

Note from David Hoffman about this version of the syllabus: “I am going to make a few changes this term. The most important is that I am going to increase the weight toward the final grade assigned to the blog postings. Last term, because I was not yet very confident in the process, the postings only counted as part of a 10% participation grade. Given the amount of work that the best students put into posting, however, I feel this was too low. Blog posts will now have a stand-alone weight of at least 10 percent, and maybe more.”

PAF 9103: Communication in Public Settings

Course Policies and Information

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Office Hours: 3-5 Tuesday, 12-2 Thursday,
12-2 Friday, and by appointment.

Course Goals: This class focuses on the kinds of communication that take place when people come together to make a decision, engaging in a process that has traditionally been called deliberation. We will seek to achieve three broad objectives: 1) We will seek to understand the norms, rules, and procedures that give deliberating groups the best chance of arriving at good decisions in a variety of contexts, from informal discussion among co-workers, to the debates of the US Congress. We will approach the subject both by studying academic scholarship and research on deliberation, and through the direct experience of various form of deliberation. 2) The course also aims to equip you, the student, with the conceptual tools of critical thinking that will further your engagement in public deliberation. 3) Finally, the course will provide opportunities practical experience in constructing and delivering various forms of public communication, and meaningful feedback that can be used to improve performance.

This is a “Hybrid” Class: 20-30% of the work in this class will be completed online by means of content delivered electronically, online discussion, and online collaboration. Anyone with internet access should be able to participate fully. Because some of the class is online, we will spend less time meeting in the class room. Each class will be approximately two hours long, rather than three hours long.

Blog Posting Policy: All posts requiring a reply from your classmates before class are due **two days prior** to class, although earlier posting is encouraged. All replies, and all post not requiring replies, are due **by the beginning of the class session** for which they have been assigned. Post should be long enough to address the prompts fully. I would expect most to be in the range of 200 to 300 words. Keep the tone of the posts friendly. Say what you have to say, but **be respectful** of the feelings and views of others.

Group Work: You will be working in groups to complete some of the assignments. Although the groups themselves will decide how to divide responsibilities among their members, I expect students to do their utmost to duly carry out the responsibilities they have agreed to. *Part of your participation grade in class may be determined by feedback about your performance from your fellow group members.*

Class Texts: *Political Communication and Deliberation*, John Gastil
Political Writing: A Guide to Essentials, Adam Garfinkle
Cite Right, Second Edition, Charles Lipson

These texts are available at the Baruch campus bookstore. These and other required readings will be available through Blackboard.

Attendance: There is a strict attendance policy. Attendance will be taken through your signing of an attendance sheet. You are not officially in class until you sign the sheet, so don't forget to sign it. Every unexcused absence may result in the lowering of your final grade. Submit excuses to me before you miss class. You may do so via phone or email. I do not normally return phone calls only to confirm that I received your excuse. E-mail me if you need a response.

Assignments: All assignments must be typed to be accepted as complete unless otherwise noted. **You are responsible for keeping an electronic copy of all your work at all times.**

Writing: As this is a course that aims to improve written communication, spelling, grammar, organization and diction are all factors in the grading of written assignments.

Revision: Most written work handed in on time in good faith can be revised for a better grade.

Conduct: DO say what you have to say. DO be respectful of other people. DON'T plagiarize or cheat. See www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic_honesty.html for Baruch College's official policy on academic honesty. Cheating or plagiarism may result failure of the assignment or the course.

Additional Resources: If you have any disability that requires some modification of the class, please let me know and that modification will be made.

List of Grades and Their Weights toward the Final Grade

Policy Options Presentation (Group or Individual Grade)	20%
Response Panel Decision (Group Grade)	10%
Policy Memorandum (Group or Individual Grade)	20%
Annotated Bibliography (Individual Grade)	10%
Webpage (Group or Individual Grade)	10%
Comprehensive Final (Individual Grade)	20%

Minor Grades (Quizzes, Participation, Blogs,
etc.) (Individual Grade)

10%

Class Schedule

Only the major assignments and readings are listed. For a full list of all assignments, including blog postings, video and website review assignments, click the Topics in the center column.

August

Dates	Calendar Notes	Topics (with Links to Descriptions and Assignment Details)	Readings	Major Assignments (Click Topics Link for Full Details)
Friday the 29 th	Class Meets	Introduction to Communication in Public Settings		

September

Friday the 5 th	Class Meets	What is Good Deliberation?	Gastil, "Introduction," Chapters 1&2	Watch <i>12 Angry Men</i> ; Comment on @ the Agora Postings
Friday the 12 th	Class Meets	Historical Perspectives Deliberation & Democracy	Hoffman, "Dilemmas of Democratic Deliberation"; Aristotle, "Deliberation"; Madison, "Federalist 10"; Lippmann, excerpt from <i>Public Opinion</i> ; Dewey, "Creative Democracy"	Problem Memos Due— Post Online and Bring a Hard Copy to Class
Friday the 19 th	Class Meets	Deliberation and Political Writing	Garfinkle, Chapters 1-3; Orwell, "Politics of the English Language"	Comment on Problem Memos; Working Groups Formed (if applicable)
Tuesday the 23 rd	Class Meets; College Follow a Friday Schedule	Deliberation and Reasoning—Ideals & Frameworks	Hoffman, "Deliberative Argumentation"; Fairbanks, "Policy"	
Friday the 26 th	No Classes Scheduled			

October

Dates	Calendar Notes	Topics (with Links to Descriptions and Assignment Details)	Readings	Major Assignments (Click Topics Links for Full Details)
Friday the 3 rd	No Classes Scheduled			
Friday the 10 th	Class Meets	Deliberation and Reasoning—Problems and Pitfalls	Tversky & Kahnemann, “Judgment Under Uncertainty”; Simons, “Cognitive Shorthands”; Powell, “Speech to the UN.”	Policy Options Brief Due—Post Online and Bring a Hard Copy to Class
Friday the 17 th	Class Meets	Deliberation and Procedural Rationality	Steffensmeier and Schenck-Hamlin, “Argument Quality in Public Deliberation”; Zimmerman, <i>Robert’s Rules in Plain English</i> ; Gastil Chapter 5	Sign Up for Response Panels
Friday the 24 th	Class Meets	Deliberation at Public Meetings	Gastil, Chapter 7	Presentations and Discussions
Friday the 31 st	Class Meets	Presentations—no additional topics		Presentations and Discussions

November

Friday the 7 th	Class Meets	Presentations—no additional topics		Presentations and Discussions
Friday the 14 th	Class Meets	Deliberation in Organizations	Graber, “Foundations for Sound Decisions”; Spee and Jarzabkowski, “Strategic Planning as a Communicative Process”	
Friday the 21 st	Class Does Not Meet, but Online Assignments are Due	Deliberation and Mass Media	Gastil, Chapter 3; Berman & Murphy, <i>Approaching Democracy</i> , “The Media”; Carpini, “News from Somewhere: Journalistic Frames and the Debate over Public Journalism.”	
Friday the 28 th	No Class: Thanksgiving			

December

Dates	Calendar Notes	Topics (with Links to Descriptions and Assignment Details)	Readings	Major Assignments (Click Topics Link for Full Details)
Friday the 5 th	Class Meets	Deliberation and Framing	Callaghan & Schnell, "Introduction" to <i>Framing American Politics</i> ; Kinder and Nelson, "Democratic Debate and Real Opinions"; Wise & Brewer, "Competing Frames for a Public Health Issue"; Hoffman, "Food for Thought About Framing"	All Policy Memos Due by This Date; Annotated Bibliographies Due
Friday the 12 th	Class Meets	Deliberation and the Internet	Sunstein, <i>Republic.com 2.0</i> , Chapters 1&2; .Iyengar & Hahn, "Red Media, Blue Media: Evidence of Ideological Selectivity in Media Use," Gentzkow and Shapiro, "Ideological Segregation Online and Offline"	