

Carleton University
School of Journalism and Mass Communication

September – December 2008

Communication and Community: Media Advocacy for Social Change

Instructor: Dr. David Nostbakken (dnostbakken@wetvworld.com)

Course Description

All not-for-profit and social entrepreneurial organizations require media attention to shine light on the social issues, to mobilize social change and to muster support for work to be done. Communication strategies are most effective when linked to public policy, personal and institutional leadership, and community mobilization. This course explores emerging models and opportunities used to harness the modern tools of information and communication for social purposes. The course will look at examples of not-for-profit, for-profit, and hybrid media, as well as ICT-based approaches and businesses that have grown up around social needs in fields of health, religious expression, cultural diversity, sustainable development and peace. A mix of theoretical considerations and practical approaches will characterize the course, with an emphasis on practical examples and actual opportunities for student engagement. The role of public sector agencies, the private sector, foundations, NGOs, radio, television, internet, and new digital technologies will be examined. Students will have opportunity to examine effective evidence-based communication strategies for community development and social change. They will investigate social entrepreneurial opportunities with successful NGOs and agencies.

Course Format

The course includes lectures, guest presentations, student work sessions, student-led workshops, presentations and discussions based on readings. A number of themes will be covered over the thirteen three-hour sessions to include:

- Advocacy: The three-pronged strategy of communication, policy change, and community/institutional leadership.
- Fundamentals of social need and the positioning of media and ICTs in addressing them.
- The roles played by public and private institutions in influencing human behavior and some examples of institutional change and leadership for social benefit.
- Canadian examples of innovative use of media and ICTs for social benefit in religious expression, sustainable development, and peace.
- Meet the successful social entrepreneurs: in person and in cyber space.
- Emerging examples of collaboration among public and private interests in the 2.0 age and the opportunity they represent for social entrepreneurship.
- The Wiki world of things: Student located and researched examples of new approaches to social change.

Required Reading

To be developed. Students will be encouraged to read:

- Tapscott, Don, and Anthony D. Williams. Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything. London: Penguin Books, 2006.
- Jason Salzman, *Making the News: A Guide for Activists and Nonprofits*. Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2003.
- Robert Bray, *Spin Works! A Media Guidebook for Communicating Values and Shaping Opinion*. Independent Media Institute, 2002.
- Paul Born. *Community Conversations: Mobilizing the Ideas, Skills, and Passion of Community Organizations, Governments, Businesses, and People*. Toronto: BPS Books, 2008.
- Lawrence Wallack et al. *News for a Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working with the Media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999.
- Charlotte Ryan, *Prime Time Activism: Media Strategies for Grassroots Organizing*. Boston: South End Press, 1991.
- Spitfire Strategies. *The Spitfire Strategies Smart Chart 3.0*. Available online at www.spitfirestrategies.com

Course Requirements

Students are required to participate in group discussions based on seminars and readings, and in on-line research, group work and student-led presentations.

Grading

Class participation 20%

Group work 20%

Class Presentations 20%

Term Paper 40%