



Final Report

Spring 2024

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MEET THE TEAM

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ABSTRACT

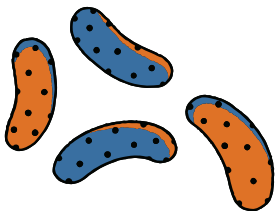
For Fall 2023, the UF PR department worked with Alpha PR to develop a strategy to effectively encourage students in PUR3000 to sign up for other enriching opportunities the major provides. The work spanned seven months, beginning in October 2023 and ending in April 2024. The team met weekly to discuss ideas, plan community outreach events and analyze the success of the strategy. The report will outline the work of the Alpha PR team and propose strategies for the PR department to consider in the future.

CAMPAIGN WORK

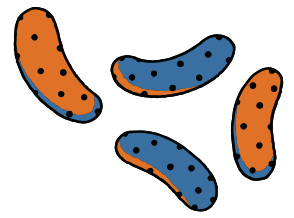
When it comes to campaign strategy, the team wanted to ensure engagement with current PR students while also attracting the interests of students from other majors. The intended target audience was UF students, specifically those with a passion for communications and public relations who haven't made the decision to pursue a minor or major in the topic.

A primary component of the strategy was the community outreach events put on each semester. These allowed the team to interact with students from every corner of campus by congregating in the most popular parts of the school. Not only were they able to learn about PR, but they also demonstrated engagement by following the PR department's Instagram.

The goal of these events was to educate others on the PR profession with hopes of motivating them to pursue PR professionally. The other component of the strategy was to further engage students enrolled in PUR3000 with the PR major. This was executed through drop-ins by our team members into our targeted introductory classes to explain to the students what PR is and where to get started.



EVENTS

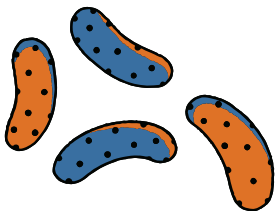


01. PR & Pickles

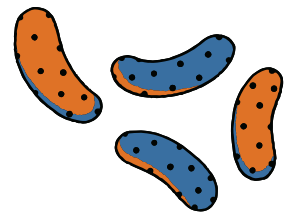
PR Pickles was a **tabling event held in Turlington Plaza** that aimed to introduce University of Florida students to PR or increase the knowledge they already had about the field. Participants were informed about **popular PR scandals**, such as the infamous Kendall Jenner Pepsi commercial, and were incentivized with jars of pickles that they could take from. They were also presented with merchandise from the UF PR department.

The ultimate goal of PR & Pickles was to **inform students about PR** and also to see what knowledge they might already have prior to the tabling event. Discussing popular PR scandals was a way to **connect their knowledge to pop culture moments** and make it easier for them to remember the information in the future.





EVENTS



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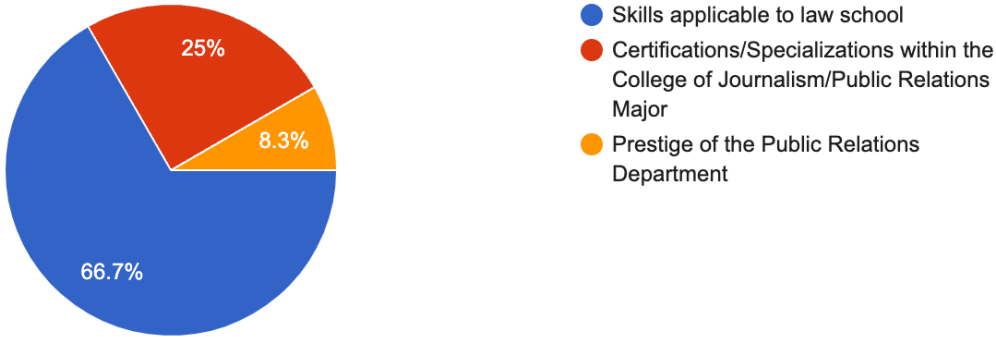


02. PLHS Presentation

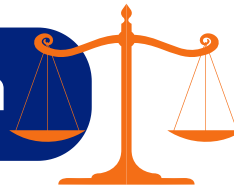
Our PLHS X PR department presentation was a **Zoom event hosted by the Pre-Legal Honor Society**. We noticed the overlap between pre-law students and PR majors and knew that we could find a way to bridge the gap. We made a presentation that would teach PLHS members about what PR is, ways to become involved in the department and **how PR can be helpful as a pre-law student**. The ultimate goal of this event was to inform an entirely new demographic about the department and provide them with opportunities to learn more.

Which part of the presentation did you find most convincing/interesting?

12 responses



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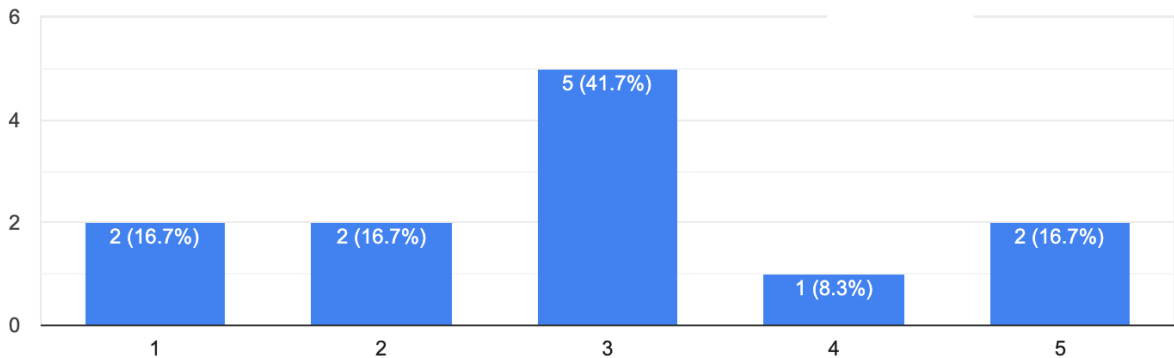


There was considerable interest in pursuing a PR minor, and significant interest in pursuing a PR-related certificate. Overall, this event gave us much insight and many PLHS members were intrigued to learn more about the PR-related certificate and other courses offered for PR especially.

How likely are you to look further into attaining a PR minor?

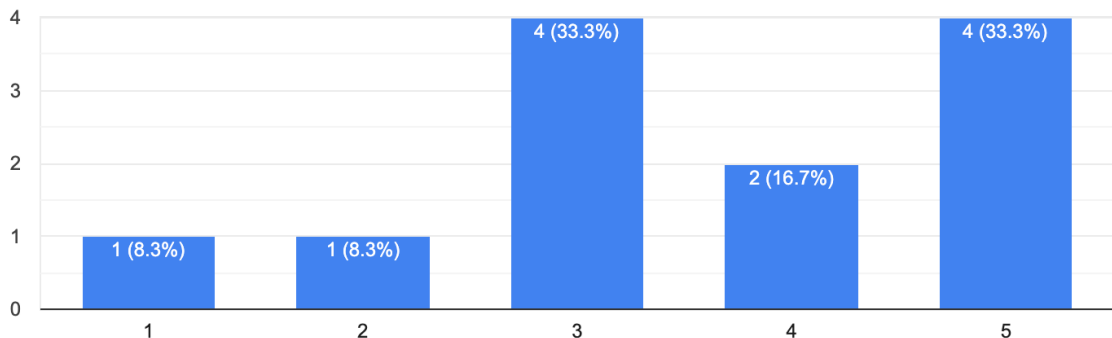
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12 responses

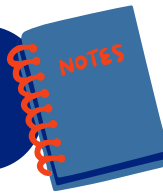


How likely are you to look further into attaining a PR-related certificate?

12 responses



03. PUR3000 Presentation



On Thursday, March 7, our team spoke with the students in **Professor Christine Bucan's principles of public relations (PUR3000) class**. Based on research conducted by the Alpha team last year, **50% of survey respondents said their understanding of PR was "poor" before taking PUR3000, and 50% said they were interested in PR after taking that class.** With that in mind, we wanted to target this group of students who were learning more about PR and finding interest in the career but didn't know what their next steps should be.

ALPHA PR

YOUR FUTURE IN PR

Here is some advice from the PR Department!



ALPHA PR

WHY MAJOR?

With the minor, you learn to **understand** public relations.

With the major, you learn to **do** public relations.



Our presentation focused on understanding **the purpose behind a PR minor and major** with an emphasis on the benefits of choosing the major. This presentation was completed around two weeks before spring registration started, so we provided specific courses to make that decision more simple. Some of those include: **social media management, public interest communications and crisis communications.**

04. Tiny Mic



Tiny Mic: PR for PR was an engaging and interactive event tailored to **introduce underclassmen to the fundamentals of PR**. Our team invited participants around Turlington and Plaza of the Americas to join in **a series of fun and informative activities** where they could test their knowledge of PR concepts and win exciting prizes along the way. We **interviewed a total of 10 participants** (excluding the dog), and we featured six of those participants in the video that was sent to the PR department for its Instagram.

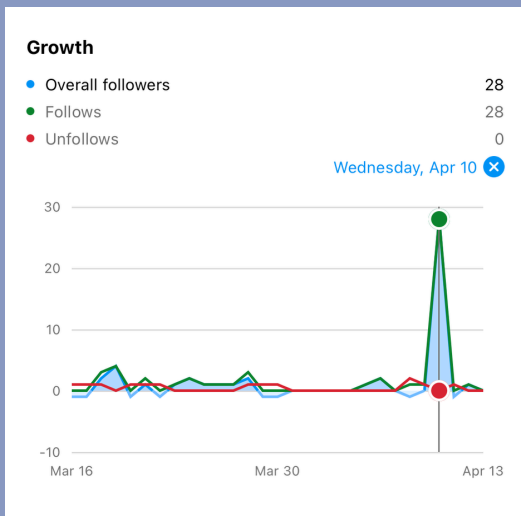
Attendees were presented with a set of **progressively challenging PR questions**, providing an opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of PR principles. Each participant's responses were recorded, **creating an interactive and dynamic environment**. The ultimate goal was to **inform our target audience** about the essential first step in pursuing a career in PR. Despite the spirited participation, **none of the contestants were able to correctly identify the introductory PR course**, highlighting the importance of events like Tiny Mic in **bridging the gap between curiosity and foundational knowledge in the field of PR**.



05. PR & Paint



Our team implemented a **pop-up event** on Wednesday, April 10 in Plaza of the Americas. We had pizza, paint and PR tote bags for students passing by to **engage with the PR department**. People in a rush were drawn to our table by the incredible deal of a free slice of pizza if they **follow the UF PR department Instagram account**. For those leisurely walking by, they were able to sit down on the lawn and **customize their very own tote bags** adorned with the PR department logo.



Looking at the UF PR department Instagram account insights, **our efforts increased its following by 28 followers**. This strategy had a direct impact with increasing social media following and reach. The ultimate goal of this event was to **initiate informal interest around PR** to those who maybe have never considered it before by doing what we do best — conversation.

LOOKING FORWARD

Target Audiences

Incoming Freshman

Especially toward the end of the spring semester, there are a **large number of prospective UF students touring the campus**. These students are typically not strongly convinced of what they plan to study and will be choosing their major in a month at preview. Our team recommends that the **PR department holds tabling or outreach specifically geared toward incoming students**, as many are not familiar with the PR major.

Exploratory Students

Exploratory students are a great target for PR outreach. Our team recommends **connecting with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences** and hosting events that provide **exploratory students with advice for a future major in PR**.

Political Science and pre-law students

We found that political science and pre-law students were **especially receptive to taking on a PR minor**. We advise that the PR department continues to target pre-law organizations and events on campus, **placing a primary focus on how the PR major and minor make an applicant more competitive in the law school admission process**. PR studies focuses on critical thinking, research, crisis communication, writing skills and relationship building. Law schools look for these specific skills in applicants. In addition, **public relations is a strong major to stand out from other applicants, as nearly 25% of all law school applicants study political science**.

Recommendations

Short-form, engaging events

Our team advises that the PR department focuses on events that are **not a large time commitment for a student**. Through experience, we found students are most receptive to events that take **less than ten minutes of their time**, especially when doing pop-up events on campus.

Such events would include:

- small game show-style events involving department representatives asking questions to students around campus
- crafting events such as bracelet making
- pop-up speed workshops where representatives provide writing review advice (exemplifying how public relations strengthens writing skills)
- “prove me wrong” tabling in which representatives table with a whiteboard and defend statements that real PR companies advocate for (within reason) and more.

Our team also recommends that these events take place **between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.** We found that there is heavy traffic on campus during high class times (1 p.m. - 3 p.m.), **leading to high exposure**. Between 3 pm and 5 pm, a majority of students are still on campus but do not have classes and therefore are **willing to engage more with events**.

Social Media Interactions

Our team advises that a focus is placed on **gaining engagement with social media** when targeting the general student body.

Because many students already are set in their degree plan, informing them about what PR is and generating social media engagement will **open the door for further open-mindedness**. By making public relations studies and what it entails general knowledge around campus, **more students may become interested**.

This can be done by providing incentives to **follow or engage with the PR department's Instagram** during events.

Within this, our team advises that the **PR department student assistants and Alpha account supervisors work together on cohesive messaging**. This would involve finding ways to target a wider audience that may not be familiar with public relations, while still keeping the focus on the public relations stop that the account currently caters to.