

**CMAT 490-001—Strategic Communication Campaigns**

Tues/Thurs, 11:00AM—12:15PM | TETC 179  
Spring 2017 Course Policies & Meeting Schedule

**Instructor Contact Information:**

Dr. Vinita Agarwal

Associate Professor of Communication Arts & Director, OURCA

Office: Fulton Hall 272 | Academic Commons 233

Email: vxagarwal@salisbury.edu

<http://drvinitaagarwal.com/> | @vinitaagarwal | My Classes

OH: T: 12:30PM–2:30PM | TR: 12:30PM–1:30PM and by appointment (FH 272)

T: 2:30PM–3:30PM | TR: 1:30PM–3:00PM and by appointment (AC 233)

Appointments via GullNet Scheduling System

**Prerequisites**

CMAT 101 and 102 with grades of C or better.

**Course Description**

CMAT 490—Strategic Communication Campaigns. Students will learn and demonstrate mastery of strategic communication principles through direct application of research, planning, implementation, and evaluation of their campaign for a real client or social cause. As a capstone experience, the major emphasis will be on the application of learning as evaluated through measurable campaign outcomes

**Learning Objectives**

As an advanced seminar for seniors who have successfully completed CMAT pre-requisites, core curriculum, and electives, the course guides students through the process of direct and immediate community engagement through strategic communication campaign planning, design, implementation, and engagement with real-world audiences to achieve outlined objectives. Seminar participants will focus on advanced analytic inquiry, measurement, and evaluation of strategic communication principles to conceptualize and create deliverables (broadcast/print/digital) that achieve positive community impact. Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Connect strategic communication design principles in an applied, community-based context.
- Critically evaluate strategic communication principles to engage best practices in campaign planning.
- Systematically utilize media/channel selection in message design and delivery.
- Conduct formative and summative evaluation to demonstrate campaign outcomes at each stage.
- Create, implement, and evaluate campaign strategy through incorporating feedback.
- Articulate the role of communication professionals in meaningful community engagement to drive change.

**Textbooks**

There is no required textbook for the course. All materials will be provided on an as need-be basis by the instructor in the form of handouts, online readings, and related materials. Recommended texts can be suggested for interested students to support their specific interest and focus during individual meetings with the instructor.

**Equipment Policy**

Familiarity with media equipment and use policies in CMAT tracks is expected. Having a smartphone (iOS or Android) is strongly recommended.

### **Copyright Statement**

The content (lectures, assignments, handouts) are the property of the instructor and protected under copyright law. You may not publicly distribute or display or share my course materials or lecture notes without my written permission.

### **Individual Work/ Teamwork**

As soon-to-be communication graduates, you will have much freedom and control over your output this semester. Successfully navigating the responsibility of delivering team-based projects is part of the course skills you are expected to deploy and gain experience in through the semester.

### **Attendance and Participation**

In accordance with the syllabus, there will be several days when you will be engaged in team-based work within the community or outside of the classroom. During the days a class meeting is scheduled (i.e., for instructor/class feedback, review, presentation, etc.), attendance is mandatory. Absences during scheduled class meeting days will negatively impact your grade. Please discuss with me in advance for any unique or special considerations that may impact your participation. If an unforeseen issue necessitates prolonged absence (i.e., greater than two missed weeks of class during the semester), evaluate your course standing and/or consider dropping the course in a timely manner. This is particularly important if you are a senior and this is your final semester. As an engaged, community-based strategic communication campaigns course, professionalism with your seminar and community participants, colleagues, and target audiences is an important element of your contribution. Participation will obviously take many forms that will necessarily include, but also go beyond your in-person, face-to-face engagement. It also includes taking a proactive approach in the application of your learning to your professional goals.

You have total responsibility in tailoring your ideas and content to the community voices/context, the issue, and the audience you choose. The effectiveness of your participation is based on how successful you are in resonating with your community groups' needs and achieving positive impact.

### **Course Ethos**

As advanced CMAT students, it is expected you will demonstrate professional behavior standards corresponding to those expected of new communication professionals in the industry. From my end, I will strive to provide each of you with the resources and guidance necessary to achieve the course objectives and toward your development as members of an engaged, cosmopolitan community of communication graduates. Do make use of my office hours and availability to assist you with your learning objectives. Your participation in this course indicates your commitment to reflecting on knowledge gained, to applying it in demonstrable ways, to demonstrating pride in your community engagement ethos, and to success of your campaign. PR professionals work in team-based, networked environments and thus navigate its strengths and challenges effectively. I am always available to guide, but I expect you to take the initiative to seek my help in a timely and professional manner.

### **Deadlines, Late Policy, and Make-Ups**

Deadlines are critical for professional success in today's work environments, and paramount for PR professionals. Here are a few general guidelines:

- Monitor your grades. All grade assignments will be taken as final one class period after the graded assignment has been entered on Grade book in My Classes.
- Do not discuss grade-related matters at end of class or via email when it is not possible to give it the full attention it deserves. Please stop by my office to do so.
- Where allowed, late reports will be assessed a late penalty downgrading by 50% for the first class period it is late and will not be accepted after the second class period from the due date. Presentations CANNOT be made up and will earn a ZERO if the due date is missed.
- You are responsible for obtaining permissions from all stakeholders involved in your campaign.

### **Grading Policy**

I strive to enter your grades within a week of their submission. You are responsible for monitoring your grade on My Classes. All grades are considered final after one week of being returned to class. You have up to one week from the day grades are returned to you to bring any concern to my notice. Requests that bring up grade-related concerns more than a week old will not be reviewed. The review process assumes you accept the possibility the grades can be revised upward/downward upon review. I do not keep records of in-class assignments more than a week after grades are made available.

In general, my grading is based on the following broad rule-of-thumb: “C” work meets the basic outlined criteria, “B” work does a great job of meeting the outlined criteria, and “A” work not only does an excellent job of meeting the outlined criteria, but also surpasses expectations to demonstrate innovative applications of the content that go beyond the outlined criteria. “D” work does not meet one of the basic criteria outlined for the assignment at an acceptable level, and “F” work is substandard and does not meet basic expectations on two or more of the outlined criteria.

### **Community Engagement Ethos**

Given the service-learning ethos of the course, your responsible conduct with your community issue/partner constitutes a large part of your seminar commitment. As you represent Salisbury University on these projects, your professionalism and work ethos are paramount at all times.

As the course simulates a real-world professional environment, as with any business partner, client, or team relationship, you should plan for and be ready to work around unanticipated factors in the course of successfully designing and implementing your goals or minimizing their negative impact on your desired outcomes. These could include, for example, unexpected changes to yours, your colleagues, or your community partners’ scheduling times, establishing communication channels that apply to your context, appropriate goal-setting, and working to manage stakeholder expectations satisfactorily. Through the course of this project I expect you will be a responsible, proactive, and productive member of your team, seminar, and community.

### **Support Services**

For trouble with your connection, access to the course website or the materials therein please contact IT at 410-677-5454, at TETC Room 113 or via email at [helpdesk@salisbury.edu](mailto:helpdesk@salisbury.edu).

### **Emergency Policy**

In the event of an emergency, announcements and information will be communicated via instructor email, My Classes course website, and SU’s home page. Course-related information will be updated by the instructor on My Classes and course website and via university email.

### **Office of Student Disability Support Services (OSDSS)**

The OSDSS provides guidance, access to resources, and accommodations for students with documented disabilities including: medical, psychiatric, and/or learning disabilities, and/or mobility, visual, and/or hearing impairments. They can be reached at 410-677-6536.

### **Academic Integrity**

The CMAT department expects you have read and understand the University’s policy as described in the *Student Policy on Academic Integrity* in your *SU Student Handbook* ([www.salisbury.edu/Students/handbook/welcome.html](http://www.salisbury.edu/Students/handbook/welcome.html)) and thereby agree to honor these standards. Academic dishonesty as a serious offense and ALL incidences are subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, separation from the university.

**Assignment Description**

In this strategic communications campaign seminar, each assignment builds on the previous one to uniquely hone your knowledge competencies into demonstrable deliverables that positively impact a neighborhood, community group, or community need/challenges. Detailed instructions will be provided at appropriate times in the semester.

- **Campaign proposal (20%):** Informed by your issue exploration and situation analysis, this is your campaign planning and strategy bluebook. Grounded in a evidence-based identification of a community issue, this persuasive document grounds your campaign foundations: Why are you doing this campaign? For whom? And, how will it help them? As a strategic planning document you will articulate your position (based on situation analysis), develop strategy (based on formative research), develop the plan (SWOT, goals, objectives, strategy, tactics), and identify measurement and evaluation of success (process evaluation, outcome evaluation).
- **Mid-semester campaign process evaluation report (25%):** Progress report focusing on how formative research and audience analysis and segmentation was employed to inform and refine your message development, channel selection, and implementation. Should include rough cuts/draft outlines of your deliverables (e.g., broadcast/video/print/digital media or networks).
- **Campaign process evaluation report (25%):** Progress report focusing on objectives achieved and in-progress as demonstrated through process evaluation employing evidence-based metrics. Should demonstrate substantive progress in deliverables alongside evaluation and how your campaign is incorporating feedback.
- **Strategic communication campaign report & presentation (25%):** Final strategic communication campaign document detailing research, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Should include final products of all deliverables, community feedback (participation), demonstration of outcome evaluation—positive impact on community.
- **Reflections (5%):** Reflection paper focusing on your take-aways with respect to the two key prongs constituting a vital, engaged, communications professional in today’s society: (a) How would you, as a strategic communications professional, use this semester’s experience to engage in your neighborhoods and communities? And, (b) What did you learn about effective campaign planning, implementation, and evaluation?

<u>Grading</u>	
Assignment	Total Points
➤ Campaign proposal	20%
➤ Mid-semester campaign progress report	25%
➤ Campaign process evaluation report	25%
➤ Strategic communication campaign report and presentation	25%
➤ Reflections	5%

Grade Breakdown

A= 90.0% & above; B= 80.0%-89.0%; C= 70.0%-79.0%; D= 60.0%-69.0%; F= 59.0% & below

❖ Important Semester Dates:

Jan 30<sup>h</sup> –May 16<sup>th</sup>: Session dates | Jan 30<sup>th</sup>: First day of classes| Jan 30<sup>th</sup> –Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>: Add/drop| Mar 20<sup>th</sup> – Mar 26<sup>th</sup>: Spring Break | Apr 7<sup>th</sup>: Last day to Withdraw with a grade of (W)| May 16<sup>th</sup>: Last day of classes| May 17<sup>th</sup>: Reading day| May 18<sup>th</sup> –May 24<sup>th</sup>: Finals week| May 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>: Commencement

Course Policies and Meeting Schedule: Spring 2017

<b>TENTATIVE SCHEDULE: Strategic Communication Campaigns</b> (May be adjusted based on our semester progress)		
<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
	<u>WEEK # 1</u>	
(T) Jan 31	<u>INTRODUCTIONS, EXPECTATIONS</u> Introductions, Syllabus. Engaging in our communities. What is situation analysis?	<i>(At Bethesda, Md. on board retreat Feb 1–3, 2017)</i>
(TR) Feb 2	Work in groups: Issue exploration. Conduct situation analysis.	
	<u>WEEK # 2</u>	
(T) Feb 7	<u>COMMUNICATING STRATEGICALLY</u> What is strategic communication? Overview of campaign principles. Campaign planning. Setting goals & objectives.	
(TR) Feb 9	Issue Identification for strategic communication campaign.	
	<u>WEEK # 3</u>	
(T) Feb 14	<u>STRATEGY IS KING</u> Campaign proposal feedback and development	<i>Work on draft campaign proposal</i>
(TR) Feb 16	Refine objectives and strategy. What is formative and summative assessment?	
	<u>WEEK # 4</u>	
(T) Feb 21	<u>OR, IS AUDIENCE KING?</u> Final campaign proposal due and discussion.	<i>Campaign proposal due</i>
(TR) Feb 23	Audience analysis and segmentation. Formative Research	
	<u>WEEK # 5</u>	
(T) Feb 28	<u>ENGAGE, CURATE!</u> Field engagement. Work in groups.	
(TR) Mar 2	Formative Research (contd.). Channel analysis and selection.	
	<u>WEEK # 6</u>	
(T) Mar 7	<u>IT'S A VISUAL WORLD: COMMUNICATING ON TARGET</u> Engaging responsibly and effectively	
(TR) Mar 9	What is process evaluation?	
	<u>WEEK # 7</u>	
(T) Mar 14	<u>PEER REVIEW</u> Mid-semester campaign progress report due.	<i>Mid-semester campaign progress report due</i>
(TR) Mar 16	Mid-semester campaign progress report due.	
	<u>WEEK # 8</u>	
Mar 20–26	<u>RELAX AND REFLECT!</u> Spring Break! ☺	
	<u>WEEK # 9</u>	
(T) Mar 28	<u>IT'S ALL ABOUT THE OUTCOME, REALLY</u> What is outcome evaluation?	
(TR) Mar 30	Individual meetings with instructor and group.	

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	<u>WEEK # 10</u>	
(T) Apr 4	<u>FROM THE WATCHTOWER</u> Outcome evaluation: discuss with instructor and work in groups	
(TR) Apr 6	Field engagement. Work in groups.	
	<u>WEEK # 11</u>	
(T) Apr 11	<u>ENGAGEMENT AND REPORTING</u> Field engagement. Work in groups.	<i>Campaign process evaluation report due</i>
(TR) Apr 13	Campaign process evaluation report & feedback	
	<u>WEEK # 12</u>	
(T) Apr 18	<u>TRUST ME, WE MATTER</u> Community participation and feedback.	
(TR) Apr 20	Field engagement. Work in groups.	
	<u>WEEK # 13</u>	
(T) Apr 25	<u>CAN WE COUNT THE LOVE</u> Audience feedback	
(TR) Apr 27	Prepare final campaign report document and presentation	
	<u>WEEK # 14</u>	
(T) May 2	Strategic communication campaign report and presentation	<i>Final campaign reports and presentations</i>
(TR) May 4	Strategic communication campaign report and presentation	
	<u>WEEK # 15</u>	
(T) May 9	Strategic communication campaign report and presentation	<i>Final campaign reports and presentations</i>
(TR) May 11	Strategic communication campaign report and presentation	
	<u>WEEK # 16</u>	
(T) May 16	FUTURAMA: Institutionalizing change and making a difference in our communities	<i>Reflections due</i>
<b><u>Finals Week</u></b> May 18–24	<b>Wed, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 8:00AM—10:30AM</b> <u>MAKING A DIFFERENCE, BUILDING A CAREER</u> Campaign Management for the Communications Graduate	