

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department:	Communications and The Arts
Programme:	MA Communication for Social Change
FHEQ Level:	7
Course Title:	Communication, Society, Change
Course Code:	COM 7100
Total Hours:	200 (standard 4 credit MA course)
Timetabled Hours:	39
Guided Learning Hours:	21
Independent Learning Hours:	140
Semester:	Fall, Spring
Credits:	20 UK CATS credits 10 ECTS credits 4 US credits

Course Description:

This course starts from the premise that communication is at the heart of social change, giving meaning to politics in government, in civil society, and in the streets. During this course, students thoroughly explore the relationship between communication, society, and change by examining the persuasive political communication in public campaigns and movements from different international and historical contexts. Students will learn theoretical frameworks and develop a historical and global perspective that enable them to design, evaluate, and revise communication strategies and campaigns from governmental, non-profit, and social movements actors.

Prerequisites:

Open to all MA students in IR, Ad&PR, and CSC.

Aims and Objectives:

- To analyse the formation of public issues in relation to the communication strategies of various agents of change, looking at the relationship between messages, media technologies, spaces of discourse, and audiences on the effects of the campaigns.
- To examine political communication, both in terms of key debates and persuasive strategies, within international and historical contexts.
- To critically consider theories and debates in the fields of political communication and communication for social change, and to evaluate various arguments in relation to achievements and challenges evidence in case studies.

- To develop an evaluative framework in which to assess political communication campaigns from various agents of change, and to be able to apply this analysis in one's own campaign.

Programme Outcomes:

- A1. Demonstrate critical understanding of the role of communication in social change, and how it is impacted by different historical, social, political, and international contexts.
- A2. Demonstrate a comprehensive and systematic knowledge of theories and methods required for examining political and persuasive communication.
- A3. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the components used in persuasive political communication and campaigns, and up to date understanding of issues and debates within the field of practice.
- B1. Demonstrate ability to assess and evaluate political communication and campaigns from various perspectives and approaches.
- C3. Work effectively within a group, including having the ability to listen and participate constructively with team members and/or with clients.
- D4. Retrieve, process, manipulate, and present information from a variety of valid sources.

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate critical understanding of the role of communication in social change, and how it is impacted by different historical, social, political, and international contexts.
- Use appropriate theories and methods to critically analyse various forms of political and persuasive communications.
- Demonstrate an ability to engage in debates about issues and debates in the field of political communications.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and the ability to synthesise, evaluate, and apply complex and nuanced arguments within written, visual, or oral formats.

Indicative Content:

- Relationship between language and society
- Relationship between democracy and public opinion
- Theories of hegemony and counter-hegemony
- Social movement rhetoric

- Theories of change
- Impact of technology on political communication
- Spaces, media, and tactics of persuasive discourse

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: [University Policies - Richmond, The American International University in London](#)

Teaching Methodology:

The course will consist of weekly postgraduate lectures and seminars, which will follow the structure set out within the course syllabus and will serve a number of functions: lectures provide a framework of the course and discuss key conceptual issues and debates in the field; seminars address critically the relevant literature in specific areas, examine concepts, theories and case studies, and enable students to engage in group discussion and dialogue, and autonomous learning. Seminars rely on upon active student participation, mediated by the course instructor. By examining and discussing issues and problems in the seminar setting, students as junior research colleagues will be able to learn from each other and resolve questions that arise in the course of the lectures and readings. All students will be required to prepare for and participate in lectures and seminars. Tutorial opportunities will also be available for research supervision and other academic support.

Indicative Text(s):

Botan, C.H. and E. Sommerfeldt. 2023. *Public Relations Theory III: In the Age of Publics*. 1st edition. London: Routledge.

Castells, M. 2009. *Communication Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Couldry, N. 2010. *Why Voice Matters*. London: SAGE.

Dagron, A., and T. Tufte. 2006. *Communication for Social Change Anthology: Historical and Contemporary Readings*. CFSC Consortium, Inc.

Dahlgren, P. 2009. *Media and Political Engagement: Citizens, Communication, and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Dahlgren, P. 2022. *Media Engagement: Key Ideas in Media and Cultural Studies*, London: Taylor & Francis

Dutta, M. 2020. *Communication, Culture and Social Change: Meaning, Co-option and Resistance*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Dutta, M. 2015. "Decolonizing Communication for Social Change: A Culture-Centered Approach." *Communication Theory* 25 (2): 123-143.

Dutta, M. 2011. *Communicating Social Change: Structure, Culture & Agency*. New York: Routledge.

Edwards, L. 2018. *Understanding Public Relations: Theory, Culture, and Society*. LA: Sage.

Escobar, A. 1995. *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Freire, P. 1993 (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin Classics.

Hintz, E. and S. Wilson. 2021. "Theorizing Disenfranchisement as a Communicative Process. *Review of Communication* 21 (3): 241-251.

Laclau, E. & C. Mouffe. (1985 [2001]). *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. Translate by W. Moore & P. Cammack. London: Verso.

Lipschultz, J.H. 2022. *Social Media and Political Communication*, 1st Edition. London: Routledge.

Luthra, R. 2015. "Transforming Global Communication Research with a View to the Margins." *Communication Research and Practice*, 1 (3): 215-257.

Martin, James. 2022. *Hegemony (Key concepts in Political Theory)*. Routledge: Polity.

Martín-Barbero, J., and E. Fox. 1993. *Communication, Culture and Hegemony: From the Media to Mediations*. SAGE Publications.

McNair, B. 2017. *An Introduction to Political Communication*. 6th edition. London: Routledge.

Menon, D., ed. 2022. *Changing Theory: Concepts from the Global South*. London: Routledge.

Mooney, A. and B. Evans. 2023. *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*. 6th Edition. London: Routledge.

Tacchi, J. and T. Tufte, eds. 2020. *Communicating for Change: Concepts to Think With*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Thomas, P. N. 2019. *Communication for Social Change: Context, Social Movements, and the Digital*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Tufte, T. 2017. *Communication and Social Change: A Citizen Perspective*. John Wiley & Sons.

Wilkins, K., T. Tufte, and R. Obregon. 2014. *The Handbook of Development Communication and Social Change*. John Wiley & Sons.

Journals

Interface: A Journal for and About Social Movements (OA)

International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics (EBSCO)

Journal of Public Relations Research (OA)

Quarterly Journal of Speech (EBSCO)

Communication Theory (EBSCO)

Media, Culture and Public Relations (OA)

Political Communication (EBSCO)

Social Movement Studies (EBSCO)

Web Sites

Association for Progressive Communications, <https://www.apc.org/>

Communication for Social Change (CFSC) Consortium, <https://www.cfsc.org/>

The Communication Initiative Network, <https://www.communit.com/global/>

Frameworks, <https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/>

See syllabus for complete reading list

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
Programme name updated	January 2024	

Total Hours Updated	April 2024	