

SYLLABUS
PUR 3801 (0946)—PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY

Instructor:

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Office Hours:

MW – Period 5 (2:00 – 3:15 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, 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. 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 explain the concepts and theories on which strategic public relations is based;
- 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 seven 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.

COURSE TEXTS:

Required: Smith, R. D. (2012). *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%
Strategist Response	5%
Team Case Analysis	20%
Individual Case Analysis	15%
Exam #1	25%
Exam #2	30%

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.

Class Participation will account for 5% of the course grade, as determined by such efforts as discussing assigned readings, participating in ungraded exercises, and bringing timely and relevant issues to the attention of the class.

Students will read one **article from PRSA's *The Strategist*** during the semester and submit a one-page, double-spaced, typed summary/critique/response of the article, which will account for 5% of the course grade. *The Strategist* is a quarterly PRSA magazine written for executive-level public relations practitioners. It focuses on the strategic importance of public relations and changing public relations concepts. For this assignment you should analyze/critique the article using the public relations theories and ROPES process model we will cover in class. This assignment is due the last day of class, June 20, but can be turned in at any time during the term. You are strongly encouraged to turn this assignment in early.

A **Team Case Analysis** accounts for 20% of the course grade. Students will be organized into five teams of six members each, based on their interest in one of the sub-functions of public relations (e.g., media relations). Each team will prepare an analysis of a public relations campaign conducted by an organization in the assigned sub-function. The team will produce a written report of 22-26 pages and a 20-minute oral presentation. The grade received for a team's analysis is not necessarily the grade individual team members will receive. 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 handout and a “Team Evaluation Form” will be distributed early in the first week of the semester.

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 4-5 pages in length, double-spaced and typed. It will account for 15% of the course grade. Details of this assignment are given in the handout, “Case Study Analysis Guidelines,” which will be distributed during the second half of the semester.

Two Exams will account for a total of 55% of the course grade. **Exam #1** will be given on May 30 during class hours (3rd week of the semester), and **Exam #2** will be given on June 20 (6th week of the semester). Both exams will measure students' mastery of content covered in the readings, presentations, and lectures/discussions.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance Policy: Your attendance in class is extremely important. Class lectures, class discussions, class presentations, and team meetings are integral components of this class. If you miss a class period, you will miss out on explanations and insights that will improve your understanding of the public relations planning elements we will cover that day.

If you need to miss class for a legitimate reason please send me an e-mail before the start of class to let me know that you will not be attending and the reason for missing class. Remember, *it is your responsibility* to let me know that you will not be in class. The University of Florida defines the following as acceptable reasons for absence from class:

- Illness
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions
- Religious holidays
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

Because life can be unpredictable, you will be allowed two unexcused absences for the semester. Unexcused absences beyond two will result in a reduction of your course grade by two percentage points for each unexcused absence.

If you miss class or team meetings, you are responsible for learning about class/team discussions or class lectures from your classmates. Assignments and due dates are listed in the “Weekly Course Plan” at the end of this syllabus. Missing class or a team meeting, even when excused, is not an excuse for missing a deadline.

Make-up Policy: Dates for assignments, exams, and presentations have been announced in advance in the “Weekly Course Plan” so you can schedule other activities around these deadlines. You are expected to meet these deadlines. Period. I will not accept late work.

Professionalism: 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 see how different cultural perspectives influence public relations. They are encouraged to also learn from the information and ideas shared by their classmates.

Other Rules:

- Cell phones must be turned off during class.
- Laptops may NOT be used in class, EXCEPT for the purpose of taking notes.
- Talking about subjects unrelated to the class and reading unrelated material are 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 or via e-mail with the instructor if they have questions or are having problems. 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.

UF POLICIES:

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct: All work completed for this course is expected to be your own original work. There is a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism. Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community and they are fundamental values of this course. Please be sure that you understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>. I expect that you will do your own work in this class (i.e., no plagiarism, no cheating, no “double dipping” on assignments, etc.) and observe the University of Florida’s policy on academic honesty in fulfilling all course requirements. I will take violations of this policy very seriously. If you are found to be in violation of the UF Student Honor code, the following sanctions from the code will be implemented at my discretion: 1) Assignment grade penalty: The student is assigned a grade penalty on an assignment including but not limited to a zero. 2) Course grade penalty: The student is assigned a grade penalty in the entire course including but limited to an “E”. 3) Formal hearings and sanctions from the university.

GETTING HELP:

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Sakai, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

** Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

FINAL CAVEAT:

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

WEEKLY COURSE PLAN:

Week #1

May 12 - 16

Topics:

Introduction to the Course. Overview of Requirements.

Smith's (2009) Textbook and Process; Hayes, Hendrix, & Kumar (2013) Textbook and Process; Comparison of Process Models. ROPES Model of the Public Relations Process. Formative Research: Analyzing the Organization. Introduction to Individual Case Analysis.

Readings:

Smith (2009), Introduction; Phase One – Formative Research; Step 1 (pp. 19-33);
Hendrix and Hayes (2010), Chs. 1-2.
Kelly (2001), “Stewardship: The Fifth Step in the Public Relations Process”

Week #2

May 19 - 23

Topics:

Formative Research: Analyzing the Situation. Analyzing the Publics. Strategy: Formulating Goals and Objectives.

Readings:

Smith (2009), Step 2 (pp. 34-47); Step 3 (pp. 48-75); Phase Two – Strategy (pp. 77-78); Step 4 (pp. 79-92)

Assign:

Memorize ROPES Model Handout. Memorize objective writing handouts.

Week #3

May 28 – 30

Topics:

Team Case Study Analysis Q&A. Strategy. Questions about Exam #1.

Readings:

Smith (2009), Step 5 (pp. 93-136); Step 6 (pp. 137-182). Tucker et al. (1997).

Assign:

Memorize Behavioral Framework Questions

Holiday:

MONDAY, MAY 26 - MEMORIAL DAY – NO CLASS

Exam:

Friday, May 30 -- Exam #1

Due:

Individual Case Study Analysis due at 3:30 p.m., Friday, May 30.

Week #4

June 2 - 6

Topics:

Exam #1. Tactics. Digital Media. Sub-Functions of Public Relations. Implementing the Strategic Plan. Planning Tools. Budgeting.

Readings:

Smith (2009), Phase Three – Tactics (pp. 183-184); Step 7 (pp. 185-199); Step 8 (pp. 255-270).

Assign:

Memorize Hierarchy of Tactics/Techniques Handout.

Team Work:

FRIDAY, JUNE 6 – NO CLASS - TEAM WORK DAY

Due:

Team Campaign Analysis AE Report (roster, specialization, case, and presentation date) by 12 noon, Wednesday, June 4.

Week #5

June 9-13

Topics:

Team Case Analysis Q&A. Evaluating the Strategic Plan. Stewardship Step.

Readings:

Smith (2009), Phase Four – Evaluative Research (pp. 271-272); Step 9 (273-296).

Team Work:

Kelly (2001), “Stewardship: The Fifth Step in the Public Relations Process.”

FRIDAY, JUNE 13 – NO CLASS - TEAM WORK DAY

Week #6

June 16 - 20

Topics:

Team Case Analysis Oral Presentations.

Assign:

Review Class Readings and Handouts for Exam

Exam:

Friday, June, 20 -- Exam #2

Due:

Team Case Analysis Written Report due at 3:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 18.

PRSA Strategist Article Summary