

 <b>FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY</b>	<b>NEW COURSE PROPOSAL</b> <b>Undergraduate Programs</b>		UUPC Approval <u>1-31-22</u> UFS Approval _____ SCNS Submittal _____ Confirmed _____ Banner Posted _____ Catalog _____
	<b>Department</b> Communication and Multimedia Studies  <b>College</b> Arts and Letters <i>(To obtain a course number, contact <a href="mailto:erudolph@fau.edu">erudolph@fau.edu</a>)</i>		
<b>Prefix</b> PUR  <b>Number</b> 3105	<i>(L = Lab Course; C = Combined Lecture/Lab; add if appropriate)</i>  <b>Lab Code</b>	<b>Type of Course</b> <input style="border: 1px solid red;" type="text" value="Lecture"/>	<b>Course Title</b> Public Relations and the Press
<b>Credits</b> <i>(Review Provost Memorandum)</i>  3.0	<b>Grading</b> <i>(Select One Option)</i>  <b>Regular</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <b>Pass/Fail</b> <input type="radio"/> <b>Sat/UnSat</b> <input type="radio"/>	<b>Course Description</b> <i>(Syllabus must be attached; Syllabus Checklist recommended; see <a href="#">Guidelines</a>)</i>  This course will examine the current and historical interaction of journalism and public relations (PR), primarily in the U.S. It will take a critical and balanced look at these two collaborative and conflicting professions.	
<b>Effective Date</b> <i>(TERM &amp; YEAR)</i>  Fall 2022			
<b>Prerequisites, with minimum grade*</b>  None	<b>Corequisites</b>  None	<b>Registration Controls</b> <i>(Major, College, Level)</i>  None	
<b>*Default minimum passing grade is D-. Prereqs., Coreqs. &amp; Reg. Controls are enforced for all sections of course</b>			
<b>WAC/Gordon Rule Course</b>  <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No  <i>WAC/Gordon Rule criteria must be indicated in syllabus and approval attached to proposal. See <a href="#">WAC Guidelines</a>.</i>	<b>Intellectual Foundations Program (General Education) Requirement</b> <i>(Select One Option)</i>  None  <i>General Education criteria must be indicated in the syllabus and approval attached to the proposal. See <a href="#">GE Guidelines</a>.</i>		
<b>Minimum qualifications to teach course</b> Master's degree or above in journalism or public relations			
<b>Faculty Contact/Email/Phone</b> Santaniello nsantane@fau.edu 561-212-7446	<b>List/Attach comments from departments affected by new course</b> None		
<b>Approved by</b> Department Chair <u><i>OB Mullis</i></u> College Curriculum Chair <u><i>Philip Lewin</i></u> College Dean <u><i>[Signature]</i></u> UUPC Chair <u><i>Phlyn Williams</i></u> Undergraduate Studies Dean <u><i>Daniel Meeroff</i></u> UFS President _____ Provost _____	<b>Date</b> <u>1/17/22</u> _____ 1/25/22 _____ 1-26-2022 _____ 1-31-22 _____ 1-31-22 _____ _____		

Email this form and syllabus to [mjenning@fau.edu](mailto:mjenning@fau.edu) seven business days before the UUPC meeting.

**PUR 3105**  
**Public Relations and the Press**  
**Florida Atlantic University/School of Communication**  
**Fall 2022 Syllabus**  
**CRN XXXXX**

Number of Credit Hours: 3

Meeting Location: CU 222

Meeting Day, Time: MW 9:30 am -11:20 am

Section: 001

Course Materials and Website: <https://canvas.fau.edu>

Instructor: Neil Santaniello

Mobile: 561-212-7446

E-mail: [nsantane@fau.edu](mailto:nsantane@fau.edu)

Office: CU 207

Office Hours: MW 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm and by appointment

Zoom Video Meeting Link (as needed per the instructor): <https://fau-edu.zoom.us/my/nsantane>

Zoom Password: FreePress1

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**Instructional Method**

This class meets in the designated campus classroom. Attendance in person is mandatory. It will not be streamed to students via a video conference tool (such as Zoom) unless the instructor arranges for a video class session in advance.

**Re: Covid-19.** Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases and the delta variant, all students regardless of vaccination status are expected to wear masks while indoors in any FAU facilities, including classrooms and laboratories. Students experiencing flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath), or students who have come in contact with confirmed positive cases of COVID-19, should immediately contact FAU Student Health Services (561-297-3512). Symptomatic students will be asked to leave the classroom to support the safety and protection of the university community. For additional information visit <https://www.fau.edu/coronavirus/>

In classes with face-to-face components, quarantined or isolated students should notify the instructor immediately as you will not be able to attend class. The instructor will not be able to offer an online version of the class but will make reasonable efforts to assist

students in making up the work. Vaccinated students have much lower chances of needing to quarantine and a much lower chance of missing class time.

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### **Course Description and Learning Objectives:**

This course will examine the current and historical interaction of journalism and public relations (PR), primarily in the U.S. It will take a critical and balanced look at these two collaborative and conflicting professions, noting their main objectives, their tactics, and how they can differ and at times overlap in their basic functions. Journalism is considered an important training ground for the practice of public relations, and PR firms are peopled with many former or schooled journalists. But the relationship between the two veers from symbiotic to adversarial. Journalists view PR as a kind of dark art, a promoter of spin and propaganda. On the other hand, journalists have been accused of not doing enough to filter PR from their reporting. In recent years, journalism has fallen in stature, its own credibility and fact-finding mission undermined by allegations of fake news, hyper-partisan politics, and attacks from right-leaning news commentators. Among the issues to be examined in this course: how journalism and PR can both dovetail and be at odds in their respective objectives, the main goals of each profession, how journalism and PR practices evolved over time, their ethical guidelines, the ramifications of shrinking legacy newsrooms and burgeoning PR operations, the impact of the Internet and social media on news reporting and PR, and the role of each in a Democracy. Along the way, students will dissect a series of PR case studies and examine their elements from both a public relations and news media perspective. In general, this course will view both professions through a critical lens. This is not a skills course, but the overview provided should imbue students with practical knowledge for either career direction, in addition to some critical and historical context for understanding the interplay of public relations and journalism.

### **Required Textbooks:**

To be determined. Additionally, students will be assigned assorted required readings, posted in Canvas modules by the instructor.

### **Graded Work/Assignments:**

-- **Exams (a midterm and final, accounting for 50 percent of the course grade or 25 percent per exam).** The exams will be multiple choice, true/false, or a mix of multiple choice and essay questions. Exams are based on instructor lectures, required readings, homework, and class discussions/activities. Exams are closed book/closed notes. Exams will either be administered in class using printed tests and Scantron cards for the multiple-choice portion or remotely via Canvas Quizzes.

-- **Attendance (10 percent of the course grade).** Attendance is based on simple math: points are deducted for each scheduled class meeting students do not attend. One-hundred divided by the number of scheduled classes determines the attendance points earned or lost per class.

-- **Participation (10 percent of the course grade).** This is derived from the frequency and quality of student involvement in classroom discussions and activities.

-- **Case analysis papers (four total, 600-word minimum per paper, accounting for 30 percent of the course grade, or 7.5 percent per paper).** Students will submit a written analysis of four different PR/news media case studies assigned by the instructor. A writing prompt is supplied for each situation being examined. The written analysis must: 1) follow the case study writing guidelines and paper format posted in Canvas, 2) fully address and answer the prompt, and 3) meet the minimum word count. All papers must be doubled spaced and paragraphed, proofread to remove writing errors, and have the student's name at the top left. All papers should be submitted to the appropriate assignment que in Canvas and will be marked via Speed Grader.

#### **Paper due dates:**

Case Study 1: XXXX @ 11:59 p.m.

Case Study 2: XXXX @ 11:59 p.m.

Case Study 3: XXXX @ 11:59 p.m.

Case Study 4: XXXX @ 11:59 p.m.

#### **Grading Scale for Final Course Grade:**

Not all assignments are weighted equally. Some will count for a larger slice of the semester-end grade than others. All assignments grades are posted in the Canvas gradebook and follow the default Canvas grade range for FAU from F through A. Those values are:

A = 94 and above  
A - = 90 to less than 94  
B+ = 87 to less than 90  
B = 84 to less than 87  
B- = 80 to less than 84  
C+ = 77 to less than 80  
C = 74 to less than 77  
C- = 70 to less than 74  
D+ = 67 to less than 70  
D = 64 to less than 67  
D- = 60 to less than 64  
F = 0 percent to less than 60

**Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to attend all, or nearly all, of the scheduled in-person or online class meetings. Students are responsible for arranging make-up work that stems from missed tests, paper deadlines and class meetings. Per university guidelines, all absences are unexcused with the following exceptions:

- illnesses and medical emergencies involving students or their immediate family, with proper written documentation
- military or legal (court-imposed) obligations, with proper written documentation
- participation in university-approved activities, including athletic or scholastics teams, musical and theatrical performances, and debate activities, with proper written documentation
- religious observances (please provide advance notice).

Points are deducted for each missed class unless both of the following occur: 1) the absence meets the university's excused-absence criteria above, and 2) the absence's qualification to be waived is documented promptly after the missed meeting. If a class is held via Zoom or WebEx or similar, attendance points may be reduced for non-video (audio-only) attendance.

**Important note: An additional attendance penalty could be added to the final grade once unexcused absences exceed 20 percent of the scheduled class meeting time. That deduction can lower the final class mark a half-grade or more depending on the amount of missed class time. Additionally, since this is not a distance-learning course,**

**the instructor may choose to reject written work (papers and tests results) from students whose unexcused absences exceed three weeks of class meetings (six sessions). Assignments affected by that policy would be graded "F."**

#### **Recording Lectures:**

Students enrolled in this course may record video or audio of class lectures for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to student presentations (whether individually or as part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), labs, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the lecturer, is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Academic Integrity.

#### **Late Assignments, Make-up Work and Exams:**

Written assignments submitted up to **24 hours after their due date/time** will be deemed "late" and receive a reduced grade – typically a reduction of one grade level. Work turned in after the late assignment deadline might not be accepted unless the situation is due to a university-approved absence with timely documentation provided. Make-up exams (for missed tests) are provided for university-approved absences at the instructor's discretion.

#### **Incomplete Grade Policy:**

The University policy states that a student who is passing a course but has not completed all work due to exceptional circumstances, may, with consent of the instructor, temporarily receive a grade of incomplete ("I"). The assignment of the "I" grade is at the discretion of the instructor and is allowed ONLY if the student is passing the course. The student must show exceptional circumstances and explain why requirements cannot be met. A request for an incomplete grade must be made in writing with supporting documentation, where appropriate.

#### **Classroom Netiquette (When Applicable):**

FAU's policies on netiquette can be found at:

<http://www.fau.edu/oit/student/netiquette.php>

### **Academic Integrity:**

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty – inclusive of cheating on tests and assignments -- is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high-quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see [University Regulation 4.001](#).

### **Grade Appeal Process:**

Procedures for a grade appeal may be found in [Chapter 4 of the University Regulations](#)

### **Plagiarism/Fabrication:**

**Plagiarism** is a violation of FAU's academic integrity policy. The university defines plagiarism as

- 1) the presentation of words from any other source or another person as one's own without proper quotation and citation,
- 2) putting someone else's ideas or facts into your own words (paraphrasing) without proper citation,
- 3) turning in someone else's work as one's own, including the buying and selling of term papers or assignments.

A finding of plagiarism in this class can lead to an F for the assignment or for the entire course.

**Fabrication** – which entails inventing sources, quotes, facts, and other information -- is equally egregious and can trigger the same penalties.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie, and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at [www.fau.edu/sas/](http://www.fau.edu/sas/)

### **Counseling and Psychological Services:**

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally, and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to <http://www.fau.edu/counseling/>

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## **Course Outline and Assignment Schedule**

**(\*\* A double asterisk denotes an exam or assignment due date.)**

### **WEEK ONE**

Class 1, XXXX: Overview: Journalism and PR's collaborative and adversarial interaction. Journalism's mission and objectives. Public relations' mission and objectives. Similarities (for example, telling stories) and differences (for example, truth-seeking versus persuading).

Homework: Read "Why All Journalists Should Study Public Relations" in Canvas or at <https://j-source.ca/article/opinion-why-all-journalists-should-study-public-relations/>

Class 2, XXXX: Overview continued: Journalism's failure to filter PR from legitimate news. Journalism's constitutional protection. Journalism's duality: objective reporting and



opinion/commentary. Internal and external PR. The digital era's impact on PR. The difference between PR and advertising. Homework reading discussion.

## WEEK TWO

Class 3, XXXX: The relationship: How the two professions use each other. Why PR relies on the news media to deliver messages, and journalists' need for "information subsidies." Journalism's employment pipeline to PR. Why today's newsrooms might be more vulnerable to PR industry influence. Case study instructions. Assign case study #1.

Homework: To be assigned.

Class 4, XXXX: The relationship continued: The news media's complaints about PR and journalists' view that public relations is antithetical to journalism's work in the public interest. Why the term PR carries negative connotations. Edward Bernays' claim that manipulators of mass public opinion are the true ruling power in a Democracy. The journalism-PR employment ratio. The amount of PR-influenced news, and journalists as enablers of spin.

## WEEK THREE

Class 5, XXXX: The PR job: different types of specializations within the PR field (corporate and government communication, media relations, public affairs/public information, lobbying, investor relations, crisis management, reputation management, speech writing etc.). A turn in terminology -- from "public relations" to "strategic communication."

Homework: Write first case study analysis.

**\*\*Class 6, XXXX: Case study analysis #1 due.** The PR job continued: the press release (or news release) and its fundamentals and purpose. Media training and shifting the balance of power in an interview. PR in forward and reverse: gaining and avoiding publicity for clients. PR's non-media-related tasks. Paid, earned, owned, and shared media and their differences.

## WEEK FOUR

Class 7, XXXX: Engaging the news media: the PR story pitch and its success rate, the dos and don'ts of a story pitch. Bypassing the news media. PR's new target in the digital and social media age: influencers. Corporate and branded news. The democratization of journalism: why the media no longer is the main gatekeeper of news. Assign case study #2.

Homework assignment: To be assigned.

Class 8, XXXX: PR/news media lab: Composing a press release, composing a story pitch.

## WEEK FIVE

Class 9, XXXX: Seesawing economics: Journalism's loss of ad revenue and personnel, PR industry growth. Journalism's traditional business model. The internet's role in newsroom downsizing and other contributing factors. The impact of budget cuts on local news and local government coverage. Paywalls and newer sources of digital revenue for the news media.

Homework:

Read "As Local News Dies, A Pay-for-Play Network Rises in its Place" in Canvas or at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/18/technology/timpone-local-news-metric-media.html>

Read "The New Journalism – and the PR Firms Behind It" in Canvas or at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/media/checks-balances-journalism-pr/2021/06/04/df35c110-b3fa-11eb-9059-d8176b9e3798\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/media/checks-balances-journalism-pr/2021/06/04/df35c110-b3fa-11eb-9059-d8176b9e3798_story.html)

Class 10, XXXX: Film: *Toxic Sludge is Good for You*. Selling wars and PR's role in government propaganda. Edward Bernays' theory that democracy needs elite minds secretly guiding public thought. Pseudo-events and their use. Stealth or invisible PR tactics: third party advocates, video news releases, front groups, AstroTurf groups, manipulating language. Silencing debate. Homework reading discussion.

## WEEK SIX

Class 11, XXXX: Modern history of PR: from publicists to management counselors to online reputation repairers/guardians. The early days: press agency and attention-getting stunts. Unethical tactics. Two pioneers of modern PR: Edward Bernays and Ivy Lee.

Homework: Write second case analysis; read: "Disinformation for Hire" in Canvas or at <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/craigsilverman/disinformation-for-hire-black-pr-firms>.

**\*\*Class 12, XXXX: Case study analysis #2 due.** Modern history of PR continued: Lee's about-face approach to PR: honesty, directness and engaging the press. Lee's long-lasting invention (the first press release). Bernays' view of PR as the engineering of

consent and the public relations practitioner as more corporate counselor than publicist. The impact of “muckraking” on American industry and its subsequent need for PR. Wartime PR and government-serving propaganda. Presidents and PR. Other PR functions: public service announcements (PSAs), event sponsorship, community relations and lobbying lawmakers. Homework reading discussion.

## **WEEK SEVEN**

Class 13, XXXX: Modern history of journalism. U.S. journalism’s early days of politically biased and sensationalized reporting. The colonial period and newspapering. The partisan press and the commercial shipping news. John Peter Zenger’s trial for seditious libel and its legacy for the American press. The impact of the “penny press” on circulation building and newspaper content. The competition for readers and the era “yellow journalism” (its characteristics and its surviving elements).

Homework: Study for midterm exam.

Class 14, XXXX: Midterm exam outline and review.

## **WEEK EIGHT**

**\*\*Class 15, XXXX: Midterm Exam.**

Homework: To be assigned.

Class 16, XXXX: The history of journalism continued. Journalism’s turn toward more objective and fact-driven reporting: separation of fact and opinion, a more scientific approach to reporting, a neutral narrator, fairness and balance. The need for and shift toward more interpretative journalism. The arrival of investigative reporting. A return to partisan reporting and cable television news taking sides. The impact of the Internet and online news sites on journalism. “Fake news” and attacks on the media

## **WEEK NINE**

Class 17, XXXX: Media monitoring. The beginning: press clipping services. Newer digital tracking tools. Media monitoring’s different purpose (for instance, tracking the success of publicity campaigns). The advent of social listening. PR industry guest speaker. Assign case study #3.

Homework: Write third case study analysis; read “Who Cares If It’s True” in Canvas or at [https://archives.cjr.org/cover\\_story/who\\_cares\\_if\\_its\\_true.php](https://archives.cjr.org/cover_story/who_cares_if_its_true.php)

**\*\*Class 18, XXXX: Case study analysis #3 due.** The decline of U.S. media credibility: polls and declining levels of public trust, the partisan gap, the global perspective. Factors contributing to the erosion of media trust, including political polarization, confirmation bias in a post-truth period, anonymous sources and opinion writing, the repeal of the fairness doctrine and subsequent rise of conservative political talk radio. The profitability of straight news vs. opinionated news. Homework reading discussion.

## **WEEK TEN**

Class 19, XXXX: Enter the Internet: A closer look at its re-shaping of journalism and public relations. The media ex-gatekeeper and “the people formerly known as the audience.” PR’s former reliance on the pre-digital news media. The social media bypass. Inherent risks in today’s speedier news delivery platforms. How the Internet has changed crisis management.

Homework: Read “The Invasion of Corporate News” in Canvas or at <https://www.ft.com/content/937b06c2-3ebd-11e4-adeb-00144feabdc0>

Class 20, XXXX: Digital age impacts continued. Blogs: democratizing news dissemination but drawing fire for attacks and misinformation. Paid posts and non-disclosure. The media watchdog’s watchdog: citizen journalists. The elevated need for reputation management in a fast-moving digital media world. PR’s push for increased corporate transparency. Owned media: Brand or corporate journalism (example: Red Bull). Crowd-sourcing the new: Help A Reporter Out (HARO) and “media catching.” Homework reading discussion.

## **WEEK ELEVEN**

Class 21, XXXX: Ethics in journalism and public relations. Public perception of both the news media and public relations as ethically challenged. Looser ethics in the earlier days of U.S. newspaper reporting, and current concern about certain reporting practices (including anonymous sources, factual errors, and liberal bias). Public relation’s questionable past practices and the industry’s current PR problem.

Homework:

Read “Ethical Journalism is not an Oxymoron” in Canvas or at <https://niemanreports.org/articles/ethical-journalism-is-not-an-oxymoron/>

Read “Ethics in Public Relations” in Canvas or at <https://instituteforpr.org/ethics-and-public-relations/>

Class 22, XXXX: Ethics continued. The establishment of ethics codes, both voluntary and enforceable, in journalism and PR. Manifestations of the news media's ethical underpinnings: publishing corrections, vetting confidential sources, minimizing harm, two-side or balanced reporting, etc. The Society of Professional Journalists' ethics code and other examples. The Public Relations Society of America's ethics code and other examples of ethical guidance in PR. Homework reading discussion.

## **WEEK TWELVE**

Class 23, XXXX: The role of "spin" in PR and its seepage into news reporting. Definition of spin. Spin tactics, including language manipulation and cherry-picking facts. Examples of spin from the news. The rise of political spin and the oxygen it got from cable television's 24-7 news cycle. George Orwell's views on political speech and the book *1984*. Assign case study #4.

Homework: Write fourth case study analysis.

**\*\*Class 24, XXXX: Case study analysis #4 due.** PR/news media lab: Writing a press release, reporting on a press release. Guidelines and exercise.

## **WEEK THIRTEEN**

Class 25, XXXX: PR/news media lab: Holding a news conference, reporting on a news conference. Guidelines and exercise.

Homework: To be assigned.

Class 26, XXXX: The news media's watchdog role: Journalism as the "fourth estate" -- meaning and history. Journalism's three levels of watchdogging (documenting, clarifying/explaining, and investigating/exposing). The historical view a free press safeguards democracy as an independent monitor of power. The role of pressure groups, including NGO and other activist/advocacy groups.

## **WEEK FOURTEEN**

Class 27, XXXX: Social media and citizen journalism as the fifth estate? Republican versus Democrat attitudes about the media's watchdog/investigative work. Journalism's role in Jurgen Habermas' "public sphere." Advertising and PR's influence on the public sphere. Charges that the news media fails to provide a viable public sphere, or forum, for informed debate on important societal/government issues.

Homework: To be assigned.

Thanksgiving Break, XXXX

**WEEK FIFTEEN**

Class 28, XXXX: PR and crisis management. The early roots of crisis response public relations. Crisis specialists in the PR field. Examples of successful crisis management (Johnson & Johnson and the Tylenol scare in Chicago) and flawed or failed crisis management (BP and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico). The importance of quick and compassionate communication with stakeholders in a crisis. Media responses to public relations crisis control tactics.

Homework: Study for final exam.

Class 29, XXXX: Final exam outline and review.

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Reading days: XXXX

Final exam period: XXXX

**\*\*Final exam, scheduled XXXX**

Grades due: XXXX