
Communication and Civic Engagement

IDS2935: Section 2SM1

Time: T Period 7/ R Period 7-8

Location: Zoom

Fall 2020

Instructor: Dr. Amy Martinelli

Office Hours: TBD

Email: acmart@ufl.edu

Zoom Information

Tuesday's class link:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/92550389046?pwd=NndkZzZCTm5ORVhQV0FsTVZLeCtUUT09>

Tuesday's Meeting ID: 925 5038 9046

Tuesday's Passcode: 790179

Thursday's class link:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/98110766059?pwd=L1pwZVlaWk1rcEtSYW1ISIMyQk1BUT09>

Thursday's Meeting ID: 981 1076 6059

Thursday's Passcode: 636609

Course Description: In a democratic society, civic engagement can consist of a great many things including social activism, speaking at a community meeting, or taking leadership positions in political organizations and even government institutions. If we are to believe the vast majority of news media and mainstream popular culture, civil civic engagement has reached a breaking point. Political discourse, in particular, is all-too-often categorized by incivility, indecency, and extremity on seemingly all sides of the political divide. Even the family dinner table has become a battleground associated with breakdowns in communication over political discussions. In this class, students will deepen their understanding of what it means to be a civically engaged citizen by considering the pressing question: How can communication enhance civic engagement in an ever-changing society? They will do so by critically engaging with historic methods of social movements, models of civic engagement (solidarity, advocacy, political activism, research public interests etc.), and theories regarding public (and interpersonal) rhetoric to better understand the most effective ways to be an engaged citizen. Students will learn about the ways that others have engaged with difficult topics and created social change and consider how they can affect change in their own communities and/or personal lives.

Course Delivery: This course will consist of interactive lectures, discussions, activities, case studies, and guest lectures. This course will be held online synchronously, meaning we will meet twice a week, every week, using Zoom Technology. Attendance is required and lectures will not be recorded for the convenience of student schedules. As this is a class that requires discussion, it is expected that students be on time and in class, every time. I do not plan to regularly record lectures, although I may do so from time to time for evaluation purposes. I will not distribute a recorded version of lectures to ensure the sanctity of the academic information and to protect student privacy.

Required Text:

Palczewski, C.H., Ice, R., Fritch, J. (2016). *Rhetoric in Civic Life* 2nd Edition. (ISBN 9781891136375) State College, PA: Strata Publishing Inc.

Other Assigned Readings (provided through Canvas)

- Barrera, S. (2017, December 5). Bowling alone, revisited [Blog post]. Retrieved from <http://stevebarrera.com/bowling-alone-revisited/>
- Benson, T. (2011). The rhetoric of civility: Power, authenticity and democracy. *Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric*. 1(1): 22-30.
- Chafe, W.H. (1981). Prologue. In *Civilities and civil rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black struggle for freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hart, D., Richardson, C., Wilkenfeld, B. (2011). Civic Identity. In Schwartz et al. (eds.) *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*. New York: Springer Science + Business Media, LLC.
- Packer, ZZ. (2018, November 28). When is ‘civility’ a duty, and when is it a trap? Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/28/magazine/when-is-civility-a-duty-and-when-is-it-a-trap.html>
- Putnam, R. (2000). Thinking about social change in America. In *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Wheatley, M.J., (2002). Willing to be disturbed. In *Turning to one another: Simple conversations to restore hope to the future*. San Francisco: Berret-Koshler Publishers, Inc.
- Woodson, A.N. (2018). “Defining and practicing deep civility on college campuses. American Council on Education. Retrieved from <https://www.higheredtoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Defining-Practicing-Deep-Civility.pdf>
- Yordanos, E. (2018, August 14). Public trust reboot: Unleashing the Millennial civic spirit. Retrieved from https://ssir.org/articles/entry/public_trust_reboot_unleashing_the_millennial_civic_spirit

Assigned Videos (links in Canvas)

- Eric Lieu Ted Talk (2018). *How to revive your faith in democracy.*
- Teresa Behan Ted Talk (2018). *Is civility a sham?*

Weekly Course Schedule

WEEK ONE: Creating a Classroom Community

Tuesday, September 1

Introduction to course details, syllabus, rules, and regulations

Thursday, September 3

In Class Activity: Collaboratively Creating a Classroom Community: Our Standards and Expectations for Participation

Reading: “Willing to Be Disturbed” Margaret Wheatley (this will be provided in class):

https://ncs.uchicago.edu/sites/ncs.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/tools/NCs_PS_Toolkit_DPL_Set_B_WillingDisturbed.pdf

WEEK TWO: Civic Engagement—Where Do We Stand?

Tuesday, September 8

Objective—Students will consider the concept of “Civic Religion” presented in Eric Liu’s Ted Talk.

Video: “How to Revive Your Belief in Democracy,” by Eric Liu (we will watch together in class but it is a good idea to watch on your own before class so that you are already familiar with the content):

https://www.ted.com/talks/eric_liu_how_to_revive_your_belief_in_democracy/transcript?language=en

Thursday, September 10

Objective—Students will take stock of the current state of civic life to assess civic engagement in society writ large and in their own lives.

Reading: *Bowling Alone* Chapter 1 <http://movies2.nytimes.com/books/first/p/putnam-alone.html>; *Bowling Alone, Revisited* <http://stevebarrera.com/bowling-alone-revisited/>; *Public Trust Reboot: Unleashing the Millennial Civic Spirit*

https://ssir.org/articles/entry/public_trust_reboot_unleashing_the_millennial_civic_spirit#

WEEK THREE:

Intro to Rhetorical Concepts in Civic Engagement Continued & Constructing your Civic Identity

Tuesday, September 15

Reading—Hart et al. Civic Identity

Activity—Cultural Iceberg and Civic Identity.

Thursday, September 17

Introduction to the first assignment: “Civic Identity Autobiographical Poster”; Students will use class time to work on their “Civic Identity Autobiographical Poster.”

WEEK FOUR: Civic Identity

Tuesday, September 22

Objective—Students will cultivate a foundational understanding of the rhetorical concepts that underpin the ways that we create ideas about civic life.

Reading: *Rhetoric in Civic Life* Chapter 1: Rhetoric and Symbolic Action

Thursday, September 24

Objective—Students will continue to expand their knowledge of the rhetorical concepts that intersect with civic engagement.

Reading: *Rhetoric in Civic Life* Chapter 2: Language and Chapter 3: Visual Rhetoric

WEEK FIVE: Civic Identity, Continued

Tuesday, September 29

Objective—Students will learn about the “Civic Engagement Workshop” assignment. This will form the basis for the final presentation in the class.

NOTE: VERY important to be in class on this day.

Thursday, October 1

Objective—Students will participate in a poster session to display and explain their “Civic Identity Autobiographical Poster” to the class and guests. We will conduct a dialogue immediately following the poster session.

DUE: “Civic Identity Autobiographical Poster”

WEEK SIX: Argument and Audiences

Tuesday, October 6

Exam One

Thursday, October 8

Reading: *Rhetoric in Civic Life* Chapter 4: Argument; Chapter 5: Narratives

WEEK SEVEN: Rhetoric and Social Movements

Tuesday, October 13

Reading: Rhetoric in Civic Life Chapter 6: Rhetors

Thursday, October 15

Social Movement Spotlight: High School/Youth Activism

WEEK EIGHT: Rhetoric and Social Movements

Tuesday, October 20

Reading: Rhetoric in Civic Life Chapter 7: Audiences

Thursday, October 22

Social Movement Spotlight: LGBTQ Rights—From Stonewall to Today

WEEK NINE: Rhetoric and Social Movements

Tuesday, October 27

Reading: Rhetoric in Civic Life Chapter 8: Rhetorical Situations

Thursday, October 29

Social Movement Spotlight: Civil Rights to Black Lives Matter

WEEK TEN: Rhetoric and Social Movements

Tuesday, November 3: Election Day

Election Day. Go Vote. It's the most civically engaged thing you can do!

Thursday, November 5

Reading: Rhetoric in Civic Life Chapter 9: Publics and Counterpublics

In-class time to work on Civic Engagement Workshop

Due: Social Movement Rhetorical Analysis

WEEK ELEVEN: The Utility and Futility of Civility

Tuesday, November 10

Students will grapple with the historic call for civility and the ways that can constrain difficult conversations and forward progress.

Readings: William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom*; ZZ Packer, “When is Civility a Duty, and When is it a Trap?”; Thomas W. Benson, “The Rhetoric of Civility: Power, Authenticity, and Democracy.” (All readings available on Canvas)

Thursday, November 12

Readings: A.N. Woodson, “Defining and Practicing Deep Civility on College Campuses,” <https://www.higheredtoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Defining-Practicing-Deep-Civility.pdf>

Watch: Teresa Behan: “Is Civility a Sham?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7hdlIneypE>

WEEK TWELVE: Deep Civility in Practice

Tuesday, November 17

In class Dialogues: Deep Civility in Practice

Thursday, November 19

In class Dialogues: Deep Civility in Practice

WEEK THIRTEEN: INDEPENDENT STUDY

Tuesday, November 24

Independent Study for Civic Engagement Workshop

Thursday, November 26

Thanksgiving, No Class

WEEK FOURTEEN: Final Presentations

Tuesday, December 1

Civic Engagement Workshop Presentations

Thursday, December 3

Civic Engagement Workshop Presentations

WEEK FIFTEEN: Final Presentations

Tuesday, December 8

Civic Engagement Workshop Presentations

WEEK SIXTEEN:

Thursday, December 17

Final exam due by 5pm

FINAL EXAM

TBA

Evaluation of Grades:

Requirement	Total Points
Civic Identity Autobiographical Poster	150
Civic Innovators Project	250
Social Movement Rhetorical Analysis	200
Dialogues: Deep civility in practice	100
Exams (2)	300 (150 each)
Total Points	1000

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Civic Identity Autobiographical Poster (Individual) 150 points

- *Poster Presentation:* In this poster session, you will consider and express your “civic identity” by relating your experiences (or lack thereof) with civic engagement. You will be expected to talk to students in the class as well as guests (faculty members, other students, etc. about your civic identity.” Students will develop a short elevator speech to explain their poster during the session.
 - *For this assignment, students will be asked to engage with theories of identity and civic participation in order to **reflect** on their **personal identity** in relationship with their civic life. In other words, students will critically observe their behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes as members of a civil society. They will present these to other observers with the expectation of being able to describe their civic identity based on these reflections.*

Civic Engagement Workshop (Group)* 250 points

- In groups of 3-5, students will participate in some kind of civic engagement together throughout the semester. This could take many forms. For example, groups could attend remote meetings of a school board, city commission meetings, or UF Student Government meetings that as a group, they could take up a civic cause and create a campaign around it, or many other possibilities that the students envision. Students must account for public health and safety when choosing their civic participation, and should not do anything like promote a large social gathering for a cause, etc. Students will report at the end of the semester about their experience getting involved in some form of civic engagement, address the ways that communication facilitated their involvement, and offer up analysis of the experience.
- *Group Presentation:* Each team will be responsible for presenting a coherent and cohesive report of the semester’s activities and what they learned from doing it.
- *Group and Self Reflection:* Each group member will be asked to write a short reflection of their experience working in their groups and with the community partner.

Social Movement Rhetorical Analysis (Individual) 200 points

- 2000 word research paper: Students will construction a rhetorical analysis of a social movement with high social relevance. An effective execution of this assignment, at minimum, will:
 - Clearly identify a discrete social movement with high social relevance
 - Provide a concise, though thorough, history of the movement that illuminates both its internal development and historical exigencies that inspired it.
 - Identify a minimum of *three* distinct rhetorical strategies the movement used, providing clear examples of each (i.e. direct quotations, images, videos, etc.)
 - Draw on materials inside and outside of class to frame your analysis.
 - Effectively use visual/audio/and written materials to frame your analysis

- This assignment will require the use of APA style guidelines for all citations of outside sources.

Dialogues: Deep Civility in Practice Conversations (Group) 100 points

- *Written Materials:* You will be expected, in your groups, to determine a socially salient and “difficult” topic that you will facilitate. In your groups, you’ll be asked to:
 - Write a one page abstract that justifies the need for dialogue about the topic you’ve selected.
 - Provide questions that will lead the dialogue.
- *Dialogue Facilitation:* In groups, you will facilitate a dialogue on the topic of your group’s choosing. You will be expected to:
 - Conduct a dialogue for approximately 40 minutes.
 - Devote at least half of the time to entire group discussion.
 - Facilitation of dialogue means that in addition to writing guiding questions you and your group will use effective dialogue techniques to get the most out of the experience.
- *Critical Reflection:* After participating in all of the group dialogues, students will write a 2-page reflection of what they learned about themselves as civic communicators. Allow the following questions to guide your reflection:
 - *In what ways did you struggle to communicate my true thoughts while participating in the dialogues?*
 - *When did you feel most comfortable participating in the dialogues?*
 - *In what ways did the content of the conversations facilitate or inhibit you from speaking up or shutting up when participating in the dialogue?*
 - *Given your experience with the dialogue, what hurdles remain that might prevent you from participating in a public dialogue or deliberation?*

Exam One 150 Points

- Mid-term—In-class exam with short answer and essay questions.

Final Exam 150 Points

- Final—take-home exam with one essay that will serve as a synthesis of the accumulation of knowledge and understanding gained throughout the semester.

**Due to COVID-19 concerns, this project has changed to promote student and community safety.*

GRADING

Score	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
943-1000	93.4-100	A	4.00
900-933	90.0-93.3	A-	3.67
867-899	86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
843-866	83.4-86.6	B+	3.00
800-833	80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
767-799	76.6-79.9	C+	2.33
734-766	73.4-76.6	C	2.00
700-733	70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
667-699	66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
634-666	63.4-66.6	D	1.00
600-633	60-63.3	D-	0.67
0-599	0-59.9	E	0.00

A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit. More information on grades and grading policies can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Paper Grading: Grading rubrics can be helpful in distinguishing the quality of the ideas and content presented from the quality of the writing style presented. This will be provided to students prior to written assignments.

UF ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS/REGULATIONS

Accommodations: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester in order to allow us to provide the most effective support. Students with any accommodations should arrange a meeting with the instructor during the first week of class (and ideally before the end of drop/add) to discuss how we can work together to meet the students' needs and still adhere to the essential elements/functions of the course in regards to attendance and class participation.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open

during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code

(<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conducthonor-code/>)

specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

DR. MARTINELLI’S CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Attendance. I treat each student as a responsible adult that is part of our learning community. Part of being a responsible adult is that you attend class, on time, every time. I expect students to take their role as a member of the class community seriously because each person serves a vital function and role in our community. Of course, things happen. Illnesses, deaths in the family, downright emergencies. Documentation is required for all excused absences. Excused absences include (a) personal illness or injury (b) a death in the family (c) a university sanctioned activity (with appropriate accompanying documentation *prior* to your absence). Documentation is required in all cases, regardless of reason.

Email Etiquette: Questions and concerns can be addressed in person during my office hours listed above. I would also be happy to respond to questions and concerns through email – *within reason*. Please include the course title within the subject line of your email. I expect an

appropriate personal address to begin your email, as well as an appropriate signature with your complete name at the end. Please proofread and punctuate your emails to represent the professionalism that is expected through all written correspondence. I will try my best to respond to emails with the above criteria completed in an appropriate time frame.

Cell Phones, Sleeping, Etc. Please respect your classmates and their learning experience (and yourself and your learning experience!). Turn off the ringer on your cell phone, stay focused on and engaged in the class discussion, and do not disrespect the contributions of your classmates by sleeping, texting, Facebooking, Pinteresting, etc.

Participation. You are expected to participate actively in the course. In order to do so, you should prepare yourself by reading assignments before class and thinking critically about the material. You are encouraged to challenge ideas, and when you do so, you must show respect for people who share differing viewpoints in support of a climate that encourages deliberation and constructive conversation. In this class, we won't shy away from topics that will vary in degree of difficulty and discomfort—as such, we will take great care to construct our own expectations for decorum in the classroom. Participation means that you are actively engaged, listening, and above all *respectful* to your classmates and your instructor. Dominating the conversation and class discussion can be distracting. Remaining silent during class discussion, however, does not represent an active public speaking engagement in the course and course concepts. Be respectful, be engaged, and be mindful of your contribution in relation to that of your classmates. If you have not completed the readings or materials for the day's class I expect that you will attend class. You will learn even by being present throughout the class.

Deadlines. Meeting deadlines is very important and a mark of professionalism and respect in a community. Late assignments will be docked 20% of the total points possible for every calendar day they are late, beginning the minute after the assignment date and time. Several assignments will be turned into Canvas and will have a posted time an assignment is due. Course assignments turned in during class will be due at the beginning of class time. Those assignments not turned in with the collection of assignments at the beginning of class will be counted late and result in a grade deduction. Assignments will not be accepted more than four calendar days past the due date. In the event of a missed speech, you will not be able to make up the speech except in the case of verified illnesses, funerals, or university-supported activities and I have been contacted before the beginning of class the day of the scheduled speech.

Written Work. The work you turn in should reflect your professionalism. All written assignments must be typed and proofread for errors. Handwritten work will not be accepted. All written work must be double spaced and typed in size 12 Times New Roman font. Documents with more than 1-inch margins will result in a grade deduction. All work must include your full name, course name, and assignment title in the one-inch header of a document. Page lengths are expected to be complete pages.

Hint: Check your margins, and make sure that your spacing after paragraphs is not providing additional spaces.

24/7 Rule. In the event that you receive a grade that you would like to discuss, please wait 24 hours to raise your concerns. This time is provided for you to carefully review all comments that I made and develop your thinking before we talk. After 24 hours but within seven days of receiving your grade, please make an appointment with me or visit my office hours to discuss your concerns and ways to help improve your work on future assignments. An appeal for any grade assigned in the course must be submitted in writing no later than seven days after receiving your grade. After seven days, all grades are final.

