

PUR4100: PUBLIC RELATIONS WRITING
Tuesday & Thursday: Periods 10 & 11 (5:10pm - 7:05pm)
Weimer Hall 2056

INSTRUCTOR:	Gabriel C. Stephen	PHONE (O):	(352) 846-1154
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OFFICE HOURS:	T R Periods 3 & 4	WEBSITE:	http://lss.at.ufl.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide students with the core qualities of excellence in public relations writing. This course is centered on the student and their learning needs. The goal of this course is to prepare students to meet the demands of the marketplace with persuasive and professional public relations writing skills.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- Develop a competency of the basic formats used most frequently in writing for public relations.
- Distinguish the purpose of each form of PR writing, and be able to make strategic decisions about when and how to employ them.
- Demonstrate writing that is compelling, logical, focused, persuasive, and accurate.
- Identify the target audience and employ a well-crafted message using the appropriate medium.

PREREQUISITES FOR COURSE

- PUR3000 - Principles of Public Relations
- JOU3101 - Reporting

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS & MATERIALS

- Wilcox, D. L. (2013). *Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques* (7th Ed.). Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Kessler, L. & McDonald, D. (2016). *When Words Collide: A Media Writer's Guide to Grammar and Style* (9th Ed.), Boston: Thomson/Wadsworth.

Students may use older editions of the required texts insofar as the edition does not pre-date 2006.

CLASS FORMAT

The method of instruction for this course will combine lectures and discussions with class labs. The lectures will inform the class discussion, and the discussion will inform the application of the public relations tool. Over the course of these labs, students will generate news releases, fact sheets, speeches and speech memos, and, ultimately, a strategic communications plan. Each lab will include an opportunity for students to receive constructive critiques of writing from the instructor and classmates. The goal is for students to sharpen their analytical and strategic communications abilities through hands-on experiences.

CLASS POLICIES

Academic Integrity: The students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. Student and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

Violations of the student honor code include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. **Plagiarism.** A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:
 - Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
 - Submitting a document or assignment, which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.
- B. **Unauthorized Use of Materials or Resources ("Cheating").** A student shall not use unauthorized materials or resources in an academic activity. Unauthorized materials or resources shall include:
 - Any paper or project authored by the student and presented by the student for the satisfaction of any academic requirement if the student previously submitted substantially the same paper or project to satisfy an academic requirement and did not receive express authorization to resubmit the paper or project.
 - Any materials or resources prepared by another student and used without the other student's express consent or without proper attribution to the other student.
 - Any materials or resources which the faculty member has notified the student or the class are prohibited.
 - Use of a cheat sheet when not authorized to do so or use of any other resources or materials during an examination, quiz, or other academic activity without the express permission of the faculty member, whether access to such resource or materials is through a cell phone, PDA, other electronic device, or any other means.

For more details about student conduct code procedure: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr>.

Class Participation: Students are expected to actively participate in class discussion and in-class activities. Engagement will exercise critical thinking and evaluation skills. Students are expected to show due respect to their peers and the instructor while taking part in class discussions and activities.

Late Papers/Assignments/Incompletes: Late assignments will be accepted on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the instructor. For emergency circumstances, students should provide a note from Student Affairs.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to be present and on time for every class period. If it is the case that a student must be tardy or absent from a class meeting, it is their responsibility to inform the instructor before class time for assignments. Excused absences require extenuating circumstances such as serious or contagious illness, caregiving for a family member with an illness, official university business or official government business (i.e. military duty, jury duty, subpoena, summons). More than two unexcused absences will result in penalty.

In cases of inclement weather, please refer to official University channels (i.e. UF homepage, emergency texts and e-mails) for class cancellations.

E-mails: The instructor will make every attempt to respond to e-mails in a timely fashion (typically within 24 hours) Monday through Friday – barring unforeseen priority obligations (i.e. research deadlines, University engagements, meetings, personal contracts). Responses to e-mails sent over the weekend may vary.

Laptop Computers and Other Electronic Devices: Personal computers are allowed for note taking – unless otherwise specified by the instructor – provided the computer is not an obvious distraction to the owner or other students.

Cellular/Digital/Smart Phones and Other Electronic Devices: Students are asked to silence and stow away cell phones or personal messaging devices of any kind prior to the start of the class period.

Food & Drinks: With respect to the length of each class meeting, food will be permitted as long as it meets “library appropriate” criteria. Snack-style foods – not requiring heating and/or utensils to consume – are acceptable. Drinks should include a sealable cap, lid or cover. Please refrain from consuming foods or drinks with intrusive odors. The instructor determines final decisions on the appropriateness of foods and drinks in the classroom.

Students with Disabilities: Students are encouraged to utilize the University’s student resources if it is the case that they require assistance in the classroom. Reference the *Resources* section at the end of the syllabus for disability service contact information.

ASSIGNMENTS

*Writing Assignments	Backgrounder Biography Client Selection Crisis Communication Paper Fact Sheet Goals & Objectives News Features News Release Online News Release Pitch Letter Resume & Cover letter	30%
Communication Plan	Executive Summary Situation Analysis Goals & Objectives Target Audiences Strategies Tactics Timeline Budget Measurement/Evaluation	40%
Communication Plan Presentation		15%
Participation		15%
Total:		100%

*writing assignments are subject to change

GRADING SYSTEM

High Achievement	A = 100 – 90%	A+ (97)	A (93)	A- (90)
Meets Expectations	B = 89 – 80%	B+ (87)	B (83)	B- (80)
Below Expectations	C = 79 – 70%	C+ (77)	C (73)	C- (70)

Inadequate Performance	D = 69 - 60%
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Failure	E = 59 - 0%
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COURSE & INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide honest and constructive feedback on the course and instructor; the information provided will assist the University and instructor in providing the best education to students. Submit course evaluations at the conclusion of the course at: www.evaluations.ufl.edu.

RESOURCES

- *Division of Student Affairs* | (352) 392-1261 | www.ufsa.ufl.edu
UF Student Affairs is an all-encompassing education advocacy organization (comprised of 13 departments) that provides students with a wide range of services, educational opportunities, learning, support, outreach, activities and engagement opportunities and services.
- *UF Counseling & Wellness Center* | (352) 392-1575 | www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc
A department featured within student affairs that specializes in providing counseling resources to students, couples or groups on an array of topics from student wellness to crisis/emergency intervention to drug and alcohol support.
- *Disability Resource Center* | (352) 392-1261 | www.dso.ufl.edu/drc
Provides students with practical assistance, accommodations and services in and outside of the classroom. Registration required (not reflected in students' records).
- *Computer/Technology Assistance* | (352) 392-HELP (4357) | helpdesk@ufl.edu
The UF IT department provides a number of services for computers, smartphones, software and general technological assistance.
- *Knight Division for Scholarships, Career Services and Multicultural Affairs* (1080 Weimer) | www.jou.ufl.edu/knight
The Knight Division is responsible for coordinating the college's undergraduate scholarship and assistantship programs, career resource activities and recruitment and retention of students from underrepresented groups.
- *Career Resource Center* | www.crc.ufl.edu
The CRC provides students with career development opportunities including workshops, seminars, career counseling, job fairs and internship placement.

The instructor reserves the right to amend the syllabus at any time; changes will be announced in class.