

**PPOL 621 Communicating Policy
Course Outline**

Course:	PPOL 621 Communicating Policy	Term:	Spring 2018
Time:	May 01 – 07 9:00 – 16:00	Section:	01
Instructor:	Dr. David Taras	Place:	Nexen Technology and Conference Center, DTC (Downtown Campus: 5 th Floor, 906-8 th Avenue SW
Office:	DTC	Telephone:	403-614-7363
Office Hours:	16:00 – 17:00	E-mail:	dtaras@mtroyal.ca
With:	Dr. Chase Remillard, Professor, Royal Roads University		

Course Description:

This course examines the vast changes that have taken place in communication and the role that this has played in the development and dissemination of public policy. The course will focus on how platforms such as Alphabet (Google), Facebook and Twitter have altered the political and social landscape as well as the challenges facing newspapers and broadcast media. The implications of media change on elections and politics, media ownership and privacy as well as on the future of news will be among the issues explored.

Textbook(s):

A basic overview of course materials appears in David Taras, **Digital Mosaic: Media, Power and Identity in Canada**

In addition to **Digital Mosaic**, students are expected to read **ONE** of the following books:

Manuel Castells, **Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age**

Bernard Harcourt, **Exposed: Desire and Disobedience in the Digital Age**

Thomas Patterson, “**News Coverage of the 2016 General Election**” Shorenstein Centre, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University and Katy Tur, **Unbelievable: My Front-Row Seat to the Craziest Campaign in American history**

Manuel Castells is one of the leading thinkers about digital networks and their power to re-shape power relations. In **Networks of Outrage and Hope**, Castells describes how social movements can use digital media to win battles that they might not be able to win through conventional politics. He argues that social movements can reset the demarcation lines of public policy by creating and sustaining political action in cyberspace. His argument is highly disputed by other thinkers including Malcolm Gladwell.

Bernard Harcourt’s book is an expose of the degree to which a surveillance society has taken shape in recent years. It is also a philosophical discussion of what this means in terms of our personal freedom and the powers of the state and corporate actors.

Thomas Patterson is one of the leading experts on the media’s coverage of politics. His book **Out of Order** is considered a classic in the field. His 2017 analysis of the media’s coverage of Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in the 2016 US Presidential election raises complex questions about the nature of media coverage and its effects on public attitudes and perceptions. Katy Tur’s description of media coverage of Donald Trump raises important questions about the role of journalists in a democracy.

Desire2Learn:

Desire2Learn will be used in this course (d2l.ucalgary.ca). Please note that Desire2Learn features a class email list and that this list that will be used. It is your responsibility to ensure that Desire2Learn uses the E-mail address of your choice. The default is your University of Calgary E-mail address.

Organization and Group Work:

Students are asked to join one of the three groups:

- Privacy and Surveillance
- Social Movements
- Campaigns and Elections

Students who choose to join the “privacy and surveillance” group will read Harcourt, write about “privacy and surveillance” in their blog and participate in discussions with others in their group. Similarly, students in the “social movements” group will read Castells, write about social movements in their blog and meet with others in the group etc. The same holds for those who will concentrate on Thomas Patterson’s work on campaigns and elections. Students must choose their group and read their assigned book before class begins on May 2. Each group is limited to 10 to 12 students – so please let the instructor know which stream you have decided to join by contacting him at dtaras@mtroyal.ca. **before** class begins.

Assignments:

Blogs: 40 per cent
Class participation: 20 per cent
Final Examination: 40 per cent

Students will write three blogs i.e. critical opinion pieces. Students will comment on readings on their chosen topics, bring new information and examples to the table and respond to points made by others in their groups. Students could also write blogs on topics introduced for class discussion. Students will submit their blogs in printed form to the instructor at the end of class on May 8.

A final exam will take place on the last day of class on May 8. The exam will cover the main ideas and theories discussed in lectures, class discussions and readings.

Students will receive a letter grade.

Grades:

Letter grades as described in the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar (see p.16) will be given for all elements of grade determination noted above. According to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, these letter grade equivalences will generally apply:

A+	97-100	B	75-79	C-	60-62
A	90-96	B-	70-74	D+	55-59
A-	85-89	C+	67-69	D	50-54

Course Schedule:

Tuesday, May 1:

9 am: Lecture: “The collapse of the traditional media”

11 am: Guest speaker

Lunch Break

1 pm: Lecture: Dr. Chase Remillard, Royal Roads University, "Images of homelessness and public policy"

Group meetings

Discussion: Reassemble in Nexen Centre

Wednesday May 2:

9 am: Lecture: "Facebook and the Privatizing of Public Space"

11 am: Guest speaker

Lunch Break

1 pm: Guest speaker

Group meetings

Discussion: Reassemble in Nexen Centre

Thursday, May 3:

9 am: Lecture: "The power of monopoly media: Google, Disney and YouTube"

11 am: Guest speaker

Lunch Break

1 pm: Guest speaker

Group meetings

Discussion: Reassemble in Nexen Centre

Friday, May 4:

9 am: Lecture: "Big data, cable and Netflix."

11 am: Guest Lecture

Lunch break

1 pm: Chase Remillard, "The visual rhetoric of election ads and video moments"

Class sourcing the final exam

Monday, May 7:

9 am: Lecture: "Journalists, politicians and the public in the news media and on Twitter"

11 am: Guest speaker

Lunch break

1 pm: Exam

Important Notes:

- The School of Public Policy expects the highest standards of professional conduct by students, faculty and staff. Abusive or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. This includes any expression of prejudice in any of its forms.
- It is the student's responsibility to be fully aware of the academic regulations outlined in the University of Calgary Faculty Of Graduate Studies Calendar. Provisions regarding Student Misconduct (plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct) will be strictly enforced. Please review the University of Calgary's Regulations on Plagiarism, Cheating and Other Academic Misconduct, online: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2.html>
- Students seeking reappraisal of a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, etc.) should discuss their work with the Instructor *within fifteen days* of the work being returned to the class.
- Examinations will not be given prior to the scheduled date.
- It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Student Accessibility Services, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course. The Student Accessibility Services website is here: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>
- All material used in this course is for the sole use of the individual and should not be recopied in either print or digital format. For copyright guidelines, including those relating to photocopying and electronic copies, please refer to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) fair dealing guidelines. <http://library.ucalgary.ca/copyright/fair-dealing>
- The University of Calgary complies with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information and Privacy Act*. The University's policy on the sharing of student information with third parties can be found here: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/files/legalservices/pg-pi-of-students-to-3rd-parties.pdf>. The University's policy on the sharing of student

information with the subject can be found here:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/files/legalservices/pg-pi-of-student-to-subject.pdf>

- In the event of an emergency, students may be required to evacuate the building. If evacuation is ordered, follow these procedures:
 - Stay calm, do not rush, and do not panic.
 - Safely stop your work.
 - Gather your personal belongings if it is safe to do so. (keys, purses, jackets, cell phones, etc. It may be hours before you are allowed back in the building.)
 - If safe, close your office door and window, but do not lock them.
 - If directed by wardens, follow their instructions.
 - Use the closest emergency exit. Do not use the elevator.
 - Proceed to the designated Emergency Assembly point in front of the Holiday Inn on 8th avenue to the west of the Downtown Campus.
 - Do not re-enter the building or work area until you have been advised by emergency responders that it is safe to do so.

Graduate Students' Association Vice-President, Academic

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Emergency Assembly Point

Holiday Inn Lobby (weather permitting)

1020 8th Avenue SW

Calgary, Alberta T2P 1J2

Or remain at nearest exit point

Safewalk / Campus Security: 220-5333

