submit a documentation letter to the professor when requesting accommodation. Please notify me at the beginning of the semester if you would like to discuss requests for special provisions.

Required Texts. There are two required texts for this course:

Duarte, N. (2010). *Resonate: Present visual stories that transform audiences*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publications.

Smith, R. (2009). *Strategic planning for public relations*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Grading Policy

Missed or late assignments will not be accepted. Quizzes/exams may not be made up. If you miss a quiz or exam, you will receive a zero for that grade.

****Grades are not negotiable.**

Attendance and Class Participation 10 percent

Attendance and class participation counts toward 10 percent of your final grade. Students are expected to arrive to class on time. Arriving five minutes after the start of class or leaving early will result in the lowering of your grade. There are three un-penalized absences for this class. Beyond the first three, each unexcused absence will result in a loss of one percentage grade for each unexcused absence from your total attendance/participation grade. However, perfect attendance does not ensure that you will receive the full 10 percent for class participation. You must be fully present during class, contribute to discussions and demonstrate through your comments that you have read and understood assigned readings and benefited from previous class discussions. It is your responsibility to sign in. If your signature is not on the sheet for that day, you will be marked absent.

Signing in another student on the attendance sheet is a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.

Quizzes 10 percent

I will conduct five quizzes on assigned readings. These quizzes are noted on the syllabus. Each quiz grade will be worth two percent - for a total of 10 percent.

Presentation 20 percent

Students will be assigned to small teams for their presentation; the number and size of teams will be determined once the final class size is known after the drop/add period. Additionally, students will be required to submit a collaborative executive summary on the day of the presentation.

Students are expected to rate their team members' performance quality and professionalism after the submission of the written report. Peer evaluations will weigh heavily in determining individual grades for the project. Thus, every team member does not necessarily receive the same grade for the case analysis assignment. A detailed assignment sheet and grading criteria will be provided after teams are formed.

Assignments 20 percent

There will be a total of four assignments due at the beginning of the assigned class period. Each assignment will be worth five percent of your final grade totaling 20 percent. Further detailed instructions regarding each assignment will be distributed and discussed during class.

Exams 40 percent

The mid-term and final exam for this class combined will equal 40 percent of your grade. The exams will cover all course readings (textbook), handouts, class discussion, guest speakers, and student presentations. Exam grades will be posted on eLearning.

Make-up exams must be approved and scheduled in advance and are only available for students who provide documented and acceptable excuses. Failure to provide a documented excuse prior to the exam date will result in a ZERO grade on the exam.

Grading

Each assignment will be graded on a 100-point scale and weighted accordingly. I will first grade for content, and then subtract points for errors in style, grammar and factual errors. Each grammatical or spelling error will count for five points off. I will award points based on your demonstrated understanding of the assignment, the level of creativity, and your ability to write compelling, accurate and precise copy. **Please cite all sources meticulously using in-text citations and a compiled list of sources at the end of your written work.**

Letter grades are based on the total points accumulated over the term. Students who earn a “C” or better will fulfill the PUR 3801 requirement for graduating with a degree in public relations and will not be required to retake the course.

Grades and Grading Policies:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

Grades

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

- A 90-100 percent
- B 80-89 percent
- C 70-79 percent
- D 60-69 percent
- E 0-59 percent

Deadlines. The practice of public relations hinges on meeting deadlines. Missing deadlines not only can damage a public relations professional’s credibility, but also can lead to termination of a relationship with a client or to dismissal. Thus, **deadlines are treated seriously in this class. All written assignments are due by the date of the deadline**, unless otherwise instructed. A student may not submit a late assignment and will receive a grade of zero for that assignment.

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 upper-division college writing, especially in work by public relations students. Please do not submit materials with editing marks on them; all assignments must be **“client-ready.”**

Unless otherwise specified, **all written assignments must be typed with a 12-point serif font (e.g., Times, Palatino, or Times New Roman), double-spaced and framed by one-inch margins**. No additional consideration will be given to written work accompanied by artwork or any other kind of design element. However, a well-designed piece for your portfolio will be an advantage as a tool to assist in an internship or job search.

Mechanics & Fact Errors. Unless otherwise specified, **use MLA or AP style on all assignments**. Do not assume you will remember everything from earlier courses. Locate and open your stylebook now and review. I do not ask this to torture you, but because it is what is expected in the profession.

Any paper 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 the client’s name or the 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**.

Academic Honesty

The work you submit for this course must be your own. It must be original for this course. You must never use direct or paraphrased material from any source, including Web sites, without attribution. You may not submit anything that you wrote for another class, or that you wrote as a volunteer or intern. You may not submit anything that was written for any purpose other than the given assignment. I will handle any incident of academic dishonesty in accordance with the University of Florida policies that address cheating and unethical academic behavior, specifically the UF Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Guidelines. Any case of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. I will follow University Guidelines for any offense.

Any time you complete an assignment for this course you will clearly attribute the source of your information, including information obtained from organizations' Web sites or internal documents. You cannot copy anything word for word, regardless of the source without putting quotes around it and attributing the source.

Having someone else do your work or sign your name/initials on the attendance sheet is considered academic dishonesty.

The University of Florida is committed to the highest standards of academic and professional ethics and expects its students to adhere to those standards. Each student is bound by the academic honesty guidelines of the University and the student conduct code. The penalty for violation of academic honesty is an "E" for the course, at minimum. Academic dishonesty includes the following: extensive 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 the Fall 1995 semester. (See <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.html>.)

Additional Final Notes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary to the grading system and schedule for this course.

Computers are great tools, and we'll obviously be using them in this course. But they can also be distracting! **Laptop computers and iPads are welcome in class only for taking notes.** Because your classmates and the professor and guest lecturers will need your full attention during our brief class time together, you may not eat, chat, email, text message, tweet, surf, check Facebook, etc. during class time. If you simply must engage in these activities, please excuse yourself from class or you'll be asked to leave.

Students are not permitted to bring guests to class unless special arrangements have been made with the professor prior to class. You are expected to maintain comprehensive class notes because class lectures and discussions often contain information that is not contained in the readings or PowerPoint slides.

If you notice yourself having trouble, it is crucial that you see the professor immediately.

Useful University of Florida Services.

Disability Resource Center: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Reading and Writing Center: <http://www.at.ufl.edu/rwcenter/>

Counseling Center: <http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/>

Dean of Students Office: <http://dso.ufl.edu/>

