POLI: 1600:0001 – Introduction to Political Communication

The University of Iowa
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Spring 2026

Meeting Time and Location: Tuesday & Thursday, 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM, 14 Schaeffer Hall (SH)

Primary Instructor: Simal Gerot
E-Mail: simal-gerot@uiowa.edu
Office: 369 Schaeffer Hall

Student Drop-In Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 2:30–4:00 PM, or by appointment

Students are encouraged to attend drop-in hours to ask questions about course material, assignments, or academic interests. Meetings outside these times are available by appointment if needed.

Course Supervisor: Julianna Pacheco (julianna-pacheco@uiowa.edu)

DEO: Julianna Pacheco (julianna-pacheco@uiowa.edu)
Campus address: 341 Schaeffer Hall
Department of Political Science: https://politicalscience.uiowa.edu

Course College (Administrative Home)
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the home of this course, and CLAS governs the add and drop deadlines, academic misconduct policies, and other undergraduate policies and procedures. Other UI colleges may have different policies.

Course ICON Site
To access the course site, log into Iowa Courses Online (ICON) using your Hawk ID and password.

Course Description
This course introduces students to the study of political communication—the processes through which political information is created, framed, transmitted, and interpreted in democratic societies. The course examines how political messages circulate across traditional news media, digital platforms, campaigns, and everyday interactions, and how these messages shape public opinion, political behavior, and democratic outcomes.

Students will explore how individuals process political information, how media environments structure attention and meaning, how campaigns strategically communicate with voters, and how emerging challenges such as misinformation, algorithmic curation, artificial intelligence, and political polarization affect democratic life. Through a combination of discussion, applied

activities, and collaborative projects, the course emphasizes both theoretical foundations and real-world applications of political communication.

Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define and explain key concepts and theories in political communication, including media effects, political persuasion, framing, agenda-setting, and information processing.
2. Analyze political messages across different media environments, including traditional news, social media platforms, and campaign communications.
3. Evaluate how media systems and digital technologies influence political attitudes, participation, trust, and democratic norms.
4. Apply course concepts to real-world political communication examples, including campaigns, media coverage, and online political content.
5. Develop critical media literacy skills, including identifying persuasion strategies, misinformation, and the role of algorithms and AI in shaping political information.
6. Collaborate effectively with peers to research, analyze, and present political communication issues.

Outline of Course Topics
- What Is Political Communication and Why It Matters
- Political Communication in Everyday Life and Democracy
- How People Process Political Information
- Media Environments, Attention, and Information Flow
- Agenda-Setting, Framing, and Media Bias
- Social Media, Platforms, and Digital Publics
- Strategic Political Communication and Campaign Messaging
- Political Advertising, Persuasion, and Negative Campaigning
- Candidate Image, Authenticity, and Storytelling
- Misinformation, Trust, and Media Literacy
- Algorithms, Artificial Intelligence, and Echo Chambers
- Political Communication, Wellbeing, and the Future of Democracy

Required Textbooks, Readings, and Other Materials

McNair, Brian. *An Introduction to Political Communication* (6th ed.).
Routledge / Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.

Available formats:

- **E-book**
  ISBN: **9781317611714**
  Publisher: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC

- **Print edition** ISBN: **9780415739429**
  Publisher: Routledge

Additional readings, media examples, and short articles will be provided through the course ICON site. These materials may include excerpts from academic research, contemporary news coverage, and digital content relevant to course themes.

Students should expect to complete assigned textbook chapters and supplementary readings each week. Weekly readings are designed to support in-class discussion and applied activities and should take approximately 2–3 hours per week to complete.

Types of Assignments

Students in this course will be evaluated through a combination of quizzes, applied assignments, short reflections, participation, and a collaborative final project. Assessments are designed to balance conceptual understanding with real-world application of political communication concepts. Students will complete periodic quizzes to assess comprehension of key theories and frameworks, written assignments that apply course concepts to contemporary political communication examples, and brief "Concept-in-the-Wild" snapshots connecting everyday political messages to course material. Active participation in discussions, workshops, and in-class activities is an essential component of the course. The semester concludes with a group project and presentation in which students collaboratively examine a current issue in political communication. Detailed instructions, rubrics, and timelines for all assessments will be provided on ICON and discussed in class.

Course Elements and Evaluation

Total Points: 100

Quizzes (15 points total)

There will be three quizzes during the semester, each worth 5 points. Quizzes are designed to assess students' understanding of key concepts and theories introduced in each unit and to help reinforce learning as the course progresses.

Quiz 1: After Unit 2 (How People Process Political Information)
Quiz 2: After Unit 3 (Media Environments and Information Flow)
Quiz 3: After Unit 4 (Strategic Political Communication)

Quizzes will be administered outside of regular class time via ICON. *In weeks when a quiz is assigned, the quiz opens by the end of the Thursday class meeting and must be completed by 11:59 p.m. on the following Tuesday.* Late assignments **will not be accepted.** Prior to each quiz, we will review key concepts and expectations during class to help students prepare.

Quizzes are open-note and open-material: students may use their notes and any course materials. However, quizzes are intended to assess individual understanding. For this reason, they must be completed independently, without collaboration during the quiz window.

Quizzes may include multiple-choice, short-answer, and applied concept questions.

Assignments (30 points total)
Over the course of the semester, there will be eight assignment opportunities. Students are required to complete any six (6) of these assignments.

Each completed assignment is worth 5 points, for a total of 30 possible points toward the final course grade. These assignments focus on applying course concepts to real-world political communication examples and developing analytical skills incrementally over the semester.

Students may choose to complete more than six assignments; in that case, only the six highest-scoring assignments will count toward the final grade, and the lowest score(s) will be dropped. All assignments must be submitted through ICON by the posted deadline. *For weeks in which an assignment is offered, the assignment will be available on ICON beginning Monday at 7:00 a.m. and must be submitted by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. of the same week.* Late assignments **will not be accepted.** Assignment due dates are listed in the course calendar below.

Each assignment will be accompanied by a grading rubric, which will be provided in advance. Assignment expectations, grading criteria, and course policies will be discussed during the first week of class.

Concept-in-the-Wild Media Checkpoints (15 points total)
Students will complete five Concept-in-the-Wild Media Checkpoints over the course of the semester (each worth 3 points). These exercises ask students to analyze real-world examples of political communication—such as news coverage, campaign messaging, political advertising, or social media content—using key concepts and theories from the course.

Checkpoints may vary in format (e.g., short written responses, headline or image analyses, brief comparisons, or discussion-style posts), but all checkpoints require clear application of course concepts rather than personal opinion.

Each checkpoint should be no more than one page (approximately 300–400 words) or equivalent and must include:
- A brief description of the political communication example
- Identification of the relevant issue or communication strategy
- Application of at least one course concept, theory, or framework
- A short analytical explanation of why the example is significant

Grading: Each checkpoint is graded on a 3-point rubric based on accurate identification of a real-world example, correct application of course concepts, and clarity of analysis. Detailed prompts, submission windows, and rubrics will be provided on ICON.

Participation and In-Class Engagement (20 points total)
This course emphasizes discussion, collaboration, and active engagement. Participation is an integral part of the learning process and will be evaluated holistically across the semester, rather than based on a single day or activity.

Participation and in-class engagement include:

- Attendance at class meetings
  - Attendance is required and is an essential component of the participation grade. Attendance will be taken at every class meeting.
  - Each student is allowed two (2) no-questions-asked absences over the course of the semester. No documentation or prior communication is required for these absences. After these two absences, additional unexcused absences may negatively affect the participation grade.
  - Students who anticipate missing class more than twice for any reason are strongly encouraged to communicate with the instructor as early as possible. Absences covered under University policies—including religious holy days, military service obligations, or documented illness—are governed by CLAS policies outlined below (pages 10-12).
- Active participation in class discussions, including listening, contributing thoughtfully, and asking questions
- Engagement in in-class activities, group work, and workshops
  - Many class sessions include structured activities that contribute to this component of the grade.

Please note that participation is not based solely on how often a student speaks in class. Instead, it reflects overall engagement and contribution throughout the semester, including:
- Coming to class prepared
- Contributing constructively to discussions (in any format)
- Participating actively in in-class activities and workshops
- Demonstrating respect for classmates and diverse perspectives

Students may demonstrate strong participation in multiple ways. Consistent, thoughtful engagement is valued over frequency of speaking.

Final Group Project & Presentation (20 points total)
Students will work in small groups on a final project examining a contemporary issue in political communication. This project is designed to allow students to apply course concepts, theories, and analytical frameworks to real-world political communication cases.

The final project includes:
- A group presentation delivered during the final weeks of the semester
- A brief group deliverable, which may take a written, visual, or digital form
- A peer evaluation component, which will factor into individual grades

The project will be introduced early in the semester and developed in stages. Students will receive support through in-class workshops and a required progress report. Detailed expectations, grading criteria, and timelines will be provided on ICON and discussed in class at least two weeks prior to the final presentation.

Media Literacy Bonus Opportunities (Up to 5 Bonus Points)

Students may earn up to 5 bonus points through optional media-literacy activities offered during the semester. These bonus opportunities are designed to encourage deeper engagement with course concepts by applying them to real-world political communication.

For each bonus opportunity, students may complete one or two of the following types of activities:
- Analyze a misleading headline, political advertisement, or viral post and identify the communication or misinformation tactic used
- Compare media coverage of the same political event across two different news outlets
- Identify and explain a framing strategy or misinformation technique using course concepts
- Reflect on an example of AI-generated or manipulated political content and its potential political impact

Bonus activities are graded on a pass/no-pass basis. Students may earn up to 5 total bonus points, which will be added to the final course grade. Credit is awarded for clear completion and accurate application of relevant course concepts. Participation in bonus opportunities is entirely optional and cannot lower a student's grade. Detailed instructions, grading criteria, and a rubric for bonus activities will be shared during the second week of the semester and posted on ICON.

Summary of Grading Breakdown

Component	Points
Quizzes (3 × 5)	15
Assignments (6 × 5)	30
Concept-in-the-Wild Snapshots (5 x 3)	15
Participation & In-Class Engagement	20
Final Group Project & Presentation	20
Total	**100**

Grading System
This course uses the +/- grading system. Final grades will be awarded based on the following ranges:

A	93–100%+	B-	80–82%	D+	67–69%
A-	90–92%	C+	77–79%	D	63–66%
B+	87–89%	C	73–76%	D-	60–62%
B	83–86%	C-	70–72%	F	< 60%

Course Policies

<u>Classroom Expectations and Learning Environment</u>

This course is a collaborative, discussion-based learning environment built on mutual respect and active engagement. Students are expected to arrive prepared, participate thoughtfully, and contribute to a classroom climate that is welcoming, respectful, and inclusive of diverse perspectives.

Regular attendance and active engagement are essential components of the course. Students are expected to be attentive and fully present during class sessions.

Electronic devices (such as laptops or tablets) may be used only for course-related purposes. The use of devices for non-class activities (such as texting, social media, or unrelated browsing) is not permitted, as it can be distracting to others and disrupt the learning environment.

Respectful communication—toward the instructor and classmates—is expected at all times.

Disruptive behavior, disengagement, or conduct that undermines a collaborative learning environment may negatively affect the participation grade.

Attendance and Participation
Attendance is required in this course and is an integral component of the participation grade. Attendance will be taken at every class meeting. Each student is permitted *two (2) no-questions-asked absences over the course of the semester; no documentation or prior communication is required for these absences.*

After these two absences, additional unexcused absences may negatively affect the participation grade. Students who anticipate missing class more than twice for any reason are strongly encouraged to communicate with the instructor as early as possible.

Absences covered under University policies—including illness, religious holy days, military service obligations, and other unavoidable circumstances—are governed by College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) policies, which are outlined in the required University policy section at the end of this syllabus. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these policies and to notify the instructor as soon as an absence becomes known.

Late Work Policy
Assignments are due at the date and time listed on ICON. Late work will not be accepted except in cases covered by University-approved absences or exceptional circumstances. Students experiencing difficulties that may affect their ability to complete coursework on time are strongly encouraged to communicate with the instructor in advance whenever possible.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy
Artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly) may be used for limited, supportive purposes in this course, such as brainstorming ideas, organizing notes, locating sources, or checking grammar and clarity. However, AI tools may not be used to generate substantive written content, analyses, or assignments submitted for credit. All graded work must reflect the student's own thinking, writing, and analysis.

Using AI to draft essays, written responses, or assignment submissions—or presenting AI-generated content as one's own work—constitutes academic misconduct and will be handled according to CLAS academic integrity policies. When in doubt about acceptable AI use for a particular assignment, students should consult the instructor before submitting the work.

Final Exam Policy
The final examination date and time will be announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes, and it will be announced on the course ICON site once it is known. **Do not plan your end of the semester travel plans until the final exam schedule is made public. It is your responsibility to know the date, time, and place of the final exam.** The Registrar's Office website details which types of schedule conflicts qualify for make-up exams and the processes students should follow to request make-up exams. Not all conflicts qualify for make-up exam times, and requests must be made by the deadlines listed.

Accommodations and Communication About Absences
Students are encouraged to initiate conversations with the instructor early in the semester about any accommodations or anticipated absences related to disabilities, religious holy days, military service obligations, varsity athletics, or other university-recognized responsibilities. For accommodations related to disabilities, students should work with Student Disability Services (SDS) and share their official accommodation letter as early in the semester as possible. A conversation may be necessary to determine how approved accommodations will be implemented in this course, and students should communicate using their University of Iowa email address. *Relevant University policies and student support resources are outlined in a dedicated section at the end of this syllabus.*

Academic Honesty and Misconduct
All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the college's standards of academic honesty. Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to these procedures. Graduate academic misconduct must be reported to the Graduate College according to Section F of the Graduate College Manual.

UI Email and Communication Expectations
Students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for any communication with instructors or staff in the UI community. For the privacy and the protection of student records, UI faculty and staff can only correspond with UI email addresses.

Email is the best way to contact the instructor with general questions, concerns, or requests related to the course. Students can expect a response within 48 hours on weekdays. Messages sent on weekends or university holidays will be addressed the following business day.

When emailing, please use a professional tone, include a clear subject line, and address the instructor as Ms. Gerot. I am happy to help and encourage students to reach out with questions about course material, assignments, or general concerns.

To protect student privacy and support meaningful discussion, individual grades will not be discussed over email. Students with questions about their grades should attend office hours or schedule a meeting.

Course Drop Deadline
You may drop an individual course before the drop deadline; after this deadline you will need collegiate approval. You can look up the drop deadline for this course here. When you drop a course, a "W" will appear on your transcript. The mark of "W" is a neutral mark that does not affect your GPA. To discuss how dropping (or staying in) a course might affect your academic goals, please contact your Academic Advisor. Directions for adding or dropping a course and other registration changes can be found on the Registrar's website. Undergraduate students can find policies on dropping CLAS courses here. Graduate students should adhere to the academic deadlines and policies set by the Graduate College.

Student Complaints and Grade Concerns
Students with a complaint about a grade or a related matter should first discuss the situation with the instructor and/or the course supervisor (if applicable), and finally with the DEO (Chair) of the department, school or program offering the course. Sometimes students will be referred to the department or program's Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) or Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).

Undergraduate students should contact CLAS Undergraduate Programs for support when the matter is not resolved at the previous level. Graduate students should contact the CLAS Graduate Affairs Manager when additional support is needed.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Information for Undergraduates

The most current and authoritative information on the policies below can be found at:
https://provost.uiowa.edu/student-course-policies

Free Speech and Expression
The University of Iowa supports and upholds the First Amendment protection of freedom of speech and the principles of academic and artistic freedom. We are committed to open inquiry, vigorous debate, and creative expression inside and outside of the classroom. Visit the Free Speech at Iowa website for more information on the university's policies on free speech and academic freedom.

Non-discrimination Statement
The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth and related conditions), disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, or associational preferences. The university also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to university facilities. For additional information on nondiscrimination policies, contact the Senior Director, Office of Civil Rights Compliance, the University of Iowa, 202 Jessup Hall, Iowa City, IA 52242-1316, 319-335-0705, ui-ocrc@uiowa.edu. Although not required, students have the option to share their pronouns and chosen/preferred names in class and through MyUI. Instructors and advisors can find information about a student's chosen/preferred name in MyUI.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
The university is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all. If a student has a diagnosed disability or other disabling condition that may impact the student's ability to complete the course requirements as stated in the syllabus, the student may seek accommodations through Student Disability Services (SDS). SDS is responsible for making Letters of Accommodation (LOA) available. The student must provide a LOA to the instructor as early in the semester as possible, but requests not made at least two weeks prior to the scheduled activity for which an accommodation is sought may not be accommodated. The LOA will specify what reasonable course accommodations the student is eligible for and those the instructor should provide. Additional information can be found on the SDS website.

Absences from Class
University regulations require that students be allowed to make up examinations which have been missed due to illness, religious holy days, military service obligations, including service-related medical appointments, jury duty, or other unavoidable circumstances or other university-sponsored activities. Students should work with their instructors regarding making up other missed work, such as assignments, quizzes, and classroom attendance.

Absences for Religious Holy Days
The university is prepared to make reasonable accommodations for students whose religious holy days coincide with their classroom assignments, test schedules, and classroom attendance expectations. Students must notify their instructors in writing of any such Religious Holy Day conflicts or absences within the first few days of the semester or session, and no later than the third week of the semester. If the conflict or absence will occur within the first three weeks of the

semester, the student should notify the instructor as soon as possible. See Policy Manual 8.2 Absences for Religious Holy Days for additional information.

Absences for Military Service Obligations
Students absent from class or class-related requirements due to U.S. veteran or U.S. military service obligations (including military service–related medical appointments, military orders, and National Guard Service obligations) shall be excused without any grading adjustment or other penalty. Instructors shall make reasonable accommodations to allow students to make up, without penalty, tests and assignments they missed because of veteran or military service obligations. Reasonable accommodations may include making up missed work following the service obligation; completing work in advance; completing an equivalent assignment; or waiver of the assignment without penalty. In all instances, students bear the responsibility to communicate with their instructors about such veteran or military service obligations, to meet course expectations and requirements.

Classroom Expectations
Students are expected to comply with University policies regarding appropriate classroom behavior as outlined in the Code of Student Life. While students have the right to express themselves and participate freely in class, it is expected that students will behave with the same level of courtesy and respect in the virtual class setting (whether asynchronous or synchronous) as they would in an in-person classroom. Failure to follow behavior expectations as outlined in the Code of Student Life may be addressed by the instructor and may also result in discipline under the Code of Student Life policies governing E.5 Disruptive Behavior or E.6 Failure to Comply with University Directive.

Sexual Harassment/Sexual Misconduct and Supportive Measures
The University of Iowa prohibits all forms of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and related retaliation. The Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct governs actions by students, faculty, staff and visitors. Incidents of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct can be reported to the Office of Civil Rights Compliance or to the Department of Campus Safety. Students impacted by sexual harassment or sexual misconduct may be eligible for academic supportive measures and can learn more by contacting the Office of Civil Rights Compliance. Information about confidential resources and videos explaining these resources can be found on the Office of Civil Rights Compliance website.

Conflict Resolution
The Office of the Ombudsperson is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for any member of the university community with a problem or concern. The Office of the Ombudsperson offers a safe place to discuss conflicts or concerns. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance. The office will brainstorm with students to help identify options, answer any questions, and provide referrals to other offices as appropriate. More information about the Office of the Ombudsperson, including how to schedule an appointment, can be found at ombudsperson.org.uiowa.edu.

Mental Health
Students are encouraged to be mindful of their mental health and seek help as a preventive measure or if feeling overwhelmed and/or struggling to meet course expectations. Students should talk to their instructor for assistance with specific class-related concerns.
For additional support, visit wellbeing.uiowa.edu to see a complete list of mental health resources.
The UI Support and Crisis Line is available any time via chat, phone, or text at 844-461-5420.
University Counseling Service (UCS) offers free, confidential mental health services to students.

Appointments can be scheduled at counseling.uiowa.edu. The UI also offers 24/7 peer support through Togetherall, an online support community where students can anonymously and safely share their thoughts and feelings without judgment. Visit wellbeing.uiowa.edu/togetherall to get started.

Basic Needs and Student Support
It can be difficult to maintain focus and be present if you are experiencing challenges with meeting basic needs or navigating personal crisis situations. The Office of the Dean of Students can help. Contact us for one-on-one support, identifying options, and to locate and access basic needs resources (such as food, rent, childcare, etc.).

Student Care and Assistance
132 IMU
dos-assistance@uiowa.edu
319-335-1162

Basic Needs info:
Food Pantry at Iowa
Clothing Closet
Basic Needs and Support Resources

Class Recordings
Students may be enrolled in a class where some sessions will be recorded or live-streamed. Such recordings/streaming will only be available to students registered for the class. These recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor and they may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit, written consent of the instructor. Further, students may not share these sessions with those not in the class or upload them to any other online environment. Doing so would be a breach of the Code of Student Conduct, and, in some cases, a violation of state and federal law, including the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The unauthorized video or audio recording of academic activities (e.g., lectures, course discussions, office hours, etc.) by a student is prohibited. Students with a reasonable accommodation for recording approved by Student Disability Services should notify each instructor and provide the Letter of Accommodation prior to using the accommodation. A student may record classroom activities with prior written permission from the instructor and notice to other students in the class that audio or video recording may occur. Any and all classroom recording must be for personal academic use only. The distribution, sharing, sale, or posting of recordings on the internet (including social media), in whole or in part, is prohibited and doing so may be a violation of the Code of Student Life and/or state or federal privacy, copyright, or other laws.

Course Calendar

Date	Class Topic	Activity Due	Assignment Due
Week 1 Class 1: Tues. 01/ 20	Introduction and Syllabus Review		
Week 1 Class 2 Thurs. 01/22	Unit 1 – What is Political Communication		
Week 2 Class 1 Tue. 01/27	Unit 1 – What is Political Communication		
Week 2 Class 2 Thurs. 01/29	Unit 1 In-Class Activity: Political Communication and Democracy		Assignment 1
Week 3 Class 1 02/3	Unit 2 – How People Process Political Information Political Information Processing		
Week 3 Class 2 02/5	Unit 2 – How People Process Political Information Information Shortcuts and Motivation		
Week 4 Class 1 02/10	Unit 2 – How People Process Political Information Emotion, Attention, and Judgement		
Week 4 Class 2 02/12	Unit 2 In-Class Workshop Final Project Overview	Quiz 1	Assignment 2
Week 5 Class 1 02/17	Unit 3: Media Environments and Information Flow Media Visibility, Public Opinion, and Agenda-Setting		

Week 5 Class 2 02/19	Unit 3: Media Environments and Information Flow Framing and Media Bias		Assignment 3
Week 6 Class 1 02/24	Unit 3: Media Environments and Information Flow Fragmentation, Platforms, and the Changing Media System		
Week 6 Class 2 02/26	Unit 3: Media Environments in Practice (In-Class Activity)		
Week 7 Class 1 03/3	Unit 3: Media Environments and Information Flow Social Media as a Media Environment		
Week 7 Class 2 03/05	Unit 3: Media Environments and Information Flow Agenda-Setting and Public Attention in the Digital Age	Quiz 2	Assignment 4
Week 8 Class 1 03/10	Unit 3 In-Class Workshop Media Environments Review		
Week 8 Class 2 03/12	Final Project Workshop	Final Project Progress Report Due	
Week 9 Class 1 03/17	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
Week 9 Class 2 03/19	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
Week 10 Class 1 03/24	Unit 4: Strategic Political Communication Political Campaigns as Strategic Communication		
Week 10 Class 2 03/26	Unit 4: Strategic Political Communication		Assignment 5

	Political Advertising		
Week 11 Class 1 03/31	Unit 4: Strategic Political Communication Negative Campaigning and Persuasion		
Week 11 Class 2 04/02	Unit 4: Strategic Political Communication Candidate Image, Authenticity, and Storytelling		Assignment 6
Week 12 Class 1 04/07	Unit 4: Strategic Political Communication Campaigning in the Age of Social Media		
Week 12 Class 2 04/09	Unit 4 In-Class Workshop: Campaign Strategy in Practice	Quiz 3	
Week 13 Class 1 04/14	Unit 5: Challenges for Democracy Misinformation, Trust, and Media Literacy		
Week 13 Class 2 04/16	Unit 5: Challenges for Democracy Unit 5 In-Class Activity: Evaluating Misinformation & Trust		Assignment 7
Week 14 Class 1 04/21	Unit 5: Challenges for Democracy Algorithms, AI, and Echo Chambers		
Week 14 Class 2 04/23	Unit 5: Challenges for Democracy Unit 5 In-Class Activity: Algorithms, AI, and Online Experiences		Assignment 8
Week 15 Class 1 04/28	Unit 5: Challenges for Democracy		

	Political Communication and Mental Wellbeing		
Week 15 Class 2 04/30	Unit 5: Challenges for Democracy Unit 5 In-Class Activity: Media Use, Stress, Wellbeing		
Week 16 Class 1 05/05	Student Projects: The Future of Political Communication		
Week 16 Class 2 05/07	Student Projects: The Future of Political Communication		
Final Exam Week May 11-May 15, 2026	Final Exam Week	Final Exam Week	Final Exam Week