PUR 4480
POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

SPRING 2023
TUESDAY PERIOD 8-10 (3-6PM) | WEIMER 1078

Instructor: Kat (Ekaterina) Romanova

Email: e.romanova@ufl.edu or Canvas Messages

Office hours: by appointment/ Zoom

REQUIRED TEXTS

There are no required textbooks for this course. All materials (readings, videos, blog posts, etc.) will be made available to you via Canvas, organized by week. All readings need to be completed *PRIOR* to the class they are assigned in order to get the most out of our class time.

COURSE GOALS

The political landscape is constantly evolving and the function communication plays in these shifts is essential. This class is designed to serve as an introduction to the role played by all forms of communication in contemporary American political communication. This course will play particular attention to how public relations professionals are integral in all of these processes. We will cover the functions of traditional and contemporary mediated channels, alternative media, and interpersonal discussion. How to understand and assess audiences will also be addressed.

* This syllabus is subject to change as the instructor deems appropriate and necessary.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this semester, students will be able to:

- Explain how politicians, advocacy groups, and citizens use strategic or persuasive communication to achieve their goals
- Develop persuasive, evidence-based arguments about the role of various communication channels, appropriate messaging strategies for each, and their implications for public discourse and engagement
- Apply theories and concepts from research in communication, media studies, and political public relations in order to develop a political strategy or media product
- Deliver a prepared group presentation in a natural, confident, and conversational manner

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that by graduation all students should be able to:
- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the US
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

COURSE POLICIES

PROFESSIONALISM: As PR students I expect you to maintain a high level of professionalism in all of our interactions. This includes being courteous and respectful to all members of the course.

INSTRUCTOR INTERACTION: Please feel free to make an appointment to chat with me. The best way to reach me is by e-mail. I check my e-mail account regularly, but please do not expect a response by e-mail after normal business hours/over the weekend. If I have not written back within 48 hours, please send your email again. As my email is considered a state public record, I do not discuss grades or any student records issues via e-mail. Please schedule a meeting with me to discuss these issues. The classroom is typically not an appropriate place for these discussions.

LATE WORK/MAKE-UP WORK: All written assignments must be turned in by 11:59 pm EST on the day the assignment is due. Canvas will automatically mark assignments as late if they are uploaded even one second after11:59 pm. You have 24 hours after the due date to turn in

your assignment for a 10% grade reduction. After 24 hours, the grade will be zero. It is your responsibility to make sure you properly uploaded your paper, blaming a group member doesn't work as it is the group's joint responsibility. THERE ARE NO MAKE-UPS/LATE EXCEPTIONS FOR EXAMS FOR ANY REASON BEYOND UNIVERSITY OR RELIGIOUS EXCUSED ABSENCES.

ATTENDANCE: Our class is scheduled as a fully face-to-face course this spring, and we will meet in our classroom during class time. I expect that you attend class, and you will have the opportunity to gain points by completing in-class assignments, but I do not take formal attendance. I do post slides on Canvas, but recommend that if miss class you obtain notes from a classmate. IF YOU MISS CLASS PLEASE DO NOT ASK ME IF YOU MISSED "ANYTHING IMPORTANT." Of course you did! I think every day is important. If what you mean to ask is if I made any announcements about changes to due dates or something of that nature, those types of announcements will always be posted on the course website.

HONOR CODE: Please note that all of your work in this class should conform to the university's honor code, which states: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Student 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." For more information, please see http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/4.040-1.pdf
I will document and report all honor code violations, including cheating and plagiarism. The minimum penalty for a violation of the honor code is a zero on the assignment or exam, but may be higher depending on the severity of the violation.

IN-CLASS RECORDING POLICY (FULL TEXT IS AT THE END OF THE SYLLABUS): You can record ONLY me speaking, while delivering course lecture material in the classroom, during which a question-and-answer session is not present. You may not record me out of the classroom, nor may you record anything any of your classmates say. You cannot share your recordings, except with a lawyer, nor post them online anywhere.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

TECHNOLOGY USE: Make sure to bring your laptop to the classroom. We'll need it for in-class assignments.

POINT DISTRIBUTION

Exams	400 pts
Framing Assignment	100 pts
Strategy Assignment	100 pts
Group Presentation	50 pts
In-class/online activities	50 pts
TOTAL	**700 pts**

Letter grades will be calculated using this formula:

Letter	Course Points	Percentage	Grade Points
A	700-651	100-93	4.0
A-	650-630	92.9-90	3.7
B+	629-609	89.9-87	3.3
B	608-581	86.9-83	3
B-	580-560	82.9-80	2.7
C+	559-539	79.9-77	2.3
C	538-511	76.9-73	2
C-	510-490	72.9-70	1.7
D+	489-469	69.9-67	1.3
D	468-420	66.9-60	1
F	419-0	59.9-0	0

I don't round up. I will keep grades posted on Canvas - it is your responsibility to check it and make sure you know where you are at.

OVERVIEW OF COURSE COMPONENTS

EXAMS

Two unit exams will be given, in addition to the OPTIONAL final, which if taken would replace your lowest unit exam grade. All exams will be worth 200 points and will be administered online via Honorlock. Honorlock requires that you have a working webcam, and you must download the Chrome extension prior to the exam. You must be on time for exams. No make-up exams are given regardless of the reason. If you do well on the two unit exams, and are satisfied with your grade, you can skip the final exam without consequence. If you miss an exam, or do poorly on an exam, you can take the final to replace the earlier exam grade that you may not be pleased with. The exams will cover the material in the readings and lectures – that includes everything posted online to Canvas. The unit exams will not be intentionally cumulative, but some content will utilize concepts from previous weeks. I will try to point these instances out when covering the material in lecture. The final exam will be cumulative, covering the whole semester and must be taken during the scheduled final exam period. The tests will be multiple choice/true-false/matching/short essay.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

You will have two written assignments that are designed to a) give you increased exposure to important issues regarding political communication, b) allow you to think about key issues covered in class, and c) help you apply those key issues to the real world. Brief details are below:

FRAMING ASSIGNMENT: You will examine a specific political issue or current political event to examine for media framing. You cannot pick "the election." If you want to analyze something related to the election, you need to choose a specific event in the election that has occurred or a specific political issue in the context of the election. Otherwise, you should pick a political issue that has recently been in the news (i.e., it doesn't have to be in the context of the election). You will examine how the issue has been framed in at least 3 different media outlets and discuss why the various framing strategies were used.

STRATEGY ASSIGNMENT: For this assignment, you will write a 1,500-word essay, in which you develop a strategic plan describing how a political candidate, elected official, political organization, or advocacy group can use course concepts to achieve its goals. Your strategy should be informed by class concepts, and you must choose an actual individual/group/cause and propose a strategy with a communication/action plan that is realistic and appropriate given its existing objectives and challenges.

COURSE PRESENTATION

Working in a group, you will develop a 15 minute in-class presentation (using PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) that critically analyzes a political "text." You will describe the strategic messaging being used and take a position as to why it may or may not be effective. This text can be a television program, an individual episode or set of episodes from a television program, a film, an online video or video campaign, a print publication, a web site, a podcast, an event or protest, etc. You may choose to focus on any example of political communication, past or present, that is of interest to your group. You may expand on an example we covered in class, or you may choose something that we have not covered. Your presentation should offer a point of view regarding the significance of the example being studied and what it communicates about politics, targeted messaging and effective use of persuasive techniques.

IN-CLASS/ONLINE ASSIGNMENTS

I believe, and research has shown, that active participation in learning is crucial for long term learning. Most weeks we will complete some sort of activity designed to help you understand the course material. These assignments – which could include content quizzes – will together make up 5% of your grade. Your top 10 WEEKLY SCORES will count, which will provide you with a cushion if you need to miss a class.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE*

WEEK	TOPIC	DUE
1 1/10	Course Intro/Syllabus Day	
2 1/17	Why Political Communication Matters	
3 1/24	Persuasion Theories	
4 1/31	Using Framing and Agenda Setting	
5 2/7	Media Bias and Choice	
6 2/14	Crafting Messages and Going Negative/Debates and Image Cultivation	
7 2/21	Part 1 recap/exam preparation/framing assignment	
8 2/28	Exam 1 (Online)	Exam 1
9 3/7	Importance of Public Opinion	**Framing assignment due**
10 3/14	SPRING BREAK NO CLASS	
11 3/21	Assessing Your Audience/Interpersonal Diffusion	
12 3/28	Effective Use of social media	
13 4/4	Entertainment Media and Politics	
14 4/11	PR and Government Relations	**Strategy assignment due**
15 4/18	Exam 2 (Online)	Exam 2
16 4/25	Presentations	Group Presentation
Friday 5/5	**Final Exam Friday 5/5 12:30-2:30pm**	**Optional final**

This schedule is tentative and subject to change.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

- For student evaluations of teaching (https://evaluations.ufl.edu, also available via Gator Rater tab on Canvas), all members of the class will be awarded 10 points to their final grade if 80% of the enrolled class completes evaluations, and 15 points if 100% of the

enrolled class completes evaluations. That, typically is enough to move many students from B+ to A- or A- to A.

- One extra credit (which equals 10 pts of the final grade for the course) will be offered for research participation through CJC's SONA research management system (https://ufl-cjc.sona-systems.com). This opportunity is limited to one extra credit. Please register a SONA account and choose studies to participate in to receive extra credits for this class. Check SONA regularly to see what studies have become available. Typically, it is not until around maybe the third week of the semester that studies will become available. You should NOT wait until the last minute to sign up for participation because people tend to procrastinate and research opportunities will be limited by the end of the semester. In fact, it is probably wise to participate early in the semester when your course loads are the lightest. Please see this video below for how to set up your SONA account: https://youtu.be/_1OnT2ZU6QQ If you have any questions, please contact the CJC SONA administrator through this email: uf-cjc-sonasystems@jou.ufl.edu

If there are any other extra credit opportunities, students will be notified via Canvas.

STANDARD UF POLICY INFORMATION AND LINKS

UF Grading Policy
http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades (Links to an external site.)
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx (Links to an external site.)

UF Policy on Controversial Issues
People learn best when they are encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse opinions on course content, which may include images, texts, data, and theories from across the disciplines. This is especially true in courses that deal with provocative or contemporary issues. UF offers many such courses, in which students encounter concepts of race, color, sex, and/or national origin. We teach these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we do not limit access to, or classroom discussion of, facts, ideas, and opinions—including those that some may find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or even offensive. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. But hostility, disruptive and disrespectful behavior, and provocation for provocation's sake have no place in a classroom; reasonable people disagree reasonably. These guidelines can help instructors and students as they work together to fulfill the mission of the University of Florida, which includes the exploration of intellectual boundaries, the creation of new knowledge, and the pursuit of new ideas.

Video and Audio Recordings
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 in 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 Policy on Course Syllabi 3 UF, Academic Affairs, July 28th, 2021 Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

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 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/

University 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 (https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of 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.

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: http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html (Links to an external site.)

CAMPUS RESOURCES

HEALTH AND WELLNESS
U Matter, We Care:
If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc (Links to an external site.), and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)
Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or http://www.police.ufl.edu/ (Links to an external site.).

ACADEMIC RESOURCES
E-learning technical support 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml (Links to an external site.).

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. https://www.crc.ufl.edu/ (Links to an external site.).

Library Support, http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask (Links to an external site.). Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/ (Links to an external site.).

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ (Links to an external site.).