

Communications, Advocacy, and Leadership (CAL)
Spring 2021

Class time: Tuesday/Thursday, 2:10 – 3:25pm
Format: Virtual-live class via Microsoft Teams (TEAMS)
Professor: Mary Russ, Executive Director, White River Partnership
mruss@vermontlaw.edu
Office hours: Immediately after class or by appointment
Teaching assistant: Eli Gleason, Assistant Director of Career Services, VLS
egleason@vermontlaw.edu, 802-831-1283
Office hours: Tuesday-Friday, 8:30am-5:00pm
Required reading: Cox, Robert, *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere* (“Cox”) and selected reading on the course TEAMS page

Overview: In this course we will consider and practice the various tools commonly used in effective advocacy. As advocates we try to generate support for ideas, policies, or practices to raise awareness, garner support, or effectuate action. To accomplish this, the successful advocate considers how to define and connect with audiences by developing a persuasive message and delivering it through an appropriate channel.

Course objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate persuasive writing techniques to determine the effectiveness of each
- Examine the steps in the grant writing process
- Analyze the specific provisions included in the Freedom of Information Act
- Illustrate legislation on a pending issue
- Determine the purpose and process of submitting a public comment letter
- Assess a public communications campaign, including the role of mainstream media, to disseminate information and foster support for an issue

Ground rules: On January 12, the class reviewed and approved the following list of ground rules that seek to foster community by balancing individual and group needs:

- Be prepared – Come to class having done the reading (or let us know)
- Be present – Provide full attention during class time (or let us know)
- Lean in – Actively participate in class
- Make space – everyone has the right to be heard – respectful and professional conduct
- Acknowledge and embrace differences
- Have patience with others and yourself – Flexibility is key!
- Ask questions to clarify your understanding – We are here for you
- Respect TEAMS protocols:
 - Video function on (or let us know) and speakers muted during class
 - Raise your “hand” to ask a question
 - Use Chat function to let Eli know if/when you need to step away (as needed)
 - Remember classes are recorded and will be available on TEAMS

CAL Syllabus v.3 (subject to change)	
Tuesday, January 12	Introductions & course overview Reading: TEAMS
Thursday, January 14	Intro to environmental communications & making a pitch Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cox, Chapter 1, pp. 10-27 - TEAMS Assignment: Pitch assignments 1 & 2 posted on TEAMS
Tuesday, January 19	Making a pitch / Goal & audience Guest speaker Reading: TEAMS
Thursday, January 21	Making a pitch / Goal & audience Reading: TEAMS
Tuesday, January 26	Class presentations Assignment: Pitch assignment 1 DUE
Thursday, January 28	Class presentations / Pitch wrap-up
Tuesday, February 2	Intro to grants Reading: TEAMS Assignment: Grant assignment posted on TEAMS
Thursday, February 4	Grants / Developing applications Reading: TEAMS
Tuesday, February 9	Grants / Developing applications Reading: TEAMS
Thursday, February 11	Grants / Developing applications Reading: TEAMS Assignment: Pitch assignment 2 DUE
Tuesday, February 16	Intro to environmental engagement / Right to know Reading: Cox, Chapter 12, pp. 285-308 Assignment: Public Records Act assignment posted on TEAMS
Thursday, February 18	Access to information / Vermont Public Records Act Reading: TEAMS

Tuesday, February 23	Access to information / Making a request Guest speaker Reading: TEAMS
Thursday, February 25	Access to information / Making a request Guest speaker Reading: TEAMS Assignment: Grant assignment DUE
Tuesday, March 2	NO CLASS – Spring break
Thursday, March 4	NO CLASS – Spring break
Tuesday, March 9	Right to comment Reading: TEAMS Assignment: Public comment assignment on TEAMS
Thursday, March 11	Public comment Reading: TEAMS Assignment: Public Records Act assignment DUE
Tuesday, March 16	Public comment Guest speaker Reading: TEAMS
Thursday, March 18	Public comment wrap-up Guest speaker Reading: TEAMS
Tuesday, March 23	Intro to environmental advocacy campaigns Reading: Cox, Chapter 9, pp. 202-228 Assignment: Campaign assignment on TEAMS
Thursday, March 25	Developing campaign objectives Reading: TEAMS Assignment: Public comment assignment DUE
Tuesday, March 30	Identifying decision makers Reading: TEAMS
Thursday, April 1	Developing a campaign message Reading: TEAMS
Tuesday, April 6	Using mass media Guest speaker Reading: TEAMS

Thursday, April 8	Campaign example Guest speaker Reading: TEAMS
Tuesday, April 13	NO CLASS – Campaign assignment DUE
Thursday, April 15	Class presentations
Tuesday, April 20	Class presentations
Thursday, April 22	Class presentations / Last day of class and course evaluations

Course website: Our course website is Microsoft Teams (TEAMS). I will use this site to communicate with you, post assignments and relevant materials, and occasionally prompt and continue class discussion.

Grading: Your grade in this course will be based on class attendance and participation as well as your research and writing assignments and in-class presentations. On all assignments you are expected to complete your work without outside help (this excludes faculty within the Academic Success Program, the Writing Specialist, and our class TA). Please review the Honor Code in your student handbook, which applies in this course.

Submitting assignments: You are responsible for submitting assignments at the proper time and place. Unless otherwise noted, **your assignments should be formatted as a Microsoft Word document and are due via TEAMS by 2:00pm on the due date.** Spelling and grammar are considered in your grades, so please edit your work carefully.

I will deduct points from your grade if you submit an assignment after the due date and time. You will receive a failing grade if you submit an assignment more than 5 days late without prior permission. Note: computer malfunction is not an acceptable excuse for a late assignment. Please back-up your work frequently.

Course participation: Course participation includes attendance, timeliness, class contribution, written assignments, and in-class presentations.

Please notify me if you will not be in class on a certain day prior to the class time. Note: prior notice does not mean the absence is excused. I will excuse an absence only when based on illness, religious holidays, or other compelling reason with prior notice (unless the emergency makes prior notice impossible, in which case you should notify me of the absence and the nature of the emergency as soon as is reasonably possible).

Questions: Please reach out at any time with questions about class, assignments, etc. Make sure to email both me and Eli when you reach out to ensure a timely response.