

# Public Sector Marketing, Strategic Planning and Communications

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EMPA U6020

Saturdays 2:00 – 4:00  
Room 405 IAB

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## Overview

Understanding both organizational strategies and the media are the first steps in shaping and influencing public opinion. Effective communication strategies depend on understanding two things: what you are trying to communicate, and how the media function. With this in mind, this course explores the practical applications of communications strategies and the theoretical foundations of those operations. You will analyze how the relevant players to news coverage (e.g., politicians, organization leaders, press officers, reporters, producers and columnists) interact in the creation of content. The course will include lectures, discussions and guest speakers, with an emphasis on classroom interaction based on the reading material.

## Individual Assignments

Throughout the semester, you will be required to submit the following items. These items do not have to be about the same organization; however, you may find it useful to focus on one organization for all three individual assignments. ***Please note, however, that the organizations chosen for the individual assignments may not be the same as those in use for the group projects.***

The three individual assignments are:

- Strategy Memo – a two page (single spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins) memo outlining a one-year communications plan for a public sector organization (political campaign, non-profit organization or government agency).
- Press release – A standard format press release (details to be discussed).
- Op-ed piece – An opinion/editorial not to exceed 750 words.

You must hand in individual assignments during the classes indicated below. Failure to do so may result in an “incomplete” grade or a make-up assignment. If you are unable to attend a class when an assignment is due, please e-mail a copy prior to the class time and then submit a hard copy as soon as possible after your absence.

## Project and Project Groups

One of the most important components of this course is the group work culminating in a group communications plan. Groups will choose a real-life public sector organization (political campaign, non-profit organization or government agency); this organization, and its issues and challenges, will provide groups with the content of their project for the semester. In effect, for the semester, groups will serve as the communications officers of their chosen organization. In this group project, you will prepare a comprehensive communications strategy plan.

At the end of the semester, groups will present the communications plan for their organization. In short, the specific written deliverables for the group project are the same as the individual assignments, as well as a ten to fifteen page paper (double spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins) detailing the group’s approach and strategy, including a detailed analysis of the opportunity, objectives, strategies and tactics pursued, plus a measurement program. A separate handout will be provided regarding the expectations for the format of the final group paper.

An interesting and challenging part of the course is the live presentation of your plan to the rest of the class. The group presentations, not to exceed 20 minutes in length, will occur on either December 4 or

December 11. All group final papers and supporting documents are due in class the day that the group presents. Following the presentations, groups will answer questions from the rest of the class.

Groups of three to five people must be determined by Week 2. Preferably, groups will come to class on Week 2 having determined their members; however, we will spend a few minutes at the beginning of that class session determining groups for those who have not chosen them. Groups shall decide upon their organization by Week 3, and during that class session must submit a memo not to exceed three pages (double spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins) detailing their choice and a brief outline of the organization, its communications challenges, and the reason for the study. Groups will select a group leader, who will be my point of contact for all deliverables and in setting up the group meeting.

***Each group is required to meet with me midway through the semester to discuss progress on the group project. At least half of the group members must be present at the meeting.***

For the group project, the grading emphasis will be on content and presentation, as well as the degree to which the paper and deliverables incorporate complex concepts and develop a convincing set of arguments supporting the proposed plan.

## Grading

Group Project deliverables:	20%
Group Project presentation:	20%
Class Participation:	15%
Individual Assignments:	15% <i>each</i>

## Courseworks

This course will make use of the Courseworks website for the class. If you are unfamiliar with the site, please review the information found at [https://courseworks.columbia.edu/cms/cu\\_about/essentials.cfm](https://courseworks.columbia.edu/cms/cu_about/essentials.cfm), or email [courseworks@columbia.edu](mailto:courseworks@columbia.edu). You are expected to review the website for any syllabus changes when directed to do so by email. Questions that cannot be fully addressed in class, or points that can be elucidated further after class, will be addressed in the Class Discussion Board through Courseworks. Participation on the class discussion board will count toward the class participation portion of the grade.

## Readings

The following books are available through Amazon.com, and should be ordered immediately:

- 1) The Jossey-Bass Guide to Strategic Communications for Nonprofits (1999) by Kathy Bonk, Henry Griggs, Emily Tynes
- 2) The Tipping Point (2002) by Malcolm Gladwell
- 3) News that Matters (1989) by Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder

Additionally, a course packet with chapters of additional books and other materials is available for purchase at Copy Quick. Readings identified with an asterisk can be found in the course packet.

Other materials will be distributed throughout the semester. All readings are required, and you are expected to complete the readings by the day indicated. The Anthrax Attacks case study can be found on Courseworks.

# Course Outline

**Week 1: September 11**

- Introduction and Course Overview
- What are Strategic Communications for the Public Sector?

**Week 2: September 18**

- Split class into Project Groups
- Analyzing and Organizing Goals and Ideas

**Reading**

**Chapter 1 – Jossey-Bass Guide**

**Chapters 1 & 37 – Salzman 1998\***

***The Tipping Point, in its entirety, should be read as quickly as possible, but by Week 4 at the latest.***

**Week 3: September 25**

- Building A Marketing and Communications Plan
- Targeting Audiences
- Media Relations and Spokespeople
- Press Releases and Basic Tools

**Reading**

**Chapter 4, 5, 9 - Jossey-Bass Guide**

**Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 – Salzman 1998\***

**Chapters 1 & 2 – Radtke\***

*Assignment: Group memos*

**Week 4: October 2**

- Political Communications
- Campaign Strategy and Communications
- Guest Lecture, Jef Pollock, Partner, Global Strategy Group

**Reading**

**Chapters 1 & 6 – Fallows\***

**Chapters 1 & 4 – Kernell\***

**Prologue – Patterson\***

***Entire book (minus appendices), Iyengar & Kinder***

**Week 5: October 9**

- Navigating the News Media
- Websites as means of communications

**Reading**

**Chapters 3 & 8 - Jossey-Bass Guide**

**Chapters 34 & 45 – Salzman 1998\***

**Chapters 3 & 4 – Radtke\***

*Assignment: Individual Strategy Memo*

- Week 6: October 16**
- Non-Profit Marketing, Communications and Brand Identity
  - Guest Lecture, Nancy Lublin, founder, Dress for Success

***Reading TBA***

*Assignment: Individual Press Release*

- Week 7: October 23**
- Evaluation

***Reading***  
***Chapter 13 – Jossey-Bass Guide***  
***Chapter 16 – Salzman 1998\****  
***Chapter 7 – Radtke\****

- Week 8: October 30**  
NO CLASS – ELECTION DAY WEEKEND

- Week 9: November 6**
- Crisis Management

***Reading***  
***Chapter 12 – Jossey-Bass Guide***  
***Chapter 32 – Salzman 1998\****  
***Anthrax Attacks case study***

*Assignment: Individual Op-Ed piece*

- Week 10: November 13**
- Government Communications
  - Guest Speaker TBA

- Week 11: November 20**  
GROUP REHEARSALS

- Week 12: November 27**  
NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

- Week 13: December 4**
- Group Presentations

- Week 14: December 11**
- Group Presentations