

COMMUNICATION 3060



"Political Communication"

Tuesday & Thursday, 4:00-5:15
Padre Rubio Hall N^o13

Professor: Brian M. Goss, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Monday 2:30-5; Tuesday, 5:30-7; Wednesday, 2-4
San Ignacio Hall N^o313
Course Credit: 3.0 Hours

Prerequisites: Communication 2000 & Communication 2800
-or- Declared Major in Political Science

Course Description

This course mobilizes a critical survey of political communication. Via readings, in-class discourse, and case studies, issues and practices that we will address include: leadership, audience reception, the propaganda

model and flak, free expression, elections and other promotional campaigns, war, secrecy, and new media. The approach to the subject matter will also traverse between “formal” and “informal” (cultural) politics.

Notice that the presentation of the material eschews “anything goes” relativistic stances. That is, we assume that there is an external reality against which to measure claims via the judicious use of evidence. In this view, political choices (as well as the communication practices that underwrite them) are not equally efficacious for the public interest. As the course plays out, we will also orient to the arenas of popular expression in which people “talk back” and contest even the terms of communicating politically (via, for example, art, humor, new media). While many examples will be drawn from US politics, the course also assays international reach, as political laws are neither trans-historical nor universal.

Method of Evaluation

Semester grades will be calculated out of 1000 possible points by the following scheme:

Three Short “Paperette” Assignments ...	100 + 120 + 130 = 350 points
Ten-Twelve Quizzes ...	160 points
Mid-Term Examination ...	150 points
Final Examination ...	180 points
Attendance & Participation ...	160 points

The “paperettes”, and examinations will be explained in detail in subsequent handouts during the course of the term. Quizzes cover material from assigned readings on the day that they are to be discussed and are weighted heavily to underscore the importance of being prepared for class. All quizzes are unannounced but will, nonetheless, be predictable since they will be regularly administered. Quizzes will be distributed at the start of class and collected no later than 4:10. If you are late, the quiz will be graded as zero. There is no make-up for a quiz but it will be graded “Excused” in the event of a documented excusable absence.

Objectives

The goals of the course are to (1) extensively model the practices of analyzing political texts—and contexts that excavate the pre-standing sociopolitical conditions that structure and produce texts; (2) examine the porosity between formal/explicit political messages and politics as embedded in everyday culture and practices; and (3) demonstrate that the political scene is contingent and labile. How it is now is not how it will always be—and what can be made can be made anew by people who most

want to bend the arc of the future to their vision.

Miscellaneous Policies

Written work that is submitted late without an acceptable excuse will be penalized, the magnitude of which will be at the instructor's discretion. If written work is not submitted within two weeks of the due date, it will be assigned a grade of zero. Aside from excused absences (documented illness, university-sponsored excursion), attendance is mandatory and will be recorded at all class meetings. A student may be granted no more than three excused absences.

The student is obligated to plan appointments and personal excursions outside of class time. Early exits from class session always present poor etiquette; do not show up for class unless you plan to stay the whole period.

Students are expected to be prepared, attentive, participatory, and courteous with the people with whom they share the academic milieu.

By virtue of being enrolled in this course, the student *by definition* firmly grasps all policies described in this syllabus. The concept of "I did not know!" does not exist within this realm.

The appendices at the end of this document detail (1) the grading scale that will be employed for final grades; (2) the campus calendar for the semester, and (3) university-wide policies (integrity, Title IX, special needs).

Course Materials

Beyond screenings and handouts during class session, texts to be mastered prior to class meetings will be found in the following channels:

- (1) Scanned readings distributed directly to students via email (hence the need to furnish the instructor with a current email address);
- (2) Internet selections listed below in the "Sequence of Topics" with author(s), article name, and URL.

Further readings may be assigned during the semester and placed on reserve or distributed directly to students.

Sequence of Class Sessions

I. Basics: A Survey of the Terrain

Tuesday 5 September—Introduction to Course

Thursday 7 September—Leaders & Messages

—Internet: Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Excerpt), available at: www.constitution.org/mac/princeoo.htm, Chapters: 3, 5, 18, 23

Paperette N^o1 Assigned

Tuesday 12 September—Audience Reception

—Internet: Drew Westen, “Voting with Their Hearts”, at:

www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2007/aug/08/politicalbooks.usa/print

—Internet: Brian Resnick, “Alex Jones and the Illusory Truth Effect, Explained”, at: www.vox.com/science-and-health/2017/6/17/15817056/alex-jones-megyn-kelly-lies-nbc-psychology-illusory-truth

II. Journalism & Its Dis(sed)-Contents

Thursday 14 September—The Propaganda Model, I

—Scanned Reading: Brian Michael Goss, “Introduction” (from *Rebooting the Propaganda Model...*)

—Scanned Reading: W. Lance Bennett, “Professional Journalism Standards & News Bias: Why Objective Reporting Is Not Objective”, from *News: The Politics of Illusion*

Tuesday 19 September—The Propaganda Model, II: Commercialism

—Scanned Reading: James Curran, “Rethinking Media & Democracy”

—Scanned Reading: Rodney Benson, “Public Funding and Journalistic Independence”

Thursday 21 September—The Propaganda Model, III: News Methods

—Internet: David Barstow, “Behind TV Analysts, Pentagon’s Hidden Hand”, at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/20/us/20generals.html>

—Scanned Reading: Oscar Gandy, “Beyond Agenda Setting”

Paperette N^o1 Due

Tuesday 26 September—The Propaganda Model, IV: Flak, I
—Internet: Monica Lewinsky, “Roger Ailes’ Dream Was My Nightmare”, at: www.nytimes.com/2017/05/22/opinion/monica-lewinsky-roger-ailes-dream-was-my-nightmare.html?mcubz=0
—Internet: Adam Cohen, “A Woman Wrongly Convicted and a US Attorney Who Kept His Job”, available at: www.nytimes.com/2007/04/16/opinion/16mon4.html
—Scanned Reading: Michael E. Mann, “Climategate: The Real Story”, from *The Hockey Stick and the Climate Wars*

Thursday 28 September—The Propaganda Model, V: Flak, II
—Scanned Reading: Brian Michael Goss, “Veritable Flak Mill”

III. Information—Sales Pitches—Conflict

Tuesday 3 October—Money Matters: Lobbying & Think Tanks
—Jane Mayer, “Tea Time”, from *Dark Money*

Thursday 5 October—Free Expression, I
—Internet: Ursula Owen & David Miller, “Not Always Good to Talk” at: www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,1178985,00.html
—Internet: Ulrich Baer, “What ‘Snowflakes’ Get Right About Free Speech”, at: www.nytimes.com/2017/04/24/opinion/what-liberal-snowflakes-get-right-about-free-speech.html
—Scanned Reading: Fred P. Pestello, “A Message from President Pestello”

Tuesday 10 October—Free Expression, II
—Scanned Reading: Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fear of Barbarians* (Excerpt)

Thursday 12 October—HOLIDAY (*Día de la Hispanidad*)

Tuesday 17 October—MID-TERM EXAMINATION

Paperette N^o2 Assigned

Thursday 19 October—Elections, Part I
—Internet: Elections New Zealand, “The Right to Vote”, available at: www.elections.org.nz/right-vote
—Scanned Reading: Kathleen Hall Jamieson, “The Role of Drama & Data in Political Decisions” from *Dirty Politics* (Excerpt)

Tuesday 24 October—Elections, Part II

—Internet: Damien Tambini, “In the New Robopolitics, Social Media Has Left Newspapers for Dead”, at:

www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/18/robopolitics-social-media-traditional-media-dead-brexit-trump

—Internet: Robert Booth, “Free Software to Reveal How Facebook Election Posts Are Targeted”, at:

www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/may/03/free-software-reveal-facebook-election-posts-targeted-chrome-extension?CMP=share_btn_link

Thursday 26 October—Elections, Part III

—Internet: John Fund, “Why Are Democrats Afraid of the Election Integrity Commission?” at:

www.nationalreview.com/article/447615/election-integrity-commission-trump-democrats-attack-ignore-fraud-evidence

Internet: Jane Mayer, “The Voter Fraud Myth”, at:

www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/10/29/the-voter-fraud-myth

—Internet: Natasha Khan & Corbin Carson, “Comprehensive Database of US Fraud Uncovers No Evidence that Voter ID Is Needed” at:
votingrights.news21.com/article/election-fraud/

IV. Information, War & Culture War

Tuesday 31 October—Presentations: Editorializing in Tandem, I

Paperette N^o2 Due

Thursday 2 November—Presentations: Editorializing in Tandem, II

Tuesday 7 November—Cultural Politics

—Scanned Reading: Steve Jones, “Culture” from *Antonio Gramsci* (Excerpt)

—Scanned Reading: Dick Hebdige, “Introduction”

Thursday 9 November—HOLIDAY (*La Almudena*)

Tuesday 14 November—War & Cold War, Part I

—Scanned Reading: James William Gibson, “Bombing as Communication” from *The Perfect War* (Excerpt)

Thursday 16 November—War & Cold War, Part II
—In-Class Screening of: *Mission Impossible* episode (Season No.3, 1967)
—Scanned Reading: Christopher Simpson, “Defining Psychological War” from *The Science of Coercion* (Excerpt)

Paperette N^o3 Assigned

Tuesday 21 November—Secrecy & Silence
—Internet: Coral Davenport & Eric Lipton, “Scott Pruitt Is Carrying Out His EPA Agenda in Secret, Critics Say” at:
www.nytimes.com/2017/08/11/us/politics/scott-pruitt-epa.html?mcubz=0
—Internet: Central Intelligence Agency Red Cell, “A Red Cell Special Memorandum”, available at: www.20min.ch/pdf/cia-afghanistan.pdf

V. Case Studies

Thursday 23 November—Invading Iraq
—Scanned Reading: Valerie Scatamburlo-D’Annibale, “In ‘Sync’”

Tuesday 28 November—Brexit
—Internet: Rafael Behr, “How Remain Failed”, at:
www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jul/05/how-remain-failed-inside-story-doomed-campaign

VI. Talking Back

Thursday 30 November—The Arts
—Internet: *The Guardian* (London) “Crude Awakening”, available at:
www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2010/jun/30/bp-tate-protests
—Scanned Reading: Eric J. Hobsbawm, “The Avant-Garde Dies” (*The Age of Extremes* [Excerpt])

Paperette N^o3 Due

Tuesday 5 December—Intellectuals, Pundits & Universities
—Scanned Reading: Nick Couldry, “Fighting for the University’s Life”
—Scanned Reading: Jeremy Jennings, “Deaths of the Intellectual”

Thursday 7 December—Cartoons & Humor
—Scanned Reading: Stephen Hess & Sandy Northrop, “Introduction”, from *Drawn and Quartered*

Tuesday 12 December—New Media

—Internet: Jonathan Sterne, “What if Interactivity Is the New Passivity?”, available at:

Flowtv.org/2012/04/the-new-passivity/

—Internet: Anglea Nagle, “The New Man of 4Chan”, at:
thebaffler.com/salvos/new-man-4chan-nagle

Final Examination: Tuesday 19 December, 15:30 (3:30 PM)

APPENDIX I: FINAL GRADE SCALE

910 points /1000 or above: “A”; 890-909 points: “A-”; 860 – 889 points: “B+”; 830 – 859 points: “B”; 800-829: “B-”; 770 – 799: “C+”; 730 – 769 points: “C”; 700 – 729: “C-”; 615 – 699 points: “D”; Less than 615: “F”

APPENDIX II: UNIVERSITY CALENDAR—AUTUMN ‘17

Calendar

Fall 2017

AUGUST		
Thursday	31	TOEFL test (4:00 p.m.)
SEPTEMBER		
Friday-Saturday	1-2	Permanent and Transfer students mandatory Academic Welcome Session and departure for Welcome Days from SLU-Madrid (9:00 a.m.)
Saturday	2	Class of 2021 Convocation at SLU-Madrid (12:00 p.m.-noon) Study Abroad arrival and Housing in host family move-in date
Sunday	3	Study abroad students mandatory Welcome Sessions (10:00 a.m.)
Monday	4	Fall 2017 first day of classes
Friday	8	Application deadline for fall semester degree candidates
Sunday	17	Last day to drop a class without a grade of W and/or add a class Last day to choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) options
Friday	29	Exams for MATH - First midterm (2:00-4:30 p.m.)
OCTOBER		
Thursday	12	<i>Fiesta Nacional de España</i> holiday (University closed)
Friday	13	University closed
Monday	16	Last day to submit Transfer Application for spring semester
Thursday	19	Professors' deadline to submit midterm grades
Monday	30	Last day to drop a class and receive a grade of W
NOVEMBER		
Wednesday	1	<i>Día de Todos los Santos</i> holiday (University closed)
Thursday	2	Registration for Spring 2018 semester begins
Thursday	9	<i>La Almudena</i> holiday (University closed)
Friday	24	Exams for MATH - Second midterm (2:00-4:30 p.m.)
DECEMBER		
Wednesday	6	<i>Día de la Constitución</i> holiday (University closed)
Friday	8	<i>Inmaculada Concepción</i> holiday (University closed)
Wednesday	13	Fall 2017 final day of classes
Thursday-Friday	14-15	Fall 2017 final exams
Monday-Wednesday	18-20	Fall 2017 final exams
Monday	18	Mid-Year Commencement
Thursday	21	Fall 2017 University Housing move-out date
Saturday	23	Professors' deadline to submit fall 2017 final grades

APPENDIX III: UNIVERSITY POLICIES

University Statement on Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office [website](#) at: Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online:

<http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

University Title IX Statement: Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLU-Madrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 917-00-1979). To view SLU-Madrid's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

Students with Special Needs: In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/campus-life/student-services/disability-services>.

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.