MMC 5648
Public Affairs Communication

Instructor

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Contents

This syllabus document contains three main sections:

1. A **course description** including a summary of major assignments and grading
2. **University policies** that apply to this and other GSC courses online
3. A detailed **Weekly Course Schedule** that includes grading rubrics (print and save!)

Contact

You are always welcome to send me a message. You can reach me by text or Canvas message (see your "inbox" on the left side) or email at rgrupp@jou.ufl.edu I will always do my best to respond within 24 hours.

 If you would like to chat live, it's best to contact me to schedule time on our calendars.

My bio is online at https://www.linkedin.com/in/robertgrupp/

Course Website and Login

Your course is in Canvas (UF e-Learning). Go to http://lss.at.ufl.edu. Click the blue e-Learning button. Login with your GatorLink account. Your course will be in the Courses menu on the left navigation. You might have to click All Courses at the bottom depending on how many courses you have taken at UF.

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

Course Description:

Public Affairs Communication is structured around the idea that individuals, communities and organizations have an obligation to work together to participate responsibly in democratic processes and help solve some of the most challenging problems. This course equips students with tools and skills to do that, anywhere in the world where need arises.

Fundamentally, the Public Affairs practice is an exercise in communication. By communicating strategically with an array of different stakeholders in the public policy arena, individuals and the organizations they represent can develop relationships that contribute to meeting human needs, advancing cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, loyalty, advocacy and crisis resolution.

Furthermore, when a collective approach to problem solving is employed, bringing disparate stakeholders together to reach consensus, both business and society can benefit.

Often in the past, when organizations spoke out, it tended to be only on policy issues that affected their business – tax and trade policy, for example. Rarely did companies take a stand on social issues. Nor did shareholders, employees or the public demand it. Most organizations preferred to avoid polarizing issues that alienate stakeholders.

Times certainly have changed!

This course will examine the public affairs communication strategies used by advocates, think tanks, non-profits and businesses to shape policy deliberations and decisions.

- **CEO ACTIVISM:** Today, both for-profit companies and non-profit ventures increasingly are expected to speak out on social issues. CEO activism can sway public opinion—and increase interest in buying a company's products and advocating for a particular cause.

- **POLARIZATION OF OPINION:** Poll after poll illustrate a deep political divide among Americans, with the rise of populist movements and extreme polarization of opinion. Employees and other stakeholders want to take a stand, but when and how should they do it?

- **SOCIAL MEDIA**: We must pay even greater attention to the customer experience with our brand narratives, and to aligning of our messages and values across every channel on which we appear. Today, "owned media" is anywhere and everywhere the customer or stakeholder wants to interact with us and our organization.

- **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REVISITED**: There is increasing recognition that "doing well" (financially) and "doing good" (for society) can be compatible. Many professionals, younger generations especially, aspire to become social entrepreneurs, seeking to apply entrepreneurial business skills to provide social benefits while working either at for-profit companies or non-profit ventures.

- **PUBLIC DIPLOMACY:** Global companies need to redefine success in terms of positive impacts, not just for business but also society, where vision and values are aligned, and public and private sector institutions collaborate. Yet, collaboration and culture are concepts that in a more connected, transparent and less trusting world, are proving difficult for some leaders to implement.

The course is designed to familiarize students with key strategies and tools used in Public Affairs campaigns to influence public policy and public opinion. During the first half of the course, we will explore current thinking about "Public Affairs" as work at the intersection of communication strategies, policy processes and behavior change. Subsequent modules focus on concepts surrounding social responsibility, citizen engagement, and the role of digital technologies in triggering advocacy and action.

Mid-course modules address the challenge created by political polarization in America, and we explore globalization of public affairs.

Mid-way through the course, you will Beginning about Then later in the course, students will apply this knowledge by suggesting how to organize public affairs, how strategy "really works," ethics and finally, a "live case" where students will be asked to analyze an issue in real time and propose solutions.

Creating an original case study is the culminating assignment in his course. Along the way, students assemble their original case studies piece by piece by choosing and analyzing a topic, post observations in the online discussion board, research the issue, draft alternative narratives, write the final case and present it to the instructor.

In developing original cases, students can draw upon real scenarios they have encountered in their work lives, or they can research choose other situations to analyze.

Finally, we explore how individuals can make a difference by considering what it takes to run for public office and win.

This is a demanding but exciting and intellectually rewarding opportunity to learn and apply global communication strategy and skills on-the-job. This course is conducted entirely online in a format that mirrors how professional, global public affairs and communication teams are assembled and work across geographies and time zones, countries and cultures, working together using online and other digital technologies.

Course Objectives and Learning Goals:

Public Affairs Communication will help you identify, develop and lead effective public affairs initiatives and campaigns that are focused on "doing well while doing good."

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

- Articulate and demonstrate how Public Affairs, as a profession, operates at the intersection of business, society and public policy.
- Assess political or public policy problems and apply strategic and creative communication strategy to identify, engage and motivate audiences to achieve specific goals.
- Analyze emerging markets, technology and channels and their impact on mass communication
- Identify networks consisting of traditional and non-traditional partners needed to impact public affairs problems and opportunities
- Work through public policy issues and political problems in a manner that upholds ethical standards and demonstrates professional conduct, civil discourse and cooperative behaviors.
- Build a responsive and flexible strategic plan, applying technology to your advantage and establishing critical partnerships.
- Interact effectively, engage opposing viewpoints constructively, and demonstrate active listening skills.

Texts:

During the semester, we will rely on journal articles, book chapters, newspaper stories, blog posts and

other materials. All readings will be freely accessible through your course Canvas shell.

Textbooks with excerpts provided to students via Canvas
The SAGE Handbook of International Corporate and Public Affairs, by Phil Harris and Craig S. Fleisher (Editors), SAGE Publications Ltd; 1st edition (March 15, 2017) ISBN-10: 1446276112 ISBN-13: 978-1446276112

Storytizing: What's Next After Advertising, by Bob Pearson; Hardcover: 200 pages; 1845 Publishing (Edition: March 10, 2016) ISBN-10: 0692598146; ISBN-13: 978-0692598146

Playing to Win: How Strategy Really Works, by A. G. Lafley and Roger L. Martin; Harvard Business Review Press; 272 pages, 1st edition (February 5, 2013); ISBN-10: 142218739X; ISBN-13: 978-1422187395

Teaching Philosophy:
The course is centered on you and your learning needs. This course requires graduate-level thinking, analytical skills and maturity.

The course is "learning in action" and is designed from a professional perspective and makes use of current, relevant situations and examples that can be applied on-the-job now.

Course Policies:

Attendance Policy:
As a virtual, online course without regular face-to-face classroom meetings, communication through Canvas, e-mail and online discussions will be the "attendance parallel" for this class. Students are expected to sign onto the course site at least once each day, Monday–Friday, to check for course updates, announcements and discussion sections of the site.

The instructor's preferred method of communication is through e-mail within the UF Canvas e-learning system. Alternatively, the instructor's UF e-mail is rgrupp@jou.ufl.edu or text +1-484-557-8401. The instructor will respond to e-mail usually within one working day.

Team Interaction:
Students will be required to work on a team project during the semester. Students are expected to act as respectful members of a team and distribute work equally according to individual team member skills and capabilities. Please be respectful and considerate of others when providing feedback. Students are expected and required to meet and communicate with their teams as often as is required to complete team assignments.

Deadlines:
This online course requires self-direction! It is essential that you remain disciplined, on task and vigilant about sticking to the schedule and deadlines.

Keep in mind that the time frame for completing your projects is short. Procrastination and poor communication with your classmates and instructor will delay progress. It is your responsibility to stay on schedule by meeting deadlines and seeking advice on challenges you confront, as soon as possible.

Discussion Post Deadlines

For DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS, a thoughtful post submitted by 11:55 pm on Thursday each week can earn up to 5 points. Interacting with at least two other students by commenting on discussion posts anytime during the week earns up to an additional 5 points. If you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from meeting these deadlines, you must contact the instructor in advance of any delays.

Extensions for deadlines will be preapproved only for emergencies.

Unless excused, points will be deduced for work submitted according to the following schedule:

- More than 24 hours late but less than 48 hours late   up to 15 points off
- More than 48 hours late   up to 25 points off
- A week or more late   May not accepted at all

Technical Difficulties:

Issues with uploading work for a grade is not an excuse. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up. **Contact UF helpdesk at (352) 392-HELP.**

If a student is having technical difficulties with Canvas, there are other means to submit completed work. A student may email .zip files or even links to Box.com or Dropbox folders to the Instructor via UF email. Students should compensate for technical difficulties by not waiting until the last minute to submit work. 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.

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 instructor immediately (rgrupp@jou.ufl.edu or text/mobile direct to +1-484-557-8401).

Students are also advised to contact the Dean of Students Office if they would like more information on the medical withdrawal or drop process: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/care/medical-withdrawal-process/.

Students must inform their academic advisor before dropping a course, whether for medical or non-medical reasons. Your advisor will assist with notifying professors and go over options for how to proceed with their classes.

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

Format for Main Assignments:

Students are expected to submit high quality, well-written, client-ready work, on time. All written assignments should be typed 1.5 spaces in a standard business format using a 10- or 11-point business font on standard white paper size 8.5 by 11 or A4. Include your name, the assignment title, page numbers, and the date on all assignments. Check spelling (at a minimum, use spell-check). Proofread for awkward sentence styles and construction. Use 1-inch top/bottom and left/right margins. Use AP Stylebook for grammar, punctuation and writing style and a standard academic reference such as MLA or APA a standard academic footnote style to ensure proper attribution of research in your assignments.

Grading:

Grades for this course are based on a point system (see below). The course creates opportunities for collaboration and structured learning for several reasons:

1. Collaboration is the future—collaborative skills are essential skills for the 21st century.
2. We need innovators in the marketplace. Working online with others builds upon existing knowledge. Great ideas were not created in a vacuum.
3. Learning now more than ever needs to be social and active. Our culture is about connecting with people using digital and social media. Learning happens the same way.

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

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMUNICATION Assignments	INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS *Maximum Point Allocation*	PERCENTAGE OF GRADE *Maximum Percentage*	WEIGHT ON GRADE
Discussion Posts (13 pts x 10 weeks) Weeks 1-11,13 & 16	130	26%	26% of grade
Journal Narratives (20 pts x 2) Weeks 1 & 16	40	8%	Projects total 49% of grade
Response Papers (30 x 3 week) Weeks 2, 3, 7	90	18%	
Political Action Memo Week 5	25	5%	
Blog/Opinion Column Week 6	25	5%	
Strategy Map Week 9	25	5%	
Values and Ethics Analysis Week 13	20	4%	
Int'l PA Case Week 11	20	4%	

Case Analysis Project -Week 4: Case Topic (15) 3% -Week 8: Research (ungraded) -Week 10: Bibliography (10) 2% -Week 12: Case narratives (15) 3% -Week 14: Presentation (25) 5% -Week 15: Case Analysis (60) 12%	125	25%	Case Analysis Project totals 25% of grade
TOTAL	**500 Possible Points**	**100%** Used to calculate grade	**100%**

LETTER GRADES
Letter grades will be based on the percentage of total available points accumulated in the course:

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%**

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 in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

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 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 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.

Other Resources:

Other are available at http://www.distance.ufl.edu/ getting-help for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
    - http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/ 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 contact your program director and/or student support coordinator at distancesuppport@jou.ufl.edu or 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. 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 expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity. It is the 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.

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