



Public Interest Communication Theory and Strategy

MMC 6936

Academic Term: Fall 2020

3 Credit Hours

Instructor

Name: Dr. Linda Hon

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Office Phone Number and Times: If you need to speak with me by phone, please email me at lhon@ufl.edu.

Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Assistants

- N/A

Course Description & Prerequisites

In this course, the students will learn public interest communications theories and their strategic applications to practice. In addition, the students will be introduced to professional resources in public interest communications related to theory and strategic application. By the end of this course, the students will understand the major areas of public interest communications theory and how those areas have been developed through empirical research.

Course Pre-Requisites / Co-Requisites

None

Course Delivery Mode & Time Commitment

This is a fully online course and you must log into Canvas with your Gatorlink username and password to access the materials and assignments. The course is organized into modules with due dates. Unless otherwise specified, each module begins on Monday at 12:00 AM, ET, and ends on Sunday at 11:59 PM, ET. The course begins with a Course Introduction Video, which will familiarize you with the course.

Time Commitment

Expect to spend about 9 hours per week, per course, watching lectures, reading, working on assignments, and engaging in discussions. During the weeks when the Mid-term Assessment and Final Assessment are due, plan to spend up to 20 hours for each assessment.

Course-Level Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the public interest communications function of an organizational counsel. (CO: 1)
2. Explain the purpose of strategic ethical public interest communications functions. (CO: 2)
3. Apply theoretical principles in a public interest communications plan. (CO: 3)

(CO = Course-Level Objective)

Textbooks & Materials

Required Course Pack (To avoid any access problems, please open the PDFs in the Canvas shell for all of the course readings rather than use the URLs below.)

Fessmann, J. (2017). Conceptual foundations of public interest communications. *Journal of Public Interest Communications*, 1(1), 16-30. <https://doi.org/10.32473/jpic.v1.i1>

Johnston, J. (2017). The public interest: A new way of thinking for public relations? *Public Relations Inquiry*, 6(1), 5-22. <https://doi-org.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/10.1177/2046147X16644006>

Atkin, C. K., & Rice, R. E. (2012). Theory and principles of public communication campaigns. In R. E. Rice, & C. K. Atkin (Eds.), *Public communication campaigns* (pp. 3-19). SAGE.

Earl, J. & Garrett, R. K. (2017). The new information frontier: Toward a more nuanced view of social movement communication. *Social Movement Studies*, 16(4), 479-493. <https://doi: 10.1080/14742837.2016.1192028>

Paisley, W. & Atkin, C. K. (2012). Public communication campaigns—the American experience. In R. E. Rice, & C. K. Atkin (Eds.), *Public communication campaigns* (pp. 21-33). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Hornik, R. C. (2012). Why can't we sell human rights like we sell soap? In R. E. Rice, & C. K. Atkin (Eds.), *Public communication campaigns* (pp. 35-39). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

McGuire, W. J. (2012). McGuire's classic input-output framework for constructive persuasive messages. In R. E. Rice, & C. K. Atkin (Eds.), *Public communication campaigns* (pp. 133-146). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Dervin, B. & Foreman-Wernet, L. (2012). Sense-making methodology as an approach to understanding and designing for campaign audiences. In R. E. Rice, & C. K. Atkin (Eds.), *Public communication campaigns* (pp. 147-162). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Freeman, C. P. (2009). A greater means for the greater good: Ethical guidelines to meet social movement organization advocacy challenges. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 24(4), 269-288. <https://doi: 10.1080/08900520903320969>

Lu, J. (2018). Organizational antecedents of nonprofit engagement in policy advocacy: A meta-analytical review. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 47(4), 177-203. <https://doi: 10.1177/0899764018769169>

Gerbaudo, P. (2017). From cyber-autonomism to cyber-populism: History of digital activism. *tripleC* 15(2), 477-489.

Boghossian, J., & Marques, J. C. (2019). Saving the Canadian fur industry's hide: Government's strategic use of private authority to constrain radical activism. *Organization Studies*, 40, 1241-1267. <https://doi: 10.1177/0170840618815928>

Seyranian, V. (2017). Public interest communications: A social psychological perspective. *Journal of Public Interest Communications*, 1(1), 57-77. <https://doi.org/10.32473/jpic.v1.i1>

Hoyt., C. L. & Goldin, A. (2016). Political ideology and American intergroup discrimination: A patriotism perspective. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 156(4), 369-381. <https://doi: 10.1080/00224545.2015.1106434>

Zoller, H. M. (2017). Health activism targeting corporations: A critical health communication perspective. *Health Communication*, 32(2), 219-229. <https://doi: 10.1080/10410236.2015.1118735>

Skurka, C. (2018). You mad? Using anger appeals to promote activism intentions and policy support in the contest of sugary drink marketing to kids. *Health Communication*, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2018.1536943>

Okamoto, K.E. (2017). "It's like moving the Titanic." Community organizing to address food (in)security. *Health Communication*, 32(8), 1047-1050. <https://doi: 10.1080/10410236.2016.1196517>

Updegrove, A. H., Cooper, M. A., Orrick, E. A., Piquero, A. R. (2020). Red states and Black lives: Applying the racial threat hypothesis to the Black Lives Matter movement. *Justice Quarterly*, 37(1), 85-108. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2018.1516797>

Tambe, A. (2017). The Women's March on Washington: Words from an organizer: An Interview with Mrinalini Chakraborty. *Feminist Studies*, 43(1), 223-229. <https://doi: 10.15767/feministstudies.43.1.0223>

Tambe, A. (2018). Reckoning with the silences of #MeToo. *Feminist Studies*, 44(1), 197-203. <https://doi: 10.15767/feministstudies.44.1.0197>

Nelms, C., Allen, M. B., Craig, C. A., & Riggs, S. (2017). Who is the adolescent environmentalist? Environmental attitudes, identity, media usage and communication orientation. *Environmental Communication*, 11(4), 537-553. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2016.1275733>

Cook, J. (2019). Turning climate misinformation into an educational opportunity. In J. Fessmann (Ed.), *Strategic climate change communications: Effective approaches for fighting climate denial* (pp. 13-34). Wilmington, DE: Vernon.

Thomas, E. F., Smith L. G. E., McGarty, C., Reese, G. Kende, A, Bliuc, A-M, Curtin, N., & Spears, R. (2019). When and how social movements mobilize action within and across nations to promote solidarity with refugees. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 49, 213-229. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2380>

Fernandez-Savater, A., & Fominaya, C. F. (2017). Life after the squares: Reflections on the consequences of the Occupy movements. *Social Movement Studies*, 16(1), 119-151. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2016.1244478>

Recommended Textbook

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association: The official guide to APA style* (7th ed.).

- ISBN-13: 978-1433832161
- ISBN-10: 143383216X

[Changes in the APA 7th Edition](#)

Publisher Materials

N/A

Minimum Technology Requirements & Computer Skills

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

Basic Computer Specifications for Canvas

- [Specifications](#)
- Reliable Web Browser: Login to Canvas and make sure your Internet browser is compatible.

Peripherals

- A backup option should be available to minimize any loss of work such as an external hard drive, a USB drive, cloud storage, etc.

Hardware

- Dependable computer.
- Computer speakers.
- Headset with microphone.
- Webcam.

Software

- [Microsoft Office 365](#).
- [UF Apps](#) – access UF software applications from any device from any location, at any time.
- Canvas Mobile App: Download instructions for [iOS device](#) or [Android device](#).
- [Adobe Reader](#)
- <https://ufl.zoom.us/>

Internet Connection

- Recommended: Broadband Internet connection with a speed of 4 Mbps or higher.
- To function properly, Canvas requires a high-speed Internet connection (cable modem, DSL, satellite broadband, T1, etc.). The minimum Internet connection speed to access Canvas is a consistent 1.5 Mbps (megabits per second) or higher.
- [Check your Internet speed here](#).

Subscriptions, Plug-Ins, and Other Tools

- [Adobe Flash Player](#) (Good until the Microsoft update December 31, 2020.)

MINIMUM COMPUTER AND DIGITAL INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

The general and course-specific computer and digital information literacy skills you must have to succeed in the course include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Accessing the Internet.

- Using Canvas.
- Using email with attachments.
- Creating and submitting files in processing program such as Microsoft Office Tools.
- Copying and pasting functions.
- Downloading and installing software.
- Using presentation, graphics, and other programs.
- Posting and commenting in an online discussion.
- Searching the University of Florida library and websites.

Technical Support

In the event that you have technical difficulties with your course, please contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) either by filling out an [online request form](#) or calling 352-392-4357 - select option 1. The Help Desk is located on the ground floor of the Hub on the UF campus.

If your technical difficulties caused you to miss a due date, you **MUST** report the problem to the Help Desk and then email your instructor. Include the ticket number that you are given from the Help Desk in an email to the instructor to explain the late assignment/quiz/test.

IT Support

For all Technical assistance questions please contact the UF Computing Help Desk:

Phone: 352-392-HELP (4357)

Email: helpdesk@ufl.edu

Please Note

Your instructor is not able to handle technological issues or answer questions related to computer issues. If a problem of this nature arises that causes you to miss an assignment, you must provide your Help Desk ticket number to the instructor in order to receive an extension.

Course Grading Policies

Grading Criterion, Late Assignment Policy, and Expectations for Assignments

GRADING CRITERION

Discussion Boards (60 %)

Your initial post must be a substantive and scholarly submission. You must reply to at least one other student's post with a substantive and scholarly response. A substantive response adds scholarly value to the discussion by addressing the instructor discussion prompts in a way that demonstrates your understanding of the course materials while also critically analyzing strengths and limitations among a variety of theories. Also, as the class unfolds, you should demonstrate your ability to see connections and contradictions among the theories.

The discussion post assignments follow the Watch, Read, Discuss, Connect, and Repond (WRDCR) format. Each week, you will watch the lecture video, read the assigned course materials, comment on the discussion prompts that address the readings, connect with and comment on some application of the theory to public interest communications practice that is provided (e.g., videos, websites, case studies) and respond to another student's post.

The initial discussion post and response to another student’s post are graded as one assignment. So, you will see the final due date in the Canvas shell as Sunday, 11:59 PM, ET. **However, please remember to leave enough time to thoughtfully comment on another student’s post since you will not be able to see others’ posts until you have posted yourself.**

Detailed and specific guidelines for the discussion posts and grading rubric are provided in the course shell.

Mid-term Assessment (20 %)

Final-Assessment (20 %)

The Mid-Term and Final Assessments are individual and creative projects that expect you to synthesize the main theoretical principles covered in the course and apply them to professional settings and clients. There are two parts—(1) producing the project **(15 %)** and (2) providing feedback to another student on his or her project as well as analyzing your own in light of what you learned from your class peer’s project **(5 %)**. Detailed and specific guidelines for the Assessments and grading rubrics are provided in the course shell.

Your grade will be calculated based on the following:

Assignments/Assessments	Points	Weight (%)
Course Orientation: These assignments are required; however, they not count toward the final grade. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Introduction Video • Introduce Yourself on Canvas • Course Evaluation 	0	0%
11 WRDCR Discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worth up to 100 points each. 	1100	60%
1 Mid-term Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worth up to 100 points. 	100	20%
1 Final-Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worth up to 100 points. 	100	20%
TOTAL	1300	100%

Grade	Percentage
A	92.5-100%
A-	89.5-92.4%
B+	86.5-89.4%
B	82.5-86.4%
B-	79.5-82.4%
C+	76.5-79.4%
C	72.5-76.4%
C-	69.5-72.4%
D+	66.5-69.4%
D	62.5-66.4%
D-	59.5-62.4%
E	0 – 59.4%

The only passing grades for graduate students are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and S. Grades of B-, C+ or C count toward a graduate degree if an equal number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with grades of B+, A- and A, respectively. Grade points are not given for S and U grades; S and U grades are not used to calculate grade point averages. All letter-graded courses eligible to count toward the graduate degree, except 1000- and 2000-level courses, are used to calculate the cumulative grade-point average. Letter grades of C-, D+, D, D- or E are not considered passing at the graduate level, although the grade points associated with these letter grades are included in grade point average calculations. See the [UF grading policy](#) for more information.

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Late assignments will not be accepted unless it is a [University excused absence](#) as stated in the attendance policies. **No late work will be accepted for final projects or work due in the final week of class due to the university grading deadlines.** If potential issues arise concerning submitting final work, students should contact their instructors before deadlines to discuss the possibility of an Incomplete Grade Contract.

1. Late Assignment Grade Reductions
 - a. 0-24 Hours Late: 10% reduction in grade.
 - b. Over 24 Hours (24 hours and 1 minute) to 7 Calendar Days Late: 20% reduction in grade.
 - c. After the 7th Calendar Day: Work will not be accepted.
2. Late Discussions will not be accepted.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

- **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/>.

Accessibility Policy

Students requiring reasonable access to services and resources required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other applicable federal and state regulations, please access [UF Accessibility](#) for all options available to you. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Please register early!

Contact Information

- For ADA questions: Dr. Russ Froman, rfroman@ufl.edu , Phone: 352 - 273-1094
- Disability Resource Center: Gerry Altamirano, galtamirano@ufl.edu , Phone: 352 - 392-8565
- Electronic Information Technology & Communication Accessibility: Anne Allen, aallen@ufl.edu , Phone: 352- 871-2707
- For persons with hearing or speech related accessibility needs: When trying to access an office on campus that does not list a TDD/TTY number, contact the Florida Relay Service at 800-955-8771(TDD) or 711 (V/TDD).

Accessibility Resource Center

University of Florida
PO Box 114085
Gainesville, FL 32611-4085
Phone: 352-392-8565
[Email: accessuf@dso.ufl.edu](mailto:accessuf@dso.ufl.edu)

Address

Environmental Health and Safety Administrative Offices
916 Newell Dr
Gainesville, FL 32603

For more information, see UF's [Electronic Information Technology Accessibility \(EITA\) Policy](#).

Communication Policy

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

Announcements

You are responsible for reading all announcements posted in the courseroom each time you log in.

Email

You are responsible for reading all your course email and responding in a timely manner (please try to respond within 24 hours).

INSTRUCTOR'S PLAN FOR CLASSROOM RESPONSE TIME AND FEEDBACK

Email Policy

I try to respond to your email within 24 hours. If you have questions of a personal nature, please email me.

Assignment Feedback Policy

I will provide feedback on submitted assignments as soon as possible but no later than one week after the submission date. If assignments require a longer review period, I will communicate to you.

Course-Related Questions Policy

I try to answer questions within 24 hours.

Electronic Communication Policy

In addition to the University's policy, please consider the following:

- Privacy, confidentiality, and security in all electronic communications. See [Information Security](#).
- All electronic communication resources must be used for the course and in alignment with to the CJC Online and University mission. See the [Acceptable Use Policy](#).
- Prohibited use of false identity, false identity pseudonyms, or anonymous (sender's name or electronic identification is hidden).
- Prohibited online access without consent.
- Prohibited disruption of services including introducing computer contaminants (viruses).
- Prohibited [harassment](#) of any kind.

Privacy

Please see UF's Information Technology [policies](#) for additional information.

Select CJC and University Policies and Guidelines

Academic Integrity 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.” The [Student Honor Code](#), Violation of the Student 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 the appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TA’s in this class.

Netiquette

Casual style of communication is commonly found in the online environment and students are sometimes tempted to relax their grammar, word choice, syntax (arrangement of words to create well-formed sentences), writing mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, and spelling), and/or professionalism. Keep in mind when communicating with others to be courteous, civil, respectful, and professional. Please remember that you are adult students and professionals—your communication must be appropriate.

Online Attendance Policy

Since the course is online, you should access your course at least four times per week to ensure you do not miss pertinent postings, messages, or announcements. It is imperative that you meet course deadlines and stay active in discussion boards, projects, etc. If you are experiencing a major illness, absences due to University duties, or other large-scale issues, contact the instructor immediately.

Students are responsible for meeting all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. In general, acceptable reasons for absences include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements, military obligation, [severe weather conditions](#), [religious holidays](#), and participation in official University activities. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. [Excused absences](#) must be consistent with university policies in the Graduate Catalog and require appropriate documentation. For additional information, see the [attendance policies](#).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is unacceptable; especially, in the academic communities. All academic work must be an original work of your own thought, research, or self-expression. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, prohibited collaboration, consultation, submission of academic work that has been purchased or obtained (see the [UF Policy: Student Conduct Violation](#)). Remember that plagiarism is not acceptable in any of your work including all discussion board posts, journal entries, wikis, and other written and oral presentation assignments. Always cite your sources!

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.

Notification to Students of FERPA Rights

There are federal laws ([FERPA](#)) protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments.

Student Guidelines for Courseroom Challenges

Student with questions regarding course content such as assignments, assessments, instructional materials, lectures, meetings, course objectives, course module objectives, or other areas of the course, please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. You should first *approach the faculty member who is teaching the course* to ask for clarifications regarding the course assignments, assessments, materials, lectures, meetings, etc.
2. If after meeting with *the faculty member teaching the course* you are still not clear on the course assignments, assessments, materials, lectures, meetings, etc., then the next step would be to contact online advising (onlineadvising@jou.ufl.edu) for additional guidance.

Writing Style

In order to meet the academic rigor and standards of a graduate program, all students are required to use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) 7th Edition style in their courses. The APA 7th Edition Manual has a plethora of guidelines that includes scholarly writing, publishing principles, elements and format for your papers, writing style and grammar, bias-free language guidelines, mechanics of style, intext citing and references, etc. For additional information on notable changes, see [changes between APA 6th Edition and APA 7th Edition](#).

Academic and Student Resources

Academic Resources

- [One UF Student Portal](#) – Course registration, final grades, transcript requests, degree audit.
- [GatorEvals](#) – Online faculty evaluations and results.
- [UF Bookstore](#): Phone: 352-392-0194, Email: ufbookstore@bsd.ufl.edu
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
[UF Library Services for Distance Students](#)
[Ask a Librarian](#) – chat with librarians online.
CJC Librarian - [April Hines](#), Phone: 352-273-2728, Email: aprhone@uflib.ufl.edu.
[Course Reserves](#): Electronic resource reserve items that can be accessed via links or files.
- [Copyright Concerns of Graduate Researchers](#): Information and resource guide on copyright concerns.
- [Teaching Center](#): General study skills and tutoring. Broward Hall, Phone: 352-392-2010 or 352-392-6420.
- [Writing Studio](#): Provides one-on-one consultations and workshops tailored to specific classes (graduate and undergraduate). 302 Tigert Hall, Phone: 352-846-1138.
- [Online Student Complaints](#): This process is designed to make every attempt to resolve student complaints within its academic and administrative departments at the program level.
- [Information for Veterans](#): Veterans Affairs Certification: Phone: 352 - 294-2948

Student Resources

- [Graduate Student Resources](#): Available resources for graduate students. Your advisors are here to support you, answer questions, help with registration, and other sources. Email onlineadvising@jou.ufl.edu.
- [U Matter, We Care](#): If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or Phone: 352-294-2273 so that a team member can reach out.
- [Counseling and Wellness Center](#): [3190 Radio Road, Gainesville, FL 32611](#)
Phone: (352) 392-1575, Fax: (352) 273-4738
- [Sexual Violence Response](#): Victim services, Care Area, UF Police Department, and Title IX.
- [University Police Department](#): Resources available include the Office of Victim Services and Community Services Division. Emergency: 9-1-1; Non-Emergency: 352-392-1111.
- [Gator Connect](#): Online database of student organizations.
- [Career Connection Center](#): Career assistance and counseling. Reitz Union, Phone: 352-392-1601.
- [Veteran Services](#): Office of Student Veteran Services, Phone: 352-294-2948, email: vacounselor@ufl.edu.
| Collegiate Veterans Success Center, Phone: 352- 294-7215, email: charlotte.kemper@va.gov.
- [Student Financial Affairs](#): Financial aid counseling including Aid-a-Gator program. Phone: 352-392-1275.
- [Student Success Coach](#): Meet with a graduate student coach that can support you in numerous ways during your time in graduate school, such as time and stress management, motivation, organization, and much more.



The instructor reserves the right to adjust this syllabus, as necessary.