

**Carleton University School of Journalism & Communications**

**COMS 4377A/PAPM 4000C**

**Communication and Public Affairs Strategy/BPAPM Strategic Public Opinion Capstone**

**Fall (September-December) 2018**

“McGovern is the only candidate who inevitably gives a straight answer when people raise these questions. He lines out the painful truth, and his reward has been just about the same as that of any politician who insists on telling the truth: He is mocked, vilified, ignored and abandoned as a hopeless loser.”

- Hunter S. Thompson  
*Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72*

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Lectures: Mondays 9:00 to 11:25  
Office Hours: Mondays 12:30 to 15:00  
Or by appointment  
Or Hangout  
Or Skype

**Objectives**

This hands-on course will teach students how to integrate public opinion research into the broader development of a public affairs strategy. The overall learning objective is to develop, design and present a strategy in response to a specific situation.

The course is built around two different projects. Each project is designed to provide an opportunity to students respond to a specific real-life and current scenario. It integrates theoretical considerations, practical insights and a particular public affairs challenge requiring the strategic use of public opinion research. The emphasis is placed on how public opinion research can be integrated to help develop and guide strategy.

Specifically, the course is divided into two sections; each related to a particular scenario. The first scenario looks at the strategic use of opinion research in crisis communication. The second scenario looks at the strategic use of opinion research in campaigns.

❖ **Since this course is designed to give students hands-on experience in conducting research, special emphasis will be given to self-directed research. In addition to lectures, the course will involve workshops and work outside of the classroom will also be necessary.**

## cuLearn

This course uses cuLearn. To access your courses on cuLearn go <sup>to</sup> <http://carleton.ca/culearn>.

For help and support, go to <http://carleton.ca/culearn/students>. Any unresolved questions can be directed to Computing and Communication Services (CCS) by phone at 613-520- 3700 or via email at [ccs\\_service\\_desk@carleton.ca](mailto:ccs_service_desk@carleton.ca).

On cuLearn you will find the following:

- A copy of the course syllabus
- Lecture Slides

## CAUTION:

- ***Familiarize yourself with Carleton University's policy on plagiarism and other instructional offenses as well as policies on withdrawals and deferrals. In other words, don't cheat and don't plagiarize. For more on what constitutes either of these serious infractions, visit the following link:***  
<http://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity/>
- ***For your own protection, always keep an original hard copy of all your work. In case of loss, theft, destruction, dispute over authorship, or any other eventuality, it will be your responsibility to provide a copy of your work.***

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## Student Evaluation:

1. **Assignment 1 – Discuss the contribution of Lee Atwater or Karl Rove or Roger Ailes on the practice of Crisis Communication. (20%)**

**Write a 5-7 doubled-spaced essay isolating the contributions and impact of one of the three practitioners.**

**DUE: October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018**

2. **Strategic Public Opinion and Crisis Communication Project**

**Presentation (25%) ON OCTOBER 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**3. Book Club Lecture Assignment (30%)**

**Based on the Book Club Lecture – focus on some key elements reviewed during the lecture and use them to frame an analysis of a campaign of your choice. It could be explaining a successful recent election campaign or any other campaigns such as a product launch, issue campaign etc.**

**The assignment will be a 8-10 double-spaced essay.**

**DUE NOVEMBER 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018 – IN CLASS**

**4. Strategic Public Opinion and Campaigns Project**

**Presentation (25%) ON DECEMBER 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018**

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**NOTE: More details will be provided in class about the presentations but here are a few important points:**

Regardless of whether you aim to pursue academic or professional employment, the ability to present complicated material to non-experts is an important communication skill. Therefore, you must create your slideshow and presentation script to fit within what would be a maximum presentation time of 20 minutes.

The presentation will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Quality of the Visuals
- Clarity of the Presentation
- Pace and Organization
- Ability to Keep the Audience's Interest
- Structure and Flow

**Grading Scale:**

<b>Letter</b>	<b>%</b>
A+ = 90-100 / A = 85-89 / A- = 80-84	
B+ = 77-79 / B = 73-76 / B- = 70-72	
C+ = 67-69 / C = 63-66 / C- = 60-62	
D+ = 57-59 / D = 53-56 / D- = 50-52	
F = 0-49	

## **Appealing a Grade**

Should you wish to dispute a mark, please provide to the instructor who marked your assignment one typed, double-spaced page responding to the instructor's comments on your assignment explaining what mark you think is more appropriate and why. The written request must be received in person (no emails) within one week after the assignment is returned. Keep in mind that "A" grades are awarded for superior (and not merely sufficient) performance. An "A" grade requires much hard work and dedication.

## **Late Assignments/Extensions:**

Late assignments will be penalized 1/3 letter grade per day (i.e. A to A-) for each day that they are late, including weekends. They must be handed in and date stamped at the *Resource Digest Resource Center (RDRC)*. Assignments will not be marked if they are received more than 7 days (including weekends) after the assignment is due.

Extensions will only be provided in exceptional and unavoidable circumstances. Poor time management or planning is not a valid circumstance. To gain an extension, students must email the instructor at least 24 hours in advance of when the assignment is due. To get a late assignment extended after the fact, students must submit one typed, double-spaced page explaining the reason for missing the deadline and one relevant piece of original documentation (such as an official doctor's note). The written request must be received in person (no emails) within one week after the scheduled due date.

## **Academic Standing:**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor and subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

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## **Plagiarism:**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own." This can include:

- Reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- Submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- Using another's data or research findings;
- Failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- Handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course. In all written assignments, students are expected to cite the work of others using APA format. A basic tutorial on APA format can be found at [http://www.library.carleton.ca/sites/default/files/help/writing-citing/apa\\_style.pdf](http://www.library.carleton.ca/sites/default/files/help/writing-citing/apa_style.pdf). Further research is required to accurately cite media texts.

### **Requests for Academic Accommodations**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy Obligation:** Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide

**Religious Obligation:** Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website ([www.carleton.ca/pmc](http://www.carleton.ca/pmc)) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

In cases of illness, family death etc., accommodation relating to course requirements can only be made with the submission of official certification (original).

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Good help is hard to find, so consider this:

The Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS) is a centralized collection of learning support services designed to help students achieve their goals and improve their learning both inside and outside the classroom. CSAS offers academic assistance with course content, academic writing and skills development. Visit CSAS on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of MacOdrum Library or online at: [carleton.ca/csas](http://carleton.ca/csas).

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## **Lectures**

**September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - Introduction & Review of the Course**

**Section 1 – Strategic Public Opinion and Crisis Communication**

**September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - Preparations**

1. Crisis Communication Fundamentals
2. Strategic Communication Plan Examples
3. Theoretical Foundation - The Best Comm WH

## **Three Options**

### **Option One**

**The Opioid Crisis and McKesson**

- **Defending McKesson**
- **The Federal Government Response**

### **Option Two**

**The Impeachment of Donald J. Trump**

- **The Democrat Plan**
- **The Republican Plan**

### **Option Three**

**Saving a Public Figure / Institution**

- **Justin Trudeau**
- **Soulpepper Theater**
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**September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018 – Team Work**

**October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 - In Class Review and Q & A**

**October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - THANKSGIVING**

**October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - Presentations**

**October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 – FALL BREAK**

**Interlude**

**October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - Book Club Lecture**

## **Section 2 – Strategic Public Opinion and Campaigns**

**November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - Review of the Case Study and Preparations**

### **Two Options**

**Selling the Canadian Federal Party Platforms**

**The Liberals**

**The Conservatives**

**The NDP**

**Selling Canada's Energy Sector**

**Lecture - Theoretical Foundation Part 1**

Frank Luntz, **Words That Work: It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear**, 2008.

George Lakoff, **The ALL NEW Don't Think of an Elephant!: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate**, 2014.

Drew Westen, **The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation**, 2008.

**November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018 – Lecture - Theoretical Foundation Part 2**

Frank Luntz, **Words That Work: It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear**, 2008.

George Lakoff, **The ALL NEW Don't Think of an Elephant!: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate**, 2014.

Drew Westen, **The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation**, 2008.

- Last Hour: Getting Started

**November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - Team Work**

**November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 - In Class Review and Q & A**

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 – Presentations**