

SYLLABUS – PUR 3801 (0946) PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY

Summer 2015 A

Monday and Wednesday, periods 6-7 (3:30 – 6:15 p.m.); Friday, period 6 (3:30-4:45)
McCarty Hall, Building B 1108

Instructor:

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Office Hours W 1:00 - 3:30 and by appointment

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A Canvas blog is activated to post and answer questions/comments related to the class. This is located under the Discussions tab—Course Questions. This allows an open discussion on class matters. The instructor will log in to read and answer blog comments every morning, but Saturdays and Sundays. The instructor's e-mail address should be used only to communicate student's personal issues. The mail function of Canvas is also available for this purpose.

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

Course Description

The development of skills in strategic public relations management based on an analysis of current and historical case studies.

Prerequisites: PUR 3000 Principles and PUR 3500 Research with minimum grades of C. If you do not have these prerequisites, you are advised to drop this class. Failure to do so or to obtain the instructor's permission to remain in the course may mean the departmental office will drop you.

Method of Instruction

This learner-centered course will primarily use class discussions, service-learning projects, presentations, and hands-on instructions 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 a seminar format much like the collaborations that operate in the professional world. This course is outcomes-based, and you will be evaluated primarily on your ability to transfer the theory and knowledge shared in class into workable solutions. It is essential that you keep up with the reading schedule and come to class with the assigned reading's concepts in your memory and in your written notes. Not all of the materials

that you read will be discussed or explained in class, therefore, if you need further explanations or clarifications please take advantage of the posted office hours. If you have a problem, see the professor or teaching assistant sooner, not later.

Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

As a result of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of public relations and its strategic process.
- Identify and explain the concepts and theories on which strategic public relations is based.
- Apply the knowledge and experience gained in this course as well as that from course prerequisites to the development of a service-learning project for a client organization, which should become part of students' professional portfolios.
- Write and formulate fundamental components of a public relations strategic plan, including situation analysis, objectives, and selection of strategies and tactics.
- Define publics appropriate for specific client organizations and appreciate differences that affect programming.
- Recognize the importance of primary and secondary research in public relations practice.
- Demonstrate understanding of conceptual foundation and professional skills competency related to strategic management process of the public relations function.
- Demonstrate proficiency in written and oral communications.

The course specifically supports 7 of the 11 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.

Required Book

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

Additional Readings

Hendrix, J.A., & Hayes, D.C. (2010). Public relations cases (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

*You are not required to purchase this book. You will only use one chapter from it for your Individual Case Analysis. This book will be on reserve at the Library West for two hours. Plan ahead when working on your paper. If you want to purchase the book, please feel free to do so.

Online Course Administration — e-Learning in Canvas

<http://lss.at.ufl.edu/> will be used to administer the course communication, materials (e.g., PowerPoint files, additional readings, handouts, assignment guidelines, evaluation forms), and grades. For instance, an electronic file of this document is posted on Canvas. You can access the site by using your GatorLink username and password. Please check the site for announcements and/or threads of comments from classmates, the teaching assistant, and the professor.

Course Evaluation

The evaluation of coursework will be based on the student's performance in four major areas, each of which constitutes a proportion of the final grade. These include weekly attendance and active participation, two exams, one team presentation (specializations), and one service-learning project (i.e., situation analysis, strategic plan, and final presentation to the client. The area and allocations for each are as follows:

Active participation **10%**

Individual case analysis **10%**

Service-learning project **45%**

Situation analysis 15%

Strategic plan 20%

Presentation to the client 10%

Examinations **35%**

First exam 15%

Final exam 20%

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

The grading scale for the course is as follows:

A	92-100%
A-	90-91%
B+	88-89%
B	82-87%
B-	80-81%
C+	78-79%
C	72-77%
C-	70-71%
D+	68-69%
D	62-67%
D-	60-61%
E	below 60%

Letter grades for this course will be based on the total points earned over the term. For further information about grades and grading policy, please consult:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

(* The two exams of the term will be held during the regularly scheduled class periods and exam week. Exams are designed to test the student's knowledge of the main ideas covered in each of the readings, handouts, guest speakers, and class discussions as specified in the syllabus. The exams will be multiple-choice and **non-cumulative**. Exam grades will be posted on Canvas.

There Are No Make-Up Exams

If you miss an exam you will receive a grade of zero for that test. Documented exceptions for extreme circumstances will be considered and should be discussed with the instructor or the teaching assistant. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

End of Course Evaluations

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>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three 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>.

Assignments

Situation analysis

Minimum 10 single-spaced pages, Times Roman 12, margins 1". This is a summary of the analysis of the client organization, its main challenges, its existing communications, and its targeted publics. It should be supported by secondary research and productive exchanges with your client. The analysis should include a variety of reliable sources and corporate information. The references must follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. The main components of this analysis are: problem/opportunity statement, background of the situation, background of the organizations (internal and external environments/impediments and public

perceptions), existing communication techniques and efforts (strategic key messages), and the description of targeted publics.

Strategic plan

The situation analysis should be the base for this second written assignment. It must include a central theme, goals and objectives, the formulation of action and response strategies, messaging, and the selection of tactics. Smith (2013) should guide these parts of the assignment.

Final presentation

The presentation of the strategic plan to the client will last 30 minutes. This presentation includes the analysis of the organization, challenge/opportunity, and target publics, as well as the planned objectives, strategic messaging, and tactics.

Individual case analysis

Students must work independently on the Individual Case Analysis. Grading will be based on specific rubrics for the assignment (see “Individual Case Analysis Assessment” handout). Each student will select one of the following case studies from Hendrix and Hayes (2010):

Media Relations – Case 3-2: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum Opening Employee Relations

Case 4-1: Excellence in Ethics: Armament and Technical Products Community Relations

Case 5-1: Tyson Foods Powers the Fight Against Hunger Investor Relations

Case 7-1: Pacific Ethanol: Creating an Industry Leader Consumer Relations

Case 8-1: Improving Patient Care with Cranberries . . .

Course Professionalism

The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school and professional decorum is expected at all times. Therefore, the students, the professor, and the teaching assistant 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, the professor, and the teaching assistant. Eating, drinking, and privately chatting in class do not demonstrate professional behavior. Chatting while the instructor, the teaching assistant, or another student is talking is unacceptable behavior; such actions can result in being asked to leave the classroom and will result in a lowering of your class participation grade.

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off completely during class; manner mode or vibrate is not considered off. In the event of an emergency situation, notify the professor at the start of class. Laptops may be used only as a note-taking device. Surfing the Internet, checking or creating email, playing games, and other online activities not related to class are strictly prohibited.

The Honor Pledge

The University of Florida Honor Code applies to all work related to this class. All students are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of

scholars. Students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time, and participate in class discussions. Assigned readings should be completed prior to class, and students should be prepared to discuss the assigned material. Any material discussed in class and/or covered in the assigned readings may be included on examinations. Students will not be allowed to make up exams. Exceptions to this policy will be limited to documented exceptional (as defined by the professor) circumstances and at the discretion of the professor. Students arriving more than 10 minutes late to an exam will not be allowed to take the exam.

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 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.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obliged to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Students with Challenges

We are committed to helping students with special challenges overcome difficulties with comprehending the subject matter, while abiding by the standard code of confidentiality. In order to address academic needs, we must be informed of the student’s circumstance at the beginning of the semester *before* performance becomes a factor. This is not to imply that standards of fairness will not be generally applied when evaluating student work; only that reasonable and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that officially recognized challenges do not become a hindrance to a student’s ability to succeed in this course.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (Disability Research Center – 352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor or teaching assistant when requesting accommodation. Students with challenges should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Phone number and contact site for university counseling services and mental health services: 392-1575, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Other Important Notes

- The instructor reserves the right to make changes, if necessary, to the grading system, schedule, or other matters pertaining to the class.

- The instructor may also be reached via e-mail, but please be aware that the professor will not be able to respond immediately to your communication. As a rule, allow up to 24 hours for a response. Therefore, barring an emergency situation, it is advisable to contact the instructor well in advance of an exam or a deadline in order to give the professor adequate time to respond you.
- Students are not to use laptop computers for other than to take class notes or follow PowerPoint presentations. Mobile telephones or other electronic devices are not allowed to use during class.
- Students are not permitted to bring guests to class unless special arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to class.
- If you notice yourself having trouble in the course, it is crucial that you see the instructor immediately. Please feel free to approach the instructor about any concerns or comments you might have about this class. I will be happy to meet with you during my office hours, or by appointment.
- You are expected to arrive promptly for class, fully prepared to discuss the assigned readings. While I understand the problems created by a large campus, it is your responsibility to arrive in class in a timely manner. Therefore my good nature extends only 10 minutes. Anyone arriving more than 10 minutes late for class will be noted as absent, and his or her class participation grade will suffer as a result.
- **Attendance policy:** Attendance is mandatory. Absences count from the first class meeting. After due warning, I may prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a lower or failing grade for excessive absences; more than one unexcused absences during the semester will be considered “excessive absences.” Please see the university handbook on what qualifies as an excused absence.
- 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 without prior written permission from both instructors. Do not adapt work from another class for this class without my prior written permission. 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.
- Spelling counts. So does grammar, punctuation and professional presentation techniques.
- An assignment turned in passed the deadline will not be accepted. This is a business where deadlines count. You can't make excuses to your boss or a client if your work is late.
- In addition to the required and recommended readings, you are expected to maintain comprehensive class notes because class lectures often contain information that is not contained in the readings. You will be tested on this information on examinations.