

COURSE: PUBLIC RELATIONS WRITING - PUR4100

SECTION: 1557 (online) Spring 2015

INSTRUCTOR: Robert (Rob) Engle; rengle@jou.ufl.edu; 703/347-3784

OFFICE HOURS: Contact me by email anytime or by phone 8 a.m.-8 p.m. M-F

COURSE WEBSITE: <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>

REQUIRED TEXT: All readings are assigned (check course website) and AP Stylebook

COURSE PREREQUISITE:

To enroll in this course, you must have completed and received a grade of C or better in PUR 3000 (Principles of Public Relations) and JOU 3101 (Reporting).

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW:

The goal of this course is to equip students with the essential skills for developing and writing public relations materials as PR practitioners. Writing effectively in the variety of PR formats is expected and desired by employers.

Using current events and topics, we will cover all areas of public relations writing, including press releases, backgrounders, bios, and press advisories. We will also cover recent technological changes such as the growth of blogging and social media, providing an understanding of how technology impacts the public relations industry.

In addition, the course will include strategic communication plans, media relations, crisis communication, proposal writing, and speechwriting.

Also please see:

- [Welcome and Course Overview PDF](#)
- *Instructor's Welcome Video:* <http://mediasite.video.ufl.edu/Mediasite/Play/53c8fe4c08a946708006e7a20bd65ba31d>

COURSE FORMAT:

For this semester, there are 15 modules. Most weeks will have a writing assignment; four weeks will have quizzes. Participating on the course discussion board will be part of your grade. The course also includes a communication plan final project, where you will incorporate covered PR writing approaches, strategies, tactics, and messaging in a comprehensive plan to inform and persuade key audiences.

All lectures, assignments, discussion items, readings, samples and other instructions are on the course website.

GRADING POLICY:

Writing Assignments, graded on a 100 point scale - 55 percent

Communication Plan - 25 percent

Quizzes (4) - 10 percent

Participation on course discussion board - 10 percent

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A 90-100 percent

B 80-89 percent

C 70-79 percent

D 60-69 percent

E 0-59 percent

ASSIGNMENT, QUIZ, AND DISCUSSION POLICIES

All assignments and quizzes (open notes) are due 8 p.m. Sunday on the week of the module -- check assignments and due dates on course website. I will have assignments and quizzes returned by Thursday of the following week.

You must submit discussion items by Thursday at 8 p.m. of the module week and respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8 p.m.

No assignments or quizzes will be accepted after due date.

Use AP Stylebook for all writing assignments.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Module/Week

- 1a. Jan. 5 - Welcome, Course Overview
- 1b. Jan. 12 - The Press Release
- 1c. Jan. 19 - The Press Release
- 2a. Jan. 26 - Press Backgrounder
- 2b. Feb. 2 - Fact Sheet
3. Feb. 9 - Bios
4. Feb. 16 - The Press Kit and Cover/Pitch Letters and Emails
5. Feb. 23 - Communication Plans
- Mar. 2 -- Spring Break ---
6. Mar. 9 - Working with Journalists and Editors
7. Mar. 16 - Social Media Writing
8. Mar. 23 - Press Advisories
9. Mar. 30 - Crisis Communication
10. Apr. 6 - Blogs
11. Apr. 13 - Proposals
12. Apr. 20 - Speechwriting
- Apr. 22 - Final Project Due

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:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>.

NETIQUETTE: COMMUNICATION COURTESY:

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. <http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

FOR TECHNICAL HELP

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

- helpdesk@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

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.