Syllabus

Course: Public Information and Community Relations

Course & Section: FES 4055

Credit Hours: 3

Session: Fall 2020

On-line

Lecturer: Adam A. Smith, MSFES, NREMT-P

fyrewlker@ufl.edu

404-933-3676

Bio for Adam A. Smith

Adam Smith is a retired Lieutenant/Medic from Lumpkin County Emergency Services located an hour north of Atlanta in the North Georgia Mountains. He began his career in emergency services in October of 1986 and retired July of 2020. Adam has 34 years experience as a firefighter and paramedic. He is an Lecturer for the University of Florida since January of 2020 and holds national certifications as a Firefighter, Paramedic, Fire Officer, Various rescue designations, Public Safety Diver, Hazardous Materials Technician, and Instructor. Adam has an Associates Degree in Fire Science Technology (Chattahoochee Technical College), Bachelors Degree in Fire and Emergency Services Management (University of Florida), and a Masters Degree in Fire and Emergency Services Management with a specialization in Disaster Management (University of Florida).

Office Hours: My office hours are typically from 0800 am to 1200 pm on Monday and Friday. On Tuesday and Thursday, my office hours are typically 0400 pm and 0800 pm. This is subject to change.

Course Communications: The best way to communicate with me is via email either through Canvas or at fyrewlker@ufl.edu. I will attempt to answer all emails in 24-48 hours. If the need is urgent, I can be reached by text or phone call at 404-933-3676 between the hours of 0800 am and 0800 pm.

Required Text: EMS Public Information and Community Relations (2015), E. Mund & J. Lindsey; Brady Publishing (Pearson) ISBN: 978-0135074633

Additional Resources (Not Required but Recommended): Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 7th Edition (2020): Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ISBN 978-1-4338-3217-8

Course Description: This course introduces the FES professional to benefits of community information and community relations. Students explore issues in marketing, crafting the message, identifying the audience, developing programs, and creating press releases.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills: None

Purpose of Course: The course provides the concepts of marketing, public relations and communication to the community.

Course Goals and/or Objectives: By the end of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate understanding of public information and community relations as it pertains to EMS.

2. Explain the various components of public information and community relations:

   a. Marketing

   b. Messaging

   c. Audience Identification

   d. SWOT Analysis

   e. Press Releases.

3. Benefits of public information and community relations.

 How This Course Relates to the Student Learning Outcomes in the Fire and Emergency Services program: Demonstrate strong verbal and written communication skills for leadership in fire and emergency services.

Teaching Philosophy: I am looking for students to demonstrate a working knowledge of the subject. You need to be creative when you complete your assignments but maintain a professional appearance of your work. Your work needs to be complete and in such a manner that someone can pick up your document and understand what you are trying to convey. **And most of all your work needs to be supported with research and cited in properly in APA format.**

Instructional Methods: The course is designed for individual and group interactivity. It is important to post and respond to discussion questions in the course within the time frame allotted. This provides a learning environment by networking with other students in the course. The assignments are individual base to give you the opportunity to do a variety of activities, in many cases, similar to what you will be doing in role as a leader in the emergency services profession.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy: The course is designed in module format. You should check the site at least once a week. You are required to complete the assignments including discussion questions within the time period designated on the module. There will be meetings set up throughout the course. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx (Links to an external site.).

Quiz/Exam Policy: There is a final project for this course. There are no exams or quizzes.

Assignment Policy: All assignments have a due date. Please be sure to check the date and time it is due in each module or discussion.

Make-up Policy: Make-up assignments will only be accepted due to technical issues, illness, and other extenuating circumstances. You must contact your instructor before the assignment's due date for special accommodations.

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from the UF Computing Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST message your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Late Assignments and Discussions Policy:

- Assignments 48 hours late will receive a 10% deduction in their grade.

- Assignments more than 48 hours but less than 30 days late will receive a 20% deduction in their grade.
- Assignments more than 30 days late but submitted during the semester will receive a 50% deduction in their grade.
- Discussions more than 48 hours late will receive a 25% deduction in their grade.
- Discussions more than 48 hours later will receive a 50% deduction in their grade.

Please note that any student that has less than 75% of their work complete for the semester cannot earn an "I" contract. If you have 75% of the work complete, you can propose an "I" contract to the instructor.

It is your responsibility to keep your instructor informed at all times. The instructor does have the right under extenuating circumstances with proper notification to assist the student by extending the above time requirements.

Course Technology: The course resides in the web-based Canvas learning management system, requiring access to the internet. Class meetings will require a web camera and mic/audio. If you are not able to use a web camera you will need to at least provide audio/mic, you can call in on a phone also.

UF's Honesty Policy: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. 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." The Honor Code (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/ (Links to an external site.)) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obliged to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor of in this class.

Technical support: If you experience difficulties with accessing components of the site, including lectures, quizzes or tests, contact the UF help desk immediately. **(352) 392-HELP (4357) |** *helpdesk@ufl.edu*

If they are not able to resolve your problem, contact your instructor with your help desk ticket number and a description of the problem and steps taken to resolve it. Extensions for due dates will be granted for documented technical problems, as needed.

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UF Policies

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office at https://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 https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-honor-code/.

**Netiquette: Communication Courtesy: All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. [Describe what is expected and what will occur as a result of improper behavior] http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Getting Help

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

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- https://elearning.ufl.edu/student-help-faqs/

** 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 https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. to submit a complaint.

Tentative Schedule

Read Syllabus and review course content

Class Introductions

Weeks 1 & 2: Value of Public Information & Principles of Marketing

Read:

- FEMA_517_ Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers
- Media Relations & Role of the PIO

Module 1

- Chapter 2: *Principles of Marketing*

Watch:

Public Information Officer (PIO Seminar)
Crisis Communication: Is the Media Your Enemy

Assignment:

Powerpoint Presentation

Module 2 - Weeks 3 & 4 Overview

Module 2   **Read:**

- Chapter 3: *Public Information & Education Tool Kit*

- [SWOT.pdf](#)
- [SWOT_Example.pdf](#)
- Chapter 4: *Audience Identification*
- [TakingResponsiblity4PositivePublicPerception (1).pdf](#)

Watch:

- SWOT Analysis
- News Media Interview Example

Discussion Forum:

Taking Responsibility for a Positive Public Perception

Module 3

Module 3 - Weeks 5 & 6: Categorizing Messages & Crafting the Message

Read:

- Chapter 6: *Craft the Message*
- [PIO_Checklist-1](#)
- [Understanding_Risk_Communication_Best_Practices](#)

Watch:

- Exploring Garden Grove Fire Department's Social Media & Electronic Communication

Assignment:

PIO Checklist Analysis

Module 4

Module 4 -Weeks 7 & 8 Overview: Audience Identification & Writing Great Online News Releases

Read:

- Chapter 4: *Audience Identification*
- [TakingResponsiblity4PositivePublicPerception](#)
- Chapter 8: *Writing Great Online News Releases*
- [How_to_Write_A_Press_Release](#)

Watch:

- News Media Interview Example

- The Accidental PIO

Discussion Forum:

Online News Release Critique

Module 5- Weeks 9 & 10: Overview: Create an Information in Your Agency

Read:

- Chapter 8: *Press Releases*
- prweb-writing_great_online_news_releases
- Chapter 9: *Create an Information Culture in Your Agency*

Module 5

Watch:

- *Toronto Police Service, Their Customer Service and Crisis Preparedness*

Assignment:

Presentation - Your Public Agency's Communication and Community Plan

Module 6 Weeks 11 & 12: Fire Service Reputation Management & FINAL PRESENTATION

Read:

- Reputation Management White Paper
- Customer Service for Fire Departments

Module 6

Watch:

- Crisis Spokesperson Training

Assignment:

Work on your FINAL PRESENTATION

Module 7

Module 7- Weeks 13 & 14: FINAL PRESENTATION DUE!!!

Prepare a 10 slide Powerpoint presentation that you would present to a *local community association* that describes a department, its mission, and why it is important to the community. You want your presentation to "sell" your department and convince the community of your commitment to the community.

For this assignment, be sure to use course materials, evidence and other additional sources to develop your presentation. Your Powerpoint presentation must include a maximum of (10) slides. Do not exceed (10) slides or points will be deducted. It is highly encouraged to be creative, using graphics, imagery, photos, screen shots, etc, to convey a clear understanding of a local community association and how to "sell" the department.

Use your experience and expertise. Also, think about the course work completed throughout the semester and use those as a guide to help you be more innovative while completing this final project. Be sure to use APA format when citing your references. Use this opportunity to be persuasive!!

Module 8

Module 8 - Week 15: Course Reflection

Discussion Forum:

Post your thoughts on the class. Please, include any recommendations you may have for improvement. I appreciate your honesty and feedback as this department is striving forward to increase the student learning experience online. Your post should be at least 250 words.

Grading Policies

The grade is based on a point system. You divide the total number of earned points into the total amount of points available to determine your grade. A grading rubric for the final project is under the Resource Tab on the course.

Assignment	Points

**Class Introductions	0
**Syllabus Quiz	0
Module 1: The Four Step Cycle Presentation	100
Module 2: Public Perception Discussion	50
Module 3: Public Information Officer Paper	100
Module 4: Online News Release Critique & Discussion	50
Module 5: Community Relations Plan Visual Aid	100
Module 6: Class Critique Discussion	50
Module 6-2: FINAL PRESENTATION	200
End-of-Semester Survey	0
Total Possible Points	650

Grading Scale

A = 93.0 to 100%	C = 73.0 to 76.9
A- = 90.0 to 92.9	C- = 70.0 to 72.9
B+ = 87.0 to 89.9	D+ = 67.0 to 69.9
B = 83.0 to 86.9	D = 63.0 to 66.9
B- = 80.0 to 82.9	D- = 60.0 to 62.9
C+ = 77.0 to 79.9	F = below 60

Evaluation process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/.

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/.

Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Additionally, the link below is **Honor Code** for UF....... (PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF)

https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/resources-by-audience/faculty-and-staff/honor-code-process/