



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MEDIA
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Spring 2010 Course Descriptions

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

Media in a Free Society (SMPA 50.10). Taught by Sean Aday. The role of mass communication in democratic political systems: informational requirements of democracy, sources of political information and the role of news media and other channels in creating and disseminating it; issues relating to propaganda and public information; and the interaction between information flows and democratic political culture. Not open to SMPA majors

Research Methods (SMPA 51). Taught by Micah Jensen, Kerric Harvey, and Staff. Process of inquiry within mediated communication. The concepts of framing research questions, conducting literature reviews, developing a research of design, and interpreting results of cultural and social science research within a societal framework. Open only to SMPA majors. *Prerequisite: Stat 53.*

Journalism and Mass Communication: Theory and Practice (SMPA 101.10). Taught by Janet Steele. An overview of journalism and mass communication in the United States. Organizations and institutions of print and electronic news media; the social context of journalism; how news is constructed; and intellectual underpinnings of occupational ideals and professional practices that guide journalism. Open only to SMPA majors.

Introduction to Political Communication (SMPA 102). Taught by Sean Aday and Robert Entman. Basic concepts and theories of political communication; development of a framework for analyzing political communication; applications in the United States, other countries, and the international system. Open only to SMPA majors. *Prerequisite: PSc 2.*

Introduction to News Writing and Reporting (SMPA 110 – multiple sections). Fundamentals of news reporting and writing, with emphasis on the print media. News judgment, information gathering skills, and crafting news and feature stories. Regular in-class and outside reporting and writing exercises. Directly admitted freshmen may enroll

in their second semester; all other freshmen need departmental permission. (Open to non-majors: WID credit)

Advanced News Reporting (SMPA 111). Taught by Albert May & Michael Doyle. Reporting, writing, and computer skills for covering beats and developing in-depth news stories. Techniques in researching, observing, and interviewing to frame stories of public interest; outside and in-class reporting and writing assignments. Restricted to Journalism and Mass Communication majors or permission of instructor required. Prerequisite: SMPA 110. (WID credit).

Introduction to Digital Media Production (SMPA 112.11). Taught by Chhayal Parikh and Jason Osder. Basic introduction to digital media production, including web design and video shooting/editing, with emphasis on use in journalism and political communication. Open only to SMPA majors.

Public Opinion (SMPA 120.10) Taught by Catherine Bailard. Key aspects of the literature on public opinion, with emphasis on the role of media in opinion formation and change. Topics include the meaning of public opinion in a democratic society, a review of methods used to measure opinions, and media effects on opinion.

Media, Politics & Government (SMPA 128.80). Taught by Steven Roberts. This course examines the dynamic interaction between the media and politics and public policy. It uses very contemporary issues to examine the process and can change week to week, depending on the news. Topics this semester will include President Obama's attempt to apply new media to the process of governing, advertising campaigns on both sides of the health care debate, and the growing role of comedy shows like the Daily Show and Saturday Night Live in the media marketplace. Admission is only by permission of the professor and seniors will be given preference. This course will now count as a political communication elective. Contact: sroberts@gwu.edu

Online Journalism Workshop (SMPA 132.10). Taught by Michael Shanahan and Jason Osder. For SMPA majors in their senior year. Students report, write, and edit online GW student news magazine. Permission of instructor required. Contact: mikeshan@gwu.edu or josder@gwu.edu

Publication Design (SMPA 134.10). Taught by Mason McAllister. Design, editing, layout, and photo selection for newspapers and magazines. Selecting and editing stories; writing headlines and photo captions; sizing and cropping graphic materials; laying out pages. Ethics of editing.

Broadcast News Writing (SMPA 135.10). Taught by Jonathan Ebinger. This course will teach you basic reporting and news writing for radio and television. You will learn the fundamentals of writing and reporting news and feature stories. You will also be exposed to some basics about oral and visual presentation, as well as distinctions between local, network, and cable news. In addition, you will learn to understand and apply broadcast techniques to think critically about what you see on the news, as well as the work of

others. By the end of the semester, you should be able to produce scripts suitable for air at a collegiate level. *Prerequisite: SMPA 110.* (WID credit)

Broadcast News Reporting (SMPA 136.10). Taught by Roxanne Russell. Advanced techniques in television news reporting and editing. Students produce, shoot, and edit news packages by teaming up to report in the field. *Prerequisite: SMPA 110.* (WID credit)

Television News Practicum (SMPA 139.10). Taught by Roxanne Russell. Students shoot, edit and produce video packages, and then compile them in the weekly studio production of the GW student news broadcast, "The Source". The course is equally split between field reporting and producing in the studio. *Prerequisite: SMPA 136.* SMPA 137 highly recommended.

Campaign Reporting (SMPA 141.10). Taught by Albert May. Development of news gathering and analytical writing skills needed for the coverage of political campaigns. Using in-class exercises and outside assignments, students acquire reporting and writing proficiency to illuminate how campaigns work and how politics affects the lives of citizens. In the spring 2010 semester, the class will follow the unfolding mid-term congressional campaigns as the Democrats try to retain the House and Senate. Students will hear from top political journalists on topics that include analyzing the election landscape, polling, campaign advertising, online campaigns and political money. *Prerequisite: SMPA 110.*

Investigative Reporting (SMPA 142.10). Taught by David Fallis, an investigative reporter at the Washington Post. Hands-on intensive training in reporting and writing in-depth enterprise news stories that expose hidden problems or wrong-doing. *Prerequisite: SMPA 110.*

Feature Writing (SMPA 143.10). Taught by Steven Roberts. This course teaches the art of feature writing through intensive weekly assignments that include profiles, interviews, and stories about objects, places and trends. A major final project incorporating all these skills caps off the semester. *Prerequisite: SMPA 110.* (WID credit). Permission of the professor is required. Seniors will be given preference. Contact: sroberts@gwu.edu

Editorial and Persuasive Writing (SMPA 145.10). Taught by Steven Keller. Techniques of editorial and column writing; editorial page and public affairs programming; function of commentary in a free press. *Prerequisite: SMPA 110.* (WID credit).

Specialized Reporting: Business and Economics (SMPA 146.10). Taught by Deborah Solomon. The recent financial and economic crisis showcases the need for reporters well-versed in financial markets, economics and business. This course will prepare students to write about business and economic issues for a wide range of audiences and platforms. It will examine the 2008 financial crisis in detail, explain how Wall Street works and teach students how to understand a balance sheet, where to find public financial documents and how to write lucid and compelling business stories. *Prerequisite: SMPA 110.*

Deborah Solomon covers economic policy in the Washington, D.C. bureau of The Wall Street Journal, where she's worked since May 2000. Ms. Solomon has previously covered the Securities and Exchange Commission, financial regulation, technology and telecommunications. She shared in the 2003 Pulitzer Prize in explanatory reporting for a series of stories that exposed corporate scandals.

Public Diplomacy (SMPA 150.10). Taught by SMPA's Public Diplomacy Fellow Mark Taplin, a Senior U.S. Diplomat on assignment from the State Department to GWU. The theory and practice of public diplomacy: informing, influencing, and establishing dialogue with international publics and institutions. A conceptual and historical examination of public diplomacy, current practices, and contemporary issues, including international information dissemination, educational and cultural exchange, and international broadcasting.

Public Affairs and Government Information (SMPA 151.10). Taught by Frank Maisano, the Director of Strategic Communication for Bracewell and Giuliani. Aspects of information and public affairs functions of government agencies at all levels. Role of the information specialist.

Campaign Advertising (SMPA 155.10). Taught by Steven Keller. Introduction to the theory and practice of campaign advertising. Emphasis on televised political campaign spots, but a range of campaign advertising media are included: radio, direct mail, and the Internet.

Political Speech Writing (SMPA 157.10). Taught by Steven Keller. Theory and practice of public speaking in the context of mediated political communication. Students analyze, write, and give speeches.

Strategic Practicum (SMPA 158.80). Taught by Jarol Manheim. In SMPA 153, students were introduced to the theory and techniques of strategic political communication. In SMPA 158, they will apply their knowledge to design prototype strategic campaign. Students will be required to research the issues and actors associated with specific campaign settings, to identify the critical points in the decision-making process and the key constituencies with interests in each issue, and to develop theory-based communication strategies which they regard as most likely to achieve the stated objective. At the beginning of the semester, students will be assigned to teams. Each team will be responsible for selecting a cause or issue objective and for designing a strategic plan to achieve it. *Prerequisite: SMPA 153.*

Media in the Developing World (SMPA 171.10). Taught by Janet Steele. Contemporary views of media roles in developing nations. The role of the press and electronic media in economic, social, and national development, including media as agents of modernization, development journalism, and post-colonial responses to Western "cultural imperialism." Media and Islam; role of the Internet; and theories of media and globalization.

Media Law (SMPA 173.10). Taught by Christopher Sterling. The course surveys the constantly changing legal context of both print and electronic journalism, including libel, privacy, reporting on the courts, obscenity and indecency, media ownership, copyright, advertising, political advertising, and public broadcasting.

Media History (SMPA 177.10). Taught by Michael Freedman. American media from colonial times to the present, set against a backdrop of ongoing political, social, and economic developments. The development of press, radio, television, cable, satellite, and the Internet; government regulation and media relations; journalistic rights and responsibilities.

Contemporary Political Rhetoric (SMPA 194.10). Taught by Peter Loge. In Contemporary Political Rhetoric students will read both classical and contemporary rhetorical theory and apply those theories to current political events. Through a better understanding of what works and doesn't and why it succeeds or fails, students will become better consumers and producers of political communication.

Politics and the Internet (SMPA 194.12). Taught by Adam Green. Blogs, online activism, YouTube, Facebook - all of these are changing the nature of journalism and politics. As blogs increasingly rival traditional newspapers for readership, and as YouTube videos increasingly impact elections, understanding the Internet's role within the political landscape is crucial to the study of modern political communication. This class will examine this new landscape - starting from square one and ultimately including conversations with some of the leading actors in online politics.

National and International Advocacy Communication (SMPA 194.80/195.81). Taught by Robert San George. This course challenges students to analyze and create campaigns on the key issues of our time: human rights, environment, public health, women's empowerment, children's issues, poverty alleviation, etc. With an interactive approach, each class takes students inside the world of national and international advocacy campaigning, as practiced by non-profit organizations – with a focus on new media. Using class blogging, along with a combined case study and theoretical approach, students learn the challenges that face professional advocacy campaigners as they research, plan, fund and operate their campaigns: audience research and targeting, issue framing/messaging, use of imagery, overcoming “crisis fatigue,” etc. The emphasis on new media reflects the rapidly growing importance of online advocacy to reach audiences, raise funds and make an impact.

A specialist in online campaigning and use of new media, Robert SanGeorge has been a senior executive in advocacy campaign communications and lobbying for the United Nations and several major international NGOs. He is the Shapiro Fellow for the Spring 2010 semester at the School of Media and Public Affairs.

Media Organizations and Audiences (SMPA 194.81/195.80) Taught by Patricia Phalen. This course provides an introduction to the American entertainment media industry, specifically with regard to organizations and economic relationships in television and film. It explores the evolution and current structure of broadcasting and film industries.

The ultimate goal is to develop an understanding of how the media industries operate, how media professionals carry out their work, and why we have the kinds of movies and television programs we have. The course will provide background on the history of broadcasting, cable and film and challenge students to consider the future of these industries.

Film, Journalism and Politics (SMPA 194.82/195.84). Taught by Kerric Harvey. Based on the theory that the products of popular culture can provide important sociological and anthropological insight into the workings of everyday life, this course positions Hollywood film as a text for analyzing the crucial relationship between journalism and politics in American public life. Drawing from the scholarly literature in media theory, communications studies, semiotics, cultural studies, and media anthropology, students will explore how the American and international cinema frame the necessary tensions between leadership elites and the press designed to monitor them, focusing on the complexities of implementing the idea of the “Fourth Estate” within the real-world context of the commercial news media. Topics examined will include: Journalism and political ethics, privacy, objectivity, the political economy of the press, and the evolving role of free speech in an increasingly globalized society. Screened films will be selected from: “State of Play,” “Munich,” “Absence of Malice,” “The Killing Fields,” “Broadcast News,” “True Colors,” “In My Country,” “Mad City,” “Network,” “Goodnight and Good Luck,” “The Year of Living Dangerously,” “All The Presidents’ Men,” “Citizen Kane,” “Meet John Doe,” “The Mean Season,” and others.

Radio News: History & Practice (SMPA 195.10) Taught by Michael Freedman. A combination lecture and lab course which explores America’s first form of electronic journalism from its creation in the early 20th Century to today’s digital age. The class will study the underpinnings of today’s news formats, listen to historic broadcasts, learn radio writing techniques, write and record newscasts, and gain hands on experience by visiting Washington offices of national media organizations.

History of Investigative Journalism (SMPA 195.13). Taught by Ken Silverstein, the Washington Editor for Harper’s Magazine. Silverstein also writes Washington Babylon for Harper’s Online. The course examines the history of investigative reporting in the United States from colonial times to the present. What is investigative reporting? How has it evolved over the years? What are its strengths and weaknesses? And why does it matter? Students examine historical works and primary source material involving political and social exposés from 18th century pamphlets and 19th century newspapers to 20th century television documentaries and 21st century blogs.

Globalization & Media (SMPA 195.60). Taught by Lee Huebner. A new category of media has emerged which is global in scope, but national and regional media have also retained their own distinctive characteristics. The media have played a central role in creating the phenomenon of globalization—while globalization has reshaped media in all parts of the world. The central purpose of the class will be to explore these developments. This three credit course will include a Spring Break trip to Paris (March 14th – 20th, 2010)—featuring panels, speakers, and field trips—with journalists, executives,

government officials, scholars and others who bring a unique international perspective to major media issues. Because most of the classroom hours will take place in Paris, the class will meet only a few times before and after the trip to discuss readings to draw conclusions. There will be no examination but a final paper will be due by the end of the semester.

Students are responsible for travel expenses. Register for this course through the Study Abroad Office. Contact Professor Huebner for details: huebner@gwu.edu

Radio: Tool of Diplomacy and War (SMPA 195.82). Taught by Christopher Sterling. Radio has been an important means of making war and peace since the 1920s and this combined grad/undergrad special course reviews how it has developed and the many roles it has played. Drawing examples from the past (such as Nazi propaganda) and the present (Voice of America and other US radio services), as well as from many other nations (Canada, China, and others), the course explores both the theory and practice of trans-border radio services as tools of diplomacy, culture, religion, and war. We will examine the impact of changing technologies and different types of audiences as well as the host of controversial issues surrounding such services.

Planet Forward: Live! (SMPA 195). Taught by Laura Pohl. Combine your love of multimedia reporting with your interest in environmental issues. This advanced, hands-on production class is designed for students eager to hone their enterprise reporting skills and help drive the conversation on climate change, reducing carbon footprints and living a sustainable lifestyle. The ultimate goal is to create content for the Planet Forward website and for possible inclusion in the Planet Forward television show. Students will become better storytellers by pitching and shooting stories; editing footage in class; critiquing stories in workshop-style class sessions; and listening to guest speakers from the environmental policy world and the multimedia production world. This is not an introductory course. Students are expected to have a basic level of competency with photography, audio and video techniques and be familiar with iMovie or Final Cut Pro.

Politics and Hollywood (SMPA 801.10 Freshman Seminar). Taught by Patricia Phalen. This course provides an introduction to the American entertainment media industry, specifically with regard to film and television. In Hollywood & Politics students learn how West and East Coast elite interact, clash, challenge and conspire to affect what American citizens see on the screen. Discussions cover everything from personal influence to organized campaigns; ways popular culture can affect political awareness as well as the ways politics might affect popular culture. "Hollywood" includes film, television or music recording, and "Politics" can be local, state or national. Exploration of Hollywood institutions and the societal issues surrounding the media and the history of events and relationships that have defined the Hollywood-D.C. connection.

Documentary Film: Fact, Fiction, Propaganda (SMPA 801.11 Freshman Seminar). Taught by Nina Seavey. This Dean's Seminar will be devoted to evaluating the messages

and meaning of the documentary form. The central thrust of the course will be to deconstruct documentary film and evaluate its journalistic, persuasive, and artistic functions. Emphasis will be given to understanding the key elements of documentary construction, visual literacy, and the structure and form of non-fiction films. Specific topics will be: content development, story structure, interview techniques, camera composition and visual modes of expression, editing theory and its impact on the creation of meaning, and the impact of music and sound design on the audience responses to documentary messages.

GRADUATE COURSES

Theories of Mediated Political Communication (SMPA 202.10). Taught by Paul Waldman. Institutional functions and individual effects of mediated communication. Impacts of different textual content and format on individual thinking and emotion; forces that shape content production.

Paul Waldman is a partner with the R 5 Advisors and formerly was a Senior Fellow at Media Matters for America.

Media and Globalization (SMPA 205.10). Taught by Lee Huebner. Theories of media and globalization. The changing role of communication media, including the Internet and other newer technologies as well as traditional books, film, newspapers, telephone, and satellite in establishing closer relationships and interdependencies among people, their cultures, and their organizations in various countries.

Media and Foreign Policy (SMPA 210.10). Taught by Robert Entman. The effects of U.S. media on U.S. and foreign governments, and of foreign media on the U.S.; role of the media in foreign policy; public diplomacy.

Principles and Methods of Documentary Filmmaking (SMPA 230.10/230.11). Taught by Nina Seavey. Analytical and practical exploration of the elements of documentary filmmaking. The genres of nonfiction filmmaking; fundamentals of film conceptualization, documentary screenwriting, story structure, and production theory; basic practical elements of production. Instructor permission required. Contact seavey@gwu.edu. Students have the option to take the full two course sequence and earn a certificate in Documentary Filmmaking. Please see: <http://www.gwu.edu/doccenter/application.htm>

Research Methods (SMPA 241.10). Taught by Jarol Manheim. Design, applications, and limitations of quantitative research as applied to the field of media and public affairs. Framing of research questions, identification of variables and formulation of hypotheses, measurement, sampling, data gathering techniques, data analysis, and preparation of research reports. Brief exposure to qualitative research. *Prerequisite: an undergraduate statistics course.*

Media Organizations and Audiences (SMPA 250.80). Taught by Patricia Phalen. This course provides an introduction to the American entertainment media industry, specifically with regard to organizations and economic relationships in television and film. It explores the evolution and current structure of broadcasting and film industries. The ultimate goal is to develop an understanding of how the media industries operate, how media professionals carry out their work, and why we have the kinds of movies and television programs we have. The course will provide background on the history of broadcasting, cable and film and challenge students to consider the future of these industries.

Radio: Tool of Diplomacy and War (SMPA 250.81). Taught by Christopher Sterling. Radio has been an important means of making war and peace since the 1920s and this combined grad/undergrad special course reviews how it has developed and the many roles it has played. Drawing examples from the past (such as Nazi propaganda) and the present (Voice of America and other US radio services), as well as from many other nations (Canada, China, and others), the course explores both the theory and practice of trans-border radio services as tools of diplomacy, culture, religion, and war. We will examine the impact of changing technologies and different types of audiences as well as the host of controversial issues surrounding such services.

Public Diplomacy (SMPA 270.10). Taught by Bruce Gregory. This seminar course examines concepts, practices, institutions, and critical issues in public diplomacy. We will explore the global debate on its meaning and scope in the context of today's information environment and changes in the conduct of diplomacy and foreign policy. The course will focus in part on U.S. public diplomacy and the evolving roles of the State Department and American embassies, social media tools, educational and cultural exchanges, policy advocacy, international broadcasting, and activities of public diplomacy stakeholders in government and civil society. We will study how public diplomacy is understood and practiced by other countries, multi-national organizations, and non-state actors. Our learning will draw on the experiences of public diplomacy practitioners and a growing body of academic and practical literature in the U.S. and abroad.

Bruce Gregory is an adjunct professor at George Washington University, Georgetown University, and the U.S. Naval War College. He previously held a variety of government positions in U.S. public diplomacy.

Strategic Communication Practicum (SMPA 270.80). Taught by Jarol Manheim. In SMPA 204, students were introduced to the theory and techniques of strategic political communication. In SMPA 270, they will apply their knowledge to design prototype strategic campaign. Students will be required to research the issues and actors associated with specific campaign settings, to identify the critical points in the decision-making process and the key constituencies with interests in each issue, and to develop theory-based communication strategies which they regard as most likely to achieve the stated objective. At the beginning of the semester, students will be assigned to teams. Each team will be responsible for selecting a cause or issue objective and for designing a strategic plan to achieve it.

