

****A DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE IS AVAILABLE ON THE COURSE OWL SITE****

University of Western Ontario: Department of Political Science

POLITICAL SCIENCE 4209F/9767A

Political Strategy and Communication

Fall 2020

Tuesdays 3:30-5:30

Course Director: Dr. Adam Harmes,
Office: 4155 Social Science Centre (Political Science Dept., 4th Floor)
aharmes@uwo.ca, cell: 416-346-4770

Course Description

This course provides an advanced introduction to some of the practical skills involved in political campaigns including lobbying/advocacy campaigns by businesses and NGOs and election campaigns. It focuses on developing specific skills related to strategy, tactics and communications using case studies and practically-oriented assignments.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to: identify and apply key concepts related to political marketing; acquire and apply knowledge of political marketing research methods; and acquire and apply knowledge in various practically-oriented media and communications skills.

Course Structure and Zoom Meetings

This is an online course that will include weekly Zoom meetings in the scheduled class time. However, rather than trying to fully approximate traditional seminar discussions, I have created weekly PowerPoint slides to highlight and explain the key concepts for each week's topics. This will allow for shorter Zoom meetings that will consist of: Q&A on the readings and PPTs; short group discussions (in the breakout rooms); and, in the scheduled weeks outlined below, a more detailed discussion of the requirements for each assignment. Attendance and participation are required. For the Q&A related to the readings and PPTs, you can ask questions during the Zoom meeting or they can be emailed to me in advance.

Required Readings

All course readings, including the weekly PowerPoints, are posted on the course OWL website in the 'Resources' folder and then the 'Readings' folder under their specific week. All readings and PowerPoints in the folders are required readings.

Graduate students will also complete a book review assignment on one of the following books which should be ordered a.s.a.p. through Amazon or Chapters:

1. Alex Marland. 2016. *Brand Command: Canadian Politics and Democracy in the Age of Message Control*. UBC Press.
 2. Sasha Issenberg. 2012. *The Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns*. Crown Publishers.
 3. Matt Price. 2017. *Engagement Organizing: The Old Art and New Science of Winning Campaigns*. UBC Press.
 4. Darren Tromblay. 2018. *Political Influence Operations: How Foreign Actors Seek to Shape U.S. Policy Making*. Rowman & Littlefield.
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Course Assignments

Undergraduate Students

Weekly Reading Summaries/Participation	20%
Take Home Assignment #1	20%
Case Analysis Essay	40%
Take Home Assignment #2	20%

Graduate Students

Weekly Reading Summaries/Participation	20%
Take Home Assignment #1	15%
Analytical Book Review	15%
Case Analysis Essay	35%
Take Home Assignment #2	15%

Assignment Due Dates

All assignments are due on OWL by 11:55 p.m. on the due date. After that, they will receive the late penalty. All assignments must be submitted as PDF files.

Monday nights	weekly reading summary as per the topic schedule below
13 Oct (Tuesday)	Take Home Assignment #1 will be posted after the Zoom meeting
16 Oct (Friday)	Take Home Assignment #1 due
23 Oct (Friday)	Grad students only - Analytical Book Review due
13 Nov (Friday)	Case Essay due
7 Dec (Monday)	all weekly reading summaries submitted as a single document
8 Dec (Tuesday)	Take Home Assignment #2 will be posted after the Zoom meeting
11 Dec (Friday)	Take Home Assignment #2 due

Zoom Meeting Schedule

Note:

- I will log in to the Zoom meeting 10 minutes before the class start time. Please log in at least 5 minutes early so we can start on time. If you have a technical issue, please email or text my cell (416-346-4770).

15 Sept (3:30 Tuesday)	Discussion of course outline and requirements
22 Sept (3:30 Tuesday)	Q&A on readings and PPTs, group discussion
29 Sept (3:30 Tuesday)	Q&A on readings and PPTs, group discussion
6 Oct (3:30 Tuesday)	Q&A on readings and PPTs, group discussion
13 Oct (3:30 Tuesday)	discussion of Take Home Assignment #1 Q&A on readings and PPTs
20 Oct (3:30 Tuesday)	discussion of Case Analysis Essay
27 Oct (3:30 Tuesday)	Q&A on readings and PPTs, group discussion
3 Nov	Reading Week - no class
10 Nov (3:30 Tuesday)	Q&A on readings and PPTs, group discussion
17 Nov (3:30 Tuesday)	Q&A on readings and PPTs, group discussion
24 Nov (3:30 Tuesday)	Q&A on readings and PPTs, group discussion
1 Dec (3:30 Tuesday)	Q&A on readings and PPTs, group discussion
8 Dec (3:30 Tuesday)	discussion of Take Home Assignment #2 Q&A on readings and PPTs course wrap up

ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Reading Summaries/Participation

For every class, students must submit a 1 page, typed, single-spaced summary of that week's readings. The PowerPoints should NOT be covered in your reading summaries. The summary must be in sentence format with your name typed at the top. The summary should summarize the key concepts and/or examples from the readings and, in particular, those that illustrate/build on the concepts mentioned in the PowerPoints.

The summaries should be organized by concepts/examples and aim to synthesize the material from the different readings. They should NOT be a reading-by-reading summary. The summaries must also include quotations and page citations from the readings using the in-text, bracketed format with the author surname and page number: e.g. (Smith, 345). No bibliography or endnotes are required. The aim is to demonstrate that you have done the reading and engaged with the main concepts rather

than trying to summarize every concept/section. Just summarize the key concepts and/or examples and don't worry about trying to cover everything. An example is posted in the OWL site.

Weekly reading summaries are due on OWL by 11:55 p.m. on the day before the class. After that, they will receive the late penalty. All analyses must be submitted as PDF files. The weekly summaries must be saved and then submitted as a single document to turnitin.com through the course OWL site by 11:55 p.m. on the day before the last class.

Students will receive comments on their first summary only to ensure they understand what is expected. The summaries will then receive an overall grade of either: 0-69 (unacceptable), 78 (good), 82 (very good), or 86 (excellent). Each late summary will drop the overall summaries grade by 2/100. Summaries will be graded based on:

- covering the most important readings and concepts (and not just the short media articles)
- the amount of detail included from the readings
- strong use of relevant quotes and page citations
- good organization and synthesis of the material

Participation will be graded based on attendance, participation in class and group discussions, and based on a peer assessment. Each missed class (excluding documented absences) will result in a 1/100 reduction in your grade. Above average participation overall will result in a 2/100 addition to your summaries grade. Average participation overall will result in no change to your summaries grade. Below average participation overall will result in 2/100 subtraction from your summaries grade.

Take Home Assignment #1

Students will write a take home assignment based on the PowerPoints and readings covered in the first half of the course. No extra readings or research are required. The assignment will consist of 3-4 long answer questions that will be posted on the course OWL site as per the assignment schedule above. Students will have 3 days to complete the assignments and submit them electronically as per the assignment schedule. Students will answer the questions to a maximum of 6 typed, single-spaced pages. Late assignments will receive a penalty of 3% per day to a maximum of 10%. Assignments will be graded based on:

- demonstrated understanding of the concepts
- covering the most important readings and concepts (and not just the short media articles)
- the amount of detail included from the readings
- strong use of relevant quotes, page citations and examples from the readings (using the in-text, bracketed citation format - no bibliography/endnotes are required)
- good organization and synthesis of the material

Take Home Assignment #2

Students will write a take home assignment based on the PowerPoints and readings covered in the second half of the course. The requirements are the same as for Take Home Assignment #1

Case Analysis Essay

Students will conduct primary research and write a case analysis of a specific election, leadership race, advocacy, or influence campaign for which sufficient primary information exists. This includes

primary sources such as: 1. reports on the campaign in the media, academic sources, ‘watch sites’, other groups’ sites, etc.; 2. reports on the campaign from the organization’s website; 3. communications products from the organization itself including media releases, videos, speeches, ads, reports, social media posts, etc.

Students should pick a specific political party, leadership candidate, company, industry association, professional association, union, interest group, or state and then focus on one of its specific campaigns. Ideally, choose a campaign that is of shorter duration so it’s easier to assess as a whole. Examples would be a single election campaign by one party, a single leadership race, an influence campaign by one state against another, or a single advocacy campaign by one group on a specific issue. All topics must be approved by the course instructor. Alternative formats are also possible as long as they retain the focus on primary research and analysis of communications products. Examples might include long-term campaigns by an advocacy group as well as formats that compare the use of a specific tactic (e.g. protests) by different groups.

In each case, students will outline and describe the various components of the campaign and communications products in as much detail as possible. This includes where applicable: goals and strategy, narrative and messages, direct lobbying (for lobbying campaigns only), the air war (earned media, paid media, issues management) and the ground war (databases, grassroots mobilization, fundraising). Students will outline the different components of the group’s campaign (trying to cover as many as possible based on the information available). They will then analyse and critique the campaign using the concepts and readings from the course (which should be cited and quoted). Critique can include what the campaign did well, what it was missing, and what it might have done better or differently.

The campaign analysis essay will be written in an essay format and will be 13-15 typed double spaced pages of text in length plus a title page and bibliography. An e-copy of the paper must be submitted to turnitin.com through the course OWL site by 11:55 p.m. on the due date. Extensions will only be given for documented illnesses, emergencies, etc. and will not be given for workload. Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day including weekends to a maximum of 10%.

Analytical Book Review (Grad Students Only)

Each graduate student will complete a 6-8 typed double-spaced page analytical book review of one of the assigned books. The review should focus on summarizing key points from the book including using specific (and properly cited) quotations from the book. It should also discuss the relationship between the book and points discussed in class as well as make specific (and properly cited) reference to the course readings where applicable. The review should also comment on how points in the book could be applied to other types of campaigns and the broader ethical and political implications of some of the techniques or points mentioned.

An PDF copy of the review must be submitted to turnitin.com through the course OWL site by 11:55 p.m. on the due date. Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day including weekends to a maximum of 10%. Extensions will only be given for documented illnesses, emergencies, etc. and will not be given for workload.

Academic Offenses and Plagiarism

Scholastic offenses are taken seriously and students are directed to read the university policy at:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Avoid these plagiarism mistakes:

- Do not cut and paste from your own previous essays. You can use some research and sources from previous essays, but not the same words. Even if you adjust the wording a little, turnitin will pick it up. It shows us your paper, the full original paper you cut-and-pasted from, and then highlights the exact words and sentences that overlap. Turnitin will also tell us when and to what course the original paper was submitted.
- Do not cut and paste from other people's essays, online sources, etc. and then try adjusting some of the words or deleting/reordering the odd sentence. Turnitin will pick it up. Turnitin searches all essays submitted to universities around the world since turnitin was created as well as all online sources including media articles, academic articles, blogs and websites.

Turnitin.com

As noted above, course assignments must be submitted electronically to turnitin.com (available through the course website and under license to the University). Please be advised that: All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and turnitin.com.

COURSE TOPICS

Sept. 15	Introduction
Sept. 22	The New Science of Politics
Sept. 29	Election Campaign Strategy I
Oct. 6	Election Campaign Strategy II
Oct. 13	Message Development
Oct. 20	Lobbying Strategy
Oct. 27	Earned Media
Nov. 3	Fall Reading Week - US election tonight

- Nov. 10** **Grassroots Mobilization**
- Nov. 17** **Direct Lobbying**
- Nov. 24** **Social Media**
- Dec. 1** **Long-Term Public Opinion Campaigns**
- Dec. 8** **Issues/Crisis Management and Interview Techniques**