Expanding your media clout: Leveraging tomorrow’s communications today

Course Syllabus

21616
POGO 580 002 (Spring 2020)
Room 465 Arlington
1.5 Hours
Thursday, 7:20 – 10:00 pm

Instructor: Dr. David K. Rehr
Professor
Telephone: 703-819-9396 (m)
Email: Drehr@gmu.edu
Office: Van Metre Hall – Room 672
Office Hours: By appointment
Class Meetings: Thursday 7:20 pm – 10:00 pm
Course Description and Overview

The course is designed to provide students with the historical and legal background of the media and how individuals can position themselves to be successful in print, radio, television, and social media. Students will gain the practical skills necessary to succeed in the fast paced and turbulent world of mass communications. The goals of this course are to get students comfortable for interviews so all students can exercise their First Amendment right to speak freely, and to build their professional reputation.

The course will also feature likely guest lecturers (depending on their availability) from former Members of Congress, professional lobbyists, media personalities, individuals that work in a State Capitol, and former Executive Branch officials, who will share their perspectives on the media.

Communication:

The best way to connect is via email. You can expect a response within 24 hours, but often within a matter of minutes, depending on schedules. You can also make an appointment before/after class.

Academic Integrity

All members of the Schar School of Policy and Government community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined here as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. For more information, see the Honor Code: http://sls.gmu.edu/honor/

Attendance:

The expectation for the class is that regular attendance is strongly encouraged, and attendance will be taken. Any student missing a class must contact Professor Rehr prior to the beginning of the class. Unauthorized absence(s) will be reflected in the final course grade. Students should be prepared for each class, having read the required readings and anticipate potential questions for guests. Remember, a portion of your final grade is based upon class participation.
Use of Electronic Devices During Class:

Use of electronic devices during class is discouraged. Laptops may be used in class if strongly preferred, but only for taking notes and be related to class material and discussions. Cell phones may not be used during class.

Recording Class Lectures and use of social media:

The recording of the course and any class is not permitted. Also, use of publicizing course material, comments or comments of guest speakers on social media is not permitted. The only exception is the posting of pictures (no video or audio) if desired by the Professor. This will allow free and unencumbered discussion and exchange of ideas. Professor Rehr may grant exceptions under unusual and exceptional circumstances.

Disability Accommodations:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

Course Evaluation:

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting:

Thys Van Schalk
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Schar School of Policy and Government
mvanscha@gmu.edu
(703)-993-8227

Class Expectations:

This class will consider how to increase your visibility and effectiveness by leveraging the media. Students are encouraged to engage in respectful and engaging debate with the diverse speakers serving as guest lecturers, even if you personally disagree with their perspective. We will focus this class on being the best interviewer you can be for assorted medium.
**Course Requirements**

Students are expected to participate in class discussion, complete assignments on time and within guidelines, and finish assigned readings before class when due. Students are also expected to take part in in-class media practice, recordings, and interviews, both in and out of class. Please submit assignments electronically to drehr@gmu.edu and make sure your name appears at the top of each page with reference to Expanding your Media Clout. You can also bring your paper to the class prior to the beginning of the class when the assignment is due.

**Grading:**

This is a graded course. The final percentage will be determined by the following percentages: 50% based upon total points available through written assignments; 30% active class participation; 20% on final class presentation.

**Assignments and Valuation:**

Additional detail about each assignment is provided at the end of the syllabus. Below provides the name of each topic, the learning objective addressed, due date, and the maximum number of points available to the student. All written papers should be at least 5 pages long (double spaced).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Learning Objective(s) Addressed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight (Total points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Google’ yourself so you are updated when others mention you and prepare a memo on what your current google search tells us about you?</td>
<td>Students will exercise the professional skills expected of highly successful professionals.</td>
<td>Before 6 pm on September 4, 2018.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain the importance of having the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution</td>
<td>Students will understand basic principles of Constitutional Law and what makes America a special place in the world that allows people to speak freely.</td>
<td>Before 6 pm on September 11.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Due Date</td>
<td>Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research the background of a successful media personality. Explain how they got their “Break” and what occurred?</td>
<td>Students will be able to apply trace patterns of media exposure and success. Is the individual person chosen considered a “top” expert?</td>
<td>Before 6 pm on September 18.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Record an audio interview of yourself and a classmate of your choice about an issue topic?</td>
<td>Students will gain an understanding of how people “speak” on the radio.</td>
<td>Before 6 pm on October 16.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Prepare a social media plan that enhances your professional reputation. Discuss what social media platforms you would choose, why, and what you hope to achieve. Include: topics, pictures desired, dates, and characteristics you wish to convey</td>
<td>Improve professional reputation by conscious effort to expand your reputation and how people perceive you through your social media postings.</td>
<td>Before 6 pm on October 23.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss how social media badly used can undermine or destroy a professional reputation.</td>
<td>Students should discover what NOT to do in social media and/or how it can haunt your career.</td>
<td>Before 6 pm on October 30.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide an assessment “Does fake news” exist? Why or why not?</td>
<td>Engage in a critical but fair analysis of the accusation that the media has a strong biased when reporting news.</td>
<td>Before 6 pm on November 20.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Assignment – Prepare a two minute or less video interview that could be submitted to a national media network on a topic of your choice.</td>
<td>Enhance interview skills and creative production through the creation of a video interview that has the quality of what we often find in the national media.</td>
<td>PowerPoint is ready to present December 4 &amp; December 11.</td>
<td>10</td>
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</table>
Class Participation: Active participation and engagement during class. This includes asking questions of speakers, participating in media practice, and offering personal insights and observations. Viewed throughout the course, with end date of December 11. Class should ask questions of presenters.

Grading Percentages:

- A+ - 100-98%
- A - 91-98%
- B+ - 86- 90%
- B - 80 – 85%
- C - 70 – 79%
- F - Percentage below 69%

Required Reading:


Supplemental:

https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action?referrer=playlist-the_most_popular_talks_of_all

https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_how_to_speak_so_that_people_want_to_listen?referrer=playlist-the_most_popular_talks_of_all&language=en

https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are?referrer=playlist-the_most_popular_talks_of_all

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqCsc31xg24

Tentative Course Calendar*
*The instructor(s) reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress and the availability of invited guest lecturers. All guest lecturers mentioned are tentative and subject to their availability. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.

Each class will be divided into two sessions – approximately 90 minutes each to ensure students understand the complexity of the issue presented. Generally, expect to stay until 10 pm for each class session.

Spring 2020 Course

January 23

Class #1 – How the media can leverage your professional profile? A review of the media landscape?

Topic and Content Covered

Introductions
Learning expectations
Course review
How media can catapult your professional career

Learning Objectives Addressed

Students will demonstrate an understanding of research, oral advocacy, negotiation, and problem solving.
Required Reading:

Morgan, pp.35-58.

Class Questions and Discussion Issues

What are student and professor expectations for class?
Being yourself, while meeting the needs of the media?
Discussing the need for a media reputation calendar?

Second portion of class January 23

Class #2 – Print media – what they want, what are the rules of interaction, and how do you interact with them

Topic and Content Covered

What makes print media unique
Mastering the rules of print media
Creating print media opportunities

Learning Objectives Addressed

Students will demonstrate an understanding of media research, oral advocacy, negotiation, and problem solving.

Required Reading:

Morgan, pp. 79-92

Invited Guest Lecturer

John Brandt, Manager of the Council’s Policy Communications and Corporate Responsibility practice area for the Public Affairs. Prior to joining the Council, John was the associate director for communications at George Washington University’s Graduate School of Political Management (GSPM), overseeing the school’s media relations, internal and external communications, and social media platforms. He began his career in DC as a journalist at the Fox News Channel for nearly a decade, spending three years covering the House and Senate for the organization.
Class Questions and Discussion issues

How should you think about media interaction?
How do I handle print media bias?
Are there any hints or tricks for successful press interviews?

January 30

Class #3– The essentials necessary for effective interviews. How to create media interest and why it is important. The importance of establishing a media strategy.

Topic and Content Covered

Ingredients for a successful interview in the media
What the media expects from you
The process of getting in the media
Tools that make getting media easier
The need for a media strategy to get your message out effectively

Learning Objectives Addressed

Students will understand basic steps for getting in the media and the competitive pressure media producers face for guests.

Tips toward making your interviews easier.

What to avoid saying, particularly on television.

Required Reading:

Invited Guest speaker

Leslie Aun is Vice President of Communications and Marketing for Population Reference Bureau in Washington D.C., leading all communications activities including public relations, marketing communications, branding and advertising, video and graphic design, and thought-leadership. She began her career as a print and broadcast journalist with media outlets including Federal Times, The Washington Business Journal, WTOP Radio and WUSA Channel 9, before holding senior-level communication positions at such organizations as MCI.
Communications, Special Olympics International, Susan G. Komen for the Cure and Sodexo. As vice president of communications for the World Wildlife Fund, she led the team that won PR Week’s Silver Anvil Award for excellence in the field of PR for her work as managing director of Earth Hour, one of the largest and most successful public events for climate change in history, with more than a billion participants from around the world. Most recently she headed up communications for Keolis North America, a global operator of public transit systems. She has consulted for a variety of organizations including NPR and Discovery Learning Alliance, and her work has been published in The Washington Post, Forbes Magazine and Roll Call. A former adjunct faculty member and frequent lecturer at Georgetown University’s School of Continuing Studies and has served on the boards of organizations including Penn State University’s Sustainability Institute. A native of the Washington DC area, she graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Government from the University of Virginia’s College of Arts and Sciences.

**Class Questions and Discussion issues:**

- How do you construct a media strategy and ‘persona’
- When should you issue a formal news release to amplify your media
- What do media personalities expect from your interview
- How do you break through to get in the media

**Second portion of class January 30**

Class #4 – Effective radio interviews – Exploring the theater of the mind

**Topic and Content Covered**

- What makes great radio interviews
- Tips of successful radio guests
- The importance of telling interesting stories to hold listeners
- What listeners hate from guests – mistakes to avoid

**Learning Objectives Addressed**

- Students will understand basic principles of successful radio interviews
- What radio producers consider news and how to get on radio stations

**Required Reading:**

Utterback, pp. 145-56, Appendix E

**Class Questions and Discussion issues:**
Are there radio formats that are better for interviews
How do effectively open and close a radio interview
Mistakes often made by radio interview guests
What do you do when you have a bad interview
How can you amplify your radio guest appearance to leverage more knowledge
How do you repeat guest appearances on radio

February 6
Class #5 – What TV Producers look for behind their camera?

Topic and Content Covered
What producers look for in great guests
How to dress to give yourself a visual edge
The importance of succinct, short statements
The importance of smiling in a visual medium
Mistakes TV guest often make and why they are not invited back

Learning Objectives Addressed
Students will exercise the professional skills expected of members of the Schar School of Policy and Government

Required Readings:
Morgan, pp. 93-120.

Invited Guest Speaker:
Prominent TV producer

Class Questions and Discussion issues:
What makes a great interview for a TV producer
What elements must be considered for a great interview
How is live TV different than a recorded interview? Does it matter
Does the guest behave differently with the more than one guest or answering controversial issues
Second portion of class February 13

Class #6 – In class practice session of recording live radio and TV interviews

Topic and Content Covered

Class will consist of practice session of radio and TV interviews. Students will be assigned specific times for practice.

Learning Objectives Addressed

Practice for media future interviews
Tips for being successful on TV

Required Reading:

No readings assigned for this class.

Class Questions and Discussion issues:

What is the basic posture for best TV interviews
How does your voice and choice of words impact a radio interview
What other tricks help produce an outstanding media interview

February 20

Class #7 – Experiences working inside a media empire and lessons learned on the distribution of content

Topic and Content Covered

How media companies operate
How new producers choose topics for shows
The role of entrepreneurialism in the media
Company priorities and how that impacts what is aired
The assorted ways content can be distributed

Learning Objectives Addressed
Students will exercise the professional skills expected of members of the Schar School of Policy and Government

Required Readings:
No required reading for this class.

Invited Guest Speaker:

Professor Justin Gest is an Associate Professor of Policy and Government at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government. His teaching and research interests include comparative politics, immigration, and demographic change. He is the author of four books: Apart: Alienated and Engaged Muslims in the West (Oxford University Press/Hurst, 2010); The New Minority: White Working Class Politics in an Age of Immigration and Inequality (Oxford University Press, 2016); The White Working Class: What Everyone Needs To Know (Oxford University Press 2018); and Crossroads: Comparative Immigration Regimes in a World of Demographic Change (Cambridge University Press, 2018), co-authored with Anna Boucher. His research has been published in journals including Comparative Political Studies, Ethnic and Racial Studies, the International Migration Review, and Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. He has also published commentary with a number of newspapers, including The Guardian, Los Angeles Times, POLITICO, Reuters, The Times, and The Washington Post. From 2010 to 2014, Professor Gest was a Harvard College Fellow and Lecturer in Harvard University’s Departments of Government and Sociology.

Class Questions and Discussion Issues:

How are show topics chosen

What role do ratings play in deciding content

Some pros and cons of working inside the media

What impact has technology had on media operations and discernment of knowledge

Second Portion of February 20

Class #8 – Stories from the media trenches: The good, the bad, and the ugly?

Topic and Content Covered
Real world examples of what works and what does not work in different medium
Off the record stories of interacting with reporters and news personalities
Important media life lessons learned when the lights were on or the content posted

Learning Objectives Addressed

Students will demonstrate an understanding of legal research, legal analysis, oral advocacy, negotiation, and problem solving.

Required Readings:

Morgan, pp. 101-120.

Invited Guest Speaker(s)

A panel of experts who have appeared in the media on behalf of non-profit organizations, association, corporations, academics, or interest groups

Class Questions and Discussion Issues:

What was the best (and worst) media experience you have had and why
What would you recommend to prepare for a nasty interviews
How do you leverage a media interview to get more requests
What lessons have you learned from your media experiences
What is one tip you would leave with the class to be better media guests

February 27

Class #9 – Social media strategy and distribution

Topic and Content Covered

What you can expect from a social media strategy
How to create content for social media
When and how often to post
Are there some platforms better than others for visibility
Are there security concerns with TikTok or Snapchat
Maximizing your presence on LinkedIn

Learning Objectives Addressed
Students will demonstrate an understanding of research, analysis, oral advocacy, negotiation, and problem solving.

Students will be able to understand the importance of social media posting and how it builds reputation.

**Required Readings:**

Social Media Trends 2019, (Hubspot) PDF provided by Dr. Rehr

**Invited Guest Speaker:**

Expert on social media engagement

**Class Questions and Discussion Issues:**

- What technology can aid you in social media posting
- Do different social media sites have different audiences
- Can you ever do “too much” social media
- Why you need a written strategy that you follow to be successful

**Second Portion of February 27**

Class #10 – Tips to successful social media – differentiating yourself to stay relevant

**Topic and Content Covered**

Lessons learned from bad social media posting
How to differentiate yourself
Time + Posting = Reputation return
Shortcuts to effective posting

**Learning Objectives Addressed**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of research, policy analysis, oral advocacy, negotiation, and problem solving in the social media culture

**Required Reading:**
Chambers, Henry, Where Social Media Marketing is Headed in the Next 5 Years: The Unconventional Guide to Build your Brand and Become an Expert Influencer Using Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Pinterest Instagram and YouTube (2019)

**Class Questions and Discussion Issues:**

*What should be your social media strategy?*

*Are their tips to maximize your content?*

*How should you fashion your media identity?*

**March 5**

Class #11. - How and what do public affairs do to get you in the media?

**Topic and Content Covered**

How to think about branding your legislative campaign  
The importance of how to frame issues  
Discussion of various legislative ‘frames’ and models

**Learning Objectives Addressed**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of legal research, legal analysis, oral advocacy, negotiation, and problem solving.

**Required Reading:**

Morgan, pp. 121 – 142, 143 – 1 88.  
Utterback, 177 – 181.

**Invited Guest speaker**

Kristen Fedewa is president of a boutique communications and public relations firm, Kirsten Fedewa & Associates, L.L.C., with experience and contacts in government, political, corporate, media and entertainment circles. Specialties include strategic planning, publicity, media relations, and special events. The firm’s highest profile client to date is former 2008 Presidential Candidate Mike Huckabee (AR) for whom she secured an estimated $400 million in free media. The firm also managed a two-year, 12-city media campaign for the U.S. Chamber Foundation. She began her career as the youngest press secretary in the U.S. House of Representatives, soon becoming
president of the Republican Communications Association and the largest bipartisan staff club on Capitol Hill. She was the first-ever national Communications Director for the Republican Governors Association (RGA) and the GOP governors’ liaison to two presidential campaigns. She graduated from The College of William and Mary and studied at Oxford University.

**Class Questions and Discussion Issues:**

How can public relations boost a media reputation?

Why is your media brand important?

What experiences led to maximum media attention?

How can you obtain media with little economic investment?

**Second Portion of March 5**

Class #12 – Giving effective small and big room presentations (teleprompter would be available to class)

**Topic and Content Covered**

How a teleprompter can make you an outstanding speaker  
Trick to be effective in large and small audiences  
Proper cadence  
The need to speak in short sentences  
Best in class body posture

**Learning Objectives Addressed**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of research, analysis, exceptional oral advocacy, and problem solving.

**Required Reading:**

[https://promptdog.com/teleprompter-training/](https://promptdog.com/teleprompter-training/)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsNEGyI_lvM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsNEGyI_lvM)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-4LsW6hKOI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-4LsW6hKOI)
Class Questions and Discussion Issues

When should you use a teleprompter
Are there teleprompter tips for success
How do you manage cadence and speed in your presentation

March 12

Class #13 – Final class presentations

Topic and Content Covered

Review of high points in interacting with different kinds of media
Understanding of different kind of content that can be used for audience
Polishing media skills through practice

Learning Objectives Addressed

Students will demonstrate an understanding of research, analysis, oral advocacy, and problem solving.

Required Reading:

There is no required reading for this class.

Class Questions and Discussion Issues

How can I be successful with different forms of media
What is my edge to appear in the media
Should I pick one media channel and stay in it
What type of practice should I undertake

Additional Portion of March 5

Class #14 – Final class presentations continued