

Syllabus Updated January 7, 2014

**Course:** Public Relations Campaigns—PUR 4800

**Section:** 2764

**Class Times:** Tuesday 10:40-11:30  
and Thursday 10:40-12:35

**Class Location:** Weimer 1076

**Instructor:** Florida Bridgewater-Alford, APR  
bridgefl@ufl.edu (If you email, please use the course name and  
number in your subject line)

**Office Hours - online:** Monday 4-5 p.m.  
Thursday 12:35 p.m.-1:15 p.m.  
And by appointment

### Course Overview

In this course, you will master the elements of a strategic communications campaign through case studies and direct experience. I will teach this course from the perspective of a practitioner and make use of extensive real-life examples. As much as is possible in a classroom environment, I will try to recreate the experience of earning and working with a real-world client.

You will work with a team on behalf of a client to develop a robust, strategic, measurable and actionable strategic communications plan. You will have the opportunity to work with a locally-based client, of which I will identify for you. You will work with your team to write a proposal and prepare a client pitch before you can work with that client. I will make the final determination about which team works with which client.

This course represents an opportunity to bring together everything you've learned through your coursework in this program. This course is centered on you and your learning needs, with ample time and opportunity for hands-on learning.

In this course we will adhere to AP style. All work completed for this course is expected to be your own *original* work. There is a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism. I expect that you are familiar with the University of Florida policy on academic honesty and will follow that policy without exception. Factual and grammatical errors will not be tolerated, and will count against your grade for the given assignment. These include mathematical errors, misspellings of the client's name or misuse of terms associated with relevant content or research.

### **Course Objectives**

1. You will understand and be able to complete the components of a successful strategic communications plan.
2. You will understand how to earn and work with a client in a way that demonstrates confidence, professionalism and an ability to learn relevant content quickly.
3. You will develop the skill of working effectively with an account management team on behalf of a client.
4. You will learn to think strategically and **courageously** on behalf of a client or cause.
5. You will develop client communication skills, including an ability to listen, to understand and respond to client expectations.
6. You will learn to represent yourself as a knowledgeable, competent and confident professional.

### **Appointments**

My office hours will primarily be online or Skype, however, I will accept appointments for face-to-face visits as well to discuss assignments, materials or other concerns related to the course. Please schedule meetings with me via email. My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus.

### **Course Professionalism**

Professional decorum is expected at all times. I expect you to adhere to workplace norms of collegial and respectful interaction. That specifically means that you will arrive on time, not speak when another student, the instructor or guests are speaking or use cell phones, lap tops or other electronic devices – unless as an assignment for this course - during the class period. I expect that you will welcome and treat with respect the diverse perspectives of your fellow students. Violations of these expectations may result in students being asked to leave class and a lowering of your grade.

### **A Few Notes about Writing for this Course**

I expect that you will demonstrate excellent writing throughout this course. I will grade written assignments with great care, and expect that you will write with the same responsibility and precision you applied to your writing classes. You will use AP Style. I will subtract points for violations of AP Style, factual errors and misspellings of names, organizations or other terms. Misspellings, syntax and grammatical errors are unacceptable in upper-level college writing, particularly writing by public relations students.

### **Students with Special Needs**

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 submit a documentation letter to the professor when requesting accommodation. Please notify me at the beginning of the semester if you would like to discuss requests for special provisions.

### **Class Attendance Policy**

Attendance for this course is required. I will distribute an attendance document or have a roll call at the beginning of each class period for the final record. Please make sure you sign next to your name. Signing in another student is a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy. Arriving late or leaving class early will result in an absence for that class. Unexcused absences are unacceptable. **Each unexcused absence will result in a loss of five percentage points from your grade.**

### **Academic Honesty**

The work you submit for this course must be your own. It must be original for this course. You must never use direct or paraphrased material from any source, including websites, without attribution. You may not submit anything that you wrote for another class, or that you wrote as a volunteer or intern. You may not submit anything that was written for any purpose other than the given assignment. I will handle any incident of academic dishonesty in accordance with UF policies that address cheating and unethical academic behavior, specifically the UF Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Guidelines. As a consequence, any case of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. I will follow University Guidelines for any offense.

Any time you complete an assignment for this course, please clearly attribute the source of your information, including information obtained from organizations' websites or internal documents. You cannot copy anything verbatim, regardless of the source without inserting quotes around it and attributing the source.

### **Grading Policy**

#### **Class Participation 15 percent**

Class participation counts toward 15 percent of your final grade. You must be fully present during class, contribute to discussions and demonstrate through your comments that you have read and understood assigned readings and benefited from previous class discussions. Each unexcused absence will result in a loss of five points from your grade for the course.

#### **Quizzes 10 percent**

#### **Client Proposal and Presentation 10 percent**

#### **Agendas and Call Reports (two sets) 10 percent**

You and your team will prepare agendas for each interaction with your client. You will also capture the proceedings of those conversations in call notes.

#### **Peer Evaluation 10 percent**

Your team members will each evaluate your contribution to the campaign. I will carefully review their assessments of your commitment and contribution to arrive at your peer evaluation grade.

#### **Campaign Preparation 15 percent**

You will complete a series of four graded assignments as a team as you develop your campaign.

### **Final Strategic Communications Plan and Presentation 25 percent**

Your team's final strategic plan and presentation is the most important part of your grade. You will submit a highly detailed written plan as a team, and present the plan as a team. I expect each member of the team to contribute equally and substantially to each.

When you present your strategic communications plan, you are welcome to use PowerPoint or another presentation graphics software if there are specific points that will be enhanced using visual aides—for example, charts, photographs, compelling quotes or images associated with the work. Use PowerPoint and similar software wisely – not as a presentation crutch. If you plan to simply use it to display words on a slide – use of the software is not necessary.

### **Client and Professional Assessment of Your Plan 5 percent**

Your client will complete an assessment of your plan, the extent to which it meets their needs and the value it contributes to the organization. You will receive a copy of the assessment form when I provide instructions for this assignment.

You will also receive feedback from a panel of professional communicators who will evaluate the professionalism and excellence of the plan.

Together, these assessments will comprise 10 percent of your final grade for the course.

### **Grading**

Each assignment will be graded on a 100-point scale and weighted accordingly. I will first grade for content, and then subtract points for errors in AP style, grammar, and errors. Each grammatical or spelling error will count for five points off. AP style violations will count for 10 points off your grade, and factual errors including misspellings of client names or misuse or core terms associated with the field in which your client works will count for 50 points off. I will award points based on your demonstrated understanding of the assignment, the level of creativity, and your ability to write compelling, accurate and precise copy.

### **Grades**

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

### **Late Work**

**No assignments will be accepted after the due date. Quizzes may not be made up.**

## Required Materials

*Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes*, Andy Goodman, available for download at [www.agoodmanonline.com](http://www.agoodmanonline.com) (Click on "Give Presentations" and the document is on the right side of the page.)

*Made to Stick*, Dan and Chip Heath, buy at Amazon.com  
Distributed Readings

## Class Discussion and Assignment Schedule:

	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1	January 7 Class Discussion: Course overview, objectives and requirements Job descriptions Resumes and cover letters	January 9 <b>Assignment Due:</b> <b>Resume, letter of intent, writing sample and photo</b> Class Discussion: Teams selected and roles assigned, meet in class to discuss background, roles and logistics, select agency name and review RFPs <i>Requests for proposals distributed</i>
Week 2	January 14 Class Discussion: Creating an effective client proposal <i>Client proposal assignment distributed (due Jan. 28)</i> <i>Campaign assignment distributed (due Feb. 18)</i>	January 16 <b>Quiz on assigned reading</b> Class Discussion: Making an effective pitch presentation Assigned reading: <i>Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes</i>
Week 3	January 21 Class Discussion: Complete: Making an effective pitch presentation Start: Casual, secondary and primary research and UFL resources for conducting research	January 23 Class Discussion: Complete: Casual, secondary and primary research and UFL resources for conducting research
Week 4	January 28 <b>Assignment Due: Client proposal</b> <b>Client presentation</b>	January 30 <b>Client presentation</b>
Week 5	February 4 <b>Client presentation</b>	February 6 <b>Client presentation</b>
Week 6	February 11 Clients assigned – <b>*Reminder – client feedback is critical</b> Class Discussion: Holding an effective client meeting	February 13 NO CLASS but you must hold your first client meeting this week or during this period
Week 7	February 18 <b>Campaign Assignment 1 Due:</b> <b>Casual and secondary research report and plan for primary research,</b>	February 20 <b>Assignment Due:</b> <b>Call notes and agenda, set 1</b> Class Discussion:

	<b>including survey</b> Class Discussion: Communications Assessment	S.M.A.R.T. Measureable Objectives
Week 8	February 25 <b>Campaign Assignment 2 Due:  Communications Assessment and  Measurable Objectives</b> Class Discussion: Audience analysis  Your client-approved survey must be deployed this week	February 27 Class Discussion: Strategy and Theory
Week 9	March 4 Spring Break	March 6 Spring Break
Week 10	March 11 Class Discussion: Communicating Visually <b>Guest Speaker: Jim Harrison</b>	March 13 Class Discussion: Integrated Communication for Campaigns
Week 11	March 18 <b>Quiz on assigned reading</b> Class discussion: Creating Your Message Strategy Reading assignment: <i>Made to Stick</i>	March 20 <b>Campaign Assignment 3 Due:  Final Research Report, Audience  Analysis and Message Strategy</b> Class Discussion: Channels and tactics
Week 12	March 25 <b>Assignment Due:  Call notes and agenda, set 2</b> Class Discussion: <b>Guest Speaker: Bruce Floyd</b> Using social media for research and engagement	March 27 <b>Campaign Assignment 4 Due  Draft Campaign Book:</b>  Class Discussion: Class choice – The experience
Week 13	April 1 Team meetings with FBA to discuss campaign book	April 3 Team meetings with FBA to discuss campaign book
Week 14	April 8 No class – please use this time to meet with your team for final presentations and preparations	April 10 <b>Client Presentation</b>
Week 15	April 15 <b>Client Presentation  Final Campaign Book Due</b>	April 17 <b>Client Presentation</b>
Week 16	April 22 <b>Client Presentation</b>	