

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC

Academic School / Department: **Communications, Arts and Social Sciences**
Programme: **MA in Advertising and Public Relations**
Level: **7**
Course Title: **Political Communication**
Course Code: **APR 7110**
Course Leader:

Student Engagement Hours: **200**
Lectures: 12
Seminars: 24
Tutorials: 12
Workshops & practical sessions: 12
Independent/Guided Learning: 140

Semester: **SPRING**
Credits: **20 UK CATS credits**
 10 ECTS credits
 4 US credits

Course description

This course examines the influence of mass communications on the development of democratic politics. It provides an insight into the relationship between political actors,

professional communicators and media personnel and institutions, and the way in which government advertising and public relations and political campaigning is undertaken.

Pre-requisites: MA Advertising and Public Relations students only

Aims and objectives

- To provide students with a critical introduction, both historical and contemporary, to the relationship between government, politicians and the media, and to the major debates surrounding this role
- To examine the role that PR and advertising and other communication and marketing disciplines play in the political process
- To engage critically in debates about the relationship between the media and politics, including the relationship between the media and public opinion, the public sphere and the political effects of the media.
- To help students use their understanding of political communication and information sources to produce a plan for a media campaign on a specific political/social issue.

Programme Outcomes

By the end of this course successful students will be able to B, C, D, F, G:

- B. Show critical and innovative responses to theories, methodologies and practices in Advertising and/or PR and their impact on the how the knowledge base is interpreted.
- C. Demonstrate a deep, systematic and innovative ability to adapt and apply the practice of PR to multiple contexts
- D. Design and undertake substantial investigations addressing significant areas of practice in PR, using selected and appropriate advanced approaches
- F. Evidence the ability to exercise initiative in organising, pursuing and reflecting upon both supervised and self-directed individual and/or team projects, while accepting full accountability for outcomes
- G. Show the ability to gather, organise and deploy complex and abstract ideas and diverse information in complex and specialised contexts, while reflecting upon and improving the skills required for effective written and oral communication

Learning Outcomes

- A critical understanding, both historical and contemporary, of the nature of political communication, including the relationship between government, politicians and the media, and of the major debates surrounding this role
- A critical understanding of the role that PR and advertising and other communication and marketing disciplines play in the political process

- An ability to use political communication techniques and relevant information sources to produce a plan for a media campaign on a specific political/social issue.

Indicative Content:

- Relationships between the media and politics in the UK and internationally
- Political PR
- Political advertising
- The use of other marketing disciplines
- Political journalism
- Politics and new media
- Lobbying and public affairs
- Activism and the role of campaigning organisations
- Case studies of political campaigns

Assessment:

The course is assessed according to the assessment norms of the university at level 7:

FHEQ level	Richmond/UK Level	Normal Number of Items (including final exam)	Total Assessment
LEVEL 7	R7000/UK MA	2-3	5,000 – 7,000 words

Teaching Methodology:

Teaching will include interactive lectures, supplemented with a range of audiovisual aids, designed to introduce students to the key concepts of professional practice. Guest speakers and activities with external organisations will contribute alternative perspectives and experience. Students will develop their critical understanding of these concepts and their practical application through a range of seminars, workshops and group and individual exercises undertaken in class and out of class. Their group and individual presentations and written work will be discussed in feedback sessions which explore responses to issues arising from professional practice. The teaching will be supplemented with individual tutorials designed to address students’ personal needs.

Bibliography

Campbell, A., *The Blair Years: Extracts from the Alastair Campbell Diaries*, Hutchinson, 2007
 Davies, N, *Flat Earth News*, Chatto & Windus, 2008 (plus later paperback)
 Marr. A, *My Trade*, Macmillan, 2004

MacNair, B, *An Introduction to Political Communication*, Routledge, 2007

Negrine, R (ed), *The Professionalisation of Political Communication*, Intellect, 2007