

COMM370: Contemporary Political Communication with Christina Knopf (Dr. K) –**Spring '08**
Prerequisite: Freshman Speaking (FS) or equivalent.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required –

- 4 Political Campaign Communication Principles & Practices, 6th edition. By: J.S. Trent & R.V. Friedenberg. Rowman & Littlefield 2008. ISBN 978-0-7425-5303-3
 - 4 Blackboard access
 - 4 A binder, report cover, folder, binder clip, or other means of organizing & maintaining a typed journal
- Recommended -
- 4 4x6 index cards
 - 4 Dedicated notebook, clearly labeled &/or color-coded for easy identification, for class notes
 - 4 Dedicated folder, clearly labeled &/or color-coded for easy identification, for handouts, assignments, etc.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of domestic (U.S.) politics in order to better understand how "political reality" is constructed through communication. To that end, the course will examine communication during particular political events, during acts of governance, and particular campaigns.

The Spring 2008 version of this course will be especially concerned with campaign communication, to coincide with the 2008 Presidential Election. The focus of this course is part history and part analysis of current political communication contexts – with special attention given to campaign speech acts in the first half of the semester and to political advertising in the second half of the semester. We will be exploring the major practices of political campaigning throughout American history and the present incarnations of this communication genre, with special attention being given the implications for American democracy. This class will take advantage of the current presidential election and will provide students with opportunities to not only critique “poli spots” but also to create them.

The purposes of this course are for you to:

- become well-versed in the basics of political communication.
- learn about trends in political communication research.
- practice and think about political communication theory, research, and exercises critically.
- refine your public speaking skills through the enactment of political speech

This course carries the General Education designator of “SI” – Speaking Intensive. This means you will participate in a semester-long series of oral communication assignments that strengthen understanding of effective oral communication in the discipline. The assumption is that everyone already knows how to create and deliver a speech and is ready to work on more advanced skills. Students who take this class are expected already know how to

- find, use, and cite evidence to support ideas
- ! decide what ideas to include in a speech
- ! arrange those ideas effectively, while using previews, transitions and signposts
- ! relate the ideas directly to the audience
- ! employ language to make ideas meaningful and interesting
- ! construct clear and effective introductions and conclusions
- ! use a delivery style that is vigorous, varied, and vivid

All of that is important in this class, but we won't spend time working on it. If you do not know how to do all that already you might not be ready for this class. If you need a refresher you should probably get a public speaking text from the library or the bookstore and review it early in the semester.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- ✓ Identify, compare, and contrast key moments in American political campaigns
- ✓ Describe and evaluate the qualities of effective political campaign communication
- ✓ Understand and apply several critical approaches to the study of political communication
- ✓ Consider the social, cultural, political, and economic effects of political communication acts
- ✓ Create your own forms of political communication

NOTE ABOUT POLITICAL PREFERENCES & PARTISANSHIP

*This class is designed to encourage student participation. This is not, however, a forum for arguing about political positions, beliefs, and affiliations; partisanship in class is not encouraged and it is asked that students keep their praise and criticisms focused on the communication elements of campaigning, not on parties or individual candidates (that is, it's OK to criticize or compliment a candidate's communication strategy but not to discuss at length the merits or weaknesses of people & parties). Views from all political affiliations are welcome in class and a friendly environment should be maintained, without students feeling threatened for having conflicting views; I will not tolerate excessive unrelated political discussions. I will likewise strive to keep my personal partisanship out of the classroom. Also, you may find that excessive cynicism about politics generally will be as counterproductive to you as partisan zealotry; to get the most out of this class, you will need to keep an open mind, be willing to self-challenge your current beliefs, and think critically about all perspectives and positions.****

ASSIGNMENTS

Surrogate Campaign Speech [5-6 minutes]

10%

Public speaking is the most fundamental communication practice in any campaign and speeches are the result of careful planning, research, and investments. Surrogate speakers are used when the candidate simply can't be in two places at once and so an appropriate, well-trained, speaker steps up instead.

Here is the Surrogate Campaign Speech Grading Rubric. Each item is worth a total of 10 points.

Basics
] Speaker is prepared & has taken the assignment seriously
] Speaker has competently employed the basic skills of public speaking
Surrogate's Functions
] Makes an effort to reduce audience resentment over candidate's absence
] Reminds the audience he/she is not the candidate
] Personally connects to, or relates with, audience
] Shows evidence of audience analysis, correctly identifying a worthwhile audience & message
Speech Format
] Gains attention
] Describes a problem
] Presents a solution
] Visualizes a solution

Concession Speech [5-6 minutes]

10%

In American politics, losing is not shameful but is, instead, part of the political drama. It is a ritual of combat involving valiant sacrifices by impressive foes, combined with the expressions of raw emotion in the face of humiliation.

Here is the Concession Speech Grading Rubric. Each item is worth a total of 10 points.

Basics
] Speaker is prepared & has taken the assignment seriously
] Speaker has competently employed the basic skills of public speaking
Concession Functions
] Speech admits defeat
] Speech makes the defeat honorable
] Speech congratulates the winner, accepting the election results, and noting personal contact with the winner
] Speech calls for unification
] Speech puts a brave face on failure, honoring democracy in action
] Speech transforms defeat into a victory, making a call to continue the fight
] Speech gives some indication about what the loser is experiencing
] Speech includes elements of political drama, psychodrama, plea for moral dispensation, or other earmarks of the genre.

Nomination Acceptance Speech [5-6 minutes]

10%

Since Grover Cleveland accepted his nomination for the presidency in 1892 with a speech at Madison Square Gardens, candidates who have attained their party's nomination for office lay claim to the responsibility and offer justification for the nomination through formal acceptance addresses.

Here is the Acceptance Speech Grading Rubric. Each item is worth a total of 10 points.

Basics
<input type="checkbox"/> Speaker is prepared & has taken the assignment seriously
<input type="checkbox"/> Speaker has competently employed the basic skills of public speaking
Functions
<input type="checkbox"/> Assumes the role of party leader
<input type="checkbox"/> Reaffirms and/or reestablishes party unity
<input type="checkbox"/> Makes motivational appeals that will resonate with the immediate audience
<input type="checkbox"/> Makes persuasive appeals for support to the larger public, seeking support of the entire constituency
Strategies
<input type="checkbox"/> Contains simplified partisan statements
<input type="checkbox"/> Bemoans the present and celebrates the future
<input type="checkbox"/> Stresses the importance of the election
Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Responds to the situational factors of the address

Ad Watch [5-6 minutes]

10%

“Ad Watches” by news media sources and other watchdog groups track the latest developments in political advertising and evaluate the accuracy of ads. Based on your readings involving media coverage of political spots, along with the examination of present Ad Watch coverage, you will conduct your own evaluation of a current political ad and present your report to the class, complete with video presentation of the analyzed ad. This means you will evaluate the claims made in paid political advertisements but avoid critiquing the production of the ad or the ad's effectiveness, break down the message by tracing the claims, track down the facts, use precise labels like “misleading,” “exaggerated” and “spin,” to help your audience draw their own conclusions about the subtleties of an ad, use the show-and-tell method to help the audience understand your investigative process. A widely recommended strategy for critical assessment of campaign advertising is the presentation of evidence of how accurately the claims made in an ad match the truth, along with a copy of the original ad clearly labeled so that audiences understand that it is the subject of a news piece. Commentary should be inserted at appropriate times, and if the ad is being played on the air, it should be frozen during the Ad Watch voiceovers.

Here is the Ad Watch Grading Rubric. Each item is worth 10 points.

Basics
<input type="checkbox"/> Speaker is prepared & has taken the assignment seriously
<input type="checkbox"/> Speaker has competently employed the basic skills of public speaking
Content
<input type="checkbox"/> Fact checking was thorough and accurate
<input type="checkbox"/> Analysis was objective and fair
<input type="checkbox"/> Analysis focused on claims
<input type="checkbox"/> All key copy was included in evaluation
<input type="checkbox"/> Key images were included in evaluation, where appropriate or necessary
<input type="checkbox"/> Information presented was clear.
<input type="checkbox"/> Language use and labels were appropriate and effective
<input type="checkbox"/> “Show and tell” method helps audience to understand your investigative method

Midterm

10%

This multiple-choice exam is designed to encourage your mastery of the discipline's vocabulary, your application of the concepts of campaign strategy, and your informed critical analysis of campaign messages. It is also a tangible reason to keep up on the reading. If you do the readings when assigned (see “Readings & Class Preparation” section below), attend class regularly, and take notes (see “Notes & Note-Taking” section below) you should do well.

Campaign 2008 Journal

10%

As part of this class, you will be asked to follow the stories about the presidential campaign. You should focus on the campaigning, and not on the policies or the people. You can use a variety of sources to get this information – Internet news sites, candidate Web sites, political party Web sites, newspapers, TV news, radio news, Blogs, etcetera. Your journals should connect what’s going on in the 2008 election to the concepts and ideas you learn in this class. Entries should focus on communication and campaign issues (strategies, polling, media coverage, voting blocks and the like – as opposed to your reactions about a candidate’s stance on gay marriage or the Iraq war.) They should not contain your personal political preferences or tirades. It is possible to make note of something a candidate did well, even if you despise his/her politics and it is possible to make note of something a candidate messed up, even if you’re rooting for him/her.

You should make 2 journal entries per week, *each one no less than 1 page*. This means your journal should have 32 total entries when you submit it at the end of the semester. Additional entries, should you be so inclined to do them, may result in extra credit if done well. These entries should be typed following the guidelines presented in this syllabus for all written work and kept together in a folder, report cover, binder, or something. You should bring your journal with you to every class so that you can refer to it during class discussions. Days when I will collect the complete journals are indicated on the course calendar with “****”.

This assignment is designed to help ensure quality class discussions and to encourage you to make connections between the course material and the “real world” while giving you practice in critical thinking skills. Each entry will be graded as ✓+ (A/4.0) where complete, thoughtful, and relevant to course material, ✓ (B/3.0) where satisfactory but lacking in completion or analysis, ✓- (C/2.0) where present but incomplete or irrelevant, or 0 (F) where absent. The total grade for the journal will be the average of each entry grade.

Attendance

10%

Because we only meet once a week and there will be a lot of in-class only activities like group work, media presentations, in-depth and open discussions, and maybe even some political games, attendance is really important to the class and will count towards your overall grade. The attendance grade will be based on how many hours out of our 40 total meeting hours you are in class.

Final Group Project

30%

Speculation about New York State’s 2010 gubernatorial election has already hit Wikipedia. The Wiki entry believes that at this time, current Governor Elliot Spitzer (D) and Senator Joseph Bruno (R) is the viable match-up for the race, and that possibly former New Paltz Mayor Jason West might represent the Green Party. Other possible candidates include Andrew Cuomo (D), Jeanine Pirro (R), and Michael Bloomberg (I). These candidates are looking for good media strategists to ensure their success in 2 years, and your group is one of the firms they’re considering. One of the candidates has asked you to pitch some ad ideas to his or her campaign. Your job is to create an ad strategy for your candidate. Your options are:

- 1 TV spot (as a script or recording)
- 2 radio ads (as a script or recording)
- 3 print ads (on paper)
- 1 Web page with an outline for a developed Web site (on paper or on the Net)

Your group will need to address the following questions, both in the planning and creation of your ad(s) and directly in writing and in your presentation.

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses you identified for your candidate?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses you identified for your opponent?
3. Who are you trying to target with your advertisement(s)? Why did you choose that audience?
4. What format/medium did you choose for your ad(s)? Why?
5. How did the medium influence the content of your ad(s)?
6. What is the rhetorical purpose of your ad(s)?
7. What type of ad(s) did you create? Why?
8. What are you trying to sell in your ad(s)?
9. What are the facts you included in your ad(s)?
10. What effect(s) are you hoping your ad(s) will have on the audience?

You will present a demonstration of your ad or ads. This can be done with recordings, skits, visuals, computer displays, handouts, etcetera. Accompanying this will be a brief explanation of your ad or ads. This is the “pitch” to your client. You can be creative with how you make your pitch, but you must answer the 10

questions. You will also need to include a question/answer period. You should be prepared to answer any questions that the class, or I, may have for you and to receive and address any feedback. Each group member must have some kind part in the presentation. It does not necessarily have to a speaking part.

The grading for this assignment will account for both individual and group performance and will allow you the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the effort and participation of all group members for my consideration in the assignment of grades. The primary grading rubric for the project is as follows:

Criteria	10	8	6	4	2
<i>Accuracy of information/Use of references</i>	Information is accurate & is referenced correctly.	Information is accurate. Few references.	Information is mostly accurate. Few references cited.	Information &/or references contains several key errors	Inaccurate information & references.
<i>Presentation of Information</i>	Information is presented clearly, completely, & succinctly.	Information presented is mostly succinct and clear.	Information is somewhat succinct; sometimes wordy or confusing.	Information is somewhat succinct but poorly organized.	Information presented is unorganized & poorly explained.
<i>Completeness of Information</i>	Enough information is given for a complete understanding.	Some important points were excluded.	Information provided was adequate; could have been thorough.	Many key points were not included.	There was not enough information to establish an understanding.
<i>Knowledge Application</i>	Solid evidence of relevant application of communication theory & research.	Occasional evidence of relevant application of communication theory & research.	Limited evidence of relevant application of communication theory & research.	Little evidence of relevant application of communication theory and research.	No evidence of relevant application of communication theory & research.
<i>Visuals</i>	Visual materials are neat, free of errors, comprehensive & well planned.	Visuals contain a few spelling or grammar errors, but are still comprehensive & well planned.	Visual materials contain some errors & are missing a few key pieces, but are adequate.	Visuals contain multiple errors and are not well planned.	Visuals are sloppy & poorly connected to the assignment.
<i>Written Work</i>	Written work is clear, comprehensive, free of errors, accurate & cohesive.	Written work is mostly comprehensive & contains only minor errors.	Written work is mostly comprehensive but is unclear &/or not cohesive & contains errors.	Written work is missing key elements, contains errors, & is somewhat confusing.	Written work is incomplete, contains numerous inaccuracies & errors, & is unorganized.
<i>Creativity of Presentation</i>	Presentation is interesting, creative, & engaging.	Presentation is creative & interesting but lacks audience engagement.	Presentation has some creative or interesting elements.	Presentation contains little creativity/lacks enthusiasm	Presentation does not hold audience attention.
<i>Group Collaboration</i>	Group collaboration is evident in presentation & materials.	Group is mostly cohesive.	Some collaboration is evident, but certain members appear "out of the loop."	Group members had multiple problems regarding collaboration prior to & during presentation.	Group appears not to have collaborated on the project.
<i>Preparation</i>	Members are all prepared in advance & have active roles in the presentation & project.	Members are prepared in advance, but not all are active in the presentation & project.	Members are somewhat prepared & have little part in the presentation & project.	Few group members are adequately prepared.	Members are not prepared; not all are participating in the presentation & project.
<i>Completion & Timeliness</i>	All materials are complete, well organized, & turned in on time.	All materials are complete & turned in on time.	Some portions of the materials are either incomplete or late.	Much of the project is incomplete or turned in late.	No project materials are handed in complete & on time.
<i>Total</i>					

SPEAKING RESPONSIBILITIES

Never distort information, respect your audience, reject stereotyping & scapegoating, enrich listeners' lives, and take every speech seriously. **Also, keep your speeches within the set time limits!** (or face a grade penalty of minus 10 points).

SYLLABUS

This document has multiple purposes:

- i. To explain the course content
- ii. To detail the instructor expectations
- iii. To outline the ways you can succeed in the course
- iv. To provide instruction on how to manage the course
- v. To give you tips and direction for making the most of your educational experience
- vi. To be a contract between you and me describing our responsibilities toward one another

No exceptions or considerations beyond those outlined in this syllabus will be made for not meeting the standards detailed in this document.

This syllabus is your initial point of reference for course concerns and questions. Before turning in work, consult the syllabus. Before coming to class, consult the syllabus. Before contacting me, consult the syllabus. You are responsible for knowing and following the course policies. If you do not like or are not comfortable with the policies outlined in this document, withdraw from the course immediately. Your continued presence in the course indicates your agreement to abide by these standards and practices, and you will be expected, without question, to do so.

The following statement regarding course syllabi is found in the SUNY Potsdam Undergraduate Catalog:

Beginning on the first day of each class the instructor shall make available to each student (and deposit in the office of the respective academic dean) a current syllabus containing information on course objectives, general description of course material, listing of course activities, evaluation procedures, grading policy, attendance policy, office hours and office phone number. Departments are encouraged to publish pamphlets with detailed course descriptions in time for students to consult them before Advance Registration (p. 49).

PEER HELPERS

Teaching others is often a great way to learn. We are also more likely to be attentive to tasks when we know that others are depending on us. For these reasons, each of you will be partnered up with one (or more) fellow student. This partner will be a resource to you, and you to him/her throughout the semester as a Peer Helper. In the event that you miss a class, you can contact your Peer Helper for notes and assignments. If you have a question about an assignment or need to borrow a book, the first person you should contact is your Peer Helper. Your Peer Helper is also your “Study Buddy” and your partner for in-class assignments. You are responsible to each other. If you skip a class to sleep off last night’s party, you might let your Peer Helper down if he had to miss class because of a stomach virus. If your Peer Helper chose to draw cartoons during class instead of taking notes, she might be letting you down if you wanted to work together for some clarification on a concept.

GAMES, MOVIES, TV, MUSIC, SKITS, ACTIVITIES, GROUP WORK

Everything that happens in this classroom (and in life) is a potential learning experience; it’s up to you to make the most of the opportunity and the time. And everything I have planned for this class (and sometimes things that aren’t planned) has course-specific purposes and goals, no matter how silly, stupid, weird, and/or fun it may seem. Make sure you pay attention to everything. Make sure you put effort into everything. If you do, the odds of your success in this course will be greatly improved – and you will take more away from the semester than just three credits.

Different education specialists have identified different types of learning styles, but two of the most useful categories are those of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners (Tileston, 2000, pp. 14-16), or of those who learn through Sensing-Thinking (ST), Intuitive-Thinking (NT), Intuitive-Feeling (NF), and Sensing-Feeling (SF) (Silver, Strong, & Perini, 2000, p. 29). The use of movies and television shows can tap into those of you who learn visually and aurally, as well as the SF learners who thrive on interpersonal concepts and NF, who respond to imagery and artistic expression. Meanwhile, games benefit the kinesthetic learners through activity, the SF learners through group work, the NT learners through problem solving, and the ST learners through competition. Small in class projects can tap into the ST learners, who respond well to the organization and management of information as well as the practicing of skills, the SF learners who are productive in groups and cooperative work, and the NT learners who enjoy analysis. The open-ended discussions that are the earmark of my classes and my Socratic approach to teaching are beneficial to the NF learners who enjoy abstract

thinking, the NT learners who value the use of evidence, and the SF learners who value personal sharing of ideas. Basically, it is my hope that there's something here that will resonate with and challenge everyone.

Silver, H.F., Strong, R.W., & Perini, M.J. (2000). *So each may learn: Integrating learning styles and multiple intelligences*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tileston, D.W. (2000). *10 best teaching practices: How brain research, learning styles, and standards define teaching competencies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

CITIZENSHIP

No matter how much we may value independence and pride ourselves on being unique individuals, we are part of multiple communities. The more attention we pay to what is happening in the world around us, the more sense we can make of our selves and our lives. No matter how unique and independent you are, you *are* impacted by the world you live in, and *do* have an impact on that world, too. Studies show that people who choose to learn about the communities they live in are more likely to help solve a community problem, believe they can make a difference in their community, volunteer, trust other people, understand the government, make consumer (ie: buying) decisions for ethical or political reasons, believe in the importance of voting, and be registered to vote (2006 Civic and Political Health of the Nation Report). Do you want to be one of those people, or would you rather just trust that those people are making the right decisions for *your life*? The world is run by those who show up.

This course, and probably many other courses, will be easier for you if you are aware of what is going on around you. If you take an interest in life generally, it will be much easier to find interest in your classes. Follow current events locally, nationally, and internationally. You might think the news is boring, but you'd be surprised how many cool or provoking things are happening to people just like you everyday and how many things are happening that will effect your lives now. The more you know about these things, the more you'll be able to bring to discussions, the more connections you'll be able to make between class material and "the real world," and the more ideas and ease you will have in completing assignments. This is true for all of your classes, from calculus to ancient history. So while you're checking out the latest Mini-Feed on Facebook, check out the day's headlines, too. I will start every class by asking about current events, so stay informed.

Education is not preparation for life, it is life itself!

HOMEWORK, PROJECTS, AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

Except as noted below, all written assignments should be typed using:

- 12-pt. Times New Roman font
- black ink (or something dark if your run out of black – like I have)
- white or cream paper
- double-spacing
- 1 inch margins

Three points will be deducted for each of these guidelines that are not met.

! I ask that multi-page documents be stapled (no paperclips, covers, or loose stacks *-please!*). There will be a stapler in the room should you need one.

Before handing in, all work must be proofread to minimize spelling errors and grammatical blunders, while maximizing clarity and completion. Take advantage of the spelling and grammar checks built into your word processing program.

More than two errors per page will result in the lowering of your grade by a ½ step. More than 4 errors per page will result in the lowering of your grade by 1 step. More than 6 errors per page will result in failure of the assignment.

Your assignments should generally follow Standard American English conventions of language use. Basically, that means write like someone who is educated well enough to be in college. If you're like most students, you'll make a few mistakes now and then, but what you say should be easy to follow and, in general, grammatically correct. Written assignments are not text messages. If you do not write using complete words and complete sentences you will not get a passing score. If you think you could use some help with your writing I encourage you to make use of the College Writing Center.

Drafts may be reviewed for feedback and assistance prior to grading if they are given to me in paper or electronic form at least 36 hours before they are due. Drafts received less than 24 hours before the due date will definitely not be reviewed. I will not, however, correct all spelling and grammar errors for you; that is your responsibility.

Only one assignment will be accepted late. It will receive a ½ step grade reduction for each day it is late beyond the due date, including weekends. I will generally collect assignments at the beginning of class the days they are due. Your assignment must be turned in *when I collect them*. If it comes in later--even later the same class period--it will be considered late.

Beyond that one assignment, late assignments will not be accepted, except in extreme circumstances with documentation. (Note: Extreme circumstances are things like college sanctioned events, hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, or death in the immediate family. They do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate disputes, flues, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. Documentation must come from official sources like coaches, doctors, lawyers, or clergy. They are not notes from your parents.) I don't like being rigid about deadlines but they are a fact of life and there's no good reason why this class should be any different. Besides, it's not fair to the people who made the effort to do the work on time to pretend the deadlines don't matter.

To ensure that you receive credit for all your work, follow these guidelines.

- ◆ Make sure you are intimately and thoroughly familiar with the syllabus and closely follow the course calendar.
- ◆ Attend class regularly. If you cannot attend a class, contact your assigned partner as soon as possible to find out what you missed in your absence and to get any assignments.
- ◆ In the case of an obligation that prevents you from appearing in class:
 - Hand in the assignment early, make arrangements for someone to hand it in for you, or email the assignment to me *before* class **AND** provide a hard (ie: paper) copy by the next class.
 - !! Credit will not be given for assignments turned-in in electronic format only. This is to protect you from suffering the consequences of lost emails. !!
- ◆ In the case of an illness that prevents you from appearing in class:
 - Email the assignment to me *before* class **AND** provide a hard (ie: paper) copy by the next class.
 - !! Credit will not be given for assignments turned-in in electronic format only. This is to protect you from suffering the consequences of lost emails. !!
- ◆ In the case of computer malfunctions:
 - For shorter assignments, turn in the assignment handwritten.
 - For longer assignments, turn in a handwritten summary followed by the full version *within 36 hours*.
- ◆ In the case of printer malfunctions:
 - Email the assignment to me *before* class, or hand in a CD or 3.5" floppy with the assignment on it.
 - AND** provide a hard (ie: paper) copy by the next class.
 - !! Credit will not be given for assignments turned-in in electronic format only. This is to protect you from suffering the consequences of lost emails or damaged disks. !!

Presentations or oral assignments must be delivered on the day assigned. There is not time in the semester to reschedule, and your classmates and I are counting on your contribution for the given day. In extreme circumstances with documentation, alternative arrangements can be made, *if and only if*, I am **notified by phone or in person prior** to your presentation time. (Note: Extreme circumstances are things like college sanctioned events, hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, or death in the immediate family. They do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate disputes, flues, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. Documentation must come from official sources like coaches, doctors, lawyers, or clergy. They are not notes from your parents.)
Speaking notes are not subject to the rules of written assignments in that they may be handwritten and do not need to be in complete sentences.

Tests must be taken on the scheduled day, except in extreme circumstances with documentation. (Note: Extreme circumstances are things like college sanctioned events, hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, or death in the immediate family. They do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate disputes, flues, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. Documentation must come from official sources like coaches, doctors,

lawyers, or clergy. They are not notes from your parents.) In extreme circumstances, a make-up exam will be scheduled; it may take a different form than the regularly scheduled tests (ex. short answer instead of multiple choice).

READINGS & CLASS PREPARATION

Lecturing for the purpose of giving notes is not necessarily a regular practice in this class. Therefore, if you expect to “get anything” out of your class time, you must come to class having done any and all assigned reading. Chapters and their due dates are clearly indicated on the course calendar. Furthermore, I am not in the habit of providing the “Cliff’s Notes” or “Spark Notes” version of the text as my course content. More often than not, that’s a boring waste of everyone’s time. Instead, classes will be expansions on, or demonstrations of, material related to the day’s reading, again emphasizing the need for you to do the reading before coming to class.

For each assigned chapter, it is recommended you make your own notes about what the chapter was about, what questions you have, key ideas, etcetera so that you can contribute productively to class discussions.

To encourage you to make preparing for each class a habit, you have the option of doing the following:

1. For *each assigned chapter*, you **may** make notes about the chapter on *ONE 4x6* (maximum) index card.
2. Turn this card into me (with your name on it) on the day the chapter is due.
3. I will then keep these cards until the next quiz or test, when I will...
4. Give them back to you for...
5. Your use during the exam.

*This is an optional assignment. No credit is given for completing note cards. No credit is deducted for not completing them.

To take advantage of this very useful offer, you must act immediately. Offer expires regularly. Cards will only be accepted on the day the chapter is due. You may not turn them in later for any reason. This option exists to encourage you to a) come to class b) prepared; to accept them late would defeat this purpose.

NOTES AND NOTE-TAKING

Again, lecturing for the purpose of giving notes is not necessarily a regular practice in this class. For those people who enjoy having notes in addition to the text, copies of my personal “lecture notes” or outlines will be made available **ONLY** to students who were in class (an added incentive for regular attendance).

Furthermore, it will benefit you greatly if you conceive of notes not as something you “take” from me, but as something you “make” for yourselves. That means that just because you don’t see an overhead projection, PowerPoint slide, or chalkboard scribbles identifying vocabulary terms, definitions, names, and dates in front of you during class, that doesn’t mean there is nothing for you to write down. Pay attention. Think actively. Listen critically. And jot down ideas, phrases, and information that you want to remember for later. Feel free to ask me to slow down or repeat something at any time.

I saw a t-shirt for sale in a catalog once that said, “If I’m talking, you should be taking notes.” Pretend I’m wearing it to every class. Also, it’s a good idea to make note of the course activities, movies, media clips, games, etcetera and what concepts they demonstrated or what discussions they led to – just to jog your memory later on during exams or assignments.

HANDOUTS

Most of the course’s handouts will be distributed via email prior to the class in which they are discussed, and will be posted on Blackboard as far in advance as possible. This is done for 4 reasons 1) To reduce the chances of your missing or losing important information, 2) To help keep you on track with the course, 3) To help the environment, 4) To help save the college money so that it can be spent on things more useful than photocopies. In order to contribute toward these goals, you will need to check your email and the Blackboard regularly. Any emails from me will always have a subject that begins with the course number. I will only use your Potsdam email accounts. You are free to print off copies of anything you want to have in paper form.

GRADING

Grades are earned by you, they are not awarded or deducted by me. You start this class and every assignment at “zero;” you should understand each grade as being a level of achievement, rather than a level of loss. (That

is to say, don't ask "What did I lose points on?" instead ask "How could I have earned more points?") When you get scores on assignments I'm not *giving* you a grade, you're earning it. Part of my job, and part of what you're paying for, is an honest evaluation of what you do. Sometimes you may not like what you hear, and I'll try to tell you how well you did in the most positive way I can think of, but you can't improve unless you know what mistakes you're making or what weaknesses you have as well as what you're doing well.

I prefer intrinsic motivations, and therefore, am frankly not a fan of giving a lot of graded assignments. I believe this extrinsic reward is too often the only motivation for students to complete assignments, which takes attention away from the ultimate goal of individual and community growth through learning. A college education should be viewed as a privilege and an opportunity to become informed and scholarly. However, for lack of a better system and a larger population recognizing that even non-graded assignments are important, grades will be assigned in this class.

Work that meets the minimum requirements of an assignment, is completed on time and displays average involvement with the course content is deserving of a 2.0
Higher grades are awarded to work that goes above and beyond the minimum standards to produce papers and presentations that reflect superior intellectual effort, excellence in critical analysis and overall creativity in the approach towards any given assignment. A 4.0 is attainable but will require much more than minimal effort.

Wherever appropriate, I use rubrics to grade work in this class. Not only do rubrics make the grading process more efficient by saving time, to help get your work back to you faster, and ensuring consistency from student-to-student and from day-to-day, but they also should help to make my expectations clear to you. Take advantage of the information and insight they provide you by using them to check your own work in advance of submission.

If you do not complete all the work for this class, you might not pass the class. Do the work. It's much easier than trying to come up with excuses or beg for special consideration at the end of the semester.

Because this course carries a General Education designator, you will need to successfully complete the General Education requirements of the course in order to receive a passing grade. To see the GenEd standards, visit <http://www.potsdam.edu/content.php?contentID=19310BE4C1D99D85924ECF3FE981CE6D> (or navigate from the SUNY Potsdam homepage through the following links: "Academics" – "General Education" – "General Education Program.")

Grades are broken down **in this class** as follows:

4.0 (A)	97-100	2.0 (C)	75-78
3.7 (A-)	93-96	1.7 (C-)	71-74
3.3 (B+)	89-92	1.3 (D+)	68-70
3.0 (B)	85-88	1.0 (D)	63-67
2.7 (B-)	81-84	0.0 (F)	0-62
2.3 (C+)	79-81		

GRADE CHALLENGES

If you identify an error in grading, I am always willing to admit to a mistake and correct it.

If you want me to *reconsider* a grade, follow these steps:

- 1) Wait at least 24 hours before deciding to seek reconsideration, but no longer than one week.
- 2) Write a 1-2 page explanation of why the grade should be reconsidered, following the same guidelines for all written work, identifying what type of change you seek and providing a reasoned argument and evidence in support of that change. **The burden of proof in any disagreement over evaluation of student performance rests with the student.**
- 3) Resubmit the original work (complete with grade & comments) along with the rationale.
- 4) Allow two weeks for reconsideration. *Be aware that in reconsidering a grade, I may find that it earned a lower grade than it originally received.*
- 5) Accept the final decision, whether the grade stays the same, is raised, or lowered. I will reconsider each assignment only once.

EXTRA CREDIT

Extra credit is not part of this course, so do not count it. Extra credit assignments *MIGHT* be given at the discretion and decision of the instructor to the entire class. **Extra credit will never be given to an individual** and is never available after completion of the course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As stated in the Undergraduate Catalog, the following pledge is made on all academic work done by students at SUNY Potsdam. This pledge is regarded as an indication that you understand and have complied with the requirements and assignments as set forth by the course instructor and as stated in this Academic Honor Code. *“On my honor: I will not give nor receive any inappropriate assistance on any academic work in accordance with the SUNY Potsdam Academic Honor Code and the directions given to me by each course instructor”*

To plagiarize is to pass off ideas or words of someone else as your own or to use created productions without crediting the source. It is literary and intellectual theft when you present work that someone else did as being new and original. If you aren't concerned by how much you personally lose by plagiarizing, consider how much it sucks when someone else takes credit for *your* idea or *your* effort, and remember that if you're tempted to deliberately plagiarize or simply do sloppy work.

For these reasons, students in this course will be responsible for authenticating any assignment submitted to the instructor. If asked, you must be able to produce proof that the assignment you submitted is in fact your own work. Therefore, I recommend that you keep copies of all drafts of your work, make photocopies and/or careful notes of research materials, save drafts or versions of assignments under individual file names on computer disks, etc. (This is a good practice for any and all classes. Not only will it protect you should you ever be accused of academic dishonesty, but it also protects you in instances of computer malfunctions, stolen bags, spilled coffee, and bad filing systems.) In addition to requiring a student to authenticate his/her work, I may employ other means of ascertaining the authenticity or originality of your assignments – such as engaging in internet searches, requiring students to explain their work and/or process orally, etc.

I have a zero tolerance policy on plagiarism. Any time you incorporate the words and/or ideas of another person into your work, whether from a book, a film, T.V., the Internet, or any other source, without giving their creator the credit, you have plagiarized. In the event of plagiarism on a an assignment in this course you will A.) Fail the assignment. B.) Possibly fail the course.

Other forms of dishonesty or cheating are also not tolerated and will result in a failure of the assignment and/or class. These include, but are not limited to: using non-sanctioned notes on an exam, using electronic devices to get answers for an exam, copying others' assignments, using work from “paper mills,” turning in work from another class without seeking permission from me and the other instructor.... If you think you are engaging in questionable behavior, you probably are, so either don't do it or seek clarification.

For additional information on Academic Integrity and Standards at SUNY Potsdam, see page 41 in the Undergraduate Catalog (electronic PDF version available at www.potsdam.edu/catalog).

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory! If you cannot be to every class on time, then you should not take this class.

Regular, timely, attendance is expected. In-class work and assignments that are missed during an absence cannot be made up, except in extreme circumstances with documentation. (Note: Extreme circumstances are things like college sanctioned events, hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, or death in the immediate family. They do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate disputes, flues, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. Documentation must come from official sources like coaches, doctors, lawyers, or clergy. They are not notes from your parents.)

Late arrivals are frowned upon. But, hey, sh*t happens. We all have bad days, and I would rather see you arrive late, with wet hair, mismatched shoes, and only a gum wrapper to write on then have you miss the class completely. Frequent tardiness, however, is counterproductive and will be noted. In this case, you will be asked to either adjust your schedule so that you can be on time or to withdraw from the class. I don't like to

be so harsh, especially knowing that sometimes jobs or even other classes can create timing issues for some students, but a lot of “housekeeping” is done at the start of each class meeting and regular tardiness, no matter how justifiable, creates many problems.

When you arrive late, please enter the classroom quietly at an appropriate moment, and take the first available seat. Do not make a lot of noise, do not interrupt to offer apologies, and do not intrude upon the entire class by searching for a seat you like or cutting across the front of the room. Being late is something that should cause some embarrassment – not be an opportunity for a grand entrance and 15 seconds of attention.

I reserve the right to lower your grade if poor attendance or frequent tardiness have interfered with your performance in the course or have been disruptive to the class.

If you feel that you have an important reason for missing or skipping all or part of class, that is your choice to make. Only you can weigh the costs and benefits of that decision and determine whether or not you are comfortable with the consequences. And only you are responsible for those consequences.

In the case of prolonged absences from class of one week or more, you must notify me immediately in order to make arrangements. Consecutive absences of one week or more, without notice from you, will result in a failure.

Incompletes, or other arrangements for course completion, can be planned only in extreme circumstances with documentation. Extreme circumstances do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate conflicts, flues, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. They are things like hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, death in the immediate family, or some other serious *emergency* so late in the semester that there isn't time to make up what you miss. If you have a substantial amount of work that you cannot finish, you should withdraw from the course, not seek an incomplete.

Additional information regarding Attendance can be found on pages 49-50 in the Undergraduate Catalog (electronic PDF version available at www.potsdam.edu/catalog).

FINAL EXAM WEEK

Please make note of the date and time the final exam for this course is scheduled, as attendance is MANDATORY unless you have a documented religious conflict, a documented school related activity scheduled that day, a documented emergency that prevents you from attending on that date, or this exam is the 2nd of 3 on a single day and you have gone through the proper channels to have the time changed. (As per SUNY Potsdam policies, a student must request rescheduling two weeks before the last day of classes. This request must be in writing and must be filed with the professor with copies to the department chair and the dean of the school(s) under whose jurisdiction the course(s) in question is (are) offered. The appropriate dean has the final responsibility for the rescheduling of the examination(s). The rescheduled examination(s) must normally occur at a time during the final examination week.) Tell your mother, father, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, cousins, significant others and anyone else not to buy you a ticket for a plane that leaves before the final exam time scheduled for this class. Tell anyone who might give you a ride away from Potsdam that you can't leave before the final session is over. Tell any potential employers that you cannot begin work until the final session is over. The final exam schedule for all of your classes is always available through Student information on the SUNY Potsdam Web site, so plan ahead.

The college's Final Exam Policy can be found on page 48 of the Undergraduate Catalog (electronic PDF version available at www.potsdam.edu/catalog).

ETIQUETTE

The success of this course is directly related to the sense of community that we will develop in this classroom. Participation is essential to this process. I encourage you to share your views and listen to those of others. Debate and discussion are an important part of the learning process. While there will no doubt be disagreements, I expect the members of this community (including myself) to challenge ideas in a manner that reflects respect and recognition of opposing viewpoints without attacking individuals.

Your enthusiasm and a positive attitude will not only make the semester more enjoyable for me and for your fellow classmates, but for you, too, and it will help you to do better in the course. If you have no enthusiasm for the course, fake it. You might just trick yourself into feeling it for real. Smile. Participate. Attack the work in this course as if it were important to you and your life – because it is.

I will never stop anyone from answering the calls of nature – whether for thirst, hunger, or other needs. If you are uncomfortable, you will not be able to focus. However, do not be disruptive. You will not see me leaving the classroom on a regular basis to use the bathroom, nor will you see me crunching on a bag of chips or chewing on a Big Mac. If I can survive through the class, you probably can, too.

If you can't make it through one class meeting without being “wired” then you should not be in the class. All electronic devices must be turned off and put away (out of sight) prior to the start of class. If there is some medical reason for leaving a pager or cell phone on, make sure it is on vibrate and in your pocket. I will not tolerate phone calls, text messaging, gaming, or the use of personal entertainment media during class.

*Five points will be deducted from your final grade for **each** instance you violate this code.* In the grand scheme of life, our class meetings are not that long, so there should be no need to break the code.

Do not pack up before I dismiss you. You never know when I may say something important or give a last minute assignment. You're going to want to have that pen and paper handy. Besides, it's just never a good idea to be rude to the teacher.

Though I do not have a problem with the use of curse words in the classroom, I ask that you be considerate and judicious in your use of them. Occasional use is one thing. Relying on curse words to express yourself is an indication of a small vocabulary, a disregard for the feelings of others, and perhaps a small mind. And though I do not mind you swearing in front of me, swearing *at* me will **never** have a good outcome for you and I reserve the right to determine what that outcome will be as I see fit.

In most circumstances, I should not see curse words in your written work. That forum is not the appropriate place for such language use; the English language has many rich alternatives for expression. Swearing in written assignments where better alternatives are available will negatively effect your grade.

Additional information regarding the expectations of your behavior can be in the Code of Conduct in your SUNY Potsdam Student Handbook (available electronically under information for Current Students off the college's homepage at www.potsdam.edu).

CONTACT:

Office: Morey Hall 144

Mondays & Fridays: by previous appointment

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 12:30-1:45 & 3:30-4:00

Wednesdays: 12:00-1:45

Phone: 315-267-2883

Email: knopfcm@potsdam.edu

The purpose of office hours is to give you a chance to talk to me so you can do better in the course. That means you can come talk to me about your assignments, readings, exams, or other things if you want. I'd much rather help you improve before you're graded than after, so you have the best chance of doing well in here. (Don't wait until the last minute, though, or you won't have time to use my suggestions.) Please do not think you're interrupting me if you visit me during office hours. That's what they're for. There may be some days when a meeting will be scheduled during office hours, and I won't be available. You may want to call first so you don't make a trip for nothing. You're also welcome to drop by if I'm there and available at any time.

If you choose to contact me by email, follow these guidelines.

◆ Put the course number in the subject line. --If you do not do this, I might overlook your message or it might be filtered as SPAM. Do not expect a reply if you do not put the course number in the subject line.

◆ Allow 12-24 hours for a reply (assuming your message needs a reply) during the week.

◆ Do not expect me to receive your email over the weekend or in the middle of the night. --I might get it, but there's a very good chance that I won't access it until the following workday.

◆ Be respectful. --It's a good rule for life to never say anything in an email that you wouldn't say over the phone or in person.

◆ Practice your writing skills by using complete words, complete sentences, proper punctuation, paragraphs, and correct spelling. --If you can't take the time to write a well-developed message, I can't take the time to read it.

◆ Avoid email if possible. --It's much better to stop by my office hours (that's why I have them), or, if necessary, to leave me a voicemail. I get a large amount of email everyday, and it becomes difficult to keep track of it all and extremely time-consuming to manage it all. I would rather use the time it takes me to respond to emails ensuring that I grade your assignments in a timely manner, complete with comments and feedback, and by preparing lively, engaging classes.

SUCCESS

This course is a team effort, of which you and I are both parts. That means we all need to put forth some effort. You won't gain much, if anything, in here if you are passive and wait for me to pour knowledge or skills into your head or tell you exactly what to do on your assignments. You need to get involved in this class, to engage in the discussions, and make choices of what will work best. You are responsible for your success in this course. I am here to help you succeed in the course – not guarantee it. I cannot help you if you do not do the minimal work required, as detailed in this syllabus. Your success depends upon your effort, dedication, and motivation. I will do what I can to make the material accessible, interesting, purposeful, meaningful, and clear.

At any time during the semester, I am happy to review drafts, answer questions, offer tutoring, suggest resources, and help find solutions to any problems you are experiencing in the course – but it's up to you to ask. Sometimes you may not fully understand what is expected of you even after I've tried to make it clear. Sometimes you may think you know what's expected, but you'll want to confirm those impressions. I strongly encourage you to ask questions in class or talk to me individually to make sure you know what you're supposed to do. Part of anything you do in here has to come from your own creativity, intelligence, and effort, but I want you to have every chance to clearly understand the general expectations. And choosing to not seek clarification or assistance is not an excuse for not knowing or doing what is expected of you.

I will do everything I can to teach you, but I can't make you learn, and I can't make you care - those are your choices to make. Your presence in college makes you among the most privileged people in the world; please take advantage of the opportunity you have and make the most of it – many will never have the same chance.

RELEVANT ACADEMIC POLICIES & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have additional questions or concerns about the policies and practices of the college, the Undergraduate Catalog is an excellent resource. Electronic versions are available at www.potsdam.edu/catalog. A selection of relevant topics has been listed below with page numbers for the PDF version.

Academic Standards	pp. 41 & 47
Attendance	p. 49
Career Planning	p. 35
Childcare	p. 35
College Credit Policies	p. 43
College Writing Center	p. 35
Counseling	p. 35
Course Scheduling Deadlines	p. 46
Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act	p. 52
Final Exams	p. 48
Grading Policies	p. 45
Health Services	p. 37
International Education	p. 37
Special Programs (Bridges, EOP, Student Support)	p. 39
Student Rights	p. 41
Student Success & Support	p. 37
S/U Option	p. 46
Syllabi	p. 49
Technology	p. 35
Withdrawal from College	p. 50

<i>date</i>	<i>college</i>	<i>topic</i>	<i>reading due</i>	<i>work due</i>	<i>journals</i>
Jan. 23	Last day to add/drop (1/25)	intro to political communication		chapter 1 in class	
Jan. 30		campaign styles & functions	text ch. 2 & 3		
Feb. 6		media's role & public speech	text ch. 4 & 6		
Feb. 13		common campaign speech acts	text ch. 7 / Corcoran on Bb		
Feb. 20		debates	text ch. 8	presentations - Surrogate (see Ch. 6)	*** (8 entries)
Feb. 27		FTF & CMC in campaigns	text ch. 9 & 11		
Mar. 5		advertising introduced	text ch. 5	presentations - Concession (see Corcoran)	
Mar. 12		advertising plans	text ch. 10 / Amateurs 1-2 on Bb		
Mar. 19	3/18 last day to withdraw or select S/U.	effects of attack ads	Schenck-Hamlin on Bb / Ansolabehere on Bb	presentations - Acceptance (see ch. 6 & Corcoran)	
Mar. 26	No Class - Spring Recess				
Apr. 2		ads & democracy	Air Wars ch. 10 on Bb	Midterm	*** (20 entries)
Apr. 9		ads & the news	Dirty Politics ch. 5 & 6 on Bb		
Apr. 16		ads & voter response	Air Wars ch. 5 on Bb	presentations - Ad Watch (see Dirty Politics)	
Apr. 23		learning about campaigns	Brians & Wattenberg on Bb / Air Wars ch. 7 on Bb		
Apr. 30				work on final presentations [Dr. K @ ECA?]	
May. 7		women, kids, and the elderly	Sherr on Bb / Hitchon et al on Bb		
MAY. 15	10:15-12:15			FINAL PROJECT presentations	*** (32 entries)