

**Ethics and Professional
Responsibility in Public
Relations**

**(PUR 4203,
Section 09H0)**

Fall, 2013

MW 3:00-3:50 p.m.

Weimer Hall 1076

F 11:45-12:35

McCarty Hall 2186

Dr. Mary Ann Ferguson,

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Public Relations Department

**College of Journalism and
Communications**

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(and by appointment)

COURSE PURPOSES:

- 1) to enhance your awareness of the ethical responsibilities of public relations professionals and of the social responsibilities of corporations and other organizations;
- 2) to increase your ability to identify the moral dimensions of issues that arise in the practice of public relations;
- 3) to enhance your ability to employ reason as a tool for dealing with moral issues;
- 4) to provide you the knowledge and skills necessary to reach and justify ethical decisions;
- 5) to elicit within you a sense of personal and professional responsibility; and
- 6) to teach you leadership theories and principles to enhance ethical leadership and corporate social responsibility.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

My expectations include the following: read the assigned materials *before* the class meeting, submit a weekly reaction paper and share your reactions to the readings in our class discussions. In addition, you are expected to research a case from the textbook and to give a short oral report summarizing the case and the public relations strategies used by the organization.. Finally, you will be submitting a final report that discusses the case, describes the public relations strategies used in the case and recommends an ethics communication program.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

Reaction Papers (30 of 100 points):

Students are expected to submit a total of 10 (of a possible 13) two-page reaction papers. The first page of the paper must summarize or outline the main points of the week's readings and the second page should be your personal reaction to or interpretation of the readings.

Reaction papers are due each Monday for that week's readings (unless noted otherwise). All papers must be printed out and handed in during class; late papers and e-mailed papers will not be accepted. **(I will not make exceptions to this rule and I consider asking me to break this rule an ethical breach.)**

These reaction papers will be graded with the following scale: Barely Adequate = 2.0-2.1 points, Average = 2.2-2.3 points, Good = 2.4-2.5 points, Very Good = 2.6-2.7, and Excellent = 2.8-3.0 points. (An Average reaction paper will have an accurate summary of the readings and will respond thoughtfully to the issues raised in the readings. A Good paper (in addition to summary) will integrate the reading for that week with what you have previously learned about public relations in other courses. A Very Good paper will summarize, integrate the readings and bring in new information from what you are learning about public relations and ethics in this course. An Excellent paper will go beyond summary, reaction, and integration and will develop a new idea beyond what you are learning in class. (Excellent papers will be rare.)

Case Study Oral Report and Final Report (40 of 100 points):

Each student will select one of the cases covered in the textbook, pp. 257-455. You will research this case and the public relations implications and, on the date assigned in the syllabus, you will make a PowerPoint presentation (about 10-12 minutes). This oral summary will be a brief overview of the case and the public relations strategies used in the case. (The oral report can earn you up to 10 of your possible 40 points.

Your final report (no more than 15 pages) will summarize the case and your recommendations for a public relations program including description of the program and the process the company should have used to develop the program. For this portion of your assignment, you will earn up to 30 points.)

Class Leadership (10 of 100 points):

Each week students will be assigned to take a class leadership role for the class discussion of the readings (generally on Monday unless otherwise noted in the syllabus). You have complete freedom in how you elect to approach that leadership role.

The following are some of the ways students have elected to do this in previous classes: a) Summarize own reaction paper (or read it in its entirety) and then direct discussion around paper. b) Prepare questions to generate thought-provoking discussions, c) Lecture on the topic and bring additional readings or other materials to the lecture, d) Take a critical position on the authors' perspectives and bring evidence as to why you think an author is wrong, and/or e) Show the class current event examples that illustrate the week's readings.

There is no one "right" way to lead; you will be evaluated in terms of how creative you were and how much impact your leadership had on the breadth and depth of the class discussion.

Participation (10 of 100 points):

In addition to taking a leadership role in your assigned week, you will be graded on how thoughtfully you participate in class discussions. I will be making this summary judgment--not on how often you talk--but on the quality of that contribution.

Attendance (10 out of 100 points):

Attendance counts for 10% of your grade and attendance is taken daily. You are expected to attend class. There are two non-penalized absences for this class. For each recorded absence—beyond the first two—you will lose 1.5 of your 10 points. The way this works is: if you are absent three times, then you will only earn 8.5 of the 10 points, four absences and you earn 7 of the 10 points and so forth.

When you are going to be absent from class, you must let me know by e-mail or phone before the class meets. Failure to do so or arriving late to class will lose you an additional one of your attendance points. (Attendance is taken at the very beginning of class, so if you arrive late you should make sure you are not shown as absent on the attendance sheet. This is your responsibility, so don't ask to have the attendance sheet changed at a later date because you forgot to check in at the end of class. There are no exceptions.)

Deadlines: I will not accept late reaction papers. Please let me know ahead of time if you have a scheduling conflict for your assignments and make your own arrangements to change dates with someone else.

GRADING:

	Points
Weekly Reaction Papers (10 of possible 13)	30
Case Study: Oral & Written Report	40
Class Leadership	10
Class Participation	10
Attendance	<u>10</u>
Total Points	100

The grading scale used for this course is:

92-100	A
88-91	A-
85-87	B+
82-84	B
78-81	B-
75-77	C+
72-74	C
68-71	C-
65-67	D+
62-64	D
58-61	D-
< 58	E

No laptops may be used during this class and cell phones must be turned off unless we have a class assignment that requires the use of these technologies. (If your cell phone rings during class, expect to lose participation points.)

REQUIRED READINGS:

Understanding Business Ethics, Peter Stanwick and Susan Stanwick, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2014, 2nd Ed. (UBE)

Legal and Ethical Considerations for Public Relations, Karla K. Gower, Waveland Press, Prospect Heights, Illinois, 2008, 2nd Ed. (LECPR)

Useful Web Sites:

Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship
<http://www.bcccc.net/>

Business Ethics: The Magazine of Corporate Responsibility
<http://www.business-ethics.com/>

Business for Social Responsibility
<http://www.bsr.org/index.cfm>

Compliance Week Articles
<http://www.complianceweek.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=Article.AdvancedSearchResults>

CSRwire: CSR news and press releases
<http://www.csrwire.com>

Ethical Corporation Online
<http://www.ethicalcorp.com>

Global Reporting Initiative
<http://www.globalreporting.org/Home>

The Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability
<http://www.accountability21.net/default.aspx?id=54>

White House—President’s Ten-Point Plan
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/corporateresponsibility/index2.html>

World Bank--Business Ethics and Corporate Accountability: The Search for Standards
http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/corpgov/csr/pdf/bizethics_econference.pdf

World Business Council for Sustainable Development
<http://www.wbcsd.org/>

Week	Topic	Required Readings	Reaction Paper Due Date and Reaction Sharers (Mondays)	Case Reports (On Fridays)
WEEK 1 Aug 21, 23	Introduction to Social Responsibility & Ethics Ethics from the Public Relations Practitioners' View	LECPR, Ch.1 Doing the Right Thing (pp. 1-24)	No Class—Read Assigned Readings	
WEEK 2 Aug 26, 28, 30	Public Relations and Ethics of Speech	LECPR, Ch.2 Defining Public Relations Speech (pp. 25-42), Ch.3 Regulating Public Relations Speech (pp. 43-62)	8/26: Reaction Paper 1 (This should cover weeks 1 and 2 and be submitted electronically to Dr. Ferguson)	
WEEK 3 Sep 4, 6 Holiday Sep 2	Public Relations, Libel and Protecting Your Organization's Products	LECPR, Ch.4 Harming Others (pp. 63-94), Ch. 5 Protecting Creative Property (pp. 95-106)	9/4 Reaction Paper 2, (Print out and bring to class) 9/4 Reaction Sharer ?	9/6, Case Research Begins
WEEK 4 Sep 9, 11, 13	Ethics, Frameworks	UBE, Ch. 1 The Foundation of Ethical Thought (pp. 1-18)	9/9: Reaction Paper 3 9/9: Reaction Sharer ?	
WEEK 5 Sep 16, 18, 20	Business Ethics Today	UBE, Ch. 2 The Evolving Complexities of Business Ethics (pp. 19-35)	9/16 Reaction Paper 4 9/16: Reaction Sharer ?	9/20: Oral Presentation:
WEEK 6 Sep 23, 25, 27	Stakeholders, Publics and CSR	UBE, Ch. 3 Stakeholders and Corporate Social Responsibility (pp. 36-58)	9/23: Reaction Paper 5 9/23: Reaction Sharer ?	9/27: Oral Presentation: Eades Draft 1, Case Report
WEEK 7 Sep 30, Oct 2, 4	Leadership and Ethics	UBE, Ch.5 Ethical Leadership and Corporate Governance (pp. 79-94)	9/30: Reaction Paper 6 9/30 Reaction Sharer: Gedigian	10/4: Oral Presentation: Eagerton
WEEK 8 Oct 7, 9, 11	Strategic Planning and Communication	UBE, Ch. 6 Strategic Planning, Corporate Culture and Corporate Compliance (pp. 95-113)	10/7: Reaction Paper 7 10/7: Reaction Sharer: Lewis	10/11: Oral Presentation: Forst
WEEK 9 Oct 14, 16, 18	Ethical Decision Making	MCSR, Ch. 7 Decision Making and Human Resources, (pp. 114-132)	10/14 Reaction Paper 8 10/14 Reaction Sharer: Mullins	10/14 Oral Presentation: Gacio, Draft 2 Case Report
WEEK 10	Environment and	UBE, Ch 8, Ethics and	10/21: Reaction Paper	10/25 Oral

Week	Topic	Required Readings	Reaction Paper Due Date and Reaction Sharers (Mondays)	Case Reports (On Fridays)
Oct 21, 23, 25	Sustainability	the Environment (pp. 133-153)	9 10/21 Reaction Sharer: Swift	Presentation: Gedigian
WEEK 11 Oct 28, 30, Nov 1	New Technologies and Ethics	UBE, Ch 9, Ethics and Information Technology (pp. 154-173)	10/28: Reaction Paper 10 10/20: Reaction Sharer: Gacio	11/1: Oral Presentation: Lewis
WEEK 12 Nov 4, 6, Nov 8 Holiday	Communication Functions and Ethics	UBE, Ch 10, Marketing and Advertising (pp. 174-193)	11/4: Reaction Paper 11 11/4 Reaction Sharer: Forst	11/6: Oral Presentation: Mullins Draft 3 Case Report
WEEK 13 Nov 13, 15, Nov 11 Holiday	Global Issues	UBE, Ch 11, Ethical Issues in the Developing World, (pp. 194-212)	11/13: Reaction Paper 12 11/13 Reaction Sharer: Eagerton	11/15: Oral Presentation: Swift
WEEK 14 Nov 18, 20, 22	Developing Ethical Programs	UBE, Ch 12, Establishing a Code of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines, (pp. 213-232)	11/18 Reaction Paper 13 11/18 Reaction Sharer: Eades	
WEEK 15 Nov 25, Dec 2, 4 Nov 27, 29 Holiday	Evaluation	UBE, Ch 13, Evaluating Corporate Ethics, (pp 233-256)		12/4 Case Study Final Report Submitted

SUPPORT READINGS

Books

Good News: Social Ethics and the Press, Clifford G. Christians, John P. Ferre, & P. Mark Fackler, Oxford University Press, New York, 1993.

Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning (5th edition), Clifford G. Christians, Mark Fackler, Kim B. Rotzoll, & Kathy Brittain McKee, Longman, New York, 1998.

Organizational Ethics and the Good Life, Edwin M. Hartman, Oxford University Press, New York, 1996.

Perspectives on Corporate Citizenship, Jorg Andriof & Malcolm McIntosh, Greenleaf Publishing, 2001.

Cannibals With Forks: The Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business, John Elkington, New Society Publications, 1998.

- When Good Companies Do Bad Things: Responsibility and Risk in an Age of Globalization, Blair Gibb & P. Schwartz, John Wiley and Sons, April 1999.
- Values Shift: The New Work Ethic and What It Means for Business, John Izzo and Pam Withers, Fairwinds Press, 2001.
- Global Corporate Citizenship: Rational and Strategies, Delwin Roy, Laurie Regelbrugge & David Logan, Washington, D.C.: Hitachi Foundation, 1997.
- Corporate Global Citizenship, Noel Tichy, Andrew McGill & Lynda St. Clair, Lexington Books, 1998.
- Leading Corporate Citizens, Sandra A. Waddock, Irwin/McGraw Hill, 2001.
- The New Rules of Corporate Conduct: Rewriting the Social Charter, Ian Wilson, Westport, CT: Quorum Books, 2000.

REQUIRED UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS FOR ALL COURSE SYLLABI

“Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.”

6CI-4.017 Student Affairs: Academic Honesty Guidelines.

“All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines which have been accepted by the University. **(1) Each student is required to subscribe to the Guidelines upon registration each semester by signing the following pledge which is contained on the "Course Request Registration Form": I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all of their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the University. (2) The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines. Those adjudged to have committed such conduct shall be subject to the sanctions provided in 6CI-4.016. (a) Cheating -- the improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit. Taking of information includes, but is not limited to, copying graded homework assignments from another student; working together with another individual(s) on a take-home test or homework when not specifically permitted by the teacher; looking or attempting to look at another student's paper during an examination; looking or attempting to look at text or notes during an examination when not permitted. Tendering of information includes, but is not limited to, giving your work to another student to be used or copied; giving someone answers to exam questions either when the exam is being given or after having taken an exam; giving or selling a term paper or other written materials to another student; sharing information on a graded assignment.**

Plagiarism -- The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the other's work is published or unpublished, or simply the work of a fellow student. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on an exam, term paper, homework, or other written materials or oral presentations for an academic requirement; submitting a paper which was purchased from a term paper service as your own work; submitting anyone else's paper as your own work.

Bribery -- The offering, giving, receiving or soliciting of any materials, items or services of value to gain academic advantage for yourself or another.

Misrepresentation -- Any act or omission with intent to deceive a teacher for academic advantage. Misrepresentation includes using computer programs generated by another and handing it in as your own work unless expressly allowed by the teacher; lying to a teacher to increase your grade; lying or misrepresenting facts when confronted with an allegation of academic dishonesty.

Conspiracy -- The planning or acting with one or more persons to commit any form of academic dishonesty to gain academic advantage for yourself or another.

Fabrication -- The use of invented or fabricated information, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive for academic or professional advantage. “