
IDS 2935: Communication and Civic Engagement

Tuesday, Period 4 (10:40-11:30am), CSE E221

Thursday, Period 4-5 (10:40am-12:35pm), ROG 0110

Instructor: Dr. Amy Martinelli

Office Hours:

Office Location: Rolfs Hall 203

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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 learning about frameworks of civic engagement, learning communication skills that are related to civic engagement, and by putting those skills to the test in the classroom. 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. 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.

General Education Subject Areas

Social Science (S)

Social Science courses must afford students an understanding of the basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavior and past and present social, political, and economic issues. Social and Behavioral Sciences is a sub-designation of Social Sciences at the University of Florida.

Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

Diversity (D) – this designation is always in conjunction with another program area. Courses with Diversity should demonstrate that a majority of the course addresses Diversity content and engagement and it should be a substantial, defining feature of the course.

In Diversity courses, students examine the historical processes and contemporary experiences characterizing social and cultural differences within the United States. Students engage with diversity as a dynamic concept related to human differences and their intersections, such as (but not limited to) race, gender identity, class, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and (dis)abilities. Students critically analyze and evaluate how social inequities are constructed and affect the opportunities and constraints across the US population. Students analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultures and beliefs mediate their own and other people’s understandings of themselves and an increasingly diverse U.S. society.

Composition (C), 2,000 words

Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (i.e. grammar, punctuation, usage) and the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive, require multiple drafts submitted to the instructor for feedback prior to final submission, and fulfill 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement. Course content must include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students are expected learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.

Subject Area Student Learning Outcomes

Achievement of these learning outcomes will be assessed through the Civic Identity Presentation, The Town Hall Meeting, the Civic Engagement Workshop, and participation in class discussions and In Class Activities.

Subject Area	Content	Critical Thinking	Communication
Composition	Select and apply writing process strategies, including how to discover a topic, how to develop and organize a text, and how to adapt writing style and format to different	Compare various genres of writing. Critique complex texts in writing using valid claims and persuasive evidence. Analyze texts for rhetorical competency.	Compose written texts for scholarly or professional purposes. Communicate using accepted conventions of standard written English and apply the techniques that produce effective texts.

	audiences, purposes, and context.		
Diversity (co-designation)	Identify, describe, and explain the historical processes and contemporary experiences characterizing diversity as a dynamic concept related to human differences and their intersections, such as (but not limited to) race, gender identity, class, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and disability.	Analyze and evaluate how social inequities are constructed and affect the opportunities and constraints of different groups in the United States. Analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultures and beliefs mediate understandings of an increasingly diverse U.S. society.	The diversity designation is always in conjunction with another category. Communication outcomes are listed in those subject areas.

Learning Objectives:

As a result of this class, I hope you will all learn:

- A new and richer awareness concerning how civic engagement manifests in contemporary American society
- How cultivating communication skills can enhance your civic engagement
- The confidence to become a better communicator in both speaking and writing

Texts: Texts in this class will be provided on Canvas.

Weekly Course Schedule

This schedule provides an overview of the course material, but more detail is available on the Canvas website for this course for registered students.

This calendar is subject to change for pedagogical or logistical reasons. To the extent possible, students will be notified in advance of these changes.

Dates	Topics Covered	Assignments (in Bold) & In-Class Tasks
Week One	Welcome to the Class	
Thursday (8/22)	Introduction to course details.	Homework: Prepare for Community Standards activity
Week Two	What is Civic Engagement?	
Tuesday (8/27)	Creating a Productive Learning Environment, Together	Reading: "Willing to be Disturbed" (Wheatley)
Thursday (8/29)	Define Civic Engagement Public Speaking and Civic Engagement	Reading: "What do we mean by 'Civic Engagement'?" (Adler & Goggin (2005)) Reading: Public Speaking as Advocacy (Mapes)
Week Three	Civic Engagement Skill Building: Public Speaking	

Tuesday (9/3)	In class activity	Activity 1: My Civic Identity
Thursday (9/5)	Class will not be held; Dr. Martinelli out of town. Work on your own and consult with your GA about the Civic Identity Presentation	Helpful Resources for Public Speaking: Organizing and Outlining (Mapes) Verbal Delivery Nonverbal Delivery Presentation Aids
Week Four	Presentations	
Tuesday (9/10)	Students present	DUE: Civic Identity Presentation (Notes and Slides uploaded to Canvas)
Thursday (9/12)	Students present	
Week Five	Presentations, Continued	
Tuesday (9/17)	Students present	
Thursday (9/19)	Students Present, if needed	
Week Six	Community Engagement	
Tuesday (9/24)	Introduction to Civic Engagement Workshop	
Thursday (9/26)	Reflect on Your Role in a Democracy	Activity 2: What does Community Membership Mean? Video: How To Revive Your Belief in Democracy
Week Seven	Civic Engagement Skill Building: Decision Making in Groups	
Tuesday (10/1)	Learn about the various ways that groups make decisions.	Reading: Problem Solving and Decision Making in Groups
Thursday (10/3)	Build skills in community decision making	Activity 3: Consensus v. Majority-Dissent Decision Making Extra Credit Due: Create Your Voter Plan
Week Eight	Understanding Why We Speak	
Tuesday (10/8)	Introduction to Town Hall Assignment	
Thursday (10/7)	Learn theory about why people speak and how to analyze speeches for audience effectiveness in the civic realm.	Reading: The Rhetorical Situation
Week Nine	Civic Engagement Skill Building: Argumentation	
Tuesday, (10/15)	Creating Effective Arguments	Reading: Crafting Arguments DUE: Civic Engagement Proposal
Thursday (10/17)	Deepening our understanding of Argumentation through Rhetorical Concepts	Reading: Rhetoric and Argumentation
Week Ten	Civic Engagement Skill Building: Town Hall Role Play	
Tuesday (10/22)	Research and Prepare for Town Hall Meeting	
Thursday (10/24)		DUE: Town Hall Meeting
Week Eleven	Civic Engagement Knowledge Building: Understanding Political Rhetoric	

Tuesday (10/29)	Political Metaphor in Electoral Politics	Reading: Don't Think of an Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate (Lakoff, 2004) Reading: The Lure and the Dangers of Extremist Rhetoric (Gutmann, 2007)
Thursday (10/31)	Political Metaphor in Electoral Politics, Continued	
Week Twelve	Reflection on the Election	
Tuesday (11/5)	ELECTION DAY	
Thursday (11/7)	Election Reflection	TBA
Week Thirteen	Political Engagement: Cultivating Political Voice	
Tuesday (11/12)	The Rhetoric of "Civility of Niceness" in Social Movements and Public Discourse	Lecture Materials on Canvas
Thursday (11/14)	Social Movement Spotlight	TBA
Week Fourteen	Interpersonal Communication and Civic Engagement	
Tuesday (11/19)	Impact of interpersonal political discussions on civic engagement.	Reading: Political Discussions with Family and Friends: Exploring the Impact of Political Distance (Levensen & Yndigegn, 2015)
Thursday (11/21)	Dr. Martinelli out of town: No class held this day	DUE: Civic Engagement Final Report
Week Fifteen	THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS THIS WEEK	
Tuesday (11/26)		
Thursday (11/28)		
Week Sixteen	End of Semester	
Tuesday (12/3)	End of Semester Summary and Celebration	

Evaluation of Grades:

Requirement	Total Points
Civic Identity Presentation	150
Civic Engagement Workshop	300
Town Hall Meeting	250
Attendance	100
In Class Activities	150 (50 each)
Total Points	1000

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Civic Identity Presentation 150 points

- *Oral Presentation:* Prepare a short speech presentation (3-4 minutes) of introduction that describes their “civic identity.”
- *Visual Presentation:* Prepare a visual presentation that enhances the effectiveness of the Oral Presentation.
- *Notes:* Students will be expected to present their speeches extemporaneously; using only a note-card
 - *Breakdown of grade:*
 - *Oral Presentation:* 80 points
 - *Visual Presentation:* 40 points
 - *Notes:* 30 points

Civic Engagement Workshop 300 points

For this assignment, students will identify an appropriate area of civic engagement in which they will take part during the semester, describe their plan to accomplish their activities outside of class, and reflect on their experience:

- *Civic Engagement Workshop Proposal:* Write a 750-1200 page paper that identifies the student’s civic engagement workshop, including justification using evidence-based research, and provide a realistic timeline and description of activities.
- *Civic Engagement Workshop Report and Reflection:* Write a 750-1200 page paper that summarizes the experiences, lessons learned, and personal reflection on the ways that their participation in civic engagement impacted students.
 - *Breakdown of grade:*
 - *Proposal:* 150 points
 - *Report and Reflection:* 150 points

Town Hall Meeting 250 Points

For this assignment, students will participate in a mock town hall meeting to address a topic of importance. Each student will be assigned a role to play, will conduct research from the point of view of their assigned role, craft arguments using evidence and reason to advance their role's point of view, and anticipate and be able to refute counter arguments.

- *Town Hall Role Research Brief:* Prepare a 1-2 page document that includes details about the assigned role and research done to support their position
- *Participation in Town Hall:* Attendance and active participation on the day of the Town Hall Meeting is required to receive credit
- *Reflection:* Write a 1-2 page reflection about Town Hall experience
 - *Breakdown of grade:*
 - *Research Brief:* 100 points
 - *Participation:* 100 points
 - *Reflection:* 50 points

In-Class Activities 150 Points

Though there will be many discussions in the class, three in class activities will count toward your credit in this class, and will account for your participation in the class. Students must be present on the days of activities to receive credit. There are three Activity days, each is worth 50 points.

Attendance 100 points

This class requires attendance because it requires engagement in the classroom in the form of discussions, activities, and videos that are only provided during class time. See the attendance policy for

GRADING SCALE

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 POLICIES AND RESOURCES

University Policies Regarding Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the [Student Honor Code](#). The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows (from the [2018 revision](#)):

Plagiarism. A Student must not represent as the Student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
2. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
3. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
4. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.

Important Tip: Anytime you cut and paste another person's/website's words, and you don't give the source credit for those words by using citations, you are committing plagiarism. **Best practice: DON'T cut and paste anything beyond citation-like information, such as titles of essays, journals, author's names, DOIs, web addresses.** If the information is going into the actual text of your paper, and you cut and paste without giving credit, even if you change a few words, you are committing plagiarism, and you will get a zero on the assignment in question, and you face the risk of failing the entire course as well.

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 Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Click [here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor before work is due.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. Click [here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Campus Resources

1. Health and Wellness

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Dean of Students Office*: Students who experience a family or personal emergency (death in the family, unplanned hospitalization, etc.) may contact the [Dean of Students Office](#) and request notification letters be sent to their professors. 325-392-1261
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:* For immediate medical care call 352- 733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.](#)

2. Academic Resources

- *E-learning technical support:* Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *Library Support:* Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- *Teaching Center:* Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- *Public Speaking Lab* Rolfs Hall 5th Floor, to make an appointment go to website. Open in Fall and Spring semesters. Email questions to publicspeakinglab@clas.ufl.edu
- *Writing Studio:* 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- *Student Complaints On-Campus:* [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)
- *On-Line Students Complaints:* [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)
- *Career Connections Center:* Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

In-class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational

use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history,

academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.