  
  
  
PSM 1818 Strategic Communications

Monday, 7:15-9:15 pm Shepard Hall 1

Professor Joe Lamport

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Office hours: Mondays, 6-7 p.m. or by appointment

This course describes and presents the use of strategic communications in achieving the programmatic goals of organizations working on issues in public policy. The course is designed for graduate students in public administration and other public affairs programs, especially those interested in careers in government and nonprofit organizations or in other institutions that carry out policy making, policy advocacy, and policy implementation.

**Learning Goals**

The overall objective of this course is to enable you to understand the strategic communications approach and strategic communications tools, conceptual and practical. At the end of this course, you should be able to:

* Identify the nature, sources, types, and characteristics of strategic communications
* Explain how strategic communications contributes to the achieving of an organization’s goals
* Describe strategic communications models and theories
* Assess the challenges to strategic communications and understand strategic communications strategies for organizations in the public and nonprofit sectors.

The course should contribute to your skills at:

* Understanding the nature and sources of strategic communications
* Integrating strategic communications frameworks in to an organization’s work
* Researching, writing, and presenting a strategic communications approach
* Thinking critically and solving complex problems related to strategic communications

**Course Policies, Assignments, and Grading**

1. We will work together with the same level of personal commitment, intellectual investment, self-responsibility, and professionalism as would be case in the workplace of a government agency or nonprofit organization. We are resources for each other in the learning process, and we share the obligation to contribute to the full measure of our abilities.

2. Preparation for and participation in class discussion are essential to meeting the learning goals for the course. Some classes include planned discussions around particular strategic communications issues, and you are expected to prepare for and participate in these dialogues.

3. The short written assignment due (DATE) must be completed before the class session.It must be clear and concise, and should be in the form of a memorandum to me.

4. There will be a take home essay midterm at the conclusion of the first two sections of the course, due DATE.

5. The major written assignment for the course is a strategic communications strategy for an organization, real or imagined, of a student’s choosing. Topics will be selected by each student, subject to approval by me. Drafts of various portions of the brief will be due during the semester as noted in the schedule of class sessions. A full strategy of no more than 10 double-spaced pages plus references must be distributed to the entire class one week before the panel presentation on that issue.

6. Each student will give an oral presentation of his/her strategy on one of the closing panels for the course.

**Grading for the course will be as follows:**

a. Class contributions 15%

b. Short assignment 5%

c. Take home exam 25%

d. Oral presentation of strategy 10%

e. Strategic communications strategy 30%

f. Strategic communications assessment 15%

**Required Reading**

The following texts should be purchased:

1. Wheeler, Alina. Designing Brand Identity: An essential guide for the whole branding team, 4th ed. (<http://www.amazon.com/Designing-Brand-Identity-Essential-Branding/dp/1118099206/ref=sr_1_fkmr2_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1447891563&sr=8-1-fkmr2&keywords=establishing+brand+identity>)
2. Heath, Chip and Heath, Dan. Made to Stick: Why some ideas survive and others die (<http://www.amazon.com/Made-Stick-Ideas-Survive-Others/dp/1400064287/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1447891670&sr=8-1&keywords=made+to+stick>)

**Class Calendar: Topics and issues we will address**

1. General Overview: What is Strategic Communications? How is it different from “communications” generally? Why is it important? What are the primary steps in developing a Strategic Communications strategy? What are primary tactics of Strategic Communications? What are the various types of problems that we see in Strategic Communications? *Introductions. Self-assessment in class. Review and discuss the syllabus.*
2. Where to start with Strategic Communications: The primary components of Strategic Communications. 1- Identity, 2-Expression, 3-Audience, 4-Tactics/Tools, 5-Feedback Loops. What is your organization’s identity? How do you determine what it is? Why do you determine it? How and why would you change it? Resource map activity.
3. Identity: How do we express an organizational identity? In what ways do we express our organization’s identity? What is identity? Conducting an internal and external audit of messaging. Developing a story about the organization/writing a “manifesto.” Writing a statement. Finding the right words. Exercise: Conduct an external audit of a given organization’s competition.
4. Identity 2: Writing the story. Making it stick. Putting the story in different forms. Using data to tell the story.
5. Identity 3: Visual identity and other collateral. Preparing a creative brief.
6. Guest lecturer, Q&A with Chris Ang, former account executive, Saatch & Saatchi.
7. Audience: Who needs to know who we are and what we are doing? Identifying your audience. Audience analysis. Building new audiences.
8. Tactics/Tools: How do we reach our audience? When? Calendar activity.
9. Social Media. How does it fit in. Best practices in social media. Take home midterm distributed; due at beginning of Class 10.
10. Guest lecturer: Sree Srinivisan, chief digital officer, the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
11. Stakeholder Engagement: Feedback Loops: How do we set up feedback loops? Why are they important? Analyzing the information you collect.
12. Planning communications activities: OSTM. Putting the pieces together of your communications strategy: an audit to answer who, what, when, where, why and how.
13. Effective presentations: How to plan, prepare and deliver effective presentations
14. Internal and external communications issues. How are internal and external communications related?
15. Presentations
16. Presentations