

# Public Relations Campaign

## PUR 4800 Section 2318

**Time: Tuesdays (10:40 to 11:30AM), Rm. Weimer 1076**

**Thursdays (10:40 AM to 12:35 PM), Rm. Weimer 1076**

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<b>Office:</b>	3050 Weimer	<b>Handouts:</b>	Available on E-learning & See <a href="#">Project Calendar</a> *
<b>Website:</b>	E-learning Site		

### Course Description

Public Relations Campaigns is a **capstone course** that introduces students to the process of **campaign development, management, and evaluation** using the principles and strategies of public relations and agency management. Recreating real-world professional settings, this course marks your transition from student to professional.

The aim of this course is to help you master the elements of a strategic communication campaign through direct experience as a practitioner. The course is designed from a professional perspective and makes use of extensive real-life examples. **You will be working with a real-world client**, which implies I expect you to conduct yourself like professionals in your interaction with me, your teammates, and your client. This also means that you will be evaluated on the quality, creativity, and professionalism of your work product.

Working in teams, you will develop a robust, strategic, measurable, and actionable strategic communication plan for a client assigned to you by the instructor. Your team will write a proposal and prepare a client pitch before you begin work with a client.

This is an exciting opportunity to apply your public relations skills and knowledge that you have acquired through your coursework in this program (research methods, writing, strategy, and visual communications) as well as your practical and professional experience during internships or jobs. This course is centered on you and your learning needs, with ample time and opportunity for hands-on learning.

While you will be working in teams, this course will provide you with a platform to showcase your individual creative talents and knowledge of communication programs, strategy, and tactics. Emphasis in the course is on the development of various campaign components. The major assignment is preparation of a professional-style communication campaign plan. Other important aspects of the course include team participation and development of presentation skills.

This course will add another notch to your undergraduate portfolio. Done well, your campaign will be an accomplishment to show prospective employers.

*\*A (tentative) course schedule is provided at the end of the syllabus (also on our E-learning site). It includes assigned readings, exam and due dates and the dates on which class will not meet. I will do my best to keep to the course schedule, but if ever I need to make a change to the schedule, I will notify the students as soon as*

*possible using the E-learning email.*

## **Course Objectives**

### **This course will help you:**

1. To develop skills in strategic public relations management based on an analysis of current and historical case studies
2. To understand the role and importance of research in responding to potential or emerging public relations problems or utilizing potential opportunities.
3. To obtain a keen knowledge of effective communication campaign and to demonstrate the application of students' previously acquired skills and knowledge in public relations through a group project.
4. To develop, execute, and evaluate an effective public relations campaign.
5. To learn how to work as a group effectively and efficiently.
6. To provide you with an experience in workplace competition, offering a "real working world" lesson in pitching clients and afterwards, learning from comparing campaigns.
7. To encourage students to view themselves as public relations strategists and to acquire the necessary skills to fulfill this role.

**These objectives will be achieved by hands-on experience with a project for a client. You will produce a high-quality report as professional (but pro-bono) consultants.**

### **Course Instruction, Management and Communication:**

Requirements include reading assigned materials, participating in class discussions, executing and evaluating a campaign project, presenting your project to a client and completing one examination.

- Reading Assigned Materials: Students are responsible for all assigned readings and material covered in class. You should read appropriate materials **BEFORE** the assigned class session so you can contribute to our discourse in a manner that can benefit everyone in class.

#### **Recommended Reading:**

Austin, E. W. & Pinkleton, B. E. (2006), Strategic public relations management: Planning and managing effective communication programs, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ.

#### **Additional Readings:**

Bobbitt, W. R., & Sullivan, R. (2009). Developing the public relations campaign: A team-based approach. Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

Smith R. D. (2009). Strategic Planning for Public Relations (3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Please note that additional recommended supplementary readings may be provided at a later time during the semester. The supplementary readings will be available on our E-learning site.

- Class Participation: You will be expected to participate in class discussions. Your input in class will be greatly valued.

- **Research Projects:** You will be asked to conduct small scale evaluative research for measuring your campaign success. Your project work will be done in teams. Expect to devote considerable out-of-class time to the projects.
- **Examinations:** Examinations count for 20 percent of your grade.
- **Final Presentation:** During the final week of the course, each team will make a formal presentation of their campaign project to the client as well as the class.

**Deadline and Makeup Exams:** Failure to meet group project deadlines will result in a lowered grade for the entire project team per day. A post-exam will not be given, so see me if you have a conflict with the exam time and plan to take it early.

**Grading:**

<b>Grading Items</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Points</b>
Background Research (Situational Analysis) and Research Plan	Sept. 23	10
The Mid-term Exam	Oct. 9	30
Formative Research Report	Oct. 30	20
Campaign Plan (with Campaign Materials if applicable)	Nov. 20	10
Final Presentation	Dec 2 and 4	10
Final Campaign Book	Dec. 9	10
Group Member Evaluations	To be weighed in the team projects	
Class Participation & Attendance		10
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>100</b>

**The Mid-Term Exam (30 Percent)**

Between twenty five and forty multiple-choice questions will be given.

**Campaign Projects & Final Reports (50 percent)**

**The Campaign Team**

Depending upon the number of students enrolled, the class will be divided into teams of five to six people, each group simulating a full-service agency responsible for developing a complete public relations campaign for an actual organization. Generally, each agency will encompass all of the positions discussed below (it’s possible that some students in smaller groups may need to assume more than one responsibility, depending on client needs and the particular campaign. Team make-up, position assignments, campaign choices and other details will be discussed as the course progresses. Traditional team positions and general responsibilities:

- **Account executive:** Responsible for overall performance of the group. (Note: AE may be required to meet with the instructor outside of class on scheduled times during the semester and/or to maintain ongoing communications with the professor. Expect to spend extra time managing your team).
- **Public relations director:** Directs public communications strategies and works with the AE to plan programs of mutual understanding between client and various publics.

- **Research director:** Responsible for secondary and primary research, using focus groups, interviews, surveys, or other techniques necessary to determine target publics, attitudes, and opinions.
- **Copy writing director:** Responsible for all copy/content including style, grammar, references and in-text citations.
- **Creative services director:** Responsible for all art, including visuals for all presentations.
- **Media director:** Develops media strategy, including selecting major media for the campaign and determining research, frequency, and continuity.

Your team is responsible to plan, execute, and evaluate a campaign project.

- You are responsible for gathering background information for the topic you chose.
- The procedure and structure of the campaign project will be chosen based on your group consent.
- In the report, you should justify why and how you used the particular tactics.
- Writing should be clear.
- Everyone in your group is equally responsible for producing the final project. This means that the project will be graded as a group project.

### Campaign Project Components

**Agency memos:** Your agency will need to meet at least once each week, usually twice and sometimes more, depending on deadlines. At each meeting, the group needs to designate an account executive who will note attendance, keep track of decisions made, tasks assigned, deadlines set and major problems or questions facing the group. I should receive at least one memo from each group each week, preferably via **an email message copied to all agency members**. I'll save these (and you should, too) for assessing your individual and your agency's performances.

1. **Situational Analysis & Research Plan:** This is the summary of your agency's background research results and your plan to conduct formative research.
2. **Research Report:** After the agency follows through with its research plan, you will submit a report summarizing what you found. The report should comprehensively document what you have done.
3. **Campaign Plan:** You have to develop a comprehensive campaign plan and this must include campaign goals, objectives, strategies and tactics.
4. **Final Campaign Book:** This report is the summary of your semester's worth of work. - this is the document you will present to your client. Included will be summaries of all previous components, but the main new portion will be conclusion and recommendation sections for the entire project.

### Final Presentation (10 Percent)

During the final week of the course, each agency will make a formal presentation of their research findings and campaign plan to their client and the class.

- Appropriate visual aids such as tables and graphics are required for presenting your final report.
- The explanation and justification of your campaign plan should be comprehensive.
- The explanation of main findings from your evaluative research should be clear and precise.
- The limitations of the project and the suggestions for further directions should be included in the final report and the presentation.
- The campaign recommendations should be based on your findings.

### Group Members/self Evaluation

Three peer- & self-evaluations will be required during the semester. Each person on a team must determine a confidential numerical score. Specific questions that detail the character of the work undertaken during the preceding time frame will be asked and students will be required to indicate specifically which tasks were completed by which team members (including themselves). The evaluation form can be found on E-Learning (Please submit a hardcopy to me directly!).

*\*\*Important: Students who receive a majority of highly unfavorable reports in Report Periods one and two – reflecting interpersonal or participatory problems – will be notified by the instructor of their precarious situation and the need for a frank and open discussion among the team's members. If the problem persists, the individual, based on a group decision, **may be fired** from the group. The decision should be made carefully and you should consult with me before the final decision. Final approval of a firing will be up to me. The person, who is subject to it, will not receive any points for group projects. Group projects account for 70% of the final grade, meaning automatic failure.*

*\*\*Be aware that members in your agency may not get the same grade. Rather, your grades on the group projects (including your final report) will be weighed by agency/self-evaluations. For example, if your group scores a 92% on the campaign project, but your average score from the self/agency evaluations is 80%, then the grade you receive for the group campaign project would be 74% (80% \* 92%). If your average score is a 91%, you would get the group project grade of 92%. The purpose of this complicated procedure is to reduce the likelihood that someone in the group will slack off and still receive the full benefit of the others' work.*

### **Class Participation (10 percent)**

Attendance and class participation counts for 10% of your final grade. Unexcused absences will be counted against class participation scores. **Each unexcused absence will be 2 points, out of 10 possible class participation points.**

*\*\* Students arriving after the class roll has been taken will be marked as late. Two "late" marks count as one absence.*

*\*\* Excused absences must have either a doctor's note or note from the faculty adviser of a university sanctioned organization/event. Please provide the doctor's/teacher's notes to our TA.*

## Academic Honesty

**Academic Honesty:** All students are expected to be honest in all their academic work. Failure to uphold the standards of honesty will result in the appropriate disciplinary action by the University of Florida. As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement:

*"I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all 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."*

*It is your responsibility to be familiar with the academic student code. You can review the honor code and sanctions for violations to the code in the following link: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/studenthonorcode.php>*

### ***Academic Student Honor Code:***

*"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. 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."*

**Plagiarism will not be tolerated!** If you use information from a publication, you must attribute a source to it.

### **Class Etiquette**

- Reading a newspaper or other unrelated materials during class is not permitted.
- Sleeping during class is considered as an unexcused absence.
- Do not use cell phones or audible pagers.
- Food, drinks and tobacco products are not allowed in the classroom.

### **Instructor Notes**

- I will make every effort to adhere to this syllabus and grading system, but reserve the right to make necessary changes.
- This class is challenging, but in the end it is rewarding and helps prepare you for internships and the job market. If you feel yourself having trouble, please see me immediately.
- I will make every attempt to make this and all courses diverse and multicultural and non-discriminatory. Should I ever fail to meet this goal, please let me know immediately.
- I will be available to assist students during office hours, by appointment, or via email and will try to provide you with your grades on assignments, exam, and participation as soon as possible.

### **Seeking Help**

If you need individual assistance beyond the help you receive in class, you can see me during office hours or set up an appointment for another time. If you have any special concerns for your instructor to know in order to ensure your academic success in class, please

inform me as soon as possible, so I can assist you accordingly. Please, see me if you have any problems! I consider my student's failure to learn as my own failure to teach effectively. We are going to work together to provide a high quality academic environment for our learning.

**Special Assistance:** "Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodations to be unavailable. All accommodations must be approved through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Administration Annex 206 (Tel. 335-1566)."