



MMC 6936: Introduction to Public Interest Communications

Academic Term: Summer 2022

3 Credit Hours

Instructor

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Office Phone Number and Times: 907-903-5811 or zoom.

Virtual Office Hours: By Appointment (Many of you are working and have other obligations; therefore, I am happy to work around your schedules, please just give me 24-hour's notice before any appointment you want to schedule)

Course Description and Prerequisites

Course Description: In this course, the students will learn the history of public interest communications, its role in driving change, the strategic planning process, and the six spheres in which effective social change communications campaigns work. The students will be introduced to the roles of branding, storytelling, and empathy. In addition, the students will learn to use media, policy, social marketing, activism, and communities of influence to drive change.

Course Prerequisites / Co-Requisites – N/A

Course Expectations

This is a fully online course, and you must log in to Canvas with your Gatorlink username and password to access the materials and assignments. The course is organized into modules with due dates. Unless otherwise specified, each module begins on Monday at 12:00 AM, ET, and ends on Sunday at 11:59 PM, ET.

Time Commitment & Student Workload Expectations

Expect to spend between 10 to 20 hours per week, per course, watching or attending lectures, reading, working on assignments and projects, and engaging in discussions.

Expectations for Writing Assignments: Writing Style

To meet the academic rigor and standards of a graduate program, all students are required to use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) 7th Edition style in their courses when appropriate for the assignment. The APA 7th Edition Manual has a plethora of guidelines that includes scholarly writing, publishing principles, elements, and format for your papers, writing style, and grammar, bias-free language guidelines, mechanics of style, in-text citing references, etc. For additional information on notable changes, see changes between APA 6th Edition and APA 7th Edition.

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. [Click here to read the university attendance policies](#) for information on absences, religious holidays, illness, and the twelve-day rule. Excused absences must be consistent with university policies in the [Graduate Catalog](#) and require appropriate documentation.

Late Assignment Policy

Late assignments will not be accepted unless it is a [University excused absence](#) as stated in the attendance policies. **No late work will be accepted for final projects or work due in the final week of class due to the university grading deadlines.** If potential issues arise concerning submitting final work, students should contact their instructors before the assignment deadline.

1. Late Assignment Grade Reductions
 - a. 0-24 Hours Late: 10% reduction in grade.
 - b. Over 24 Hours (24 hours and 1 minute) to 7 Calendar Days Late: 20% reduction in grade.
 - c. After the 7th Calendar Day: Work will not be accepted.
2. Late Discussions will not be accepted.

Student Guidelines for Course Challenges

A student with questions regarding course content such as assignments, assessments, instructional materials, lectures, meetings, course objectives, course module objectives, or other areas of the course, please adhere to the following guidelines: first, *approach the faculty member who is teaching the course* to ask for clarifications regarding the course assignments, assessments, materials, lectures, meetings, etc. Use the instructor's contact information to request an appointment where you can address any concerns and/or questions. If after meeting with *the faculty member teaching the course* you are still not clear on the course assignments, assessments, materials, lectures, meetings, etc., then the next step would be to contact online advising (onlineadvising@jou.ufl.edu) for additional guidance.

Accessibility/Students with Disabilities Information

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letters with their instructors and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

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 professionally and respectfully 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/>.

Course-Level Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the role of communications in driving social change. (CO: 1)
2. Critique a strategic communications plan for social change efforts. (CO: 2)
3. Determine how to use and combine the six spheres through which communicators work to achieve change: policy, media, social marketing, the market, activism, and communities of influence. (CO: 3)
4. Develop the skills to interpret and incorporate fundamental changes in how we communicate as a society and their implications for this field. (CO: 4)
5. Utilize a framework for the skills and qualities associated with effective communication for social change. (CO: 5)
6. Develop a career plan in Public Interest Communications. (CO: 6)
7. Describe the role research plays in designing for change. (CO: 7)

(CO = Course-Level Objective)

Textbooks and Materials

Required Course Textbook(s)

Heimans, J, & Timms, H. (2017). *New power: How power works in our hyperconnected world—and how to make it work for you*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House LLC.

- ISBN: 9780385541114
- ISBN: 9780385541121 (ebook)

Hersh, Eitan. (2020). *Politics is for Power: How to Move Beyond Political Hobbyism, Take Action, and Make Real Change*. New York, NY: Scribner Press.

- ISBN: 978198211678
- ISBN: 978198216804 (ebook)

Recommended Textbook(s)

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association: The official guide to APA style (7th ed.)*.

- ISBN-13: 978-1433832161
- ISBN-10: 143383216X

Publisher Materials

N/A

Course Reserves

N/A

University and Course Grading Policies

University Honor Code

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 Conduct Code specifies the number of behaviors that violate this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is unacceptable; especially, in academic communities. All academic work must be an original work of your own thought, research, or self-expression. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, prohibited collaboration, consultation, submission of academic work that has been purchased or obtained (see the [UF Policy: Student Conduct Violation](#)). In addition, self-plagiarism is also unacceptable. Self-plagiarism is defined as recycling or reusing one’s own specific words from previously submitted assignments or published texts. Remember that plagiarism is not acceptable in any of your work including all discussion board posts, journal entries, wikis, and other written and oral presentation assignments. It's important to always cite your sources in your assignments.

Grading Criterion

Discussion Boards (Total 20%)

Each week one student will be assigned to lead the class discussion. These discussion leaders will be asked to post a current campaign or news story that they think is related to PIC. In the post, leaders will be expected to analyze why

they believe the campaign or event is an example of PIC and provide evidence using class content from the current week or past weeks to support their view. Students will be expected to be discussion leaders once throughout the semester. On weeks that students are not discussion leaders, they will be expected to comment on the leaders' post. Leaders for the week will then be expected to respond to their classmates' comments (facilitate online discussion). For some weeks, you may also be asked to participate in a Discussion Activity. You will need to provide a short answer related to the prompt due Friday (midnight) of that week. Peer comments will not be required for the Discussion Activity assignments but are encouraged.

One-on-one check in with professor (Total 5%)

Midway through the semester, students will need to set up a one-on-one meeting with Dr. Snyder. The purpose of this meeting is to not only check in on class progress but ensure that they are appropriately planning for the campaign analysis. The conversation will be short, but still necessary.

Twitter (Total 5%)

In addition to creating a LinkedIn profiles, students will also be required to establish a professional Twitter presence. Twitter is an important tool for PIC practitioners in that it helps individual's network but also build credibility in the field. During the LinkedIn check-in at the beginning of the semester, students will also be expected to follow the instructor and the five PIC contacts from LinkedIn. Students will also need to follow at least ten PIC-based organizations (a list of potential organizations will be included with the assignment description). For each module, students will then need to tweet about the topic. For examples, if a student is reading *New Power*, they could tweet about a section they found interesting or a direct quote that included the author's Twitter handle.

Book Review (Total 15%)

Midway through the semester students will be asked to select a book from a proposed reading list to read and evaluate. Students will be expected to write a brief synopsis detailing why the book is related to PIC and then develop a brief PIC campaign surrounding the issues discussed in the book. This assignment will also serve to reinforce the power of stories and how they are effective strategic communications tools. Given that students in the class are coming from diverse backgrounds, in addition to the proposed books (which focuses on topics of education, race, and inequality), students will also be able to propose their own books for approval if there are other PIC topics that may interest them.

Film or Podcast Review (Total 15%)

After the module about media, one of the six spheres through which we drive change, students will write their own review of a film (documentary or feature) or podcast season based on what they learned through the *Blackfish* example discussed in class. Students will specifically focus on how the media can be used to effectively drive change. The assignment will consist of a short 3-5-page paper that gives a summary of the film or podcast, how it's related to PIC, and how the documentary/podcast engages storytelling.

Quizzes (Total 10%)

The quizzes will be low-stakes assignments designed to assess students' understanding of the reading materials and guest speakers.

Campaign Analysis/Critique (Total 30%)

For the final assessment, students will be asked to explore a social issue that matters to them. They will then need to identify an organization whose work is related to the desired issue and find a related campaign to analyze and critique using the skills developed in class. Students will be expected to explore the context, audience, message, and strategy of the campaign and present the information as an issue brief.

Your grade will be calculated based on the following:

Assignments/Assessments	Weight (%)
Course Orientation: These assignments are required; however, they not count towards the final grade.	0%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Introduction • Course Evaluation 	
Discussion Post Leader and Discussion Posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Discussions worth 10 points each 	20%
Book Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Selection and Professor Check in worth 10 points • Book Review worth 65 points 	20%
Film Review	15%
Final Project – Campaign Analysis and Critique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Review worth 100 points • Peer Review worth 15 points • Written Review worth 100 points 	30%
Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Quizzes worth 25 points each 	10%
Twitter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Tweets worth 5 points each 	5%
TOTAL	100%

Grade	Percentage
A	92.5-100%
A-	89.5-92.4%
B+	86.5-89.4%
B	82.5-86.4%
B-	79.5-82.4%
C+	76.5-79.4%
C	72.5-76.4%
C-	69.5-72.4%
D+	66.5-69.4%
D	62.5-66.4%
D-	59.5-62.4%
E	0 – 59.4%

The only passing grades for graduate students are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, and C. Letter grades of C-, D+, D, D- or E are not considered passing at the graduate level, although the grade points associated with these letter grades are included in grade point average calculations. See the [Graduate Catalog](#) and [UF graduate school grading policy](#) for more information.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the [Notification to Students of FERPA Rights](#).

Technology Requirements

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students at the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the

members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Software

- [Microsoft Office 365](#).
- [UF Apps](#) – access UF software applications from any device from any location, at any time.
- [Adobe Reader](#)
- [Zoom](#)

Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties with your course, please contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) either by filling out an [online request form](#) or calling 352-392-4357 (HELP).

If your technical difficulties cause you to miss a due date, you must report the problem to the Help Desk and then email your instructor. Include the ticket number that you are given from the Help Desk in an email to the instructor to explain the late assignment/quiz/test.

IT Support

For all Technical assistance questions please contact the UF Computing Help Desk.

Phone: 352-392-HELP (4357)

Email: helpdesk@ufl.edu

Communication Policies

Announcements

You are responsible for reading all announcements posted in the course each time you log in.

Email

You are responsible for reading all your course emails and responding promptly (within 24 hours).

Video Conferencing

You are responsible for attending course video conferencing meetings. If you cannot attend the video conferencing meeting, please advise the instructor and/or your team at least 24 hours in advance (exceptions can be made for legitimate emergencies). You are expected to demonstrate netiquette and etiquette communication expectations during these meetings.

Instructor Communications

Email Policy

Except for weekends, holidays, and University breaks, the instructor will typically respond to emails within 48 hours. For course-related questions please post in the Canvas FAQ discussion board. If you have questions of a personal nature, please email me directly.

Assignment Feedback Policy

I will provide feedback/grades on submitted assignments in a timely manner. Some assignments may require a longer review period, which I will communicate to you, if necessary.

Course Policies

Video Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may

be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under [UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code](#).

Privacy

If your course includes live synchronous meetings, the class sessions will all be audio-visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. Please see UF’s Information Technology [policies](#) for additional information.

Academic and Student Resources

Academic Resources

- E-learning Technical Support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 (HELP) or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- [Career Connection Center](#): Career assistance and counseling. Reitz Union, Phone: 352-392-1601.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance concerning using the libraries or finding resources. [UF Library Services for Distance Students](#)
[Ask a Librarian](#) – chat with librarians online.
CJC Librarian - [April Hines](#), Phone: 352-273-2728, Email: aprhone@uflib.ufl.edu.
- [Teaching Center](#): General study skills and tutoring. Broward Hall, Phone: 352-392-2010 or 352-392-6420.
- [Writing Studio](#): Provides one-on-one consultations and workshops tailored to specific classes (graduate and undergraduate). 302 Tigert Hall, Phone: 352-846-1138.
- [Online Student Complaints](#): This process is designed to make every attempt to resolve student complaints within its academic and administrative departments at the program level.

Health and Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, call 352-294-2273, or visit the website to refer or report a concern, and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: Visit the [Counseling and Wellness Center](#) website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need or visit the [Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: Visit the [UF Police Department](#) website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shand's Emergency Room/ Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services*: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Course Schedule

Week Number	Topic and Assignments
1	Defining the field of Public Interest Communications; Discussions, Tweet
2	Stop Raising Awareness; Discussion, Tweet, Quiz
3	The Science of What Makes People Care; Discussion, Tweet, Quiz
4	Understanding the Six Spheres of Social Change; Discussion, Tweet
5	Building Power Through Communications; Discussion, Tweet, Film Review Paper
6	Political Participation; Discussion, Tweet
7	Story Building; Discussion, Tweet
8	Research; Discussion, Tweet, Book Review
9	Misinformation; Discussion Tweet, Quiz
10	Campaign Strategy and Evaluation; Discussion, Tweet
11	Class Review; Discussion, Tweet; Final Presentation
12	Final Projects; Final Paper Due

The instructor reserves the right to adjust this syllabus, as necessary.