

PUR 6475 (26A5): Public Relations and Digital Social Advocacy, Fall 2015

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Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to explore and develop the theoretical and practical implications of social advocacy for public relations activism with emphasis on the use of digital media. Social advocacy is defined as the deliberate effort of groups of people to mobilize for or against institutions, governments, causes, and/or public figures.

Course Goals

1. Explore the theory and practice of social advocacy, particularly through the use of digital media.
2. Understand the antecedents, process, and effects of digital activism.
3. Understand the tools and forms of digital activism.
4. Evaluate historical theoretical and practical knowledge about social advocacy in the context of public relations practice.
5. Evaluate theoretical and practical knowledge about digital social advocacy in the context of current public relations practice.
6. Examine instances of digital social advocacy by analyzing international and issue-specific applications.
7. Conduct original research on a current social cause and analyze how digital media have been used in the public relations management of the cause.

Course Description

This course is designed to be interactive and produce original content by and among the students. Because digital social advocacy is in a nascent stage, there are no formal lectures. And, since one of the unique advantages of digital media is that they create linked networks, this class builds upon that advantage through interactive discussion and critique among students in the class.

Course Format and Assignments

For Modules 1-3, each student is expected to independently read all of the course material each week by the specified deadline. Each student then posts comments to the class discussion group to answer the weekly instructor prompt including a link to an example of relevant and current (within the last year) online content beyond the class material (and a brief explanation of the relevance). Next, each student comments on a post from a discussion group member. For Modules 4-6, teams divide up the week's readings (one article per student). Each student prepares an extended abstract that includes a link to an example of relevant and current (within the last year) online content beyond the class material (and a brief explanation of the relevance),

posts the abstract to the discussion group, and comments on the abstract posted by another team member.

Each student also will write an original research paper analyzing how digital media have been used in the public relations management of a social issue/cause of their choice.

Required Textbooks

Joyce, M. (2010). (Ed.). *Digital activism decoded. The new mechanics of change.* New York: International Debate Education Association.

Carty, V. (2015). *Social movements and new technology.* Boulder, CO: Westview.

Requirements for Class Work:

Requirements for assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Students with Disabilities:

"Students requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation."

Grading Scale and Percentages:

Grading policies adhere to UF's guidelines that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

A	100 to 94
A-	<94 to 90
B+	<90 to 87
B	<87 to 84
B-	<84 to 80
C+	<80 to 77
C	<77 to 74
C-	<74 to 70
D+	<70 to 67
D	<67 to 64
D-	<64 to 61
E	<61 to 0

Discussion Group:

Answer Posts to Instructor Prompts and Responses to Discussion Member's Posts (30 percent; 15 percent instructor grade, 15 percent peer grade)

Extended Article Abstracts and Responses to Team Member's Extended Abstracts (30 percent; 15 percent instructor grade, 15 percent peer grade)

Peer Critique:

Peer Critique of Posts to Instructor Prompts and Responses to Discussion Member's Posts (**due October 8, 11:59 p.m.**)

Peer Critique of Extended Abstracts and Responses to Team Member's Abstract (**due December 3, 11:50 p.m.**)

Exams

Exam 1 (10 percent, **due October 8, 11:59 p.m.**)

Exam 2 (10 percent, **due December 3, 11:59 p.m.**)

Research Paper

Research Paper Proposal (**due September 21, 11:59 p.m.**, no grade)

Research Paper (**due December 9, 11:59 p.m.**, 20 percent)

Netiquette Policy

Netiquette policies for all class interaction adhere to UF's guidelines that can be found at:

<http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

Guidelines for Discussion Group Assignment—Modules 1-3—Instructor Prompts

Format

Each week, an instructor prompt will be posted by Monday, 9:00 a.m. Each student posts his or her answer by 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, to the instructor prompt about that week's readings. Each student's post must include **one link to relevant and current (within the last year) online content** that is useful for understanding the assigned readings for the week and the student's answer to the prompt. Each student's answer to the prompt is limited to 750 words (not including the linked information and a one-sentence description of the linked material). Each student then reads and comments on another discussion group member's comments **and** linked material by Thursday, 8:00 p.m. Comments on another student's answer and linked material are limited to 250 words.

Content

A well-organized answer to the prompt demonstrates the following:

- (1) You mastered all of the assigned material for the week well enough to provide an *accurate* and *comprehensive* answer to the prompt.
- (2) You understand the material well enough to find one link to online content that is *current*, *relevant* to and *useful* for understanding the assigned readings for the week and your answer to the prompt.

In the responses to another student's answer and linked material, you should provide a constructive assessment of the *accuracy* and *comprehensiveness* of the other student's answer to the prompt. Comment on the *relevance* of the linked material to the student's answer and whether or not (and why) the linked material is a *useful* example for understanding the week's readings and the student's

answer to the prompt. If needed, suggest constructive feedback for how to improve the answer to the prompt and the selection of linked material.

Grading

Each student will receive one numerical grade based on the italicized criteria above and the constructiveness of the student's critique of another discussion group member's post. At the conclusion of Module 3, there will be a separate **peer critique** of each of the discussion group members. For this peer grade, each student will assign a numerical grade to every other student in the discussion group. This numerical grade will assess the performance of each discussion group member in terms of his or her contribution to the discussion group assignments for Modules 2 and 3.

Guidelines for Discussion Group—Module 4-6—Extended Abstracts

Format

Students are grouped into small teams. Team members divide up the week's readings by having each team member select a different article among the course readings for that week. Each student writes and posts an extended abstract (in a Word file) for his or her article. Each student posts his or her extended abstract by 8:00 p.m., Tuesday. Each student's extended abstract must include **one link to relevant and current (within the last year) online content** that is useful for understanding the abstracted article. Each student's extended abstract is limited to 750 words (not including the linked information and a one-sentence description of the linked material). Each student then reads and comments on one of his or her team member's extended abstract **and** linked material by Thursday, 8:00 p.m. Comments on another student's extended abstract and linked material are limited to 250 words.

Content

The extended abstract is written in third person (The purpose of this study was...). Each section below begins a new paragraph even if the paragraph is only one sentence. The extended abstract begins with the citation for the research article, correctly formatted using APA, and *accurately* and *succinctly* summarizes the following components:

Citation _____

- Purpose—what did the study set out to examine?
- Review of literature—what were the major theories, themes, historical trends, concepts, and/or variables relevant to the study that were discussed?
- Hypotheses and/or research questions—what were they?
- Methodology—how were the data collected (survey, interviews, content analysis, historical analysis, etc.?)
- Data analysis—how were the data analyzed (quantitative--what statistical tests were performed?; qualitative--how were themes analyzed?; historical—what evidence was provided?)
- Conclusions—what did the data suggest?
- Discussion/Implications—what did the article contribute to the theoretical body of knowledge on social advocacy and/or a better understanding of social advocacy in practice?

Link _____

Grading

The instructor will give feedback to each student by 11:59 p.m., Sunday. Each student will receive one numerical grade with written comments based on the italicized criteria above and the constructiveness of the student's critique of one another student's abstract. At the conclusion of Module 6, there will be a separate **peer critique** of each of your team members. For this peer grade, each student will assign a numerical grade to every other student in his or her team. This numerical grade will assess the performance of each team member in terms of his or her contribution to the extended abstract assignments for Modules 5 and 6.

Guidelines for Examinations

Exams will be essay format. The second exam is not cumulative.

Guidelines for Digital Social Advocacy Research Paper and Proposal

Purpose

The purpose of this research paper is to analyze how digital media were used in relation to social advocacy about a selected cause. An example is my article about the Justice for Trayvon campaign listed under Week 10.

Selecting the Case

Think about the social causes you are passionate about and narrow the focus to a specific **cause/event(s)** and **time frame** that is feasible to study. You need to pick a cause/event(s) for which there is enough digital discussion in the public sphere for you to have enough background information to write the paper.

Data Collection

Gather secondary information about the case you are examining. Your references must come from a variety of digital sources—e.g., news coverage, editorials, blogs, videos, interviews, conversation on social networking sites, popular music, or any other form of digital discourse in the public sphere. In situations where enough time has transpired, there may be scholarly articles about the case similar to the scholarly articles included in the class readings. However, the case must be recent enough to have used digital media as the primary communication strategy.

Data Analysis and Writing the Chronological Narrative

Write a chronological narrative of your case by analyzing how digital media were used by various people/groups to share information, collaborate about social advocacy goals and objectives, and mobilize for collective action.

Format

Your paper should conform to the following guidelines—20—25 pages (including references), **double-spaced**, one inch margins, 12-point type. You should use APA style. Your paper should be suitable for presentation at a national or international academic conference and subsequent publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

A written proposal of your research project is due September 21, 11:59 p.m. This is a one-page summary of your proposed cause/event(s) and time frame. On a separate page, include the

list of references identified to date. Submit the proposal as a Word document, **double-spaced**, 12-point type, one-inch margins.

Online Teaching Evaluations

“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/>.”

Academic Honesty

As a UF student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s Student Honor Code: “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. 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.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-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 appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me.

Counseling Services

University counseling services and mental health services are available at <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>; 392-1575, University Police Department 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Course Schedule

Introduction: Course Overview and Requirements

Module 1: What is Digital Advocacy?

Week 1—August 24

Joyce, M. (2010). (Ed.). *Digital activism decoded. The new mechanics of change*. New York: International Debate Education Association.

Introduction: How to Think About Digital Activism, Mary Joyce

Shirky, C. (2008). Chapter 2, Sharing anchors Community. *Here comes everybody*. New York: Penguin.

Institutions vs. Collaboration (speech by Clay Shirky). Available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPQViNNOAkw>.

Module 2: Modeling Digital Social Advocacy

Week 2—August 31

Part 1—Antecedents—the Digital Activism Environment

Joyce, M. (2010). (Ed.). *Digital activism decoded. The new mechanics of change*. New York: International Debate Education Association.

Infrastructure: Its Transformation and Effect on Digital Activism, Trebor Scholz
Applications: Picking the Right One in a Transient World, Dan Schultz and Andreas Jungherr
Devices: The Power of Mobile Phones, Brannon Cullum
Economic and Social Factors: The Digital (Activism) Divide, Katharine Brodock
Political Factors: Digital Activism in Closed and Open Societies, Tom Glaisyer

Week 3—September 7

Part 2—Processes—Digital Actions in the Aggregate

Joyce, M. (2010). (Ed.). *Digital activism decoded. The new mechanics of change*. New York: International Debate Education Association.

Activism Transforms Digital: The Social Movement Perspective, Anastasia Kavada
Digital Transforms Activism: The Web Ecology Perspective, Tim Hwang
Destructive Activism: The Double-Edged Sword of Digital Tactics, Steven Murdoch

Week 4—September 14

Part 3—Effects—What is Digital Activism’s Value?

Joyce, M. (2010). (Ed.). *Digital activism decoded. The new mechanics of change*. New York: International Debate Education Association.

Measuring the Success of Digital Campaigns, Dave Karpf
The New Casualties: Prisons and Persecution, Simon Columbus
Digital Politics as Usual, Rasmus Kleis Nielsen
The Future of Advocacy in a Networked Age, Sem Devillart and Brian Waniewski
Conclusion: Building the Future of Digital Activism, Mary Joyce

Module 3: Digital Media and Advocacy: New Tools, New Forms

Week 5—September 21

***Research Paper Proposal Due, September 21, 11:59 p.m.**

Carty, V. (2015). *Social movements and new technology*.

Introduction: The Digital Impact on Social Movements
Chapter 1: Social Movement Theories
Chapter 2: New Digital Capabilities and Social Change
Chapter 3: MoveOn.org and the Tea Party

Week 6—September 28

Chapter 4: Arab Spring

Chapter 5: The Occupy Wall Street Movement and Its Precursors

Chapter 6: Occupy Student Debt and the Dreamers

Conclusion: The Digital Future of Social Movements

Week 7—October 5

***Peer Critique of Discussion Group Participation--Instructor Prompts Due October 8, 11:59 p.m.**

***Examination 1 due October 8, 11:59 p.m.**

Module 4: Social Advocacy and Public Relations: Historical Precedents in the United States

Week 8—October 12

Part 1

Lamme, M.O. & Russell, K.M. (2010). Removing the spin: Toward a new theory of public relations history. *Journalism and Communication Monographs*, 11(4), 281-362.

Piasecki, A. (2000). Blowing the railroad trumpet: Public relations on the American frontier. *Public Relations Review*, 26(1), 53-65.

Pinkleton, B. (1994). The campaign of the Committee on Public Information: Its contributions to the history and evolution of public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 6(4), 229-240.

Russell, K.M. & Lamme M.O. (2013). Public relations and business responses to the civil rights movement, *Public Relations Review* 39(1), 63-73.

Toledano, M. (2005). Challenging accounts: Public relations and a tale of two revolutions. *Public Relations Review*, 31(4), 463-470.

Week 9—October 19

Part 2

Coatney, C. (2012). Public relations techniques for leaders in a crisis: Mackenzie King and John Curtin in the Canadian-Australian war alliance, 1941-1945. *Global Media Journal*, 5(2), 5-22.

Hallahan, K. (2002). Ivy Lee and the Rockefellers' response to the 1913-1914 Colorado coal strike. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 14(4), 265-315.

Hon, L.C. (1997). "To redeem the soul of America: Public relations and the civil rights movement. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 9(3), 163-212.

Lamme, M.O. (2003, Fall). The “Public Sentiment Building Society.” The Anti-Saloon League of America 1895-1910. *Journalism History* 29(3), 123-132.

Russell, K.M. & Hume, J., & Sichler, K. (2007). Libbie Custer’s “Last Stand”: Image restoration, the press, and public memory. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 84(3), 582-599.

Module 5: Digital Social Advocacy and Public Relations: Coming of Age

Week 10—October 26

Auger, Giselle A. (2013). Fostering democracy through social media: Evaluating diametrically opposed nonprofit advocacy organizations’ use of Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube. *Public Relations Review* 39, 369-376.

Carr, R.L., Pratt, C.B., & Herrera (2012). Social media for crisis communication on Japan’s 2011 Tohoku earthquake. A critical textual analysis. In S. Duhe (Ed.), *New media and public relations*, 2nd ed., (pp. 293-301). New York: Lang.

Hon, L. (2015). Digital social advocacy in the Justice for Trayvon campaign. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 27(4), 299-321.

Kent, M.L. (2013). Using social media dialogically: Public relations role in reviving democracy. *Public Relations Review*, 39, 337-345.

Sison, M.D. (2013). Creative strategic communications: A case study of Earth Hour. *International Journal of Strategic Communications*, 7, 227-240.

Sommerfeldt, E.J. (2013). Online power resource management: Activist resource mobilization, community strategy, and organizational structure. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 25(4), 347-367.

Module 6: Digital Media and Advocacy: International and Issue-Specific Applications

Week 11—November 2

Part 1

Ackland, R. & O’Neil, M. (2011). Online collective identity: The case of the environmental movement. *Social Networks*, 33(3), 177-190.

Christensen, C. (2013). @Sweden: Curating a nation on Twitter. *Popular Communication: The International Journal of Media and Culture*, 11(1), 30-46.

Kang, J. (2012). A volatile public: the 2009 Whole Foods Boycott on Facebook. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 56(4), 562-577.

Ozdemir, B.P. (2012). Social media as a tool for online advocacy campaigns: Greenpeace's Mediterranean's anti genetically engineered food campaign in Turkey. *Global Media Journal*, 5(2), 23-39.

Ciszek, E. (2013). Advocacy in the digital age. Participatory media and the empowerment of an LGBT public. In *Coming out of the closet*, N T.J. Tindall & R. Waters, (Eds.), pp. 207-218. New York: Lang.

Week 12—November 9

Part 2

Carty, V. (2002). Technology and counter-hegemonic movements: The case of Nike Corporation. *Social Movement Studies*, 1(2), 129-146.

Carty, V. & Onyett, J. (2006). Protest, cyberactivism and new social movements: The reemergence of the peace movement post 9/11. *Social Movement Studies*, 5(3), 229-249.

Kumar, R. & Thapa, D. (2015). Social media as a catalyst for civil society movements in India: A study in Dehradun city. *New Media and Society* 17(8), 1299-1316.

Hestres, L.E. (2013). Preaching to the choir: Internet-mediated advocacy, issue public mobilization, and climate change. *New Media and Society*, 0(0), 1-17.

Rane, H. & Salem, S. (2012). Social media, social movements, and the diffusion of ideas in the Arab uprisings. *Journal of International Communication*, 18(1), 97-111.

Week 13—November 16

Part 3

Harlow, S. (2012). Social media and social movements: Facebook and an online Guatemalan justice movement that moved offline. *New Media and Society*, 14(2), 225-243.

Gill, J. & DeFronzo, J. (2009). A comparative framework for the analysis of international student movements. *Social Movement Studies*, 8(3), 203-224.

Gustafsson, N. (2012). The subtle nature of Facebook politics: Swedish social network site users and political participation. *New Media and Society*, 14(7), 1111-1127.

McDonald, K. (2002). From solidarity to fluidarity: Social movements beyond 'collective identity'—the case of globalization conflicts. *Social Movement Studies*, 1(2), 109-128.

Stein, L. (2009). Social movement web use in theory and practice: A content analysis of US movement websites. *New Media and Society*, 11(5), 749-771.

Week 14—November 23

Part 4

Munro, L. (2005). Strategies, action repertoires and DIY activism in the animal rights movement. *Social Movement Studies*, 4(1), 75-94.

Muir, K. & Peetz, D. (2010). Not dead yet: The Australian union movement and the defeat of a government. *Social Movement Studies*, 9(2), 215-228.

Sima, Y. (2011). Grassroots environmental activism and the Internet: Constructing a green public sphere in China. *Asian Studies Review*, 35(4), 477-497.

Wall, M. (2007). Social movements and email: Expressions of online identity in the globalization protests. *New Media and Society*, 9, 258-277.

Wojcieszak, M. (2013). Will politics be tweeted? New media use by Iranian youth in 2011. *New Media and Society*, 0(0), 1-19.

Week 15—November 30

***Peer Critique for Extended Abstracts Assignment—Due December 3, 11:59 p.m.**

***Exam 2 Due December 3, 11:59 p.m.**

Week 16—December 7

***Final Research Paper Due December 9, 11:59 p.m.**