COURSE OVERVIEW
The average consumer is bombarded with thousands of messages every single day. Grassroots and word-of-mouth communications can cut through the clutter, make your message stick, and persuade people to act. Grassroots is the oldest form of communications and the most effective. But many marketing and communications professionals overlook important, yet inexpensive, grassroots communications strategies. We'll discuss the history of grassroots, the theories behind it all, and develop "how-to" tactics that can help any company, cause or candidate succeed.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of the semester, students will:

- Understand the history and theory of grassroots communications
- Identify what makes grassroots communications effective
- Develop grassroots communications objectives, strategies and tactics
- Evaluate the effectiveness of grassroots campaigns
- Envision possible futures for grassroots communications

REQUIRED READING

In addition to the books listed above, additional readings may be assigned during the semester (some of which are detailed in the course schedule). Please note that these books can be purchased for much less than the listed price through amazon.com and abebooks.com.

ATTENDANCE
As outlined by the university, missing more than two classes will result in a final grade reduction of one level (for example, an A will be converted to an A-). Absences for classes, beyond the initial two, will result in further reduction of the final grade. If you are absent for more than four classes, you will be in danger of failing this course. Punctual attendance is critical. If you have to miss a class – family emergency, medical emergency or other act of God – or if you will be late, please text or call me at 202.288.5124.
CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE, CLASS PARTICIPATION AND OTHER GUIDELINES
I try not to be doctrinaire about the use of electronic devices in class, especially laptops, because many students use them to take notes. But a successful class depends on the active engagement of all students, so please turn off all cell phones, pagers or other communication devices while in class. If you need to check email, text, Facebook or IM with friends, please wait until the break or after class.

Class discussions should be respectful and considerate of others’ views and opinions. What happens in class stays in class unless you receive permission from the instructor to share something. In addition, please consider the following:

- Readings in any given week correspond to the discussion that week. In other words, be prepared to discuss the readings that are for that week’s class in the schedule.
- Assignments must be submitted on paper and electronically to jlamountain@reingold.com.
- Late work will be dropped one grade for each day it is late. If you have extenuating circumstances speak with me before the due date. Work is due at the beginning of class on the assigned date.
- I will not offer incomplete grades save in the most exceptional, unforeseeable circumstances. Job requirements do not qualify.
- Grammar, spelling and proper citations matter. Your ideas matter more.
- You are responsible for classroom information. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with your classmates to get class notes.

ASSIGNMENTS
I. Class Participation (25 points)
Students are expected to complete the readings and participate in our discussions. This is not a “lecture” class, but one that relies on your participation. Participants will receive a grade based on the “quantity” of your involvement and the “quality” of your comments and remarks.

II. Reaction Paper #1 (50 points)
The Reaction Paper #1 is due by week 2. It should be 2-3 pages and examine the grassroots communications elements of a current event or a topic of interest to you. For example, you might want to examine the role of grassroots communications in the runaway success of a new product or some aspect of your professional work. Your assignment is not to restate the event, but to analyze the situation, discuss the role of grassroots communications (or lack thereof) and provide arguments based on what you have learned in class.

III. Reaction Paper #2 (50 points)
The Reaction Paper #2 is due by week 4. It should be a one-page summary of the objective, strategies and tactics for a current grassroots communications campaign. For example, you might want to break down the way in which Apple is using word-of-mouth marketing to sell its products. Or you could examine the ways in which Greenpeace is using grassroots communications to address climate change. Please also include a brief paragraph or two of analysis (e.g. “Is it working?”)

IV. Group Project (75 points)
We will develop a tactic that can be implemented by assigned teams. In the past, teams have collected 100 responses of a brief survey. Each team will theorize, in advance, on the best way(s) to
maximize compliance with the request to complete a survey. On July 6, groups will present their theories to the class. During the week of July 13, teams will execute their plans (we will not have a lecture that day). Finally, on July 20, each group will submit their final report and present their findings to the class.

The final group assignment should be 3-4 pages, state what you were attempting to learn (the theory) and its relevance to grassroots communications, how you will measure success and what your actual results were after our fieldwork. Each group presentation should be 15-20 minutes in duration. The written paper will account for 2/3 of the team’s grade while the group presentation will account for 1/3 of the team’s grade.

V. Individual Proposal (100 points)
The Individual Proposal is a 5- to 7-page strategic plan proposal addressed to a candidate, organization or company. The proposal will analyze an issue currently affecting the target organization and offer a comprehensive solution along with suggested strategies and tactics. The Individual Proposal is due by May 4.

GRADING
Your course grade will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction paper #1</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction Paper #2</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Proposal</td>
<td>August 3</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
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Evaluation criteria for each assignment will be discussed in class.

Total 300 points

Graduate course grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C and F. There are no grades of C+, C- or D.

A  279-300
A-  270-279.9
B+  264-269.9
B   249-263.9
B-  240-248.9
C   210-239.9
F   209.9 and below

The instructors will provide a warning by mid-semester to any student who appears to be on track for a poor final grade.
UNIVERSITY RESOURCES
Georgetown offers a variety of support systems for students that can be accessed on main campus or at the downtown location:

- MPS Writing Resource Program
  202-687-4246
  http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/

- Academic Resource Center
  202-687-8354 | arc@georgetown.edu
  http://ldss.georgetown.edu/

- Counseling and Psychiatric Services
  202-687-6985
  http://caps.georgetown.edu/

- Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action (IDEAA)
  (202) 687-4798
  https://ideaa.georgetown.edu/

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY
Students with documented disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center (202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu; http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your professors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

GEORGETOWN HONOR SYSTEM
All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity in pursuit of their education at Georgetown. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to, failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are held to the Honor Code. The Honor Code pledge follows:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

PLAGIARISM
Stealing someone else’s work is a terminal offense in the workplace, and it will wreck your career in academia, too. Students are expected to work with integrity and honesty in all their assignments. The Georgetown University Honor System defines plagiarism as “the act of passing off as one’s own the ideas or writings of another.” More guidance is available through the Gervase Programs at http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html. If you have any doubts about plagiarism, paraphrasing and the need to credit, check out http://www.plagiarism.org.

SYLLABUS MODIFICATION
The syllabus may change to accommodate discussion of emerging topics. Also, the schedules of guest speakers may require some shifting of the agenda. The instructors will make every effort to provide as much advance notice as possible for any alterations.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 1: May 18</th>
<th>What is this Course All About?</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion: We will review the syllabus and class policies and discuss what we mean by grassroots communications. We will also take time to share our backgrounds, interests and what we expect to learn from taking this course. We will also examine elements of the 2008 and 2012 Obama presidential campaigns and watch Can Mr. Smith get to Washington Anymore? Frank Popper’s engaging documentary follows the 2004 congressional campaign of Jeff Smith.</td>
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<td>Readings: The Center Holds, pages 83-111</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2: June 1</th>
<th>History and Origins of Grassroots Communications</th>
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<td>DUE: Reaction Paper #1</td>
<td>Discussion: We will examine examples of grassroots communications throughout history, both political, electoral and from the business community. We will discuss what they have in common, and what differentiates the good from the bad, and how technology has impacted our ability to communicate with one another.</td>
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<td>Current Thinking in Grassroots Communications</td>
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<td>Discussion: How do ideas and information spread? What is the basic reason for grassroots communications? Are new technologies enhancing, or hindering, our ability to communicate? Why and how are businesses starting to use it?</td>
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<td>Readings: The Tipping Point, pages 3-169 (and skim remaining chapters).</td>
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<th>Week 3: June 8</th>
<th>The Holy Grail: Objectives, Strategies and Tactics</th>
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<td>Discussion: What are the definitions and differences between objectives, strategy and tactics? Why are they critical to the success of your grassroots communications plan? How can you align your goals, strategies and tactics?</td>
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<td>Readings: The Center Holds, pages 219-232 and 256-268</td>
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<th>Week 4: June 15</th>
<th>Why Political Campaigns Matter</th>
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|                | Discussion: Politicians, through political campaigns, have mastered the art of effective
| Week 5: June 22 | **Targeting and Getting Sticky**  
Before developing and implementing a grassroots campaign, you have to identify whom you want to speak with and what will most likely motivate them to act and spread the word to others.  
**Readings:**  
- *Made to Stick*, pages 1-24 and 195-199 (to be provided electronically). |
| --- | --- |
| Week 6: June 29 | **#GRBC Field Exercise**  
Now that we've discussed the theories, it's time to get into the real world and see how local companies, causes and candidates are putting these ideas into practice. We'll do that by forming into teams and participating in the 2nd Grassroots Bar Crawl. Participants will identify different grassroots communications approaches and present them to the class following their field work. |
| Week 7: July 6 | **Become a Communications Czar**  
Discussion: The most essential element of a successful grassroots campaign is the ability to communicate well. We will discuss the relative value of various forms of communication, developing an effective communications plan, tactics for securing media coverage and word of mouth “buzz.”  
**Readings:**  
- *Rules for Radicals*, pages 81-97 |

### DUE: Reaction Paper #2

Grassroots communication. We’ll discuss how to organize and execute a successful campaign for elective office and what interest groups and industry can learn from them.

**Interest Groups and Businesses**  
**Discussion:** How are nonprofit interest groups using grassroots to achieve their objectives? Is there a role for grassroots in activities other than political advocacy? Fundraising? How are businesses using grassroots communications to achieve their objectives?

**Week 5: June 22**

**Targeting and Getting Sticky**  
Before developing and implementing a grassroots campaign, you have to identify whom you want to speak with and what will most likely motivate them to act and spread the word to others.

**Readings:**  
- *Made to Stick*, pages 1-24 and 195-199 (to be provided electronically).

**Developing a Winning Message Platform**  
**Discussion:** Words have the power to motivate and inspire. When developing a message platform, you need to consider carefully the power of the words. What are you trying to say? Who are you trying to reach and influence? How can you create a concise, clear message while retaining maximum flexibility? What about proof points?

**Readings:**  

**Week 6: June 29**

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**Interactive Communications: Promise and Peril**  
**Discussion:** Email and social media make it easy to reach your audience. But does that mean they are listening? We will discuss how to effectively use interactive technologies and the continued importance of old school, and often overlooked,
| Week 8: July 13 | **Field Exercise: Implementation of Research Projects**  
Discussion: Groups will meet a predetermined location to implement their research projects. During this time, we will interact directly with members of the public through a questionnaire and face-to-face conversations. We will test our theories and report and discuss our findings and report results the following week. **Note:** This is an independent exercise that can be implemented during normal class hours on July 13 or at another time and place of your group’s choosing. Please note that we will not have a lecture on July 13. |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 9: July 20 | **Creating and Implementing Tactics**  
Discussion: You have an objective and a strategy. How do you get people to respond and take the desired action? We will examine ways to motivate people to take action, successful tactics for engaging customers, advocates and voters, and the use of incentives.  
**Readings:**  
*Influence, pages 1-56 (and skim 57-280)* |
| DUE: Findings and Presentation |---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 10: July 27 | **Measurement and Evaluation**  
Discussion: It takes times and money to create, launch and implement a grassroots campaign. How will you know if it’s working? We’ll discuss a number of different mechanisms that can determine if your efforts are on track for achieving short, medium and long-term goals.  
**Readings:**  
*Word of Mouth Marketing, pages 183-193 (to be provided electronically)* |
| Week 11: August 3 | **6th Annual Grassroots Film Festival**  
Discussion: We will view and discuss How to Survive a Plague, the story of two coalitions—ACT UP and TAG (Treatment Action Group)—whose activism and innovation turned AIDS from a death sentence into a manageable condition. |