PR 501: Advocacy Communications
4 Units

Fall 2018 – Tuesdays – 2-5:20 p.m.
Section: 21456D
Location: ASC 331

Instructor: Terri Austin
Office: ASC lobby or classroom
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Contact Info: terriaus@usc.edu

I. Course Description
This course will study and evaluate communication campaigns by civil society actors to influence public policy and public opinion with a focus on messaging and efforts to shape news coverage. Students will learn to analyze and create such campaigns.

The course is designed for students who want to understand how “influencers” affect and change public policy through mediums like media, legislation, litigation, lobbying, marketing, and advertising. Those influencers can include the government, politicians, think tanks, charitable organizations, and corporations.

The course will focus on current communication campaigns and identify the actors and mediums controlling those campaigns. Students will learn how to decipher messages and understand how to strategically develop public policy. The course will cover a variety of issues affecting public policy including fake news accusations, foreign media meddling, and cyber security.

Students will be expected to participate in classroom discussions. Classroom activities will include internet searches and analysis. Students will be provided with a list of selected reading. Guest speakers may include local and national politicians or other policy influencers. For the final project, the students will write a policy campaign focusing on a current topic in the news. The project will include an oral presentation explaining the rationale behind the strategy. The course will be graded and will provide four (4) credits.

II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment
The overall objective of the class is to equip students with the ability to understand the impact of communication campaigns and to learn how to develop and influence public policy through the development of communication campaigns. Specific objectives are listed below.

1. Identify communication campaigns and strategies. Students will be asked to research and identify strategies in the media and other mediums.
2. Determine the influencers behind the communication campaign.
3. Interpret the message behind the communication campaign. Students will be asked to provide interpretations of the messages underlying the campaign.
4. Identity the results of the campaign strategy.
5. Develop a communication campaign to affect public policy.

III. Description of Assignments
Classroom Participation (15%): Students are expected to attend all classes and to actively participate in classroom discussions.
Homework Assignments (35%): Students will be given periodic homework assignments to complete on a timely basis.

Midterm Examination (20%): A midterm examination will be administered which will cover class discussions and class assignments.

Final Project (30%): The final project will include the creation and presentation of a communications campaign strategy. Students may work individually or together in teams. The students will work on the final project throughout the semester.

IV. Grading
a. Breakdown of Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework Assignments</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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b. Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95% to 100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% to 94%</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87% to 89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84% to 86%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% to 83%</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77% to 79%</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74% to 76%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% to 73%</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67% to 69%</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64% to 66%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% to 63%</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% to 59%</td>
<td>F</td>
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</table>

c. Grading Standards

Public Relations Grading Standards

“A” projects have writing near professional quality; one or no mistakes; clearly proofread and edited material. All required elements included (catchy headline, solid lead, varied vocabulary; supporting facts/figures; quotes as required). Excellent organization and flow; original thinking. Showed creativity in packaging/distribution method. High end of scale: publishable today as is.

“B” projects have two to five spelling, grammar or AP Style mistakes. One or more required elements missing or poorly displayed (i.e., boring headline; confusing lead, etc.). Shows potential as a good writer. Adhered to inverted pyramid. High end of scale will have at least one extraordinary element such as astonishing lead or little-known facts or pithy quote. Some creativity shown. Publishable with medium editing.

“C” projects have more than five errors (spelling, grammar, AP style). Poorly edited and/or proofread. May have adhered to inverted pyramid but strayed at beginning or end. Hackneyed elements such as trite headline or
uninteresting lead. Little or no facts/figures included. Passive rather than active verbs become the norm. Little or no creativity shown. Publishable with major editing.

“D” projects have more than 10 errors (spelling, grammar). Needs to be completely rewritten. Poorly organized with little or no understanding of journalistic style/standards. Needs to work with writing coach.

“F” projects are not re-writable, late or not turned in.

V. Assignment Submission Policy
All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be dropped a letter grade for each day late. Assignments must be submitted via [Blackboard, Multimedia Asset Management (MAM) system, email, etc.]

VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
- All other reading and assignments will be posted on Blackboard or by email.

VII. Laptop Policy
All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the Annenberg Virtual Commons for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s Information Technology Services website.

VIII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/20/18 – 11/30/18)
- Friday, September 7: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001
- Friday, September 7: Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001
- Tuesday, September 11: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001
- Friday, October 5: Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]
- Friday, October 5: Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]
- Friday, November 9: Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001
**IX. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

*Important note to students:* Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>8/21</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>Castells, Manuel. Communication Power</td>
<td>Chapter 1 by 8/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>8/28</td>
<td>Impact of Networking</td>
<td>Castells, Manuel. Communication Power</td>
<td>Chapter 2 by 9/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>Digital Media</td>
<td>Selected Articles</td>
<td>By 9/11</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>[Labor Day: Monday, September 3]</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>9/11</td>
<td>How to Frame the Message</td>
<td>Castells, Manuel. Communication Power</td>
<td>Chapter 3 by 9/18</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>Draft Outline by 9/18</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>9/18</td>
<td>Political Campaigning</td>
<td>Determine topic and team for final project</td>
<td>Finalize team and topic by 9/25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>9/25</td>
<td>Building the Brand</td>
<td>Castells, Manuel. Communication Power</td>
<td>Chapter 4 by 10/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>10/2</td>
<td>Crisis Management</td>
<td>Castells, Manuel. Communication Power</td>
<td>Chapter 5 by 10/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>10/9</td>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>Social Movements and the Media</td>
<td>Freedman, Des. Strategies for Media Reform</td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 2 by 10/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>10/23</td>
<td>Strategies for Media Reform</td>
<td>Freedman, Des. Strategies for Media Reform</td>
<td>Chapter 4 by 11/6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Via BB Video</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final Project Outline due 10/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>10/30</td>
<td>WikiLeaks and Indirect Media Reform</td>
<td>Selected Articles/Case Studies</td>
<td>By 11/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>11/6</td>
<td>Focus on Delivering the Message</td>
<td>Guest Speaker</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>11/13</td>
<td>Framing the Message</td>
<td>Selected Articles/Case Studies</td>
<td>By 11/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>11/20</td>
<td>Discussion Forum</td>
<td>Answer Questions posted on Blackboard</td>
<td>Final Project due 11/27</td>
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<td><strong>[Thanksgiving Recess: Wednesday, November 21, to Sunday, November 25]</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>Present Final Project</td>
<td>Present Final Project</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINAL EXAMS</td>
<td>12/6, 2-4 p.m.</td>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td>Note: All classes must meet during their designated final exam date and time.</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
X. Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

Students should check their USC email for additional instructions and to request office time.

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

Presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words - is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in Scampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards (https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in Scampus and university policies on scientific misconduct (http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/).

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism’s policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

“Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an ‘F’ on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators.”

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

b. Support Systems

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.
engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

XI. About Your Instructor
Ms. Austin most recently served as Chief Corporate Policy Officer for S&P Global where she implemented and monitored corporate policies, standards, and procedures. She previously served as Chief Diversity Officer from 2010 to 2015 where she developed an integrated diversity and inclusion strategy across the businesses. Previously she served as Chief Compliance & Ethics Officer for AIG’s Domestic Insurance Operations, as an associate at Richards & O’Neil, and as an Assistant General Counsel for the New York City Law Department.

Ms. Austin holds a bachelor’s degree in political science from Grinnell College, a Juris Doctorate from Columbia University School of Law, and a Master’s degree from the Columbia School of Journalism. Ms. Austin serves on a number of boards including Riverdale Country School and Girls Inc. of NYC. She has received a number of honors including The Network Journal’s 25 Influential Black Women in Business in 2008 and Top Diversity Executive by Black Enterprise in 2011.

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