

FALL 2008

COMMUNICATIONS ELEMENTS PMGT 203

This course introduces GSPM students to the specialized forms of communication which Political professionals use to win support for their candidates and causes. Students will learn what's important in producing strategically sound and rhetorically powerful messages for electoral campaigns, policy campaigns, and public affairs efforts. Students will also learn how to evaluate and interpret the messages of others with a critical eye.

Class meets every Wednesdays from 7:10 - 9:40 p.m. in Monroe Hall (2115 G Street, NW), Room 353

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Throughout the class students will write at least 4 separate short memos summarizing each political party's (Democrats and Republicans) current strategy and evaluate how their strategy is impacting the national political and/or legislative climate. Each student will write at least one memo from each party's point of view.

In addition, each member of the class will create a radio or TV ad to present to the class with their strategic reasoning behind the message, targeting and timing (details on this will be given in class).

There will be a final individual project. (Details on this will be given in class).

Grades Will Be Determined on the Following Scale:

Memo's and the "ad project" will count for 50% of your course grade
Individual final project will account for 40%.
Class Attendance and Participation 10%

COURSE READINGS:

Daily reading of the political news blogs:

The Page (Time Magazine) ABC News' "The Note," NBC News First Read, and CNN's Political Ticket, the Politico, AdAge.com's Campaign Trail.....

Morley Winograd and Michael D. Hais **Millennium Makeover: My Space and YouTube and The Future of American Politics** Discussion Weeks 5-9)

Michael Lewis; **LOSER (formally titled Trail Fever) – The Road to Everyplace but the White House** (Discussion weeks 2-4)

Michael Franz, Paul Freedman, Kenneth Goldstein Travis Ridout, **Campaign Advertising and American Democracy**

Outside of class meetings, the best way to communicate with me is by E-mail: Evan.Tracey@tnsmi-cmag.com

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS:

In consulting the schedule below, please note that guest availability may lead to juggling a couple of sessions.

Week 1: Introduction

- Overview of the Course
- Process of Message Development
- Message is really a conversation
- Win the battles win the war?

Week 2: Communicate

- Timing
- Words
- Rhetoric & Emotion
- Storytelling

Week 3: Building a Message

- Doing the Situation Analysis
 - What is important and what is not
 - Understanding how to construct the plan
 - External and Internal

Week 4: The Brand – Cornflakes vs. Candidates (Memo #1 Due)

The Brand and the message

- Corporate vs. Political
- The Making of a Brand
- Maintaining Your Brand
- The Death of a Brand
- Hispanic and Ethnic Targeting

Week 5: The Brand as a message

- Political brand building
- Communicate the political brand
- Passion and the Brand

Week 6: Selling a Political Message

- What's the message
 - How to communicate it
 - Emotional connections on Policy Ideas
- Tools in the box
 - What media fits the Message and the Money
- Timing and delivery
 - When and How
 - Do silver bullets exist?
 - Emotional decisions – the process trap

Week 7: Paid Media & Fundamentals of Advertisings (Memo #2 Due)

- TV Productions
- Ratings Points
- Other Media

Week 8: External Message – Ads

The Power of Advertisements and How to Misuse This Power

- The Power of the Image and/or the Words
- Advertising Production
- Ad Placement.
 - 2008 Election Ad Overview and Review
 - The Negative Ad – How, When, and Why to Use Them
 - The Role of the Internet
 - Who are Opinion Leaders, and How to Reach Them

Week 9: External Message Part 2

- Types
- Themes
- Style
- Do's and Don't Going Negative

Week 10: The Press: The Media Landscape (Memo #3 Due)

- The Press as an Audience
- Other Mediators
- Media Advisories
- Press Releases
- Events

Week 11: The Media Landscape

- Dealing with the media
- Pundits vs. Reporters

Week 12: New Media Landscape (Memo #4 Due)

Week 13: Crisis Communication

Week 14: You are the Message

- Today and in the future