

Syllabus updated January 7, 2018

PUR 4442: Public Interest Communications, Section 0982

Professor Ann Christiano, Frank Karel Chair in Public Interest Communications

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Class meets Tuesday 9:35-11:30 am and Thursday 9:35-10:25 in Weimer 1070

Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-4 and by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Kristina Forman

S/U: NO

About This Course

Effective communication is the accelerant on the fire of social change. Public Interest Communications is a form of strategic communication through which organizations take on specific communications objectives that will have a benefit to society. This benefit transcends the particular interest of any single organization undertaking a campaign or communications effort. The skills and qualities of those who work in Public Interest Communications are not unlike those of people who work in public relations. In fact, the fields differ more in purpose than in form: while public relations tends to take on the interests of a single corporation or entity, public interest communications tends to take on causes that affect the health, safety and well-being of a community or population.

This is an evolving field, and its practitioners are continuously applying new insights and techniques to support positive social change. The field is not as well-established as its sister fields of public relations, advertising, journalism and marketing, however, an increased recognition among change makers of the importance of communications to social change means that there are more resources available than there once were. This is also an entrepreneurial field, which results in significant innovation.

Public interest communications is a large and complex field, and it will not be possible to cover all its aspects during the 16 weeks we have together. To make the most of our time, the course will focus on the principles and fundamentals on which the field stands.

In this course, you will learn the six spheres through which we can drive social change, the strategic planning process for an effective social change communications campaign, and the tools, qualities and tactics that make these campaigns real. You will gain insight to the richness of the field, the power that effective communications has to address a problem and profoundly affect the lives of people, and begin to see the astonishing range of careers and opportunity that this field holds.

This course will give you the opportunity to hear directly from the leading thinkers in public interest communicators.

Course Outcomes

1. You will be able to describe the role of communications in driving positive social change.
2. You will be able to critique or create strategic communications plans for social change efforts.
3. You will be able to 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.
4. You will establish a professional network of the experts who are leading and defining this field.
5. You will develop skills to interpret and incorporate fundamental changes in how we communicate as a society and their implications for this field.
6. You will gain a framework for the skills and qualities associated with effective communication for social change.

Grading

Your grade will be based on the following:

Class participation:	15%
Final Exam:	20%
Reaction Paper	10%
Final Project Memos	10%
Final Project:	20%
Quizzes:	25%

A	90-100 points
B	80-89 points
C	70-79 points
D	60-69 points
E	Less than 60 points

Appointments

Please use my office hours to discuss assignments, materials or other concerns related to the course. You may also schedule a meeting with me via email. My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus. I'm often in my office, and am always happy to talk with students. Please feel free to pop in, but know that there's no guarantee you'll catch me except during office hours.

Technology

You may not use laptops, phones or tablets to take notes in this class. There will be days when you'll need your laptops to complete specific worksheets in class, and I will make an announcement on those days through Canvas. If you are texting, using Facebook, or engaging in other distracting communication unrelated to class, I will ask you to leave.

Course Professionalism

This College is a professional school, and professional decorum is expected always. I expect you to adhere to workplace norms of collegial and respectful interaction and behavior. That specifically means that you will arrive on time, not speak when another student or the instructor are speaking or use cell phones, lap tops or other electronic devices. I expect that you will welcome and treat with respect the diverse perspectives of your fellow students, as will I. Violations of these expectations may result in students being asked to leave class and a lowering of your grade.

Students with Special Needs

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must submit a documentation letter to the professor when requesting accommodation. Please notify me at the beginning of the semester if you would like to discuss requests for special provisions.

Class Attendance Policy

Attendance is not required.

However, note that your attendance will affect your class participation grade. Participation accounts for 15 percent of your grade. To achieve full credit, you must be present and on time for class and participate in our discussions. Being present doesn't simply mean you're in the room—it also means you're attentive, and not texting, checking email, doing other work or using social media during class.

If you miss class, it is your responsibility to take initiative to make up lost work, get notes from another student and otherwise ensure that you have learned anything you missed.

Academic Honesty

The work you submit for this course must be your own. It must be original for this course. You must never use direct or paraphrased written material, images, or ideas from any source, including Web sites, without attribution. You may not submit anything that you wrote for another class, or that you wrote as a volunteer or intern. You may not submit anything that was written for any purpose other than the given assignment. I will handle any incident of academic dishonesty in accordance with the University of Florida policies that address cheating and unethical academic behavior, specifically the UF Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Guidelines.

Any case of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. I will follow University Guidelines for any offense.

In every assignment you complete for this course you will clearly attribute the source of your information, including information obtained from organizations' web sites or internal documents. You cannot copy anything word for word, regardless of the source, without putting quotes around it and attributing the source. Please use MLA format for your citations.

If you plagiarize, you will fail this class.

Format

Everything you write for this course must be coherent, logical and carefully edited. Misspellings, syntax and grammatical errors are unacceptable in upper-level college writing.

Texts, Readings and Materials

Dan and Chip Heath "Switch"

Wes Moore "The Other Wes Moore"

"Merchants of Doubt" the movie: rent on Amazon

"Stop Raising Awareness Already," Stanford Social Innovation Review February 2017, available at SSIR.org

"The Back-of-the-Envelope Guide to Communications Strategy," available at SSIR.org

Additional Reading will be assigned and posted through Canvas

Reaction Paper Assignment: DUE Tuesday, January 23

In 600-1000 words, please tell me about your own interaction with public interest communications.

You have been the target of countless change communications efforts over the course of your life. From when you first watched Sesame Street to your daily walks around campus now, you have been buffeted by messages to help you make "better" decisions or to take action on behalf of a cause.

Tell me about the extent to which your behavior and lifestyle have been affected by a particular campaign, and whether it stands out as being particularly good or bad. If you have a story about how a specific campaign or message has affected the path of your life, please do include it. While I recognize that you may not have been aware of who organized or funded the campaign at the time, please find that out now and include that in your paper. Who funded this effort? Why? How does that knowledge affect your perception of the credibility of the campaign?

This is a reaction paper, not a research paper, but please do include citations where appropriate, and share links to things that have been particularly moving—I'm always looking for new things to share. You must consult sources other than the organization's web site, including news sites, social science research and other blogs. Use the MLA in-text citation method to cite your sources. If you are

unfamiliar with this method, a quick Google search will turn up several great sites. Your paper must include at least three citations not including the organization's web site or social media.

I will grade these on:

- The cohesiveness of your points. Are your comments supported by facts? Have you used examples, is there an overarching structure that makes sense?
- Your discussion of who funded the campaign and why, and your thoughtful discussion of what that means.
- The quality of your writing. Your writing should be free of grammatical errors, typographical errors and other mistakes. Your paper should be well-organized, lively, and interesting.
- The extent to which you reach beyond the mundane in your response.
- Your use of external sources. "A" papers will make use of at least three sources other than the organization's web site.

Please use page numbers and headings, and include footnotes or endnotes. Use the following convention name for your file: YourLastNameYourFirstNameReactionPaper.docx

Schedule of Class Discussions

Week	Tuesday		Thursday
1	<p>January 9</p> <p>Course Overview</p> <p>About Public Interest Communications: Defining a New Field</p>		<p>January 11</p> <p>The Six Imperatives of Public Interest Communications</p> <p>.</p>
2	<p>January 16</p> <p>Quiz: Merchants of Doubt and Stop Raising Awareness Already</p> <p>All the Reasons to Stop Raising Awareness</p> <p>The Six Imperatives of Public Interest Communications, Continued</p>		<p>January 18</p> <p>A Short and Incomplete History of Public Interest Communications</p>
3	<p>January 23</p> <p>Final Project Assignment Discussion and Team Formation</p> <p>DISCUSSION PAPER DUE, VIA CANVAS, 1 HOUR BEFORE CLASS</p>		<p>January 25</p> <p>Quiz: Switch</p>
4	<p>January 30</p> <p>Class discussion, Switch</p> <p>An Overview of the Six Spheres</p>		<p>February 1</p> <p>Working with the News Media</p>
5	<p>February 6</p>		<p>February 8</p>

	Activism and Community Organizing		NO CLASS
6	February 13 The Social Marketing Sphere		February 15 Team work period
7	February 20 Communities of Influence MEMO DUE: Final Project Proposal		February 22 The Market
8	February 27 Working with the news media		March 1 Working with Policymakers
9	March 6 NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK		March 8 NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK
10	March 13 The Back of the Envelope Guide to Strategic Communications Planning for Social Change		March 15 MEMO DUE: Final Project Roles and Responsibilities Using Research to Drive Change
11	March 20 Message Strategy, Development, and Testing		March 22 Design Thinking Workshop
12	March 27 The Science and Purpose of Empathy		March 29 Quiz: The Other Wes Moore and Empathy

13	April 3 Class discussion: The Other Wes Moore		April 5 Making Great Presentations
14	April 10 Systems Thinking for Change		April 12 Final Project Meetings
15	April 17 Final Presentations		April 19 Final Presentations
16	April 24 Final Exam		