

**POLM 5014/COMS5203
Political Marketing
Winter 2025**

IN PERSON DELIVERY

Course Description

As Jennifer Lees-Marshment put it:

Political marketing is a fundamental part of political life. A large number of political players, including presidents and prime ministers, politicians and parties, as well as government departments and councils turn to marketing in their pursuit of political goals. Market research is used when deciding on policies and service design, to understand what the people they serve and seek votes from want and need; voter profiling helps create new segments to target; strategy guides the creation of the political brand to develop an attractive vision; internal marketing guides the provision of volunteer involvement; analytics and experimental research test and refine communication messages; and delivery management sets expectations and helps to convey progress once a politician is elected or a programme has begun. Political marketing is complex, broad, and constantly evolving. No longer confined to advertising or campaigns, marketing influences policy development and leadership decisions. In government significant resources are devoted to policy research, marketing, and branding whole nations. Politicians use communication to build long-term relationships with voters rather than just sell their product.

The objective of this course is to understand what it means – in practical terms – to look at politics through the lenses of political marketing – instead of more traditional frameworks like political economy, political science, or public administration. First, we will examine what is political marketing. Then, we will discuss the main components of the practice. Throughout the course, we will hear directly from experts and practitioners.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, students are expected to have:

- * A knowledge of the scientific literature on political marketing and a knowledge of some of the important intellectual and applied influences
- * The ability to assess, balance and contrast the weaknesses and strengths of different positions in classic and contemporary debates in this field.
- * An understanding of the research skills necessary to the analysis of the nature and effects of political marketing in Canada.

Optional Books (available on amazon.ca)

Jennifer Lees-Mashment et al., **Political Marketing**, 3rd edition, 2019.

Alex Marland et al., **Political Marketing in Canada**, 2012.

Grade Breakdown

FINAL PROJECT (35%)

Each student will choose **one** of the following campaign **RE-Dos** as final project:

The Kendall Jenner Pepsi Ad Campaign is generally viewed as one of the worst campaigns of all times – How could you redo this?

Vancouver is now perceived as the Fentanyl Capital of the World – how would you rehabilitate the City's image

The PQ is poised to form government in the next year or so and will hold a referendum on Quebec Independence. What would you do so that it succeeds this time around.

The 2024 UK general election was held on July 4th 2024 and the Labour Party defeated the governing Conservative Party in a landslide. Redo the Conservative campaign.

After stealing the spotlight for many years, PETA is no longer relevant. Re-imagine this organization and make it relevant again.

Rehabilitate Kanye West.

After almost winning the fight against smoking, vaping is on the rise. Design an Anti-Vaping Campaign.

In the Saskatchewan election, the NDP came very close to defeating the Saskatchewan Party. Redo the NDP campaign.

The Dylan Mulvaney-Bud Light collaboration was a marketing disaster. How would you do this over again?

In the BC election, the Conservatives fell short in their attempt to defeat the incumbent NDP. Redo the Conservative campaign.

Nuclear Energy is one of the cleanest energy sources available. It is used throughout Europe but not in North America. Design a campaign for nuclear energy.

After stealing the spotlight for many years, Greenpeace is no longer relevant. Re-imagine this organization and make it relevant again

Abortion is now illegal in several States in the US. Reverse this trend with a new campaign.

*Now that weed is legal in Canada, psychedelics are next. Design a campaign for the **Psychedelics 4 Everyone Organization**.*

The PQ is poised to form government in the next year or so and will hold a referendum on Quebec Independence. What would you do so that it fails again.

Pierre Poilievre is now Prime Minister of Canada. Taking his cues from the US, he wants to restrict access to abortion in Canada. You have been hired to design a campaign to support his efforts.

Rehabilitate Twitter.

- Each STUDENT will submit the equivalent of a 30-minute presentation deck.

The evaluation will be based on:

The integration of at least 4 key elements from the course

Feasibility of the campaign

Originality

Depth of Scholarship

Quality and depth of the information provided

Accuracy of the information provided

Quality of the visuals

Clarity of the visuals and of the overall deck

Strength of the argument

Experts and Practitioners Journal (30%)

We have 4 scheduled lectures with experts and practitioners. The JOURNAL will be a reflection and lessons learned from those sessions. For each, students will address:

A summary of the main points of the sessions

How does it relate (or not) from the associated lecture.

Discuss critically – what have you learned?

Each entry will be about 4-5 double-spaced pages.

TAKE-HOME PROJECT (40%)

This *Take-Home Project* will focus on lectures and how the content can be applied to specific situations.

The format will be to choose to answer two of six questions.

The answer should have the following components:

First – Position the question/project within the context of political marketing

Which fundamentals from the basics of political marketing can contribute to addressing the issue.

Second – Review the relevant element(s) discussed in class which can help address the issue.

Third – Outline an approach/solution to address the issue.

Format: Submit what would be the equivalent of a 15-minute Powerpoint presentation per question

The evaluation criteria are:

Quality and depth of the information provided

Accuracy of the information provided

Quality of the visuals

Clarity of the visuals and of the overall deck

Strength of the argument

Lectures Outline

Week 1 - Lecture: Introduction and Review

FIRST SECTION – FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS

Week 2 – Lecture: Basic Principles of Political Marketing

Readings: Jennifer Lees-Marshment et al., **Political Marketing: Principles and Approaches**, 3rd edition, 2019, chapters 1 and 2.

Alex Marland et al. eds, **Political Marketing in Canada**, 2012, Part 1.

Week 3 – Meet – (ON ZOOM)

Jennifer Lees-Marshment - UK

Jamie Gillies - CANADA

Vincent Raynauld - US

Week 4 – Lecture: Element One - Public Opinion

Week 5 – Meet the Practitioners

Coalition for a Better Future

Hon. Lisa Raitt

Hon. Anne McLellan

Susannah Pierce

Week 6 – Lecture: Element Two – Understanding the Voter

Alex Marland et al. eds, **Political Marketing in Canada**, 2012, chapters 4,5 and 6.

Week 7 - READING WEEK

Week 8 – Lecture: Element Three – Political Market Research

Readings: Jennifer Lees-Marshment et al., **Political Marketing: Principles and Approaches**, 3rd edition, 2019, chapter 3.

Alex Marland et al. eds, **Political Marketing in Canada**, 2012, chapter 9.

Week 9 - Meet the Practitioners (ON ZOOM)

Johanna Holmes – CBC

Andy Baker – Digital CBC

Harrison Lowman – The Hub

Week 10 – TAKE-HOME PROJECT

Week 11 – Lecture: The Populist Persuasion

Week 12 – Meet the Practitioners (ON ZOOM)

Preston Manning

Nathan Manning

Week 13 – EXPANDED OFFICE HOURS FOR FINAL PROJECT