

**Professor Ann Christiano, Frank Karel Chair in Public
Interest Communications
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Class meets Monday 1:55-4:55 in Weimer 3200 (AHA! CoLab)**

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:	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam:	20%
Reaction Paper	10%

Final Project and Presentation:	20%
Quizzes:	20%

- 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. Engaging in activities unrelated to class or failing to attend will result in a lower participation grade.

Course Professionalism

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 10 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.

Please do not email me to ask me what you've 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

Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms "New Power"

Wes Moore "The Other Wes Moore"

"Merchants of Doubt" the movie: rent on Amazon

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

"The Science of What Makes People Care," Stanford Social Innovation Review 2018, 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

Class Discussion Schedule

January 7

What is Public Interest Communications?

Six imperatives of effective communication

Public Interest Communications at UF

Course overview

January 14

What we're up Against—Merchants of Doubt

Quiz 1: January 7 class lecture, Merchants of Doubt, Stop Raising Awareness Already, The Science of What Makes People Care

January 21

No classes, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 28

A Brief and Incomplete History of the Field

The Back-of-the-Envelope Guide to Strategic and Effective Communication

Reaction Paper Due

February 4

Be prepared to discuss Switch

Discuss Final Assignment

Using research in your work

February 11

The spheres through which we drive change: Policy, Media, and Communities of Influence

Quiz 2: History of the Field, Applying the Back-of-the Envelope Guide, Using Research in Your Work, Switch

February 18

The spheres through which we drive change: Market, Activism and Social Marketing

February 25

Exam on material covered in first half of semester

March 4

No classes, Spring Break

March 11

The Science of Story Building

March 18

Quiz 3: The Science of Storybuilding and The Other Wes Moore

Class discussion: The Other Wes Moore

March 25

Making Great Presentations

April 1

Using Evaluation

April 8

Quiz 4: Making great presentations, using evaluation

April 15

Final project due, final project presentations

April 22

Cumulative Exam