

MODULE 6: Political Communication

Stage				1			
Semester				2			
Module Title				Political Communication			
Module Number/Reference				6			
Module Status (Mandatory/Elective)				Mandatory			
Module ECTS credit				5			
Module NFQ level (only if applicable)				9			
Pre-requisite Module Titles				Semester One Modules			
Co-requisite Module Titles				Public Relations Theory & Practice			
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)				No			
List of Module Teaching Personnel				Robbie Smyth			
Contact Hours				Non-contact Hours			Total Effort (Hours)
Lecture	Practical	Tutorial	Seminar	Assignment	Placement	Independent work	
24			12	36		48	120
Allocation of Marks							
	Continuous Assessment	Project	Practical	Final Examination	Total		
Percentage contribution	100				100		

Intended Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the work of a political public relations officer from content creation tasks, to campaign planning and strategic decision making.
2. Create PR content including press releases and campaign literature to a professional standard, using to maximum affect the communication options available.
3. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the academic literature on political communication from an international and Irish perspective.
4. Contribute constructively to the creation of an effective political PR campaign, whether it is an election, policy campaigning or lobbying.

Module Objectives

Learners entering this module possess a range of media skills, including an ability to create content, design and layout documentation in an online and print format. They are competent to research issues and synopsis key points for policy formulation. They also have an understanding of media audiences and societal trends. The

objective in this module is to harness these abilities into a process of running or co-ordinating communication aspects of a political campaign.

Module Aims

Learners begin to develop the skills needed to adapt their journalism and other PR skills to a political setting. This involves being able to work in a fast paced, rapid response and at times pressurised environment while maintaining a professional competency.

Module Curriculum

Indicative Syllabus

(1) Lobbying and advocacy in the political arena

- (a) Decision making processes of local and national government, transnational institutions and bodies
- (b) Lobbying: styles and approaches
- (c) Lobbying - an international comparison

(2) Profiling

- (a) Candidates/Representatives
- (b) Issues and Policies
- (c) Press releases composition, statements, public speeches,
- (d) Candidate interview and event preparation
- (e) The proper role of social media

(3) Planning political campaigns

- (a) An introduction to the planning, design and implementation of the PR and communication aspects of political campaigns,
- (b) Election campaign planning
- (c) Generation of election material.

(4) Political Advertising and Marketing

- (a) The marketing avenues in political PR
- (b) Bought and earned political PR
- (c) The international perspective
- (d) Political advertising theories

(5) PR in government

- (a) Departmental strategies, legislation, interest groups
- (b) Understanding the government cycles including budgets, government initiatives
- (c) Information and Issue Management
- (d) Growing and maintaining public support

(6) Persuasion and Propaganda

- (a) Definitions and differences
- (b) Theories and research
- (c) Analysing propaganda

(d) Case studies

Reading lists and other learning materials

Recommended Reading

Foster Steven, (2010) *Political Communication* (Politics Study Guides), Edinburgh University Press

Hendricks John, Kaid Lynda Lee, editors, (2010) *Techno Politics in Presidential Campaigning: New Voices, New Technologies, and New Voters*, Routledge

Maier Michaela, [Strömbäck](#) Jesper, [Kaid](#) Lynda Leeb, editors, (2011) *Political Communication in European Parliamentary Elections*, Ashgate.

McNair Brian (2011) *An Introduction to Political Communications*, 5th Edition, Routledge.

Negrine Ralph, Stanyer James, editors, (2007) *The Political Communication Reader*, Routledge.

Secondary Reading

Cox Robert, (2010) *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere*, 2nd Edition, Sage

Davis Aeron, (2010) *Political Communication and Social Theory*, Routledge

Edwards Lee & Hodges Caroline, editors, (2011) *Public Relations, Society & Culture: Theoretical and Empirical Explorations*, 2011, Routledge

Johnson-Cartee K & Copeland G, (2004) *Strategic Political Communication*, Rowman & Littlefield.

Jowett G & O'Donnell Victoria, (2012) *Propaganda and Persuasion*, 5th edition, Sage

Kaid Lynda Lee, editor, (2004) *Handbook of Political Communication Research*, Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.

Lilleker Darren, (2006) *Key Concepts in Political Communication*, Sage

Oates Sarah, Kaid Lynda Lee, Berry Micke (2009) *Terrorism, Elections and Democracy – Political Campaigns in the United States Great Britain and Russia*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York

Semetko Holli A and Scammell, editors, (2012) *Sage Handbook of Political Communication*, Sage

Stromback Jesper, [Kioussis](#) Spiro, editors (2011) *Political Public Relations: Principles and Applications*, Routledge

Theaker Alison, (2012) *The Public Relations Handbook*, 4th edition, Routledge

Module Learning Environment

The module learning environment is built on introducing learners to the key theories and concepts of political communication through the preliminary lectures, directing learners at each stage to core readings, available on Moodle and in the college library. As the module develops learners engage through independent reading and research, using historical and contemporary case studies to deepen their critical understanding of the theories and concepts involved.

Module Teaching and Learning Strategy

The module teaching strategy is to use key lectures to introduce the module topics supplemented by seminars with industry practitioners and learner led workshops where the learners will make presentations on key readings and case studies, while leading the class discussions on the material. Learners are expected to engage in considerable reading and research to optimise the learning in lectures, seminars and workshops

Module Assessment Strategy

Learners are required to complete four pieces of work. This includes an academic essay, a research project, a political content analysis, a class presentation and a minor PR content creation piece.

Assignment 1 is designed to meet the learning outcomes of demonstrating a critical understanding of the academic literature, elements of the work for assignment 2 involve this learning outcome. Assignment 3 is also critical for this learning outcome.

Assignments 3 and 4 involve meeting the requirement of demonstrating a critical understanding of the work of a political PR officer, campaign planning and strategic decision making.

Assignment 2 and 4 help meet the requirement of creating PR content such as press releases and campaign literature and demonstrating an ability to contribute to the creation of a political PR campaign.

Element Number	Weighting	Type	Description
1	50	Academic Essay	Long paper, 2,500 words on an agreed topic with tutor. Learners will be expected to address a key political communication theory area and engage in independent reading and critical reflection.
2	30	Research Project	Learners will have to demonstrate understanding of the module concepts and theories through applied research such as analysing contemporary political communication strategies and assessing their effectiveness, identifying the use of PR theories and concepts.
3	10	Class Presentation	Learner will make a presentation on a key reading, take questions and lead class discussion.
4	10	PR content creation	Learner will either rewrite a PR content piece or plan a political PR event