

SYLLABUS
PUR 3801 (0176)—PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY

Instructor

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Office Hours:

TR – Period 9⁺ (4:05–5:30 p.m.)
W – Period E-1 (7:20–8:10 p.m.)
Or by Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

PUR 3801—Public Relations Strategy: The development of skills in strategic public relations management based on an analysis of current and historical case studies. Prerequisites: minimum grade of C in PUR 3000 and PUR 3500.

COURSE FORMAT:

This course uses a combination of lecture and seminar formats. Several guest speakers will join the class to demonstrate how scholarly principles are related to the professional practice of public relations. A high degree of student interaction is expected.

COURSE PURPOSE & LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This course is designed to educate students in the strategic management of public relations through a systematic problem-solving process based on theory and research. Through readings, lectures, exercises, handouts, and discussions, students will study in-depth the essential steps of the process: research, objectives, programming, evaluation, and stewardship. Using case studies, students will analyze and evaluate actual public relations campaigns related to the various sub-functions of public relations, such as media relations and employee relations. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are listed below; the two in bold are specifically reinforced in all sections of PUR 3801. As a result of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of public relations and the process through which it is practiced strategically;
- Apply the problem-solving process of ROPES to diverse organizations and situations;
- **Identify and discuss concepts and theories relevant to effective public relations practice;**
- **Think critically, creatively and independently about public relations problems;**
- Write and formulate fundamental components of a public relations campaign plan, including objectives and budget;
- Define publics appropriate for specific campaigns and appreciate differences that affect programming;
- Recognize the importance of formative and evaluative research in public relations practice; and
- Demonstrate proficiency in written and oral communication.

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):

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

COURSE TEXTS:

- Required:** Smith, R. D. (2014). *Strategic planning for public relations* (4th ed.). New York: Routledge.
Hendrix, J. A., & Hayes, D. C. (2010). *Public relations cases* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Chapters from the texts are assigned in the “Weekly Course Plan” of this syllabus. Additional assigned readings also are listed. They will be handed out in class, are available online, or will be e-mailed to you. All readings must be **read in advance** of the class dates for which they are listed. Students also are expected to monitor trade publications and the mass media for local, national, and international news related to public relations, which will be used in class discussions.

TESTS AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

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

Class Participation	5%
PRSSA Speaker Event	5%
Individual Case Analysis	15%
Team Campaign Analysis	20%
Exam #1	25%
Exam #2	30%

Grading for the course follows current UF grading policies for assigning grade points (see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>)

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.

Class Participation will account for 5% of the course grade, as determined by such efforts as discussion of assigned readings, performance in ungraded in-class exercises, and participation in raising timely and relevant issues to the attention of the class.

Students will attend one **PRSSA Speaker Event** (or Skills Seminar) during the semester and submit a one-page, double-spaced, typed summary of the featured speaker’s presentation, which will account for 5% of the course grade. UF’s Alpha Chapter of PRSSA sponsors a total of approximately five speaker events and skill seminars on Wednesday evenings from September through November (see “Upcoming Events” at <http://ufprssa.com/>). To verify attendance, students will submit a second sheet containing the student’s name, date of the meeting, and the signature of one Alpha Chapter officer stapled to the summary. Students also can fulfill this requirement by attending the 2013 PRSSA National Conference in Philadelphia, PA, October 25-29. Any substitute meetings must be approved in advance by the instructor.

Students will produce an **Individual Case Analysis** of a public relations case study published in the Hendrix and Hayes (2010) textbook. The written analysis will be four to five pages in length, double-spaced and typed. It will account for 15% of the course grade. Details of this first major assignment are given in the handout, “Individual Case Analysis Packet,” which will be distributed during the second week of class.

A **Team Campaign Analysis** accounts for 20% of the course grade. Students will be organized into six teams of five members each, based on their interest in one of the sub-functions of public relations (for example, investor relations). Each team will analyze a public relations campaign conducted by an organization in the assigned sub-function. The team will produce a written report of approximately 25 pages and a 25-minute oral presentation. The grade received for a team's analysis is not necessarily the grade individual team members will earn. Utilizing confidential forms, team members will evaluate each other’s contributions. Peer evaluations will weigh heavily in determining individual grades for the project. As in real life, team members will be dependent on each other to complete the project successfully. A detailed assignment packet, which includes the “Team Evaluation Form,” will be distributed during the eighth week of class.

Two Exams will account for a total of 55% of the course grade. **Exam #1** will be given on Thursday, October 3 during class hours (7th week of the semester), and **Exam #2** will be given on Thursday, November 21 (14th week of the semester). Both exams will measure students' mastery of content covered in the handouts, readings, lectures, and discussions.

MAKEUPS, LATE ASSIGNMENTS, AND EXTRA CREDIT:

Policy of the course is that there will be no make-up exams or extensions of deadlines. Dates have been announced in advance in the "Weekly Course Plan" so that students can schedule other activities around these deadlines. Exceptions will be rare and made only in cases of extraordinary, documented circumstances, as determined by the instructor. Any make-up exams administered or late assignments accepted will be graded lower than work turned in on time. No extra credit will be given for additional work.

ABSENCES:

Attendance is mandatory. Each student is allowed two excused absences for the semester. Absences beyond two—for *any* reason—will result in a reduction of the course grade at the rate of one-third grade level for each absence. 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").

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." On all work submitted for credit, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

Furthermore, students are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

For more information about the student honor code, violations, and sanctions, go to the Dean of Students Office website at (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

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. This means the instructor and students adhere to workplace norms for collegial and respectful interaction. Students are expected to arrive on time and not leave the classroom until announced breaks or the end of the class.

Diversity:

All discussions will be ruled by mutual respect—for people and their opinions. Effective public relations practice is dependent on gathering and understanding diverse viewpoints. Furthermore, professionalism requires an appreciation for the multicultural society and global economy in which students plan to work. Effectiveness in both practice and scholarship relies on an ability to recognize and embrace diversity in all its forms. Throughout the course, students will have opportunities to learn from the information and ideas shared by their classmates.

Other Rules:

- Cell phones must be turned off during class.
- Photos and other recordings are prohibited unless approved in advance by the instructor.
- Laptops and electronic tablets may not be used in class; notes must be handwritten.
- Students may only leave the classroom during official breaks (notify the instructor of emergencies).

Classroom Conduct cont.

- Reading unrelated material or talking while others are speaking is prohibited.
- Anyone violating these rules or disrupting class in other ways will be asked to leave the classroom.
- Students are urged to meet in-person with the instructor if they have questions or are having problems. Office Hours are listed on p. 1 of the syllabus. Short conversations immediately following class are welcomed.
- E-mail inquiries to the instructor should be limited to questions that are not answered elsewhere (e.g., the syllabus). Formal composition and clear and concise writing are required. E-mail messages generally cannot be answered in less than one day, so plan ahead.
- Telephone calls are encouraged for quick questions (when leaving a voice-mail message, slowly state your name, telephone number, and reason for calling; repeat phone number).

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 and typically are conducted during the last two weeks of the semester. Time has been allocated in the “Weekly Course Plan” for students to complete their evaluations. Summary results of assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

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.

UF RESOURCES:

- University counseling services and mental health services: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> or 392-1575
- University Police Department: 392-1111 or 911 for emergencies.

FINAL CAVEAT:

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

WEEKLY COURSE PLAN:

Week #1

Aug. 22 **Topics:** Introduction to the Course. Overview of Requirements. The Public Relations Manager of the 21st Century.
Assign: **Memorize Kelly’s ROPES Process Model Handout.**

Week #2

Aug. 27 & 29 **Topics:** Quiz on class syllabus. Comparison of Process Models: Smith’s (2013) Textbook and Hendrix & Hayes’ (2010) Textbook. ROPES Model of the Public Relations Process.
Readings: -Smith (2013), Introduction (pp. 1-18);
-Hendrix & Hayes (2010), Chapters 1-2;
-Kelly (2001), “Stewardship: The Fifth Step in the Public Relations Process” (e-mailed by Thursday, Aug. 22).
Assign: **Memorize System’s Theory Handout.**

Week #3

Sept. 3 & 5 **Topics:** Individual Case Analysis. Writing Rules. History of Public Relations. Formative Research: Analyzing the Organization.
Readings: -Handout: “Individual Case Analysis” Packet (4 pp.).
-Smith’s (online) “Historical overview of the evolution of public relations,” paying particular attention to Parts 2 & 3, Colonial and Modern History, at <http://faculty.buffalostate.edu/smithrd/prmenu.htm>;
-Smith (2013), Phase One – Formative Research (pp. 19-20); Step 2 (pp. 41-56);
Exercise: Oral: Analyzing Cases Using Hendrix & Hayes’ (2010) Case 8-3.

Week #4

Sept. 10 & 12 **Topics:** Individual Case Analysis Q&A. Formative Research: Analyzing the Situation. Analyzing the Publics. Strategy: Formulating Goals and Objectives.
Readings: Smith (2013), Step 1 (pp. 21-40); Step 3 (pp. 57-92); Phase Two – Strategy (pp. 93-94); Step 4 (pp. 95-122).

Week #5

Sept. 17 & 19 **Topics:** Goals and Objectives cont. Individual Case Analysis Q&A. Strategy: Formulating Action and Response Strategies. Review for Exam #1.
Readings: Smith (2013), Step 5 (pp. 113-171).
Exercise: Written: Formulating Meaningful Objectives.
Due: **Individual Case Study Analysis at 1:55 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 19.**

Week #6

Sept. 24 & 26 **Topics:** Individual Case Analysis Results. Strategy: Developing the Message Strategy. Tactics. Review for Exam #1.
Readings: Smith (2013), Step 6 (pp. 172-224); Phase Three – Tactics (pp. 183-184); Step 7 (pp. 185-199).
Assign: **Memorize Grunig’s Four Models of Public Relations & Kelly’s Hierarchy of Tactics/Techniques Handouts.**

Week #7

Oct. 1 No Class – Study for Exam #1
Oct. 3 **EXAMINATION #1**

Weekly Course Plan Cont.

Week #8

Oct. 8-10 **Topics:** Strategy and Tactics cont. Digital Media. Exam #1 Results. Team Campaign Analysis. Organization of Teams. Sub-Functions of Public Relations.
Readings: -Smith (2013), Step 7 (pp. 199-254).
 -Handout: “Team Campaign Analysis” Packet (5 pp.).
Exercise: Oral: Devising Appropriate Strategies & Selecting Appropriate Tactics.

Week #9

Oct. 15 & 17 **Topics:** Team Campaign Analysis Q&A. Implementing the Strategic Plan. Planning Tools. Budgeting.
Readings: -Skim Cases in Hendrix & Hayes (2010);
 -Smith (2013), Step 8 (pp. 255-270).
Exercise: Written: Formatting Expense Budgets.
Due: **Team Campaign Analysis: AE Information Form (specialization, e-mail address, presentation date, and team meeting schedule) due by 3 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 15.**
Assign: **All students must be enrolled in a team for the Team Campaign Analysis by 12 midnight, Friday, Oct.18.**

Week #10

Oct. 22 & 24 **Topics:** Team Campaign Analysis Q&A. Evaluative Research: Evaluating the Strategic Plan.
Readings: Smith (2013), Phase Four – Evaluative Research (pp. 271-272); Step 9 (273-296).
Exercise: Oral: Devising an Evaluation Plan.
Due: **Team Campaign Analysis AE Report (specialization, case, and roster of team members) due to instructor by 12 noon, Monday, Oct. 21.**

Week #11

Oct. 29 & 31 **Topics:** Team Campaign Analysis Q&A. Stewardship Step. Strategic Public Relations.
Readings: Review Kelly (2001).
Exercise: Written: Devising Stewardship Plans.
Guest Speaker: TBA.

Week #12

Nov. 5 **Topics:** Strategic Public Relations in Practice.
Guest Speaker: TBA.
Nov. 7 **TEAM PRESENTATIONS: Teams #1-#3.**

Week #13

Nov. 12-14 **TEAM PRESENTATIONS: Teams #4-#6.** Review for Exam #2.

Week #14

Nov. 19 **Topics:** Catch-Up. Review for Exam #2.
Nov. 21 **EXAMINATION #2.**
Due: **PRSSA Speaker Event Summary due by 1:55 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 21.**

Week #15

Nov. 26 **Topics:** The Gender Gap: Salary Negotiation.
Due: **Team Campaign Analysis Written Report due by 3 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 26.**
Nov. 28 No Class: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week #16

Dec. 3 **Topics:** Course Evaluation. Exam #2 Results. Team Campaign Analysis Results. Wrap-Up.

Happy Holidays and Have a Great Semester Break!