

## **Communication 320: Public Service Communication**

Spring 2014  
Course Syllabus

Tues. & Thurs. 2:30-3:45 p.m.  
Corboy 522

### **Instructor**

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211 School of Communication  
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Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 10-11 and 1:15-2:15, or by appointment

**Prerequisites:** COMM 210 and 211

### **Course Description**

This service-learning course focuses on public relations and advertising for public service communication and public education campaigns related to such issues as health, public safety, education, the environment, social welfare, and community development. This includes community relations, public service programs, special events, dialogue, advocacy, fundraising, philanthropy, and alliances and partnerships between businesses, non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

Public service communication focuses on cause-related public relations and advertising activities that support a common good, provide a benefit or value to the public, show responsiveness to community needs and issues, encourage mutual understanding between an organization and its publics, and demonstrate accountability in the decisions and actions that affect the community. Students will work with a local non-profit organization to develop a public service campaign and to create a variety of communication materials for it.

### **Course Objectives**

- ❖ To examine current public issues and causes in relation to ethical communication, responsiveness, accountability, and social responsibility.
- ❖ To become acquainted with a variety of public service communication activities and campaigns.
- ❖ To become familiar with several theories used to guide public service communication.
- ❖ To discuss and apply public relations, advertising and marketing strategies and techniques in public service communication.
- ❖ To understand the basics of public communication campaign planning and implementation and apply them in a real campaign.
- ❖ To learn about and develop various tactics to deliver key public service communication messages to target audiences.
- ❖ To strengthen research, critical thinking, creativity, teamwork and writing and oral skills.

### **Readings**

Required readings will be posted on Sakai and/or handed out in class.

## **Course Website**

Lectures will be posted in advance on Sakai. This is designed to enable students to avoid having to take extensive notes in class and as an aid for studying for exams; it is not meant as a substitute for class attendance.

## **Expectations**

Students are expected to be prepared for, attend, and participate in all class sessions. Classes will begin promptly at 2:30 p.m. and students who arrive after attendance has been taken will be marked absent. Please inform me in advance if you believe you have a legitimate reason for an absence.

## **Assignments**

The cornerstone of the course will be planning a public service communication campaign on behalf of a local non-profit organization. We will work with this pro bono client to crystallize the public issue or social need, identify target audiences, conduct research, develop a communication plan for the campaign, create a variety of campaign materials and determine how to evaluate the campaign's effectiveness.

There will also be two research and writing assignments early in the semester. All written work should be typed double spaced in a 12-point font with 1-inch margins with the student's name and date on the top of the first page. Multiple-page assignments should be stapled. Students should strive for professional-quality work. Accuracy, quality, neatness, and format count, and multiple typos, factual errors, or errors in grammar or punctuation will result in a lower grade. Carefully proofread your papers and don't rely solely on spell-check to catch errors.

A hard copy of each assignment is due in class on the specified date. Late assignments will be graded down one grade per day. For example, an assignment that would have received an "A" if it been turned in on time would receive a "B" if it is turned in on the following day and a "C" if it is turned in two days late.

## **Exams**

There will be two exams, a mid-term and a final. The mid-term will include material from the beginning of the course up to the mid-term; the final will include material after the mid-term to the end of the semester. Both exams will cover materials from lectures, assigned readings, handouts, guest speakers, and film/videos. Neither exam may be made up at another time.

## **Grading Scale**

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	61-66
F	60 or below

## **Course Grading**

Research and writing assignments (2)	15 percent of grade
Mid-term	20 percent of grade
Group public service communication campaign	30 percent of grade
Final exam	20 percent of grade
Class participation	15 percent of grade

## **Academic Integrity**

Each student is expected to do his or her own work in the course. Allegations of academic misconduct will be forwarded immediately to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication for possible disciplinary action. Loyola regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter with consequences ranging from failure of the course to probation to expulsion.

Academic misconduct includes:

- Cheating on exams or aiding other students to cheat. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful.
- Stealing the intellectual property of others and passing it off as your own work (this includes material found on the Internet). Software will be used to identify plagiarism.
- Failing to quote directly if you use someone else's words, and cite that particular work and author. If you paraphrase the ideas of another, credit the source with your citation. Please ask me if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and/or how to cite sources.
- For closed-book exams, academic misconduct includes conferring with other class members, copying or reading someone else's test, and using notes and materials without prior permission of the instructor.
- Turning in the same work for two classes.

## **Classroom Behavior**

To help create a positive learning community, turn off all cell phones, tablets and laptops and keep them in your bag, backpack, or pocket. Phones used for texting in class will be confiscated. Be respectful of fellow students and our guest speakers and be in your seat when class begins.

## **Accommodations**

Any student with a learning disability who needs accommodation during class sessions or exams should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities to the instructor during the first week of class; this information will be treated in complete confidence. The instructor will accommodate students' needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the responsibility of each student to plan in advance to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

Students are excused for recognized religious holidays. Please let me know in advance.

## Course Schedule

(Reading assignments are to be completed before class on the date shown)

### Week 1

Jan. 14

*Course Overview and Introduction*

Jan. 16

*Overview of Public Service Communication*

- What is public service communication?
- Why is public service communication needed?
- How public service communication has evolved
- Competing for a place on the media and public agendas

### Week 2

Jan. 21

*Creating and Maintaining Community*

- Defining community
- The importance of community
- Understanding and valuing social capital
- "Bowling Alone" revisited

Reading: Felkins, ch. 1 (all) and 7 (part)  
Putnam, "Bowling Alone, Revisited"

Jan. 23

*Non-Profit Communication*

- How and why non-profit organizations communicate
- Challenges of non-profit communications
- Developing public/private/government partnerships

Reading: Singer, "Welcome, Fans, to the Pinking of America"  
Story, "Want to Help Treat AIDS in Africa? Buy a Cellphone"  
Traub, "The Celebrity Solution"  
Webster, "Color-Coded Causes"

Assignment 1: Research and analyze the online communication efforts of a non-profit organization (organization to be selected in class). Due in class Jan. 30.

### Week 3

Jan. 28

Guest speaker on non-profit communication: Alyse Chung, public relations specialist, the Salvation Army, Metropolitan Division

Reading: Review Salvation Army websites -- [www.salarmychicago.org](http://www.salarmychicago.org) and <http://www.kroccenterchicago.org>

Jan. 30

*Communicating about Corporate Social Responsibility*

- What makes a company socially responsible?
- Why is corporate social responsibility a growing trend?
- How does it benefit a company? The community?
- Which companies are leading the way, how and why?

Reading: Atkins, "Is Corporate Social Responsibility Responsible?"  
Crane, "When is Being Good not Good Enough?"  
Sengupta, "Toxic Sludge Torments Bhopal"  
Smith, "America's 100 Best Corporate Citizens"  
Weiss, "Good Business"

Assignment 2: Research and analyze how a company communicates online about its corporate social responsibility initiatives (company to be chosen in class). Due in class Feb. 11.

## **Week 4**

Feb. 4

Guest speaker on corporate social responsibility: Ray A. Johnson, vice president/program manager, corporate sustainability, HSBC

Reading: Review sections of two HSBC websites on corporate social responsibility:

HSBC USA:

<http://www.us.hsbc.com/1/2/home/about/corporate-sustainability>

HSBC Global:

[http://www.hsbc.com/citizenship/sustainability?WT.ac=HGHO\\_f2.4](http://www.hsbc.com/citizenship/sustainability?WT.ac=HGHO_f2.4) On

Feb. 6

*Public Service Communication Campaigns*

- History of public communication campaigns
- The "who," "why" and "how" of public communication campaigns
- A sampling of public communication campaigns
- Using interactive media in public communication campaigns

Reading: Elliott, "Pro Bono Efforts Follow Targets to the Web"  
McDonough, "Ad Council at 60"

## **Week 5**

Feb. 11

*Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Public Communication Campaigns*

- What a public communication campaign plan includes
- How the plan is structured
- Creating "a call to action"

- Budgeting and implementing the plan
- Evaluating campaign exposure and efficacy

Reading: Salmon & Murray-Johnson, "Communication Campaign Effectiveness"  
Kaiser Family Foundation, "New Media and the Future of Public Service Advertising"

Feb. 13

Guest speaker from pro bono client: Philicia Deckard, executive director, Brain Injury Association of Illinois (BIA)

Reading: Review BIA website, <http://www.biail.org/>

## **Week 6**

Feb. 18

Initial organizing session for pro bono client project

Feb. 20

*Public Health Communication Campaigns*

- Setting objectives for public health communication campaigns
- Community involvement and collaboration
- Do fear appeals work?
- Limits of public health education campaigns

Reading: Kaufman, "Campaign on Childhood Mental Illness Succeeds at Being Provocative"

Howard, "Teens Actually Like Being Told Why Smoking's Dumb"

Resto-Montero, "Program Takes Steps to Urge Healthier Living"

Smith, "City Signs on to Bridge Gaps to Healthier Neighborhoods"

Valorelo campaign brochure

Wilson, "U.S. Releases Graphic Images to Deter Smokers"

## **Week 7**

Feb. 25

In-class work on public communication campaign plans and materials

Feb. 27

Mid-term exam

## **Week 8**

No class, spring break

## **Week 9**

March 11

In-class work on communication campaign plans and materials

March 13

Guest speaker on public health communication: Jennie Szink, marketing and communications coordinator, Respiratory Health Association

Reading: Review Respiratory Health Association website, <http://www.lungchicago.org/>

**Week 10**

March 18

*Environmental Communication Campaigns*

- What environmental risks should we be most concerned about and why?
- "Greenwashing," "green fatigue" and the "Chicken Little" syndrome
- Structuring communication campaigns to overcome skepticism, inertia and fatalism

Reading: Bardelline, "Greenpeace's 'Dirty Water' Shows Benefits of Antagonistic Campaigns"  
Cox, "Environmental Advocacy Campaigns"  
Strand, "The Crying Indian"

March 20

In-class work on public communication campaign plans and materials

**Week 11**

March 25

Guest speaker on environmental communication: Emily Rosenwasser, associate press secretary, Midwest region, Sierra Club

Reading: Review Sierra Club website, <http://www.sierraclub.org/>, including the organization's Beyond Coal campaign, <http://content.sierraclub.org/coal/>

March 27

In-class work on public communication campaign plans and materials

**Week 12**

April 1

*Public Safety and Social Welfare Campaigns*

- Identifying and prioritizing public safety and social welfare issues
- Role of social norms in public safety and social welfare campaigns
- Seeking and incorporating community input for solutions
- Planning for fundraising, "friendraising" and communication

Reading: Littlejohn, "Real Men Don't Buy Girls"  
Stelter, "Campaign Offers Help to Gay Youths"

April 3

In-class work on public communication campaign plans and materials

### **Week 13**

April 8

Guest speaker on public safety and social welfare communication: Ann Pinkney, senior director of marketing and communication, and Ashley Gerou, creative director, Metropolitan Family Services

Reading: Review Metropolitan Family Services website, <http://www.metrofamily.org/>. Using the widgets on the right-hand side of the home page, also look at the organization's social media pages and blog

April 10

In-class work on public communication campaign plans and materials

### **Week 14**

April 15

In-class work on public communication campaign plans and materials

April 17

In-class work on public communication campaign plans and materials

### **Week 15**

April 22

Presentation preparation

April 24

In-class presentation of public communication campaign plans and materials to client. Two hard copies of the plans and creative materials and one CD or flash drive containing electronic versions of the campaign plans and materials are due in class.

**FINAL EXAM: Thurs. May 1, 9 a.m.**