

PUR 3801 Section 5081 Spring 2014**Public Relations Strategy – Course Syllabus**

Tuesday, periods 4-5, 10:40 a.m.-12:35 p.m. & Thursday, period 5, 11:45 a.m.-12:35 p.m.

Weimer Hall 1070

Course E-Learning site accessible at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>

Instructor Information

Instructor: Weiting Tao
Department of Public Relations
College of Journalism and Communications

Office: Weimer Hall, Room 2039B (2nd floor, in the Graduate Division)
352. 273.1638 (office phone)

Email: tweiting@ufl.edu (Use this email address; do not leave messages on the class E-Learning site; I do not check email there).

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday – 12:35 p.m. to 1:35 p.m. or by appointment.

Course Description

This course will develop your understanding of the strategic management of public relations by analyzing the public relations process (research, objectives, program, evaluation, and stewardship) as it relates to public relations theory and practice. You will become acquainted with the strategy and tactics used by public relations professionals in areas of public relations specialization such as crisis public relations and international public relations, and in the primary public relations functions of media relations, employee relations, member relations, community relations, government relations, investor relations, consumer relations, etc.

Course Objectives

- To provide an overview of the purpose of public relations and the process through which public relations is practiced strategically.
- To develop your problem-solving skills by critically analyzing current case studies in public relations, including the collection and discussion of material relevant to course topics.
- To analyze situations for their public relations challenges and opportunities.
- To practice developing and applying strategy and tactics based on a sound understanding of public relations concepts and theory.
- To enhance your skills at communicating persuasively, clearly and successfully.

Prerequisite

Students must have taken and passed PUR 3000 and PUR 3500 with a grade of C or higher; have at least junior standing; and have taken and passed a statistics course.

Online Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/>. Evaluations are typically open during the last several weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Required Text and Course Materials

Success in this course requires successful use of these materials:

- *Syllabus*

This syllabus outlines your responsibilities for this term and tells you how you can succeed in this course. You are responsible for all the information in this document, so make sure you have read it carefully and completely. If you don't understand something, ask me about it. **Note that all class materials such as the syllabus and the course schedule are subject to change, as the instructor deems appropriate and necessary.**

- *Required Textbooks*

Smith, R. D. (2013). *Strategic planning for public relations* (4th ed.). New York: Routledge.

Hendrix, J. A., & Hayes, D. C. (2010). *Public relations cases* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

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 at the end of this document. **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. Be prepared to discuss them intelligently in class. Students' class prep efforts will be evaluated via quizzes, assignments, or in-class observation by the instructor.

- *Supplementary Readings*

Supplementary readings will be provided by the instructor on course E-Learning site. These readings will be tested in in-class quizzes, assignments, and/or exams.

- *Course E-learning Site*

Log into E-Learning at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/> using your Gatorlink name and password. All class materials such as PowerPoint slides, assignments, exam study guides, case analysis instructions and evaluation rubrics, and earned student grades will be posted on E-Learning. Students will be responsible for keeping up with the class assignments and materials and monitoring their progress via student records on E-Learning. Please check the site frequently.

- *Course Teaching Method*

This learner-centered course will employ various teaching strategies (e.g., lectures, class discussions, video clips, group activities, team 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. Classes will move in something of a seminar format.

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. **The instructor reserves the right to penalize any students who do not follow the following guidelines and who disrupt the class (via a 5-point final grade deduction for each occurrence).**

- Students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, not leave early unless prior permission is granted, and wait for the class to end before packing to leave.
- 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 his/her devices in the instructor's care. The instructor will prohibit students' in-class use of laptop if necessary.
- 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.
- Students will be responsible for all material and procedures related to this course (e.g., readings, lecture material, activities, assignments, case analysis, presentation, etc.).
- Students will be responsible for completing all of the assigned readings *prior* to the class period during which they will be discussed in order to participate actively in class discussion.
- **An assignment turned in after the deadline will receive a grade of zero for that assignment. No makeup assignments, quizzes, exams, presentations, case analysis reports, etc.**
- Students are not permitted to bring guests to class unless special arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to class. Students are not allowed to record class lectures or place/distribute class materials (esp. online) without the instructor's permission.
- Any evidence of plagiarism or cheating will result in an "E" for the course and possible disciplinary action.
- Do not submit the same work to more than one class. Do not adapt work from another class for this class. Do not adapt someone else's work and submit it as your own. This course requires original work, created at this time, for this purpose.
- Please be aware that a student who attends class irregularly, comes to class late, leaves class early, fails to complete assignments, quizzes, exams, and other class requirements on time or neglects assigned readings can normally expect to earn a low grade.

Deadlines and Critical Dates

Exam dates and other major due dates are clearly stated in the syllabus and/or course schedule. Failure to complete and submit any work by deadlines will result in a grade of ZERO. No excuses. If you become aware of a serious problem which will prevent you from taking an exam, taking a quiz, giving presentations, or being at class, you must inform the instructor of this **via email ahead of time**, as early as possible. The instructor may consider possible rearrangement *only if* the problem you face falls into the legitimate reasons listed in UF's attendance policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>). You must submit documentation of the reason for your delay promptly, no later than one week following the missed deadline. Please note that if the work is due at the start of a class and you arrive late to the class, your work will NOT be accepted.

Grading

The course grade will be determined by the following components on a 100-point scale, **minus any penalties incurred as a result of failing to follow class rules:**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Attendance, Participation, and In-Class Quizzes: | 10% |
| Class Assignments: | 10% |
| PRSSA Meeting and Professional Interview: | 5% |
| Exam One: | 20% |
| Exam Two: | 20% |
| Case Analysis I (Individual): | 10% |
| Case Analysis II (Team) including: | 25% |
| • Written Report: | 15% |
| • Oral Presentation: | 5% |
| • Peer Evaluation: | 5% |

Grading Scale: 92-100 = A, 90-91 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 82-86 = B, 80-81 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 72-76 = C, 70-71 = C-, 67-69 = D+, 62-66 = D, 60-61 = D-, Below 60 = E.

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. For UF grading policy, please see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

1. Attendance, Participation, and In-Class Quizzes (10%)

Attendance. Prompt attendance at ALL class meetings is mandatory. **Each day of class, you are responsible for signing the attendance sheet.** If you forget to sign the sheet, even though you did attend the class, your attendance grade will be deducted. Signing a friend's name to the sheet is academic dishonesty and will result in the loss of your ENTIRE attendance grade for the term, as well as other appropriate ramifications related to academic dishonesty.

Each student will be permitted to **receive ONE excused absence** during the semester. You may use this absence for illness, family emergency, death or funeral, personal vacation, mental health day, conference attendance, job interview or work, etc. Please clear the absence with the instructor ahead of time. **The excused absence may NOT be used on any exam days or on the date your team is assigned to make its presentation.** Absence on a day when work is due will result in a grade of zero unless the work is delivered to me prior to class time. **For each absence past the one excused, you will incur a 5-point deduction off your final course grade.** After due warning, the instructor may prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a lower or failing grade for excessive absences. **More than one absence during the semester will be considered "excessive absences."**

If you miss class for any legitimate reasons listed in UF's attendance policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>), you must email the instructor before class meets and, then, provide documentation of the reason for your absence within one week following the missed class. If you fail to notify me promptly of your absence and provide me with documentations, your attendance grade will also be deducted. Students are responsible for any class/class work missed. They should consult with classmates, rather than the instructor, to obtain information on lectures, assignments, and other matters. Attendance grades will be posted on E-learning at the end of the semester.

Participation. Because this is a learner-centered course, student participation in class discussions and activities is essential. The instructor's role in this course is one of collaborator, facilitator, and coach. In other words, share thoughts, suggestions, criticisms, and disagreement in a respectful manner. However, 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. Participation grades will be posted on E-learning at the end of the semester.

In-Class Quizzes. The specific dates of these quizzes will NOT be announced in advance. Please expect one or two quizzes per week. Students arriving late to an in-class quiz will NOT be permitted to take the quiz and will receive a grade of zero. No makeup quizzes. Quizzes come in a variety of forms (e.g., true/false, multiple choices, fill in blanks, short essay questions, etc.).

2. Class Assignments (10%)

Instructions for all class assignments will be posted under the "resources" tab on E-learning. The due date for each assignment will be specified in the instruction document. Students should check E-learning frequently to keep up with all the assignments. No late or makeup assignments will be allowed.

3. PRSSA Meeting and Professional Interview (5%)

PRSSA Meeting (by 3/25). UF's Alpha Chapter of PRSSA sponsors several workshops per semester. Students are responsible to keep themselves informed of the time and location of these workshops. For workshop schedules and other relevant info, please contact the Alpha Chapter via <http://www.ufprssa.com/#!/contact> or check <http://www.ufprssa.com/#!/upcoming-events> frequently for event updates. To fulfill this assignment, students should attend one PRSSA Workshop before March 25, 2014 and submit a one-page, double-spaced, typed summary of the featured speaker's presentation. In addition, students should submit a second sheet containing the student's full name, date of the workshop, and the signature of one Alpha Chapter Officer stapled to the summary. **Students should submit the two stapled sheets at the start of the class on March 25, 2014.**

Professional Interview (by 3/27). Students should search, identify, and then personally contact a public relations professional. Ask her/him, in a concise and polite manner, about her/his professional practice: challenges faced, most rewarding experience, or any advice for an upcoming professional who seeks to work in public relations. The interview can be conducted in person, via phone or Skype. There is no specific requirement for the time length of the interview. **Students should post a summary of the interview in E-learning Chat Room by 11:45 a.m. on March 27, 2014.** The summary should be between 400-500 words. Also include the contact information for the professional and document the date and time of the interview in the summary. Note that **students are responsible to secure and complete the interview before the assignment is due.**

4. Two Exams (20% each)

Your ability to competently develop strategic plans is built on a conceptual foundation. We will have two in-class exams to test your understanding of Smith's ROPES process and your ability to apply this process to actual cases, and other topics covered during this course. Both exams will be based on readings in the textbooks, class lectures and discussions, quizzes, assignments, students' presentations, videos, other assigned readings, lectures by guest speakers, etc. 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 and will be in the forms of true/false, multiple choices, fill in blanks, and short essay questions. Exams will NOT be cumulative. Exam study guides will be provided under the "resources" tab on E-learning.

5. Case Analysis I (Individual): Written Report

The purpose of this assignment is to help students further familiarize Smith's ROPES process of public relations planning. In this assignment, you will explore how real-life public relations programs have either applied or not applied this process. You will have a chance to practice your planning skills by considering what you would have done differently to improve the case you study, i.e. make it adhere more closely to the Smith process. It also requires thoughtful analysis expressed in a concise written format. It encourages your external research skills and critical-thinking skills.

Each student will submit a **5-page written analysis** of a published public relations case study following the formatting requirements stated on the next page of this document. Please select the case study from one of the following sources and do NOT use the Hendrix and Hayes (2010) textbook for this assignment:

- Arthur W. Page Case Study Competition Winners between 2008 and 2013 (<http://www.awpagesociety.com/insights/winning-case-studies/>).
- PRSA Silver Anvil Winning Cases between 2011 and 2013 (<http://www.prsa.org/Awards/search>). You will need to create a "My PRSA" account to successfully log in to the web archive and download the case. Let me know if you have difficulties downloading the case.
- "Adventures in Public Relations: Case Studies in Critical Thinking," by D. Guth (2005).
- "International and Intercultural Public Relations: A Campaign Case Approach," by Parkinson and Ekachai (2006).
- "Crisis Communications: A casebook approach," by Kathleen Fearn-Banks (2002).

A detailed instruction for the individual case analysis will be posted under the “resources” tab on E-Learning. Students are responsible for searching and obtaining information to facilitate the case analysis, both from the source listed above and from other credible sources.

TWO DEADLINES.

- *Email a two-paragraph summary of the case* you intend to analyze to the instructor **by 10:40 a.m. on January 28, 2014.** Write the summary in the main body of the email. Do NOT include it as an attachment. Use “Individual Case Summary (PUR3801 Your Full Name)” as the subject line of your email.
- *Submit the complete written report for the individual case analysis* (both a hard copy and an electronic copy) is due **by 10:40 a.m. on February 11, 2014.**

6. Case Analysis II (Team): Written Report (15%), Oral Presentation (5%), and Peer Evaluation (5%)

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate that you have mastered the ROPES/Smith process and can plan a high-quality campaign for a client. The class will be divided into teams with **three or four students per team.** Each team will have an Account Executive (AE) who is responsible for recruiting team members, organizing and delegating team tasks, monitoring and assuring team progress, and reporting to the instructor promptly. Each team will prepare an in-depth analysis of a public relations case from the textbook *Public Relations Cases by J.A. Hendrix & D.C. Hayes (2010)*. The selected cases should fall into different specializations of public relations (e.g., investor relations, consumer relations).

Each team will be responsible for a **written report of 22-25 pages** and a **25-minute oral presentation.** The written report should follow the format requirements below. In addition, each student should complete a peer evaluation form, in which they rate their team members’ performance quality and professionalism. 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 instruction for the team case analysis, plus the peer evaluation form, will be posted under the “resources” tab on E-Learning. Students are required to seek out additional, credible information (at least TEN extra references) about their assigned cases, which is not provided in Hendrix and Hayes (2010).

FIVE DEADLINES.

- *Account Executive (AE) Volunteers.* Students are strongly encouraged to volunteer as AEs. If interested, email your ID and contact info to the instructor **by 10 a.m. on Jan. 16, 2014.** First come, first served.
- *Team formation.* AE should email the finalized team-member info to the instructor **by 11: 45 a.m. on January 28, 2014.**
- *Case selection.* Each team should email the title plus the public relations specification of the selected case to the instructor **by 11:45 a.m. on February 6, 2014.**
- *Written report and peer evaluation.* Each team should submit both a hardcopy and an electronic copy of the written report **by 11: 45 a.m. on April 10, 2014.** Meanwhile, each team *member* should submit a hardcopy of the completed peer evaluation form **by 11:45 a.m. on April 10, 2014.**
- *Visual aids for oral presentation.* Each team should email the visual aids (PPT, Prezi URL Link) for their presentation to the instructor **by 11:45 a.m. on April 17, 2014.**

7. Assignment Format Requirements.

All assignments (e.g., case analysis and class assignments) **MUST** be submitted in computer-generated or typed format; no handwritten material or materials with handwritten corrections will be accepted. Most assignments are due at the beginning of class, unless otherwise specified by the instructor. Students can find instructions for each assignment under the “resources” tab on E-learning prior to the deadline of the assignment. Please check E-learning frequently to keep yourself informed. **CAUTION:** One of the kisses of death in public relations practice is sloppy work, especially incorrect use of the language, misspelled words, incorrect punctuation, and poor presentation. **PROOFREAD** and fix mistakes *before* you turn in the assignment. The easiest way to lose points on

any assignment is to include grammar/spelling/punctuation errors. The second easiest way to lose points is to fail to follow the directions for the assignment.

- The following format should be used for all submitted written assignments:
 - APA Style 6th edition for in-text citations and references
 - Microsoft Word
 - Times New Roman font
 - 12-point type
 - 1-inch margins
 - Double-spaced
 - Stapled

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. 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/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

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. In addition, phone numbers and contact sites for university counseling services and mental health services: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> 392-1575, University Police Department 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Tentative Course Schedule and List of Major Deadlines

All course materials and requirements, as well as the following schedule, are subject to change as the instructor deems appropriate and necessary. Students are responsible for keeping themselves informed of any changes, and should complete reading assignments **prior to** class.

Only major deadlines are listed below. Some other deadlines such as the due dates for Class Assignments (10%) are NOT provided herein; they are listed in each assignment instruction on E-learning.

| DATE | TOPIC | READINGS | DUE |
|---------------|---|--|--|
| Week 1 | | | |
| Jan. 7 | Course overview & Introduction to strategic public relations | Syllabus | |
| Jan. 9 | Introduction to strategic public relations & Overview of ROPES | Smith (2013). Introduction | |
| Week 2 | | | |
| Jan. 14 | Analyzing the situation & Analyzing the organization | Smith (2013). Step 1 & 2 | Professional goal statement on Jan.14 |
| Jan. 16 | | | AE volunteers for case analysis II on Jan. 16 |
| Week 3 | | | |
| Jan. 21 | Case analysis I assignment briefing & Analyzing the publics | Case analysis I instructions on E-Learning & Smith (2013). Step 3 | |
| Jan. 23 | Analyzing the publics | Smith (2013). Step 3 <i>Cont.</i> | |
| Week 4 | | | |
| Jan. 28 | Establishing goals and objectives | Smith (2013). Step 4 | Team formation info for case analysis II & Paragraph Summary for case analysis I |
| Jan. 30 | Formulating action and response strategies | Smith (2013). Step 5 | |
| Week 5 | | | |
| Feb. 4 & 6 | Formulating action and response strategies | Smith (2013). Step 5 <i>Cont.</i> | Team case-selection info for case analysis II on Feb. 6 |
| Week 6 | | | |
| Feb. 11 & 13 | Formulating action and response strategies & Reminders for PRSSA meeting and professional interview | Smith (2013). Step 5 <i>Cont.</i> | Written report for case analysis I on Feb. 11 |
| Week 7 | | | |
| Feb. 18 | Exam One review & Case analysis II assignment briefing | Exam one study guide and case analysis II instructions on E-Learning | |
| Feb. 20 | *FPRA Gainesville Chapter Meeting | | |
| Week 8 | | | |
| Feb. 25 | Exam One & Developing the message strategy | Smith (2013). Step 6 <i>Cont.</i> | |
| Feb. 27 | Developing the message strategy | Smith (2013). Step 6 <i>Cont.</i> | |
| Week 9 | | | |
| Mar. 4 & 6 | Spring Break! Enjoy ☺ | | |

| Week 10 | | | |
|---------|--|---|--|
| Mar. 11 | Developing the message strategy & Case analysis II assignment briefing | Smith (2013). Step 6 <i>Cont.</i> | |
| Mar. 13 | Selecting communication tactics | Smith (2013). Step 7 | |
| Week 11 | | | |
| Mar. 18 | Selecting communication tactics | Smith (2013). Step 7 | |
| Mar. 20 | In-Class Case Studies | | |
| Week 12 | | | |
| Mar. 25 | Implementing the strategic plan | Smith (2013). Step 8 | PRSSA meeting summary and signature |
| Mar. 27 | Evaluating the strategic plan | Smith (2013). Step 9 | Professional Interview Summary |
| Week 13 | | | |
| Apr. 1 | Evaluating the strategic plan & Stewardship | Smith (2013). Step 9 Cont & Kelly (2001). Stewardship (on E-Learning) | |
| Apr. 3 | In-Class Case Studies | | |
| Week 14 | | | |
| Apr. 8 | Work on case analysis II (no class meeting) | | |
| Apr. 10 | Case analysis II team presentation & Exam Two Review | Exam Two study guide on E-Learning | Written report & Peer evaluation form for case analysis II |
| Week 15 | | | |
| Apr. 15 | Case analysis II team presentation | | |
| Apr. 17 | Case analysis II team presentation | | Visual aids for case analysis II presentation |
| Week 16 | | | |
| Apr. 22 | Exam Two | | **Online teaching evaluation for the course |

*Each student will attend the Professional Meeting of the Gainesville Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Society (FPRA) on Thursday, Feb. 20. The Professional Meeting is one of FPRA's monthly luncheons which usually take place on the third Thursday of the month at the Sweetwater Branch Inn from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Students should RSVP to the event at least two weeks ahead. Reservations and information can be found/made at <http://fpragainesville.com/professional-development/monthly-luncheons/>. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this meeting to seek contacts for their professional interviews. However, if FPRA changes the meeting schedule, normal class lecture will be held that day.