

**Master in Public Administration - Fall 2022**  
**POLT 897.F 1on**  
**Strategic Communications for Public and Non-profit Sectors**  
**August 15-October 7, 2022**

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**Office Hours:** Available by zoom appointment

***Course Description:***

Effective communication reflects the organization's vision, mission and values. Effective communication advances organizational objectives and a clear understanding of needs, motivators and interests of various internal and external stakeholder groups, including the media, organization staff, constituents, and funders. Effective communication does not just happen. With an understanding of the elements of communication and the effective use of communication tools and activities, leaders and administrators in the public and nonprofit sectors are prepared to effectively engage, educate and inform constituents, guide messages, respond to situations and fulfill organizational goals. The result is improved constituent relations, strengthened collaborative relationships, and improved organizational and crisis management. 3 credits.

***Learning Outcomes:***

Students in the course will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles and best practices of interpersonal and organizational communication and how strategic communication reflects organizational vision, mission, and values and supports organizational goals and project objectives.
- Demonstrate understanding of the various types of the communication tools and techniques used to establish and strengthen internal and external stakeholder relations; improve organizational effectiveness and effective crisis response.
- Demonstrate understanding of the elements of a strategic communication plan and develop a plan that makes effective use of messages, tools, activities, and timelines as well as human and financial resources.

***Delivery method:***

This course will be offered in an accelerated, online, 8-week delivery model. The course will include assigned readings, PowerPoint materials, videos, discussion questions, and independent work.

**NOTE: Three scheduled Zoom sessions will be held on Monday evenings at 6 PM during Week 1, Week 5, and Week 7. These 3 sessions will be recorded and posted to My courses. There may be other Zoom sessions depending on possible guest speaker availability and these will also be recorded and posted. Check course announcements regularly for course updates.**

### Course Materials:

There are no required textbooks for this course, however, students who want to explore the topics more deeply are invited to review the following materials. Course resources will include the Community Toolbox (<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/>) and additional handouts and journal articles posted to My UNH for review and discussion

#### Recommended Reading - NOT REQUIRED:

- Bonk, Kathy; Griggs, Henry, and Tynes, Emily. (2008) *Strategic communications for Nonprofits*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Chapleo & Simms. (2010).
- Dimock, Marshall E. and Dimock, Gladys O. (1964). *Public Administration*. Third Edition. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1964. Pp. vi, 410
- Fear-Banks, Kathleen. (2002). *Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach*. Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc, Inc. Publishers.
- Freeman, R. E. (2010). *Strategic Management*. Marshfield, MA: Pitman Publishing, Inc.
- Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Pamar, & de Cole. (2010)
- Lee, Mordecai. 1998. "Public Relations in Public Administration: A disappearing act in public administration education." *Public Relations Review*, 24 (4); 509-520.
- Lee, Nancy R. & Kotler, Philip (2011). *Social Marketing: Influencing Behaviors for Good*. SAGE Publications.
- Patterson, Sally and Radtke, Janel. (2009) 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. *Strategic Communications for Nonprofit Organizations. Seven Steps to creating a successful plan*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Safko, Lon, (2010). *The Social Media Bible. Tactics, tools and strategies for business success*. J. Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Ulmer, Robert R.; Sellnow, Timothy; Seeger, Matthew. (2007). *Effective Crisis Communication: Moving From Crisis to Opportunity*. SAGE Publications.
- Yankelovich, Daniel. (2001). *The Magic of Dialogue: Transforming Conflict into Cooperation*. Touchstone/Simon & Schuster.

### Course Assignments

**NOTE: All written assignments must be submitted to My Courses by the assigned due date to be considered for full credit.** If you can't meet the assigned due date, please talk with me about an extension—I am happy to work with you. Early submissions and drafts of work are fine, of course. Assignments received after the due date, unless we have talked about an alternate due date, will lose 1 point for each day they are late. I will make every effort to return the submissions to you by the next class. *Rationale: deadlines are critical for communication professionals. These standards apply to the course as well. Also, due to the accelerated pace of the course, materials must be submitted in a timely fashion in order for me to review, grade and return them to you.*

- **Read course materials and complete assignments as assigned and be prepared to participate in discussion board discussions.** Note that each module has additional activities and assignments beyond those listed below.
- **Communication tool.** Beginning in Week 2 through Week 7 (for a total of 6 examples) you will identify an example of a communication tool in action. Examples include signage, press conferences,

newsletters, public service announcements, emails, customer service experiences, etc. (See assignment information she for more details.)

- **Case Statement/Elevator Speech** -- Assignment scenario: You need to prepare a briefing document to be used by you or a supporter of your organization or initiative. The goal is to provide succinct background information so you or your colleagues have sufficient background on the key issues and can champion the initiative in clear, simple and memorable terms – the elevator speech. The assignment includes **background information and research**, identifying *helpful links* to the most important and relevant stories, **an analysis of the overall situation on your issue**, identification of three essential talking points that could be used for an elevator speech. **Submit by the end of the week of Week 4.** (See handout of assignment for details.)
- **Organizational Communication Audit.** Students will select an organization, conduct a communication audit, including communication tools and implementation methods, and explore the consistency and quality of the communications identified in the audit. The audit will include a review of internal and external publications, marketing materials, public information materials, evidence of service to constituents, Web pages, social media, signage, and, where possible, quantify the organization's exposure in the media and the community TV/Radio, social media, friends/followers, public programs, etc. Students are encouraged to speak with those responsible for communication implementation. The audit will include a summary impact assessment including the effectiveness in advancing organizational mission and goals and targeted audiences, consistency, and quality. Students should reflect on and provide recommendations for alternative tools, messages, programming, services, and media to achieve the organization's stated objectives. **The audit materials should be submitted by the end of the week of Week 5.** (See specific assignment information for more details.)
- **Identify and read three (2) journal articles** on topics related to strategic public communication for public and nonprofit sectors and your specific field or topic of interest. For each article, prepare a **250-word maximum annotated bibliography for each article also is due the last day of Week 6.** (See specific assignment information for more details.)
- **independent Study Assignment – Your choice: Job shadow, meeting/event critique, or crisis communication timeline, etc.** This assignment is designed to get you closer to your career goals; increase your awareness of best (or worst) practices in public presentations and/or organizational communication; or to explore the elements of crisis communication in real time by creating a timeline of a crisis event using web-based and other publicly available information. The goal: make it useful to you and your career, meet people in your desired field, and enjoy the experience. Rather than a firm page count for a written summary of your experience and reflection, let your observations guide you (consider 5 - 7 pages, bulleted points rather than a narrative are acceptable). Please submit this written response/reflection by **the end of the week of Week 7.** (See details on assignment sheet)
- **Final project: Strategic Communication Plan.** Students will develop and formally present a strategic communication plan including goals, target audiences, strategic themes/messages, communication tools and activities, resources needed (time, space, staff, etc.), project/plan, budget and timeline for implementation and post implementation assessment or evaluation tools and plan. **Final detailed**

**written plan must be received by the end of the week of Week 8.** (See specific assignment information for more details.)

**NOTES**

- a. Discussion board participation is an important part of the course and benefits everyone.
- b. Nightly topics and/or assignments may need to be adjusted, but any changes will be clearly communicated. Please regularly check your UNH email and MY UNH for updates and announcements

**Course grading (100 points possible)**

Discussion board participation and weekly assignments	24
Independent Study: Job shadow/Critique of meeting or lecture	10
Communication tools	15
Two (2) Journal Articles/Annotated bibliographies	10
Communication Audit	16
Case statement/Elevator Speech	10
FINAL: Communication plan	15
Total Possible:	<hr/> 100

**Summary of Assignment due dates**

**Note the assignments are due by the end of the week for the noted week. Assignments will be accepted earlier than the due date and returned as soon as possible after receipt.**

**Benchmarks questions** – due as soon as possible but by the end of Week 1

**Communication tools** – a total of six (6) posts describing the tools beginning in Week 2 and ending at Week 7.

**Case statement** assignment due Week 4.

**Communications Audit** due Week 5.

**Journal articles and annotated bibliography** for each journal article due Week 6.

**Independent Project** paper due Week 7.

**Final written Strategic Communication Plan** due Week 8.

**Grading Rubric**

	Weak/Poor	Satisfactory	Strong
Promptness and frequency	Does not post or submit assignments in a timely fashion and or without notification.	Written assignments and posts are late and random	Written assignments Posts are submitted on time
Grammar	Written assignments and posts have numerous grammar or spelling errors. Writing is unclear or unfocused.	Written assignments and posts include an acceptable level of thought or reflection. Postings contain a minimum number grammar and formatting errors	Written assignments and posts are well-written, clear, focused, and free from spelling and grammar errors
Relevance	Written assignments and posts are off topic or with minimum alignment or connection with the assignment, course content, or expectations as outlined.	Written assignments and posts are on topic and include examples from course content and reflect an understanding of the material.	Written assignments and posts reflect the student's understanding of the material and alignment to the assignment
Expression and Organization of Ideas	Written assignments and posts do not reflect preparation organization of thought	Some written assignments and posts reflect clarity of thought in writing and organization in the presentation of ideas and alignment with the assigned topic.	Written assignments and posts are organized, thorough researched and considered, and presented with thoughtful, reflective understanding of the assigned topic.
Building Community	Student does not participate in the online learning community.	Engagement in the learning community is occasional, sometimes forced or reluctantly shared.	Engaged in the learning opportunities presented as evidenced in active participation in discussions in both small and large groups. Participation reflects understanding of the material and course content as well as a respectful engagement with their peers.

## Topic and Assignment Schedule

### **Week 1      Mission Driven Communication**

Goal: Explore communication basics, understand the importance of organizational goals, mission, and values as they related to strategic communication.

#### Content/Materials

##### Review

- Week 1 PowerPoint
- Simon Sinek Ted Talk (“The Golden Circle” – How leaders inspire action.)  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/simon\\_sinek\\_how\\_great\\_leaders\\_inspire\\_action](https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action)

##### Read:

- Liu and Horsley. (2007) “The Government Communication Decision Wheel: Toward a Public Relations Model for the Public Sector.”
- Hyland-Wood, Gardner, Leask, & Ecker. (2021). “Toward effective government communication strategies in the era of COVIC-19.”

##### Activity:

- Complete and submit Benchmarks and post bio to course sign.
- Complete the Organizational Communication Field Trip
- Respond to discussion questions
- Review, brainstorm, and work on other assignments (e.g., audit, independent study, journal articles, etc.)

### **Week 2      Stakeholder and Audience Focused Communication**

Goal: Explore and develop an understanding of strategic communication, stakeholder theory, audience- and message-related research, and their relation to audience-focused communication.

#### Content/Materials

- Review: Week 2 PowerPoint
- View Amy Cuddy Ted Talk, “Your body language shapes who you are.”  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_may\\_shape\\_who\\_you\\_are?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are?language=en)
- Read: Minehart, Symon, and Rock. (2022). “What is your listening Style?”
- Review materials on Promoting Internal Communication: Community Toolbox, Chapter 15, section 4. <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/effective-manager/internal-communication/main>

##### Activity:

- Communication tool (see information sheet)
- SWOT analysis for stakeholders. Identify 3 to 5 stakeholders to your organization. As you think about their relationship to your organization, identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in relation to your organization.
- Reminder: Review, brainstorm, and work on other assignments (e.g., Case Statement, audit, independent project, journal articles, etc.)

## POLT 897F.F 1ON Strategic Communications for Public and Non-profit Sectors-Fall-2022- 7

- Reminder: Review, brainstorm, and work on other assignments (e.g., Case Statement, audit, independent project, journal articles, etc.)
- Discussion questions response

### **Week 3 Social Marketing**

Goal: To understand social marketing and explore campaign efforts in government and nonprofits.

Content/Materials:

- Review: Week 3 PowerPoint
- Read: Chapter 45, Community Toolbox; Section 1, Understanding Social Marketing.  
<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/sustain/social-marketing>

Activity:

- Communication Tools
- Discussion question response
- Reminder: Review, brainstorm, and work on other assignments (e.g., Case Statement, audit, independent project, journal articles, etc.)

### **Week 4 Strategic Communication Planning**

Goal: To understand the elements of strategic communication planning; to understand the role of the media and media relations.

Content/Materials:

- Review: Week 4 PowerPoint
- Read: Chapter 6, Section 1, Community Toolbox; Developing a plan for communication;  
<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/promoting-interest/communication-plan/main>
- Read: Chapter 34, all sections, Community Toolbox; Media Advocacy.  
<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/media-advocacy>

Activities/Module Assignments:

- Communication Tools
- Case Statement Assignment Due by the end of Week 4
- Reminder: Review, brainstorm, and work on other assignments (e.g., audit, independent project, journal articles, etc.)
- Discussion question response

### **Week 5 Tactics of Strategic Communication**

Goal: to explore strategic communication tactics, alignment with mission, values, and goals and effectiveness. Digital advocacy and social media

Content/Materials:

- Review PowerPoint for Week 5
- Review Message Box Information sheet

## POLT 897F.F 1ON Strategic Communications for Public and Non-profit Sectors-Fall-2022- 8

- Read/Review: Chapter 6, Sections 2 to 4, 6 to 13, 15 to 19 Community Toolbox; persuasion and communication tools  
<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/promoting-interest/principles-of-persuasion/main>
- Chapter 33, Main Section. Community Toolbox, Using Social Media for Digital Advocacy;  
<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/direct-action/electronic-advocacy/main>

### Activity:

- Communication Tool
- Communication Audit due by the end of week 5
- Reminder: Review, brainstorm, and work on other assignments (e.g., independent project, journal articles, etc.)
- See the message box and develop a message for your organization
- Discussion question response

### **Week 6            Tactics of Strategic Communication**

Goal: To understand the elements of ethical organizational communication; explore the value of community engagement and partnerships.

#### Content/Materials

- Review: Week 6 PowerPoint
- Revisit: Community Toolbox, Chapter 6, Section 2; Persuasion
- Review: Community Toolbox, Chapter 1, Section 3: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/overview/model-for-community-change-and-improvement/building-capacity/main>

#### Activity:

- Communication Tool
- Journal Articles/annotated bibliographies due (See information sheet for assignment)
- Identify your professional or organizational ethics policy. What guidance does it provide for decision-making and action related to communication (internal, external, stakeholders)?
- Discussion question response

### **Week 7            Communication Challenges and Crisis Communication**

Goal: To explore the challenges in communication and the unique responses required in crisis situations.

#### Content/Materials

##### Read/Review:

- Review Week 7 PowerPoint and visit the videos included in the slides
- View: Melissa Agnes. Ted Talk. The Secret to Successful Crisis Management in the 21st Century  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQGEPEaEWtg>
- View: Public Relations Crisis Communication Case Study (2011)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RiXTk\\_zds\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RiXTk_zds_w)

## POLT 897F.F 1ON Strategic Communications for Public and Non-profit Sectors-Fall-2022- 9

- View: The Boston Marathon Crisis Communications Panel.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzcVcjWeEog>
- Review: Colorado Nonprofit Association. Crisis Communication Plan Nonprofit Toolkit.
- Review: Community Toolbox: Crisis Communication: Chapter 6, Section 19,  
<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/promoting-interest/communication-crisis/main>

### Activity:

- Independent Project Due
- Discussion question response

### **Week 8      Material summary and lessons learned**

Goal: To understand where communication fits in the organization, community, stakeholders, and society. Impact, opportunity, responsibility.

### Content/Materials

- Review Week 8 PowerPoint
- Read: Madrigal, Alexis. (2/24/2018) "What Facebook Did to American Democracy" - The Atlantic
- Read: Deloitte Insights. (2022). "Government trends 2022."

### Activities/Module Assignments

- Final Strategic plan due
- Discussion question response