Public Affairs Communication Strategies
Messaging, Influencing, and Persuading

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Course Website: login to Canvas at http://elearning.ufl.edu/

Contact UF Helpdesk http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/ (352) 392-HELP (4357) if you have any trouble with accessing your course.

Course Communication: Contact me by email anytime with questions or by phone 8 a.m.-8 p.m. M-F

Course Overview and Objectives:

Borrowing tactics honed in political elections, public affairs campaigns today are designed to influence issues, perceptions, policy, and legislation. This course will provide an understanding of successful public affairs communication and campaign strategies on behalf of public affairs/policy organizations, nonprofits, corporations, governmental entities, trade associations, political candidates, and elected officials.

Public affairs communication is in the midst of a major paradigm shift with fundamental changes to the way it is conducted and practiced. Notable is the role of social media in providing the platform to directly communicate with key audiences, bypassing the traditional media, e.g., the effective use of Twitter, Instagram and Facebook by presidential candidates. Indeed, Peggy Noonan in a Wall Street Journal column recognized that the political/public affairs world is undergoing a seismic "upheaval… and nothing will be the same. How we do politics in America is changed and will not be going back. The usual standards and expectations have been turned on their head, and more than one establishment has been routed."

The course will encompass a mix of practical applications and the latest in research and theory. It will include assignments and projects that will challenge students to identify and decipher the aforementioned new direction and approaches

of public affairs/political communications, as well as lectures and discussions on timely and scholarly readings and topics.

Recognizing that this is a "global" program, a section will be devoted to international public affairs and diplomacy for multinational corporations and global non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Required Texts:

Because of the fast-moving nature of the public affairs communication field, readings will include current and relevant articles by practitioners, academics, and media/communication experts. The course will also include topical and informative videos and other presentations. Check modules in Canvas for readings and videos.   Use AP Stylebook for all writing assignments. If you don't have it, the AP Stylebook can be purchased in hardback or online (https://www.apstylebook.com/ online/).

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills:
It is important that you have strong writing skills through academic or work experience and have the ability to communicate via various formats effectively and creatively.

Attendance Policy

Because this is an online, asynchronously delivered course, attendance in the form of calling roll will not occur; however, students are expected to sign onto the course site at least once each day to check for course updates in the announcements and discussion sections of the site.

Late Work Policy:

Deadlines are critical to this class. All work is due on or before the due date. Extensions for deadlines will only be granted for extenuating circumstances such as catastrophic emergencies or major illness that can be documented.* Minor inconveniences such as family vacation, work conferences, or minor illnesses are not valid reasons for extensions. There will be no credit for late work.

Issues with uploading work for a grade is not an excuse. If a student is having technical difficulties with Canvas, there are other means to submit completed work. Student may email .zip files or even links to Dropbox folders to Instructor

via UF email. Students should compensate for technical difficulties by not waiting until the last minute to submit work.

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 catalogue at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

* Emergency and extenuating circumstances policy: Students who face emergencies, such as a major personal medical issue, a death in the family, serious illness of a family member, or other situations beyond their control should notify their instructors immediately.

Grading:

Course Items

1. **Assignments on behalf of chosen issues, legislation, public initiatives, public policy/interest groups, associations, candidates, non-governmental entities, or elected officials** - 40 percent:

   • social media post - visual storytelling (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram)
   • news release, written for traditional and new media placement
   • opinion column or white paper
   • speech

2. Quizzes (7) - 20 percent

3. Discussion Posts on readings and lecture topics - 20 percent

4**. Final project** - A public affairs communication plan for a nonprofit, trade association, public interest group, corporation, candidate, or elected official - 20 percent

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A	100%	to	93%
A-	< 93%	to	90%
B+	< 90%	to	87%
B	< 87%	to	83%
B-	< 83%	to	80%
C+	< 80%	to	77%
C	< 77%	to	73%
C-	< 73%	to	70%

D+	< 70%	to	67%
D	< 67%	to	63%
D-	< 63%	to	60%
F	< 60%	to	0%

Current UF grading policies for assigning grade points: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Weekly Discussions – Details:

Discussion Boards are a key part of this online course. After completing all of the readings and other assignments for this week (if applicable), review the discussion board scenario/questions and respond. You are also required to read all, and comment on or reply to a minimum of two student posts (per discussion board).

Discussion Boards will be graded on the following criteria:
Content, Contribution of Original Thought, Connection to Course Material, Mechanics, and Deadline.

You must post your initial post before responding to classmates' contributions. You will not be able to edit your post, so take time to ensure your post is complete for submission before you officially post.

Content: Post addresses all questions asked; is appropriate length to stimulate further discussion (250-300 words). Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.

Contribution: Contribution is thoughtful, analytical, and original

Connection: Author makes connections between course content, readings, and personal reflection, current events, etc.

Mechanics: Response is well structured, logical, and free of grammatical/spelling errors PLEASE PROOFREAD before posting.

Deadline: First post (addressing the instructor posed questions) is to be submitted by **THURSDAY** at 8PM (ET) and the minimum **two** meaningful responses are to be submitted before **SUNDAY** at 8PM (ET).

Use AP Stylebook for all writing assignments. If you don't have it, the AP Stylebook can be purchased in hardback or online (https://www.apstylebook.com/online/).

Discussion Board Rubric:

Your discussion grade is two parts: 50 total points for your initial post, 50 points for your responses. Both initial post and responses will be graded on the same criteria.

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Less than satisfactory
Content **25 %**	Post is appropriate length and includes one original and two reply posts to stimulate further discussion. Information clearly relates to the main topic. Includes supporting links and/or examples.	Original post is appropriate length, but ideas developed for discussion are minimal or vaguely developed. Information marginally relates to the main topic. No links and/or examples are given.	Post is short, does not address topic, and/ or does not develop ideas. - OR – Responses have little or nothing to do with the topic and/or are missing.
Contribution of original thought **25 %**	Contribution is thoughtful, analytical, and original.	Contribution shows adequate evidence of original thought, but lacks real insight or analysis.	Contribution relies on others' posts or lacks original insight into/ shows little understanding of the questions asked.
Post connects to course materials **25 %**	Author makes connections between course content and personal reflection, current events, etc.	Author makes some connections between course content and personal reflection or current events, but connections are not sufficient or clearly explained.	Author does not connect course content to personal reflection or current events.
Spelling and Grammar **25 %**	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling result in a coherent and intelligible response.	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding.	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding.

Assignments:

All assignments are due SUNDAY 8 p.m. (ET) on week of the module. Check the assignment details and due dates in Canvas. I will have graded assignments returned by Thursday of the following week.

Assignments Rubric:

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Less than satisfactory
Topic 25 %	Assignment describes, contextualizes, and conceptualizes topic and subject matter in an excellent manner.	Assignment adequately covers topic and subject matter but lacks depth and insight.	Assignment information inadequately covers and misses the point of topic and subject matter.
Presentation 25 %	Message is engaging, compelling, attention getting, comprehensive and easily understandable. The presentation follows style and formatting instructions in lecture PDFs, writing samples, videos and readings. Presents ideas, thoughts, and concepts in a cogent and organized manner.	Message made an adequate presentation, but additional effort is needed to make the work more compelling, attention getting and engaging. Piece has some style and formatting issues and needs tighter organization and structure.	Presentation is not compelling, attention getting or engaging. It has many style and formatting issues and concepts and ideas are presented in a disorganized and incoherent manner.
Writing **25%**	Assignment contains excellent grammar, spelling, punctuation and syntax. Includes descriptive and persuasive language. Piece is factually accurate and utilizes AP style. Ideas, thoughts, and messages are superbly conveyed in the written word. Lead includes the five Ws.	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors to not impede understanding. Lead is adequate, but piece has some AP style issues.	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding. Piece has numerous AP style errors and lead is unclear and uninteresting.

Research & Sourcing 25%	Assignment demonstrates excellent research and sourcing, and provides attribution and links to websites and other sources when needed.	Assignment demonstrates adequate research and sourcing, but additional attribution may be needed. Links to websites and other sources are provided in an adequate manner.	Adequate research, sourcing, attribution is minimal or missing. No links to website and other sources are provided.

Quizzes:

Quizzes will be on lectures, readings, and videos. Quizzes will be 10 questions, open book/notes, and graded on a 100 point scale. Quizzes are due **SUNDAY 8 p.m. (ET) on week of the module.**

Weekly Lectures:

A lecture video will be posted to the course website on Canvas for the 12 weeks (one is an introduction to the course and review of the syllabus). These videos will vary in length depending on the material. It is your responsibility to watch each of the videos. Although it is possible to watch the pre-recorded video lectures at any time and at any pace, keeping up with the videos week to week according to the schedule will be easier as many build off the other along with the weekly readings.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Module and Lecture Topic: Course Overview/Introduction and Syllabus Review

Watch: Welcome, Course Overview, and Syllabus review video

Assignments:
1. Course Overview and Syllabus Quiz

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 2: Module and Lecture Topic: Introduction to Public Affairs and Political Communication:

Objective: Describe the tradition and importance of public affairs communication campaigns and the role they currently play in informing and influencing.

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Lecture and Readings Quiz

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m.
Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m

Week 3: Module and Lecture Topic: The Public Affairs Communication Paradigm Shift - Enter the New Media and the Millennials

Objective: Analyze and understand the rise of social media and the impact of the Millennial generation in public affairs and political communications.

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Social Media Posts - see Canvas for instructions

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 4: Module and Lecture Topic: Public Opinion, Polling, Research, Canvassing, and Evaluating

Objective: Describe the effective use of public opinion research, polling, canvasing and evaluating in public affairs communication.

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Lecture and Readings Quiz

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m.
Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 5: Module and Lecture Topic: Framing the News and Messages

Objective: Develop and frame messages; set agendas; and brand the group, issue or candidate.

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Lecture and Readings Quiz

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 6: Module and Lecture Topic: Communicating and Influencing

Objective: Communicate through effective media relations to influence key audiences, influencers and validators; and understand the role of the press officer/secretary.

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Press release and press advisory - see Canvas for instructions

2. Discussion Posts: Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 7: Module and Lecture Topic: Strategies of Persuasion

Objectives: Identify effective strategies to understand and connect and communicate with key audiences to **persuade -** using compelling messages and media formats.

Watch: Lecture

Assignments:
1. Lecture and Readings Quiz

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 8: Module and Lecture Topic: Lobby & Advocacy

Objective: Analyze and understand the role of lobbying initiatives (for or against legislation, regulations) in effectively communicating, persuading, influencing and "winning the debate."

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Opinion Column or White Paper - see Canvas for instructions

2. Discussion Posts: Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 9: Module and Lecture Topic: Speechwriting

Objective: Write memorable, well-structured and persuasive speeches.

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Speech - see Canvas for Instructions

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 10: Module and Lecture Topic: International Public Relations/Affairs and Diplomacy

Objective: Describe and explain the role of public affairs for multinational corporations and global non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

Watch: Lecture

Assignments:
1. Lecture and Readings Quiz

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 11: Module and Lecture Topic: Special Events

Objective: Organize fundraisers, press conferences, campaign events, and special events.

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Lecture and Readings Quiz

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m.
Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

Week 12: Module and Lecture Topic: Course Review and Wrap up, and The Future of Public Affairs/Political Communications

Watch: Lecture and Video

Assignments:
1. Final Project Due - see Canvas for Instructions

2. Discussion Posts - Posts must be submitted by Thursday at 8:00 p.m.
Respond to two student submissions by Sunday at 8:00 p.m.

University Policies:

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (http://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. Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565. University counseling services and mental health services:

Netiquette - Communication Courtesy:

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf

Class Demeanor:

Mastery in this class requires preparation, passion, and professionalism. Students are expected, within the requirements allowed by university policy, to attend class,be on time, and meet all deadlines. Work assigned in advance of class should be completed as directed. Full participation in online and live discussions, group projects, and small group activities is expected.

My role as instructor is to identify critical issues related to the course, direct you to and teach relevant information, assign appropriate learning activities, create opportunities for assessing your performance, and communicate the outcomes of such assessments in a timely, informative, and professional way. Feedback is essential for you to have confidence that you have mastered the material and for me to determine that you are meeting all course requirements.

At all times it is expected that you will welcome and respond professionally to assessment feedback, that you will treat your fellow students and me with respect, and that you will contribute to the success of the class as best as you can.

Getting Help:

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

- learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml
  ** 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 http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/ cwc/ Default.aspx
- 352-392-1575
- 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 to submit a complaint.

Course Evaluation: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted

online at https://evaluations.ufl.edu Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results

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 http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:
Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."

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 about academic honesty, contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 352-392-1261.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All graduate students in the College of Journalism and Communications are students' responsibility to ensure that they know and understand the requirements of every assignment. At a minimum, this includes avoiding the following:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas or expressions of another as his or her own. Students must always credit others' ideas with accurate citations and must use quotation marks and citations when presenting the words of others. A thorough understanding of plagiarism is a precondition for admittance to graduate studies in the college.

Cheating: Cheating occurs when a student circumvents or ignores the rules that govern an academic assignment such as an exam or class paper. It can include using notes, in physical or electronic form, in an exam, submitting the work of another as one's own, or reusing a paper a student has composed for one class in another class. If a student is not sure about the rules that govern an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to ask for clarification from his instructor.

Misrepresenting Research Data: The integrity of data in mass communication research is a paramount issue for advancing knowledge and the credibility of our professions. For this reason any intentional 14 misrepresentation of data, or misrepresentation of the conditions or circumstances of data collection, is considered a violation of academic integrity. Misrepresenting data is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.

Any violation of the above stated conditions is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.

Students are expected to adhere to the University of Florida Code of Conduct

https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code

If you have additional questions, please refer to the Online Graduate Program Student Handbook you received when you were admitted into the Program.

Disclaimer:

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.