

# Political Advertising

## Tactics, Tools and Techniques

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### COURSE OVERVIEW

*Political Advertising: Tactics, Tools and Techniques*, is designed to teach students about the elements that go into producing the most widely used campaign marketing vehicles: television media and direct mail.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Operatives choose tactics of various size and impact from an arsenal of tested tools to market their candidate or issues to voters. There is limited time, human resources and financing to plan and execute a political marketing strategy, with the intent of gaining a majority of support and defeating a likely opponent.

Anyone can run for office or launch an issue campaign – that’s not hard. There are plenty of generic models and old fashioned advice one can get on how to run for office. The real challenge is to go into the political arena with a clear understanding of how to implement the marketing tools available to communicate with voters.

It is crucial for a campaign operative is to recognize, understand and value all the elements that go into planning and executing an effective marketing campaign. With this knowledge the best operatives will learn how to utilize their campaign resources to gain maximum effect from their marketing dollars and decisions.

This course is designed to help students develop an understanding of the different political marketing tools and how they should use them. It is a study of the strategies, techniques and technologies of broadcast media and direct mail. These are the staples of political marketing in contemporary electoral, legislative and issue campaigns.

### COURSE STRUCTURE

The course will be conducted as a seminar emphasizing in-depth class participation and discussion. Through examination of case studies and the use of simulation exercises, it will explore the practical applications of political marketing tactics, tools and techniques.

## AREAS OF EXAMINATION

### Television & Radio Media

- Crafting a campaign media plan
- Budgeting a media campaign – soup to nuts
- Understanding how to place a political ad buy
- Reviewing spots that carry out different objectives: Bio, issues, contrast, GOTV
- Crafting an effective script
- Understanding the elements of spot production from shoot to post
- Getting a TV spot on the air
- What technology and factors are affecting television political marketing: TiVo, Satellite radio, webcasting, cable interconnect, Comcast Spotlight

### Direct Mail

- How to craft a direct mail plan
- Budgeting a direct mail campaign
- Understanding the elements of a persuasive mail piece
- Crafting powerful direct mail copy
- Laying out and producing a direct mail piece
- Getting the mail into the hands of voters
- Examine mail's effectiveness in the future, with the greater reliance on email, cell phones and increased mobility

### Additional Activities

- **Produce a Spot** - Have the class participate in actually producing a political radio spot. Have two groups go through the process of creating a script, working with voice talent, an engineer and choosing music.
- **Produce a Direct Mail Piece** - Have the class participate in actually producing a mail piece. Have two groups go through the process of creating copy, working with a designer and printer.

### Guest Speakers

- Media Buyer
- Direct mail copy specialist
- Media Producer

### Required Reading

- **Ogilvy on Advertising**, David Ogilvy
- **Selling of the President**, Joe McGinniss
- **Words that Work**, Frank Luntz

## **SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Week 1: Introduction**

- History of Campaign Advertising: broadsheets to the information Age
- Why do Campaigns spend their greatest resources on television and direct mail

### **Week 2: Direct Mail Uses / Production Process**

#### **Part 1 – Direct Mail as Weapon**

- Explore the different uses for direct mail in politics:
  - Persuasion Mail
  - GOTV Mail
  - Fundraising Appeals

#### **Part 2 – Understanding the Production Process**

- Gain an understanding of the costs associated with production, printing and delivery for crafting an accurate mail budget
- Understand how designers, editors, mail houses and the post office all contribute toward the making and delivering of direct mail

### **Week 3: Targeting / Appealing to Target Audiences**

#### **Part 1 – Targeting: People, Places**

- Explore the concepts of targeting mail and the importance of lists for optimizing mail universes

#### **Part 2 – The Elements that make an Effective Mailer to Target Audiences**

- Learn about the elements that contribute to making a mail piece a more effective tool in communicating a campaign's message

### **Week 4: Copy Writing & Designing / How to Beat the Clutter**

#### **Part 1 – Copy Writing**

- Learn how to write copy and construct an outline for a mail piece
- Guest Speaker: TBD

#### **Part 2 – Creative Designing**

- Explore the psychology of how mail is received, read and acted-on by voters

#### **Group Assignment**

- Breakout into three groups to write and create a mail piece for a congressional candidate

## **Week 5: Test / Present & Submit Mail Piece for Design**

**Part 1 – Test on direct mail portion of course**

**Part 2 – Present mock direct mail plans, copy and ideas on designs**

## **Week 6: Introduction to Media Portion / Why TV & Radio Matter**

**Part 1 – Test return / review finished mail pieces**

**Part 2 – Introduction to TV / Radio communications**

- Determine how many and what kind of spots are necessary to fit into an overall media marketing plan
- Evaluate the elements that support the decision to use broadcast, cable or radio and the decision how to proportion your marketing dollars between the mediums.

## **Week 7: Buying media / Costs / Research**

**Part 1 – How to purchase airtime**

- Understanding the key variables used in making decisions on buying air time and placing campaign spots. Also, understanding what media buying services are available and how the process works.
- How to craft a campaign media plan
- Budgeting a media campaign – soup to nuts
- *Guest Speaker: Media Buyer*

**Part 2**

- What are the resources available for finding the costs and getting the market research for preparing a media budget and plan

## **Week 8: Understanding TV Spots**

**Part 1 – The analytical decisions that go into creating TV / Radio spots**

- Explore the psychology of how viewers watch TV and receive political messages

**Part 2 – View Television spots for production and message analysis**

- Reviewing the types of spots used to carry out different objectives: Bio spot, issues spot, contrast spot, GOTV spot

## **Week 9: Producing a Spot**

**Part 1 – Script Writing**

- What makes a good script? Learn how to write a script for sixty and thirty second TV and radio spots that effectively communicate the campaign's message and themes

## **Part 2 – Individual Assignment**

- Write campaign scripts from three different kinds of spots (bio spot, attack ad, defense spot)

## **Week 10: Elements of Production**

### **Part 1 – Preparing and Conducting a Shoot**

- Learn how to prepare and conduct a film shoot or radio read. Learn about hiring talent, crews and editors – what role the campaign and the consultants play

### **Part 2 – Guest Speaker, Director of Photography**

## **Week 11: Post Production**

### **On Site at Post Production House**

- Review post production elements
- Working with editors, engineers and mixers
- Understanding the different systems

### **Group assignment – breakout into two groups:**

- Craft a media budget
- Craft a media buy
- Write scripts
- Produce story boards

## **Week 12: Presentations / Produce a Radio Spot**

### **Part 1 - Present Group Assignments**

### **Part 2 – Produce a radio spot working with an engineer and voice talent.**

## **Week 13: The future in television and other media applications**

### **Part 1 – Listen to the produced spots from last week**

### **Part 2 – The future of broadcast**

- What technology and factors are affecting television political marketing: TiVo, Satellite radio, webcasting, cable interconnect, Comcast Spotlight

## **Week 14: Final Exam / Dinner**

## GRADING / EVALUATION

### Grading

<b>Direct Mail</b> – Group Assignment	15%
<b>Direct Mail</b> – Test	20%
<b>TV</b> – Individual Assignment	10%
<b>TV</b> – Group Assignment	15%
<b>Final Exam</b>	15%
<b>Class Participation</b>	25%

## INSTRUCTOR

### Brian Donahue

Prior to joining Jamestown Associates, Donahue managed four federal election campaigns, served on two presidential campaign staffs and consulted on numerous political and public affairs campaigns.

After serving as a target state **Executive Director for Bush-Cheney'04**, Donahue headed the **National 72-Hour Task Force** for the **Republican National Committee**, directing all grassroots programs, vote analysis and GOTV operations. While at the RNC, Donahue conducted political strategy trainings for party leaders, campaign operatives and foreign delegations.

Donahue successfully managed **Steve Pearce's (NM-02)** top-targeted campaign for U.S. Congress; **Diane Allen's campaign for U.S. Senate**; **Mike Ferguson's (NJ-07)** successful congressional campaign, regarded one of the most competitive races of 2000.

Mr. Donahue also served as **Deputy Chief of Staff and District Director to Congressman Mike Ferguson**, as well as, Public Affairs Director for the national law firm, Foley & Lardner.

He was named a **2006 Rising Star by Campaigns & Elections Magazine**. He has presented campaign strategy and tactical seminars at several dozen campaign schools and training programs and is sourced in several national news and political publications.

Mr. Donahue received his degree in Political Science from **The George Washington University** and received a campaign management certification from The Campaign Management Institute at American University.

For more information on this course please email Brian Donahue at [bdonahue@jamestownassociates.com](mailto:bdonahue@jamestownassociates.com).