

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Program Overview

Political communication is an interdisciplinary minor which prepares students to evaluate political discourse while becoming more effective communicators themselves. They will compare traditional mass media with social media and other forms of new media, to ask how new technologies and strategies of communication change the political order, and how the political order structures the dissemination of information. How do citizens get their information? How do they distinguish reliable information from mis- and disinformation? Minors will learn how to successfully manage political messaging for campaigns, elected officials, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups. They will, moreover, develop their information literacy and their skills in critical thinking, ethical analysis, persuasive expression, cross-cultural communication, and evidence-based argument.

The minor in political communications prepares students for further study in graduate or law school, as well as for careers in political campaigning, advocacy, government, international affairs, political journalism, and private business concerned with government activity.

Minor Offered

- Minor in Political Communication

Contact

Libby Newman, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Chairperson
Department of Government, Politics and Law
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Fine Arts Building
609-896-5268
onewman@rider.edu

Program Website: Political Communication (<http://www.rider.edu/politicalcommunication/>)

Associated Department/College: Department of Government, Politics and Law

Related Programs

- Communication Studies (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/majors-minors-certificates/communication-studies/>)
- Finance (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/business-administration/majors-minors-certificates/finance/>)
- Health Administration (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/business-administration/majors-minors-certificates/health-administration-minor/>)

Political Communication Minor Requirements

(21 credits)

| Code | Title | Credits |
|--------------------------------|---|---------|
| POL 307 | Political Communication | 3 |
| Communication | | |
| Select three of the following: | | 9 |
| COM 105 | Communication, Culture and Media ¹ | |
| COM 205 | Persuasion ¹ | |

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|--------------------------------|---|-----------|
| COM 304 | Rhetoric for Politics and Law | |
| COM 322 | Argumentation and Advocacy | |
| COM 390 | Communication and Society | |
| COM 393 | International Communication | |
| Political Science | | |
| Select three of the following: | | 9 |
| GLS 180 | Understanding Global Relations | |
| POL 210 | Public Opinion | |
| POL 230 | Methods of Political Analysis | |
| POL 247 | Political Campaigning | |
| POL 295 | Special Topics in Political Science ² | |
| POL 301 | Civil Liberties in the U.S. | |
| POL 305 | Political Parties and Electoral Behavior | |
| POL 306 | American Political Film | |
| POL 313 | American Presidency | |
| POL 315 | Global Issues | |
| Recommended Course | | |
| Select one of the following: | | 4 |
| COM 490 | Independent Study: Research and Creative Expression | |
| COM 491 | Internship in Communication | |
| POL 490 | Independent Study: Research and Creative Expression | |
| POL 491 | Internship in Political Science | |
| Total Credits | | 21 |

¹ May not be counted toward the minor by Communication and Journalism majors.

² Only one special project may be counted toward the minor.

Courses and Descriptions

COM 105 Communication, Culture and Media 3 Credits

Provides a detailed investigation and analysis into the nature, history, scope, adequacy, and limitations of mass communication and examines the reciprocal influence of the media on culture and society. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Disciplinary Perspectives element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

COM 205 Persuasion 3 Credits

Analyzes the motivations that lead individuals and audiences to beliefs and actions and the techniques of achieving objectives through persuasion. Attention, interest, empathy, ethos, fear, and techniques of speakers, and those who use persuasion professionally are studied.

COM 304 Rhetoric for Politics and Law 3 Credits

Introduces the theory and strategy of crafting persuasive messages and cultivating relationships with the media in the context of judicial, deliberative, and epideictic genres of rhetoric. In addition, students will learn how to plan and coordinate media briefings and how to prepare and participate in a media interview.

Prerequisite(s): COM 104 or COM 290.

COM 322 Argumentation and Advocacy 3 Credits

Investigates the theory and practice of speech communication that seeks to persuade by inferential argumentation. Concentrates on theories, practices, and research in argumentation and debate, blended with speaking experience in analyzing and advocating controversial topics.

Prerequisite(s): COM 104 or COM 290.

COM 390 Communication and Society 3 Credits

Examines in a topical manner the influence of communication upon significant issues and movements affecting people and society. Investigates interpersonal and mass media factors as they relate to a major issue such as changing sex roles, radicalism, racism, evangelism, election campaigns, and technology. May be taken more than once with different emphasis.

COM 393 International Communication 3 Credits

Examines mass media systems and their influence on international communication. Emphasizes media systems of major political powers such as Russia, China, the European community, the United States, and geo-political centers such as Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. Using a seminar format, the course explores how a nation's mass media reflect its socio-political environment and national values. Focuses on the international images constructed by the mass media.

COM 490 Independent Study: Research and Creative Expression 1-4 Credits

Independent Research and Study allows students to investigate topics of interest under faculty supervision. Available to majors/minors only. Approval of the faculty sponsor, department chair, and CAS dean's office is required. Only one project may be scheduled in a semester and up to 12 semester hours of independent study may count toward graduation.

Prerequisite(s): A minimum of 45 credits and 3.0 GPA.

COM 491 Internship in Communication 1-4 Credits

Places qualified students in a professional area related directly to their communication training. Students may intern in a communication position with a corporation, small business, media outlet, public relations agency, non-profit organization, political party, sports organization, or other similar organizations. A minimum of 50 hours of internship per credit is required. Written reports, a final project, and supervisor evaluations are used to analyze and evaluate the experience. Available to majors/minors only. One internship may be scheduled in a semester, and up to 8 credits of internship may count toward graduation. Approval of the faculty sponsor, department chair, and CAS dean's office is required.

Prerequisite(s): A minimum of 45 credits and 2.5 GPA.

GLS 180 Understanding Global Relations 3 Credits

Offers an introduction to Global and Multinational Studies by exposing the student to basic concepts necessary to understand the dynamics underlying the emerging worldwide society of diverse nations. The student will become acquainted with the mechanisms by which contacts are built across nations, and the factors that shape the conception of and relations with "the other."

POL 210 Public Opinion 3 Credits

Public opinion as a social force and as expression of public sentiment on political and social issues. Topics include: development and dissemination of opinions, the measurement of public opinion, public opinion and governmental processes, and the reciprocal relationship between mass media and public opinion.

POL 230 Methods of Political Analysis 3 Credits

An overview of the various qualitative and quantitative methods that political scientists use to study their discipline. Themes include analyses of political participation and support, methods of studying elections, measures of political tolerance and liberalism.

POL 247 Political Campaigning 3 Credits

This course entails the study of campaigning for political office at the federal, state and local levels in the United States. While attention will be given to how the broader political environment and specific factors, e.g., partisanship, hot button issues, local interests, and money, affect the nature of campaigns, the course's primary focus will be on how to organize and conduct a successful and ethical campaign, including how to collect and analyze pertinent data, manage a staff, develop a communications plan, including social media, and get out the vote.

POL 295 Special Topics in Political Science 3 Credits

For non-seniors who engage in serious research in political science. Topic to be approved by instructor and department chairperson.

POL 301 Civil Liberties in the U.S. 3 Credits

The American doctrine of civil liberties in theory and practice. Emphasis on analyzing the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and religion, the right of privacy, and the problem of discrimination in the context of contemporary issues and problems. Particular attention to the role of the Supreme Court in this area. Note: This course is cross-listed as HLS 301. Students may not get credit for both HLS 301 and POL 301.

POL 305 Political Parties and Electoral Behavior 3 Credits

The structure, character, and functions of U.S. political parties and pressure groups, and their impact on public policy. Parties are analyzed within the broader scope of organizational theory and comparative party systems. Major emphases on their historical origins, their role in contemporary political life, and particular aspects of party politics—local organization, membership, campaigning and elections, policy-making roles, and leadership.

POL 306 American Political Film 3 Credits

This course analyzes the structure, history, and impact of the genre of political film. It begins with a discussion of how one distinguishes a political film from other forms of cinema. It then proposes insights into the manner in which these films evoke a particular time and place in politics, affect the viewer's interpretation of a political event or figure, and have an effect upon a viewer's political perceptions or behavior. The student will also learn to review films critically, both as political statements and as effective (or ineffective) conveyors of political messages.

POL 307 Political Communication 3 Credits

The meaning and uses of political communication are examined, the manner and forms such communication takes, and the history of political discourse. Major topics include the role of communication in elections and the development of public policy, how political communication strategies have changed with the rise of mass media, and the development of national and international publics for discourse.

POL 313 American Presidency 3 Credits

A description and analysis of the American presidency: its historical development, the internal organization, and ecological context. Basic issues include the intent of the framers of the Constitution, the historical accumulation of presidential powers, and institutional limits on presidential power (e.g., Congress and the bureaucracy).

POL 315 Global Issues 3 Credits

Military, economic, demographic, and environmental threats to global security in the post-Cold War era. Forces of transnational integration vs. forces of intrastate fragmentation. Inadequacy of international law and organization to deal with these problems within the confines of the sovereign nation-state system.

POL 490 Independent Study: Research and Creative Expression 1-4 Credits

Independent Research and Study allows students to investigate topics of interest under faculty supervision. Available to majors/minors only. Approval of the faculty sponsor, department chair, and CAS dean's office is required. Only one project may be scheduled in a semester and up to 12 semester hours of independent study may count toward graduation.

Prerequisite(s): A minimum of 45 credits and 3.0 GPA.

POL 491 Internship in Political Science 1-4 Credits

Students work under supervision in a public agency, political party, or public interest group. A minimum of 52 hours of fieldwork per credit required, with regular reports and a concluding critique analyzing and evaluating the experience. Available to majors/minors only. One internship may be scheduled in a semester and up to 8 credits of internship may count toward graduation. Approval of the faculty sponsor, department chair, and CAS dean's office is required.

Prerequisite(s): A minimum of 45 credits and 2.5 GPA.