

COMM 419 Propaganda (DEI Designated)
Ideology, Communication Warfare, and Social Control
Department of Strategic Communication & Media-- Slippery Rock University--Fall 2023

Instructor

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Email

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Student Hours (Eisenberg 208)

T-Th: 7-8am, W: 1-4 pm

M: 12-2 pm on Zoom (by appointment)

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to enhance the critical thinking and analytical skills of students to make them better able to cope intellectually with public argument in a world of where soundbites rule the day. This course addresses the ways in which various ideologies compete for global dominance by employing advocacy strategies and propaganda techniques, a process made both more complex and more consequential by rapidly advancing communication technologies. By manipulating visual imagery, propagandists often exert control over the public's perception of political, social, and economic reality. Extensive use of art and video examples will be made in this course.

As a DEI designated course, the approach and contents of this class will seek to reflect Rock Studies Learning Objective 3a: Demonstrate knowledge of diverse experiences, cultures, and identities from a systemic perspective. Learning about diversity means learning to apply multiple perspectives to address local, regional, global, and cultural issues. It also asks students to discover ways that systems of power contribute to inequalities and interactions that affect individuals and communities.

Thematic Thread(s): Citizenship & Social Problems

Required Textbook:

Garth S. Jowett, G. J. and O'Donnell, V. (2019) *Propaganda and Persuasion*. (7th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. Additional reading (articles, videos, and narratives) will be provided on D2L.

Course-Level Outcomes:

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate understanding of how power and privilege interplay with ideological and identity constructs to create propagandist messages and practices.
- 2) Demonstrate understanding of the philosophical, historical, economic, social, and political underpinnings of communication warfare across the globe.
- 3) Demonstrate ability to identify and critically analyze propaganda cases and campaigns in a variety of communicative contexts, while understanding their political and socio-economic impact on oppressed and marginalized people and communities.
- 4) Demonstrate understanding of how systems of oppression and privilege create and sustain propagandist practices that contribute to prejudice, discrimination, exclusion, and other forms of social injustices based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexuality, ability, and intersectional identities.
- 5) Develop ethical attitudes for persuasive practices that involve care and respect for the well-beings of others, especially marginalized and minoritized people and groups.
- 6) Demonstrate efficacious, and inclusive communication skills, including interpersonal and group, writing, civil discourse, and presentations.

Classroom Expectations and Policies

Attendance, participation, and classroom community: The most meaningful type of learning happens through communication and engagement with others. When you are not in class, we miss hearing your perspective and you miss sharing your voice. If you are unable to be in class, please let me know as soon as possible. You are expected to be in attendance, on time, for the full amount of time the class is scheduled. Because “life happens” sometimes, you will be allowed 2 free absences. Should you choose to use any or all these absences, please make sure to keep up with assigned readings and other work. 25 points will be deducted from your final grade for each unexcused absence beyond the allotted two (2). An absence may be excused if you have a legitimate reason or official documentation. Please attempt to make prior arrangements if you need to miss class. Any missed assignment deadline or absence without explanation or documentation is considered unexcused.

There is an expectation of participation for all enrolled in this course. It includes being current in readings, discussions, class exercises, etc. While there is no grade for participation, your participation will be used (at the instructor’s discretion) to round up a grade.

Communication involves both speaking and listening. I encourage you to learn to practice active listening in this class. You might encounter ideas that challenge or contradict some of your views, attitudes, and beliefs. The goal of engaging with ideas is not to arrive at a consensus or agreement. Disagreement and argument are essential parts of the learning process. To best support and challenge each other, there needs to be an environment of respect. I encourage you to express yourself and share your perspective and opinion. In sharing those, please make sure that you are not using racist, sexist or any type of language that demeans, belittles, insults, or denigrates any group of people. In other words, classroom incivility will not be tolerated.

Late work: A late assignment will be assessed a 25 percent late penalty if received within 24 hours, and a 50 percent penalty if received with 48 hours after it is due. No assignment will be accepted after 48 hours of the due date; after 48 hours, a grade of zero will be granted.

Communication outside of class: E-mail and office hours are the best means of communication outside of class. Please first look for answers to your questions on the syllabus before asking via email. If you missed class and would like to discuss assignments or class content, please come to my student hours, or request a meeting (see details on first page). Also, please make sure to put "COMM 419" in the subject line of your email.

Please note: I typically answer emails Mondays-Fridays 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. Allow for at least a day for a reply, and for extra time if you email outside of these days/times.

Presentation of work: All assignments should be prepared with the utmost attention to accuracy of spelling, grammar and punctuation. For Academic Support see <https://www.sru.edu/academics/academic-services/academic-support>

Academic Honesty and Integrity: Academic integrity refers to the adherence to agreed-upon moral and ethical principles when engaging in academic or scholarly pursuit. mastery of subject matter should be demonstrated in an honorable and straightforward manner. Academic dishonesty may take many forms. For a list of examples, and more information on Slippery Rock University’s policies on academic integrity, visit: <https://www.sru.edu/offices/student-conduct/code-of-conduct>

Title IX Policy: Slippery Rock University and its faculty are committed to ensuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to comply with the requirements of Title IX of the

Education Amendments of 1972 and the University's commitment to offering supportive measures in accordance with the new regulations issued under Title IX, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person designated in the University protection of minors' policy. Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at: <https://www.sru.edu/offices/diversity-and-equal-opportunity/sexual-misconduct-and-victim-resources>

Non-discrimination: Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, religion, age, disability, or veteran status in its programs or activities in accordance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies. www.sru.edu/offices/diversity-and-equal-opportunity/notice-of-non-discrimination

Gender inclusive language: Correct Pronouns, Names, and Inclusion: I hope to create a space where students have the opportunity to bring all aspects of their selves into the classroom in order to fully engage in this course. I support people of all gender expressions and gender identities and encourage students to use the name and set of pronouns which best reflect who they are. In this spirit, I welcome and expect all students to also use the correct name and pronouns of their classmates. I will do my best to respect and use the language you use to refer to yourself and will encourage other members of our classroom community to do the same. Please inform me if my documentation reflects a name or set of pronouns different from what you use, and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me after class, by email, or during office hours

Disabilities: I will do whatever I can to ensure that every student has the same learning opportunities. Please come talk to me about any situation that might affect your learning. I will be happy to assist in making the necessary arrangements. You may also contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 105 University Union or Call 724.738.4877.

Basic Needs and Security: Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing or personal safety and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact Karla Fonner, Director of Student Support, at karla.fonner@sru.edu or 724-738-2121. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to do my part to ensure your success in this course.

Diversity & inclusivity statement: Each one of us is a unique individual, with a unique identity, body, background, culture, set of experiences, worldview, and dreams. Together we form a diverse and rich community of learners, where we can learn from each other and appreciate what each person brings to the classroom. I am committed to creating an equitable and inclusive environment for all students to feel welcome in my classroom. I will encourage all to express opinions and perspectives, except when those threaten the wellbeing or safety of other students in the classroom. Examples of those opinions include statements that stereotype or denigrate groups of people based on their race, ethnicity, ability, sex, gender identity, etc.

Land Acknowledgment: I wish to acknowledge the land our campus is situated on is part of the traditional homelands of the Seneca, Erie, Delaware, and Susquehannock peoples. Today, the Seneca Nation of Indians, part of the Hodinöhsöñih — the Six Nations (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora) is the only remaining Nation from this area to retain any land in the region, and that land is located on a few reservations in southern New York State.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. A list of all university policies in detail is to be found here: <https://www.sru.edu/offices/academic-affairs/syllabi-policies>
2. You may NOT submit work that has already received a grade in any other course (even a course you are retaking). Any attempt to do so will be considered academic dishonesty and will result in an immediate course failure.
3. Using Chat GPT or other AI software to generate class work without prior consultation with instructor is unethical and you will, in essence, be missing an opportunity to learn.
4. Email and all correspondence with your instructor should be professional with proper greetings etc.
5. All work must be turned in to D2L by the due date.
6. Check the online student handbook/catalog for other pertinent academic information.
7. Please refer to www.sru.edu for student support services that are available to you here at SRU.
8. Review the [2023-2024 Academic Calendar](#) for important dates/deadlines.
9. Please let me know, if there is anything I can do to facilitate your success in this course, and at Slippery Rock University (i.e. learning issues, tensions within classroom environment, resources for personal/academic issues, etc.)

Assignments*

Quizzes: You will have 3 quizzes in this course. The quizzes are used as tools to provide me (and you) with data to gauge your understanding of course concepts. All quizzes will be available on D2L and open 48 hours before they are due. Quizzes will be multiple-choice, T/F and fill in the blanks. Each quiz will include 25 questions. **(two quizzes are worth 100 pts each, and the final one is worth 150=350 pts)**

Group presentations: Groups of 3-4 students will present a current case of propaganda based on cases presented in the textbook. The presentation should include DEI aspects related to race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, sex and ideology as they relate to the case. These presentations will serve as material for class applications and discussions. **(Worth 150 pts)**

Propaganda in the news: (Almost) every class, we will have a student give us an overview of current propaganda in the news. This will be a short presentation of 5-7 minutes **(Worth 100 pts).**

Propaganda Case Study—Part 1 and Part 2 (350 pts)

TOPIC: Choose a propaganda case of interest to you. This should be an instance in which propaganda successfully worked on the target population/audience. The case could be a successful advertising campaign, an election campaign in which a long-shot candidate defeated an entrenched incumbent, or a successful national or international advocacy campaign, such as the “#metoo” movement. Make sure to research multiple sources for evidence about this case. Start by researching articles from newspapers and magazines,

journal articles, posters, etc. Write about each of the articles or items you find, what they mean in relation to propaganda and DEI. At about week 5 you should have a topic for your case study.

Part 1: Propaganda case + Counter-Propaganda Zine Presentation

This part of the project is about educating all of us about your propaganda case and presenting a counter-propaganda zine. Use pictures, videos, visual aids, or any paraphernalia to support your argument/case. The presentation should be 7-10 minutes long and include ppt slides and other visual aids. The class will determine the theme of the zine as well as its format (online, print, or other). **(Worth 150 pts)**

Part 2: Research Paper: Your research paper must be between 3-5 double-spaced pages long, fully documented, using APA style. This is your chance to fully engage your propaganda case by providing a literature review to see what's already been written on the topic, identifying the tactics involved in the case, and explaining the impact on the target audience. You should also include any counter-propaganda efforts that have been attempted. An annotated bibliography of at least 5 peer-reviewed sources should be attached to your paper. **(Worth 250 pts)**

These are the areas your project should address:

1. Describe the nature of the historical setting in which the propaganda has been disseminated and the dominant ideological forces at work.
2. Review what scholars have written about this case
3. Identify strategies and counterstrategies.
4. Evaluate the result of the propaganda and counter-propaganda messages on the target audience.

(*) More detailed guidelines for assignments will be posted on D2L.

Grading scale:

A = 90% and above

B = 80% – below 89%

C = 70% – below 79

D= 60%--below 69

SUMMARY OF ASSIGNEMENTS & POINTS (1000 pts)

Quizzes	350 points
Group presentations	100 points
Presentation of propaganda + counter-propaganda zine	150 points
Research paper	250 points
Propaganda in the news	100 points

DATE	TOPIC	Readings & Assignments
<p>MODULE 1: Intro to Propaganda: History, persuasion, and ethics</p> <p>8/22 8/24 8/29 8/31 9/05 9/07 9/12 9/14 9/19 9/21</p>	<p>Intro to course Defining propaganda Social Positioning Forms of propaganda Ethics and persuasion Ideology and purpose Context + Target audience Techniques to maximize effect Quiz 1 Overview Research topic for propaganda case due</p>	<p>Article on D2L Assignment on D2L Chapter 1 Chapter 1 Chapter 2 Chapter 6 Chapter 6 GP#1: Women in War Quiz 1 (Chapters 1 and 6)</p>
<p>MODULE 2: Propaganda Institutionalized</p> <p>9/26 9/28 10/03 10/05 10/10 10/12 10/17</p>	<p>The new audience + mass society The new Media + Advertising The internet and social media No class: Fall Break Modern study of propaganda Cultural + Collective memory Review for Quiz 2</p>	<p>Chapter 3 Chapter 3 Chapter 3 + GP#2: Cyber propaganda Chapter 3 Chapter 4 Quiz 2 (Chapters 3, 4 & 5) GP#3: Pundits for Hire</p>
<p>MODULE 3: Psychological Warfare</p> <p>10/31 11/02 11/07 11/09 11/14 11/16 11/21</p>	<p>Wars and propaganda Public diplomacy Review for Quiz 3 <i>Study day</i></p>	<p>Chapter 5 Chapter 5 GP#4 Outline for research paper due + annotated bibliography GP# 5 QUIZ 3 (Chapters 6, 7 & 8)</p>

Research presentations 11/28 11/30	<i>Presentations</i> <i>Presentations</i>	
FINALS	<i>TBD</i>	

Tentative Schedule—*Subject to change*

College of Business

Department: Strategic Communication & Media

Course: COMM 419 – Propaganda: Ideology, Communication Warfare, and Social Control

UNIVERSITY OUTCOMES: Communication, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving,
Values and Ethics, and Social Awareness and Civic Responsibility.

Course Outcomes	Department Outcomes
<p>Outcome 1: To develop an understanding of ideology and how power and other factors interplay with ideological constructs.</p> <p>Obj 1. Students will demonstrate understanding of the role of power and hegemony in persuasion and propaganda</p> <p>Obj 2. Students will be able to define propaganda and become familiar with different forms of information control</p> <p>Obj 3. Students will demonstrate understanding of the ethical differences between propaganda and persuasion</p> <p>Obj 4. Students will demonstrate understanding of the role of culture in communication</p>	<p>1. Understand the historical development of the practice and study of human communication.</p> <p>2. Apply the processes of inquiry and analysis.</p> <p>3. Think critically.</p> <p>4. Apply information literacy skills.</p> <p>5. Engage in ethical reasoning.</p> <p>6. Extract and make meaning from written texts.</p>

Course Outcomes	Department Outcomes
<p>Outcome 2: Demonstrate understanding of the philosophical, historical, economic, social, and political underpinnings of communication warfare across the globe.</p> <p>Obj 1. Students will demonstrate understanding of the history of propaganda</p> <p>Obj 2. Students will understand the relationship between religion, war, and propaganda</p> <p>Obj 3. Students will demonstrate understanding the historical use of religious ideology and propaganda in imperialism and in controlling various groups of people and communities, including colonized nations and people, women, GBTQIA+, etc.</p> <p>Obj. 4. Students will demonstrate understanding of the development of the institution of propaganda in its various forms, including the new media, advertising and the internet and discuss the impact of the institution of propaganda on politics, race relationships, diversity, and inclusion. Specific cases will be researched and studied.</p> <p>Obj. 5. Students will demonstrate ability to identify and critically analyze propaganda cases and campaigns in a variety of communicative contexts, while understanding their political and socio-economic impact on marginalized</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply the processes of inquiry and analysis. 2. Think critically. 3. Develop and express ideas in writing. 4. Develop and express ideas orally. 5. Apply information literacy skills. 6. Extract and make meaning from written texts. 7. Demonstrate intercultural knowledge and competence.

Course Outcomes	Department Outcomes
<p>Outcome 4: Demonstrate understanding of the ethical dimensions of propaganda.</p> <p>Obj.1. Students will be able to identify and analyze unethical communicative practices and propaganda.</p> <p>Obj 2. Students will develop understanding of the harmful impact of unethical practices and propaganda on target population.</p> <p>Obj. 3. Students will be able to distinguish facts from opinions.</p> <p>Obj.4. Students will be able to use sound evidence and reasoning and avoid false claims and manipulation of emotion.</p> <p>Obj. 5. Students will Understand fake news, echo chambers, conspiracy theories, and misinformation and their impact on society and diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Obj. 6. Students will apply critical thinking skills.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate intercultural knowledge and competence. 2. Engage in ethical reasoning. 3. Apply the processes of inquiry and analysis. 4. Think critically.
<p>Outcome 5: To develop ethical attitudes for persuasive practices that involve care and respect for the well-beings of others, especially marginalized and minoritized communities and groups.</p> <p>Obj. 1. Students will demonstrate respect for diversity and be inclusive in their communication, including showing awareness of language, race, gender identity, sex, age, ability, ethnic, religious, etc.</p> <p>Obj. 2. Students will demonstrate ability to Identify and apply ethical standards of communication</p> <p>Obj. 3. Students will demonstrate care and respect in their communication.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and express ideas orally. 2. Demonstrate intercultural knowledge and competence. 3. Engage in ethical reasoning.

Course Outcomes	Department Outcomes
<p>Outcome 6: To develop efficacious and inclusive communication skills, including interpersonal and group, writing, civil discourse, and presentations.</p> <p>Obj. 1. Students will demonstrate ability to use oral language style appropriate to the audience and setting.</p> <p>Obj. 2. Students will demonstrate ability to use inclusive verbal and non-verbal communication</p> <p>Obj. 3. Students will demonstrate ability to use physical behaviors that support the message in an efficacious way.</p> <p>Obj. 4. Students will demonstrate ability to work in groups.</p> <p>Obj. 5. Students will demonstrate ability to use written communication, with proper arguments and evidence.</p>	<p>1. Think critically.</p> <p>2. Apply information literacy skills.</p> <p>3. Engage in ethical reasoning.</p> <p>4. Develop and express ideas in writing.</p> <p>5. Develop and express ideas orally.</p>

SRU Student Learning Outcomes

Slippery Rock University's vision is that SRU will excel as a caring community of life-long learners connecting with the world. In addition, the fundamental educational mission of Slippery Rock University is to transform the intellectual, social, physical, and leadership capacities of students in order to prepare them for life and career success. With this vision and mission as the foundation, the SRU Student Learning Outcomes provide the basis for SRU graduates to become life-long contributors as citizens and leaders in their communities and the broader world. Students at Slippery Rock will achieve these SLOs through their academic programs, the liberal studies program, and co-curricular programs and activities.

Slippery Rock University students will

1. Act as **effective communicators**:
 - o Communicate successfully with diverse audiences in speech and writing.
 - o Demonstrate active listening skills.
 - o Apply analytical reading to support language use.
2. Apply **critical thinking** to argument and problem solving:
 - o Gather, analyze and evaluate information and ideas.
 - o Produce well-supported reasons and evidence. o Reach well-argued conclusions and decisions.
 - o Use a variety of viewpoints and reflective thought.

3. Develop **scientific literacy**:
 - Explain and predict natural phenomena through use of observation, experimentation using appropriate technology, and scientific reasoning.
 - Make decisions based upon understanding of scientific concepts and processes.
4. Apply **quantitative reasoning** in appropriate contexts:
 - Create and use mathematics in a variety of forms including formulas, graphs, schematics, and computing, where appropriate.
 - Implement experimentation and quantitative reasoning to solve problems and make inferences.
5. Develop as a **whole person**:
 - Acquire and apply knowledge and skills in the major and profession, including soft skills.
 - Make connections beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries.
 - Demonstrate a desire for lifelong learning.
 - Establish an identity that incorporates emotional and physical wellness.
6. Demonstrate **creativity** and develop **aesthetic appreciation**:
 - Demonstrate understanding of the role of creativity in discovery, innovation, and artistic expression.
 - Develop aesthetic perception and appreciation.
7. Become **civically engaged**:
 - Acquire and apply skills and knowledge based on partnership and reciprocity within and beyond the university community.
 - Contribute to the betterment of society.
8. Act **ethically**:
 - Respect the range of ethical perspectives.
 - Understand their own values and principles.
 - Recognize the consequences and impacts of their actions on others.
9. Develop a worldview that acknowledges **diversity and global interdependence**:
 - Understand the importance of diverse experiences, cultures, and identities.
 - Understand the ways that group and individual inequalities and interactions impact self and society.
 - Apply multiple perspectives to address local, regional, global, and cultural issues.
10. Act as responsible **digital citizens**:
 - Recognize the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of living, learning and working in an interconnected digital world.
 - Use relevant digital technologies competently in ways that are safe, legal and ethical.