

## SYLLABUS – PUR 3801 (2660) PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY (☀)

Fall 2015

Tuesday, period 4 (10:40 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

Thursday, periods 4-5 (10:40 a.m. – 12:35 p.m.)

Weimer 3200 (AHA! Lab)

### Instructor:

Mr. Jasper Fessmann, M.Sc.

Office Hours: Mo: 11.30 - 2.30 p.m.

or by appointment

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### 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.

*A Canvas blog is activated to post and answer questions/comments related to the class. This allows an open discussion on class matters. The instructor will read and answer blog's comments once per day except Saturdays and Sundays. The instructor e-mail addresses 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 instructor deems appropriate and necessary.

### 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 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 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.

## Required Books

Smith, R. D. (2013). *Strategic planning for public relations* (4th ed.). New York: Routledge.  
ISBN-10: 041550676X & ISBN-13: 978-0415506762

## Additional Readings

If and when additional readings are assigned, an announcement will be made in class and the material will be posted on Canvas.

## 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, three exams, one team/individual 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 presentation (specializations)** **10%**
- **Service-learning project** **45%**
  - Client research 05%
  - Situation analysis 10%
  - Strategic plan 20%
  - Presentation to the client 10%
- **Examinations** **35%**
  - First exam 15%
  - Second exam 10%
  - Third exam 10%

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. 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 must be discussed with the instructor. Material turned in late will be penalized by one letter grade per day. 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>

## Assignments

### Client pitch

Student will work in groups and prepare a 5 minute pitch to the client on why they should select the group for the account (instructions will be provided). The team's performance will determine which client will have which group assigned to.

### Situation analysis

Maximum 5 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 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. A SWAT analysis is encouraged. In addition to the outline in Smith, it is highly recommended to reach the internet for good professional examples of situation analysis.

### 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 / two-person team presentation

This one-period (50 min) oral and visual presentation will summarize a selected specialization of public relations as presented in Hendrix & Hayes. Individuals / teams are encouraged to supplement their presentations with additional sources and to emphasize the use of digital communication in their selected specialization. Public speaking and visual communication skills will be evaluated. A good presentation usually consists of 20-25 minutes of presentation and two to three case studies or videos. Each of the case studies should be followed by a discussion on why they are relevant to the topic. You are required to send my a outline / draft of the presentation one week before the presentation.

### APA Style

All references must follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Style)*. For those not familiar with APA, the following webpages might be helpful:

- <http://flash1r.apa.org/apastyle/basics/>
- <https://www.library.cornell.edu/research/citation/apa>
- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

## Course Professionalism

The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school and professional decorum is expected at all times. Therefore, the student and the professor 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, guests or the professor. 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; silent 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 conduct of students will be measured against what is expected of a public relations professional in an agency or in-house department. Students are encouraged to keep this in mind.

## 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 in this class.

## 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 and the professor.

## End of Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback during specified times (usually last two or three weeks of the semester) on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

## 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/](http://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 students will be informed of these changes in a timely manner.
- The instructor may be reached via e-mail and the telephone, but please be aware that the professor will not be able to respond immediately to your communication. As a rule, allow up to 48 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 consume food or beverages in the classroom or 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 professor 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 or teaching assistant 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. 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 three absences during the semester will be considered “excessive absences.” You are responsible for signing the attendance sheet every class period as well as notifying me of the cause of your absence for a class meeting (for further information on attendance policy, please consult: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationattendance.html>).
- 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 be penalized one letter grade for each weekday it is late. 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.

## Tentative Course Schedule and Reading

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due/Notes
T Aug. 23	Course introduction	Syllabus	
Th Aug. 25	The strategic process		
T Aug. 30	The strategic process	Smith, Introduction	<i>Choose client teams</i>
Th Sept. 1	Analyzing the situation	Smith, step 1	<b>Research on clients due</b>
T Sept. 6	Analyzing the situation		
Th Sept. 8	Analyzing the organization <b>Meeting with clients</b>	Smith, step 2	<b>Pitch</b>
T Sept. 13	Analyzing the publics <b>Meeting with clients</b>	Smith, step 3	<b>Pitch</b>
Th Sept. 15	Exam		<b>Exam 1</b>
T Sept. 20	Goals & objectives	Smith, step 4	<i>Send topic choice email Designate client contact</i>
Th Sept. 22	Goals & objectives Cont.		
T Sept. 27	Formulating strategies	Smith, step 5	
Th Sept. 29	Reactive strategies		
T Oct. 4	Pres: Media relations		<b>Situation analysis due</b>
Th Oct. 6	Message strategy Pres: Social Media	Smith, step 6	
T Oct. 11	Exam		<b>Exam 2</b>
Th Oct. 13	Communication tactics Pres.: Internal communications	Smith, step 7	
T Oct. 18	Implementation	Smith, step 8	
Th Oct. 20	Pres: Public affairs & Government relations		
T Oct. 25	Pres: Community relations & CSR		<b>Draft Strategic plan due</b>
Th Oct. 27	Evaluating strategic plans	Smith, step 9	
T Nov. 1	Exam		<b>Exam 3</b>
Th Nov. 3	Pres.: Investor relations Pres.: Financial relations		
T Nov. 8	Pres.: Consumer Relations Pres. International PR		
Th Nov. 10	Pres.: Change Communication Pres.: Crisis Communication		<b>Final strategic plan due</b>
T Nov. 15	Pres.: Internal communications		
Th Nov. 17	Pres.: Integrated marketing communication Pres.: Internal communications		
T Nov. 22	Public Interest Communication		<i>Guest Speaker?</i>
T Nov. 29	Agency vs. in-house PR		
Dec. 1& 6	<b>Final presentations</b>		<b>Final presentations</b>