

Advocacy & Politics Syllabus

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Course Information

PSCI 4372

Advocacy & Politics

FALL 2023

August 28-December 1, 2023

Class meets at the Archer Center and on Teams

See times listed below.

Professor Contact Information

Dr. John Daly, 512-471-1948 daly@austin.utexas.edu; Office hours: By appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Must be enrolled in the UT System Archer Fellowship program.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the issues individuals face when placed in the role of persuading others to adopt an issue or idea in a political environment like Washington DC. You will learn ways of communicating ideas memorably and impactfully, techniques for building and maintaining a “brand” name that motivates people to listen to you, ways of building allies through narrative and networking, methods for framing issues so they are potentially adoptable (i.e., pre-selling), and ways to apply various theories of persuasion to political issues. The goal is for class participants to grasp concepts they will see and experience during their internship in Washington D.C. This is not a class on social movements although we will allude to some throughout the semester. It is instead about specific tools and techniques people can use to change others’ opinions about issues.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completing the class, students will be able to:

- 1) Explain the role that advocacy plays in shaping politics and the political environment.
- 2) Identify the primary tools used in building and maintaining a reputation in work environments.
- 3) Develop skills that will allow them to build alliances with others when trying to influence policy.
- 4) Frame issues in ways that make them more persuasive (i.e., pre-selling)
- 5) Better influence others in work settings common to Washington, DC.

Required Textbooks and Materials

- **Machiavelli, N., *The Prince*** This book is a classic on influence (been in press since 1523. It focuses on how power is effectively used and has applications in virtually any environment (e.g., foreign policy, office settings, mergers and acquisitions) – see <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1232/1232-h/1232-h.htm>
- **Daly, John, *Advocacy: Championing Ideas and Influencing Others*** (This book offers a summary of the course materials with substantially more detail than what is presented in class)

Assignments & Academic Calendar

The class will have 15 sessions. Some class meetings will be held on Zoom and others in person at the Archer Center later (unless COVID conditions limit in-person meetings).

Session	Class date	Time & Class # (all times ET)	Location	Topics to cover (Additional topics may be included, depending on class discussion)	Prepare for Class
1	Mon Aug 28	3-6 pm	Teams	Course introduction;	Read Machiavelli
2-3	Fri, Sep 1	9-12	Archer Center	Communicating your ideas	Continue to read Machiavelli
4-5	Sat Sep 2	9-12 12-1:30 (lunch) 1:30-4:30	Archer Center	Building Credibility	
6-7	Sun Sep 3	9-4 pm *lunch break (12-1)*	Archer Center	Building Credibility	Discussion in class about Machiavelli
	Wed Sep 20	6:30-9 pm	Zoom	Check-in: Paper 1 Prep Session (15 minutes per team)	
DEADLINE	Sun Oct 1	PAPER 1 DUE TO DR. DALY			
8-11	Fri, Oct 13	9-noon; 1-4 pm	Archer Center	Pre-selling 1	
	Sat, Oct 14	9-noon; 1-4 pm	Archer Center	Pre-selling 2	
DEADLINE	Sun Nov 5	PAPER 2 DUE TO DR. DALY			
12-13	Sat, Nov 11	9-noon 1-4 pm	Archer Center	Paper 2 discussion and course material on persuasion theory and tactics	Read Daly
14-15	Fri, Nov 17	9-noon 1-4 pm	Archer Center	Paper 2 discussion and completion of persuasion theory and tactics	

You should read Machiavelli's The Prince before the first session and the Daly **book by November 5th**

Paper One: *Advocating for an Issue*: You will have two choices for Paper 1. In either case your paper will be a team paper (*Teams of six people: Groups 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8* - These group lists will be published in the eLearning channel for this class, and a hard copy will be given to you). The length of the paper should not exceed 3000 words.

Option 1: Your team will identify an organization that is currently advocating for an issue in Washington and then write a paper discussing the ways this organization is or has pitched their idea. For instance, teams in the past have looked at organizations advocating for statehood for D.C., the legalization of marijuana, LGBTQ+ marriage, Congressional representation for Washington DC, improving eating behavior by Americans, housing policy, and the Dream Act. Your team selects the organization and its issue. You should select one organization. You should plan to interview people involved in the marketing of the idea as well as people who are decision-makers about the issue. Suppose that you are focused on an advocacy organization trying to get Congress to provide better dental care for older Americans. You would want to chat with the people in the organization who are pitching this idea to Congress as well as, perhaps, staff members on relevant committees who might be deciding whether to create or pass this legislation. You might consider interviewing coalition partners (e.g., AARP) as well as members of the media who cover dental issue or older people in America.

Option 2: Your second option is to pick a very specific issue from the recent past that was successfully or unsuccessfully “sold” in DC. For example:

- How did USMCA get passed (probably too broad) and signed into law?
- How were attempts to have a female on the \$20 bill delayed during the Trump Administration (more specific)?
- How did the DC area get the big Amazon deal? (more specific)
- How was “warp-speed” for the vaccine sold within the Trump Administration (more specific)
- How was the “don’t ask, don’t tell” rule eliminated during the Obama Administration?

For this option, you will interview with people who have expertise on the political advocacy involved. Critically, this is not a simple history paper. It is a focused paper on the politics behind getting the issue adopted or rejected. One other thing: For this paper, you cannot select an issue that is being currently debated in DC. It needs to be one where there has been some resolution.

Paper 1 is due on **Oct 1** by email in **WORD format (please, no PDFs)**. **Please send it to daly@austin.utexas.edu**. We will have team-based electronic conversations about the paper the evening of **Wednesday, Sept 20, 2023, according to the following schedule (on Teams – link [here](#)):**

Time	Team	Members
6:30-6:45 pm	1	
6:45-7 pm	2	
7-7:15 pm	3	
7:15-7:30 pm	4	
7:30-7:45 pm	5	
7:45-8 pm	6	
8-8:15pm	7	
8:15-8:30	8	

Critically, **please check your topic with Professor Daly**. There are some organizations that will not respond to any requests for interviews (e.g., NRA) and there are certainly topics that are far too broad for a paper if you select Option 2.

In both Paper 1 and Paper 2 you have two goals.

1. The first is to identify **very specific tactics** people use to influence. For instance, for this paper you may encounter a person who says that one needs to build alliances with other advocacy organizations. How does the organization actually do this? Meetings? Phone calls? And, then, what specific moves does the person make at the meeting or on the phone? For instance, at a meeting a person might decide, ahead of time, what they can give on and what they can't. On the phone, they might remind the other person about a recent social event. Or they might ask their advice on the issue rather than pushing the issue directly. Or, the organization might use Twitter as a way to communicate with their supporters. But how do they compose tweets to get people's attention? How do they know their tweets are successful? (perhaps, for example, by measuring the percentage of tweets that are re-tweeted).
2. The second is to **integrate your interviews and research**. You should not submit a paper that simply contains summaries of the interviews and research. Instead, you should seek out themes that cut across interviews and then embed specific interview items within those themes. So, for instance, you might say that one theme was the use of social media. Then you would describe how the different media is used – again with specifics.

Paper Two: How do people successfully influence and persuade in DC? Your task is to interview people (same number as you have members on your team) about their advocacy techniques and then write an integrative summary of what you learned from those interviews. The goal for this paper is to discover some secrets of successful influence. The first paper deals with organizational influence, the second deals with personal influence. Just like the previous paper the goal is to be very specific about the moves people make to influence. So when someone tells you the secret is to be trustworthy, what specific actions does that person do to build trust? Be on time for meetings? Follow-up immediately? Like the prior paper, integration is crucial. A mediocre paper would simply include summaries of the interviews one after another. An excellent paper would seek out themes and then integrate the results of various interviews into those themes. So, for example, you might find one theme would be trust. Then you would include examples from various interviews about how trust is exemplified.

In this paper you should also integrate materials from the Advocacy book into the paper. A good paper will connect what you learned in your interviews to the materials in the book. You should plan to include materials from at least seven chapters. This paper is due on **Nov 5, 2023** by email in **Word format**. *Please send it to daly@austin.utexas.edu*. **The length should be no more than 3000 words.**

Please plan on conducting a short (about 15 minute) presentation on your final paper at the last class session.

Grading Policy

Course Requirements and Grading Policy:

Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material. There are a total of 1,000 points that can be earned over the semester:

1. **Involvement in Class** (200 points) – regular participation in class discussions. Decorum and professionalism are expected in the classroom at all times. Respect for the professor, classmates and their opinions, guest speakers and their opinions and Archer Center staff are also required. The professor reserves the right to deduct points from class involvement should any improprieties occur throughout the course of the semester.

Class Absence: In some cases students will opt to not attend a class session because of other commitments they have made. Students should chat with me prior to the missed class(es). In most

cases, students will be asked to complete a make-up assignment. Typically, the assignment is to read a book relevant to the class and write a paper describing applications of the book to their internship experience. **This semester the book will be *Influence* by Robert Cialdini.**

Given that the schedule for the class is published early-on it's wise to alert your internship coordinator at work about class times when you won't be able to do office-related projects.

- **Papers** (800 points) – Each paper will be worth 400 points total.

Grading Scale

The total points earned on a 1,000 point scale will be divided by 10 to calculate the final grade:

- A (90-100)
- B (80-89)
- C (70-79)
- D (60-69)
- E (59 or lower)

Midterm grades will be based off involvement from the first sessions of class. Final grades will be reported to your home UT System institution by **December 12, 2003** and posted in accordance with their respective grade submission deadlines.

Course & Instructor Policies

Students who complete all assigned projects SATISFACTORILY AND in a timely manner will receive a B. Students who display excellence through written work and through involvement will receive an A. Students who fail to SATISFACTORILY complete assigned projects will receive lower than a B. Students are encouraged to discuss with faculty how they might display excellence in the course.

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students.

Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.