

“People are hungry for community; they miss it.”

Barack Obama

“This isn’t science, this is citizenship – and it is a rhetorically messy business.”

Anonymous

“I will absolutely use these skills again. If not my civic engagement skills, then absolutely my organization skills! I learned a lot about myself, others, and how to get things done. I learned about interactions with others that I am working with, and how to effectively plan and execute events like ours to engage the community in important issues. I learned that when people are informed, they find a passion they didn’t know they had before, and will do what they can to let more people in on what they know. . . . Most of all, I learned that people can make a difference. We made a difference at FAU.”

Devin Kelley, former civic engagement student & founding member of SOS (Save Our School)

Capstone in Communication and Civic Life

(SPC 4271, 3 credits [CRN])

[Term]

Time: [Day/Time]

Room: [room]

Instructor: [Name]

Office: [Room]

Office Hours: [Day/Time]

Email: [email]

Assistant: [Name]

Office: [Room]

Email: [email]

DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE: This is one of the capstone courses for seniors in public communication. As such, the class provides the experienced student of communication with an opportunity to reflect on disciplinary concepts, and to examine the influential role communication plays in nurturing democratic practices, recognizing and valuing diversity, and training active, responsible citizens. In addition, the course also provides an opportunity for students to transform theory into practice by engaging in a semester long service-learning civic engagement project. *The project provides seniors in public communication with a focused task that requires application of academic expertise in communication to real world practice.*

This course also counts toward the certificate in peace studies.

METHOD: This course uses traditional lectures, discussion, student presentations, and a service-learning component. Service-learning combines service activities with structured opportunities that link the activities to self-reflection. The service-learning civic engagement project in this class will allow students to engage in problem-solving in complex settings, thereby enhancing deep learning and promoting critical thinking. It should demonstrate how concepts and skills learned in the communication classroom apply to larger communities and function to encourage democratic practices and civic engagement.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Ford, Jon & Marjorie Ford. *Citizenship Now*. New York, NY: Pearson Longman, 2004.

Graham, Bob. *America: The Owner’s Manual*. Washington DC: CQ Press, 2010.

RELATED WORKS:

Colby, Anne, et al. *Educating for Democracy: Preparing Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility*. Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Education: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

Hauser, Gerard A., & Amy Grims, eds. *Rhetorical Democracy: Discursive Practices of Civic Engagement*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004.

Isaacson, Rick & Jeff Saperstein. *The Art and Strategy of Service-Learning Presentations*. 2nd Ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2005.

McHale, John P. *Communicating for Change: Strategies of Social and Political Advocates*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.

Poulakos, Takis, & David Depew, eds. *Isocrates and Civic Education*. Austin, TX: Univ. of Texas Press, 2004.

Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2001.

COURSE POLICIES

LATE WORK: The success of this course depends significantly on your readiness to discuss materials and to do assigned work ON TIME. In large part, the work in this class requires that you function effectively in and across groups and committees. Because the success of the service-learning project (and the quality of your educational experience in this class) depends largely on efficient and effective group work, timeliness is especially important in this class. **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR A GRADE.**

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION: Attendance and participation are essential to the success of the course and to the class service-learning civic engagement project. Attendance includes active participation in class discussions which demonstrates familiarity with and understanding of readings and other course materials. Attendance at civic engagement project activities is essential. As with any other college course, you will be expected to work outside the class period. Your attendance at project planning meetings and during the implementation of the class project is **REQUIRED**. Poor attendance and participation will affect your grade substantially: **Over three unexcused absences will lower your grade by AT LEAST ONE full grade, for example, from a "B-" to a "C-" Only one of those three absences may be during a service-learning project planning meeting or implementation activity. WE WILL STRICTLY ADHERE TO THIS POLICY. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SIGN THE ROLL EACH CLASS PERIOD AND AT SERVICE LEARNING ACTIVITIES.**

PLAGIARISM: In all your assignments (both oral and written), be sure to recognize any sources you consult. Work found to be plagiarized will automatically result in a failing grade for the course.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: In the university environment, academic misconduct is a matter which can result in serious consequences for the offender. The consequences include mandatory reporting of any offense to the Committee on Academic Misconduct, a zero on any assignment(s) involved, and loss of credibility with the faculty members in whose course the infraction was committed. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating on examinations, providing work to other students that should be authored by them or accepting such work yourself. If you have any questions about the propriety of the academic behavior you are considering, see us for advice. **As a student you should observe the policies on academic irregularities as explained in Florida Atlantic University's 2011-2012 University Catalog.**

Code of Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy:

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see

http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf

Disability Policy Statement: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) -- in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 240 (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 117 (772-873-3441) --and follow all OSD procedures.

A SPECIAL NOTE: This is a university course with the expectation that attending students are adults.

Controversial subjects, issues, and materials may be discussed, presented, or viewed within the class (initiated either by instructors or students) or during a service-learning activity. Instructors will notify students of any particularly controversial materials prior to class or outside meetings; **students giving class or public presentations are required to do the same.** Students who find certain materials offensive or who feel they will be uncomfortable viewing or discussing controversial materials may freely choose to leave during these times.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES: In accordance with University policy, all cell phones & beepers must be silenced during class. Laptops must be turned off and put away, except during committee and class project planning meetings.

TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS: All written assignments must be submitted in hard copy during class, not submitted in electronic form.

KEEPING RECORDS: For this as well as all your other college classes, you should keep a copy of all course materials (syllabus, assignments, your papers & other written assignments, the instructor's critiques and grades, etc.) until you have received your final grade for the class.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:** (5% of final grade) At the beginning of each class period at which required reading is due, you will be asked to turn in ONE meaningful question and/or comment about the assigned reading designed to stimulate class discussion. Alternately, you may provide a real world example that illustrates something discussed in the reading. Questions/comments/examples may be hand written and must be turned in at the beginning of class.

2. **SMALL GROUP REPORT ON SUPPLEMENTAL READING:** (10% of final grade) Early in the semester, we will divide the class into 7 small groups (3 to 4 students in each group) for the purposes of this assignment *only*. Each group will be assigned to present a report on a supplemental reading (I will give each group either a hardcopy of the essay or a web address). Each member of the group should read the assigned essay, and the group should meet to discuss how they will coordinate the presentation. Your group should do the following in your oral presentation: (1) describe the main concepts, arguments, and supporting evidence in the essay, (2) discuss how this essay relates to other class readings or discussions, (3) discuss how concepts in the reading may relate to real world practices and especially to the class service-learning project, (4) offer your group's evaluation of the essay. To prepare successfully, you will also want to familiarize yourself with related literature, contribute additional information or specific comments about the essay, etc. Your group should divide labor equally (in terms of preparation, oral presentation, and written work). Each group should turn in ONE typed, detailed, full sentence outline of your group presentation along with a bibliography of works consulted. You should also include a clear description of your group's division of labor. Your group presentation should be no longer than 20 minutes. **See Tentative Schedule for group report due dates.**

Supplemental Readings for Group Reports:

- #1—"The New Student Politics" by Sarah E. Long
- #2—"Deliberative Dialogue to Expand Civic Engagement: What Kind of Talk Does Democracy Need?" by Martha L. McCoy & Patrick L. Scully
- #3—"Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" by Robert D. Putnam
- #4—"Effective Nonviolent Action" by Randy Schutt
- #5—"Conflict Management Skills" by Gregorio Billikopf
- #6—"A Well-Connected Citizenry" by Al Gore
- #7—"Recovering the Civic Culture: The Imperative of Ethical Communication" by Kenneth E. Andersen

3. **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT** (15% of final grade) Early in the semester, we will discuss and select ONE semester long service-learning civic engagement project on campus. Possible project topics include voter education workshops on campus, workshops on discussion & deliberation methods, workshops on communication literacy, gender & communication, ethnicity & communication, etc., planning a public forum or student debate on a current issue, planning a campus rally on a social or political issue the class feels strongly about, giving a campus performance highlighting important/interesting aspects of public communication, etc.

Each student will be required to participate in planning and implementing the project. The project should generally

function to foster civic engagement on campus, at the same time providing the class with experience in planning, implementing, and participating in the civic engagement process and offering communication majors opportunities to utilize their expertise. Suggested project formats include campus or campus/community workshops, forums, debates, discussions, “townhall” meetings, performances, teach-ins, rallies, etc. (*with instructor approval*). As skilled communication majors, you will have an opportunity to apply your expertise to a practical situation and to reflect on relationships between conceptual knowledge and real world practice (highlighting connections between communication and democratic practices). Once the civic engagement project has been selected, the class will brainstorm on the number and kind of committees needed to plan and implement the project. The class will decide how it wants to organize itself into a number of committees to complete various planning and implementation tasks related to the class project. **The project is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, April 17th**. However, the class may choose to change that date based on the nature and goals of the project selected. For this part of the course, the CLASS will receive a grade based on how well the project is put together and presented (not on how many people attend or whether the project’s social/political goals are met).

4. **COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORTS** (15% of final grade) Each committee will be required to submit at least two formal progress reports during the civic engagement project: (1) **conceptual planning report** (this should include a clear description of the committee’s charge, a description of the way the committee has organized itself, and its general plan for how to complete its committee tasks), and (2) **implementation report** (this report should discuss the committee’s role in implementing the project *in detail*: Who will do what & when? How much has been accomplished thus far? What is left to be done and who will do it? Does the committee have a timeline for when specific tasks should be completed? etc. **Progress report #1 is due Thursday, February 16th; Progress report #2 is due Thursday, March 22nd**).

5. **PROJECT PORTFOLIO** (55% of final grade) Each student will compile a detailed portfolio of his or her participation in the class service-learning civic engagement project. The portfolio must include at least the following items:

- A. **A description of your committee membership and your assigned role & duties on that committee (20 pts)**
 - Committee chairs will also submit the following information: committee meeting minutes & attendance records, evaluation of committee members (a form will be provided)
 - Committee members will also submit an evaluation of the committee chair (a form will be provided)
- B. **A journal (130 pts)**, including a *time log* which records **all** times you spent on the project (a sample form will be provided), *specific, detailed descriptions* about each project activity you engaged in, what you did, where you went, who you talked to, what their responses were, etc. as well as *notes reflecting your thoughts, reactions, and ideas about each specific activity*.
- C. **Supplementary Documents (50 pts)**—submit complete contact information about ANYBODY outside the class that you spoke with for the project (names, position, phone number, e-mail address, business card), e-mails, posters, fliers, newspaper articles, videos, etc. and/or a bibliography of sources consulted while completing tasks related to your participation in the project.
- D. **Narrative Reflection (100 pts)**--Each of you will be asked to write a reflection paper about your experience with the service-learning project. This is a first-person informal narrative describing your personal experiences in relation to the planning and presentation of the class project, your reactions, feelings, evaluations, and any suggestions for how the project could be improved (in terms of your work, your committee, or the class as a whole). The narrative reflection should be typed, double-spaced and should be between 3-5 pages long.
- E. **Critical Essay (250 pts)**—Each of you will be asked to write a short critical essay in which your purpose is to critically analyze the usefulness/applicability of a course concept, theory, or guideline in light of the class project. While the reflection narrative is a personal narrative of subjective experience, in the critical essay you should take a more scholarly approach: as a participant-observer in the class project, you should examine how the project relates to your chosen concept. The paper should include the following (1) a clear introduction to the concept you’ve chosen and your purpose in the paper followed by a preview of the essay, (2) in the body you should (a) describe in detail the concept you’ve chosen to analyze and (b) discuss in specific ways how the project relates to the concept and what we can learn from this. The critical essay should be typed, double-spaced, and should be between 3-5 pages long. This paper should use in-text citations and include a bibliography of sources consulted. Better papers will demonstrate research beyond required course texts.

THE COMPLETED PROJECT PORTFOLIO, INCLUDING THE NARRATIVE REFLECTION & CRITICAL ESSAY PAPERS, IS DUE TUESDAY APRIL 24th; HOWEVER, WE MAY PERIODICALLY ASK TO SEE YOUR PORTFOLIO ANYTIME DURING THE SEMESTER.

GRADES

Note: While grading for some group project work may center on group oriented grading criteria forms, in all cases we will consider individual participation & quality of work. Thus, group members may receive different grades for their work on group projects.

Final grades

Discussion Questions/Comments	= 50 possible points
Report on Supplemental Reading	= 100 possible points
Civic Engagement Project	= 150 possible points
Committee Progress Reports	= 150 possible points
Project Portfolio	= 550 possible points
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Semester Total	= 1000 possible points

Final grade breakdown

940-1000 points	= A
900-939 points	= A-
870-899 points	= B+
840-869 points	= B
800-839 points	= B-
770-799 points	= C+
740-769 points	= C
700-739 points	= C-
670-699 points	= D+
640-669 points	= D
600-639 points	= D-
599 pts & below	= F

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

<u>WEEK</u>	<u>FOCUS</u>	<u>READINGS DUE</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</u>
T Jan 10	Introduction to the course Basic course terms & concepts Rhetoric & Democracy		
TH Jan 12	Assign supplemental reading Group Reports	Graham, Preface, pp. xv-xxi; Prologue, pp. 1-16; Introduction, pp. 17-28	
T Jan 17	Isocrates & Civic Education Defining the Challenge Gathering Information	Graham, Chs. 1-2, pp. 29-62.	
TH Jan 19	Identifying the Solution Creating Support	Graham, Chs. 3-4, pp. 63-122	
T Jan 24	Engaged Citizenship Timing	Ford, Ch. 1 (pp. 1-18), Ch. 5 (pp. 207-222 & pp. 242-256) Graham, Ch. 6, pp. 144-159	
TH Jan 26	Discuss & Select Class Civic		Select Class Civic

<u>WEEK</u>	<u>FOCUS</u>	<u>READINGS DUE</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</u>
T Jan 31	Review Project Assignments & Committees Persuasion & Influence Collaboration	Graham, Ch. 5, pp. 122-143; Ch. 7, pp. 160-182.	
TH Feb 2	“The New Student Politics” by Sarah E. Long Project Planning Time		Supplemental Reading Report Group #1
T Feb 7	Engaging the Media Project Planning Time	Graham, Ch. 8, pp. 183-214.	
TH Feb 9	Citizenship & Civil Liberties “Deliberative Dialogue” by McCoy & Scully Project Planning Time	Ford, Chs. (pp. 103-139)	Supplemental Reading Report Group #2
T Feb 14	Finding Resources Project Planning Time Committee	Graham, Ch. 9, pp. 215-238.	
TH Feb 16	Committee Progress Reports #1		All Project Committees Progress Reports #1 DUE
T Feb 21	Activism & Mass Media “Bowling Alone” by Robert Putnam	Ford, Ch. 4 (pp. 155-206)	Supplemental Reading Report Group #3
TH Feb 23	Lecture: Cicero, Quintilian & The Ideal Orator Project Planning Time		
T Feb 28	Lecture: Activist Communication Mediums Public Communication		
TH Mar 1	Civic Engagement & Education “Effective Nonviolent Action” by Randy Schutt	Ford, Ch. 2 (pp. 49-102)	Supplemental Reading Report

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March 5th through March 9th: SPRING BREAK

<u>WEEK</u>	<u>FOCUS</u>	<u>READINGS DUE</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</u>
T Mar 13	Lecture: Italian Humanists & <i>Vita Activa</i> Project Planning Time		
TH Mar 15	Activism & Conflict "Conflict Management Skills" by Gregorio Billikopf		Supplemental Reading Report Group #5
T Mar 20	Lecture: Activism & Intercultural Communication Project Planning time		
TH Mar 22	Committee Progress Reports #2		All Project Committees Progress Reports #2 DUE
T Mar 27	Lecture: Habermas & the Ideal Speech Community Project Planning Time		
TH Mar 29	Lecture: Invitational Rhetoric & Nonviolent Communication "A Well Connected Citizenry" by Al Gore		Supplemental Reading Report Group #6
T Apr 3	Deadline for completing tasks discussed during presentation of committee progress reports #2		
TH Apr 5	Victory & Defeat Activism & Ethics "Recovering the Civic Culture" by Kenneth E. Andersen	Graham, Ch. 10, pp. 239-258	Supplemental Reading Report Group #7
T Apr 10	Project Planning Time		
TH Apr 12	Project Planning Time		
T Apr 17	CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT EVENT (tentative date)		Civic Engagement Project Event

TH Apr 19 Project Wrap-Up & Course Evaluation
T Apr 24 Course Conclusion

**COMPLETE
PROJECT
PORTFOLIO
DUE**

“The world is run by those who show up!”