

## MSc Strategic Communication and Public Relations

### Public Affairs and Advocacy (31792)

<b>Term:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>Number of ECTS:</b>	5 ECTS
<b>Number of hours:</b>	125 hours
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Instructor:</b>	Núria Almiron

#### 1. Course objectives

There is not a universal definition for public affairs. This is why their function is usually offered instead: the purpose of public affairs is to influence public policy and resource allocation decisions. At roots, public affairs are about the political influence. Therefore, public affairs are also about the public administration, public interest, leadership, democracy, ethics, persuasion, power and social values.

The principal two arms of public affairs are lobbying (government relations) and corporate responsibility (community relations)—although the list of activities encompassed by public affairs also include issues management, media relations, stakeholder relations, or crisis management, amongst others. This course focuses on the former—lobbying and advocacy. Students will be introduced to Lobbying and Advocacy as academic and practical disciplines.

#### 2. Course outline

##### **PART 1: Public Affairs' Theory**

###### **I. Introduction to public affairs**

Public affairs in perspective. The three components of public affairs: communications, government relations, and public issues management.

###### **II. Introduction to lobby and advocacy**

The political economy of interest groups: lobbies and think tanks. Introduction and key figures of the *fourth branch of government*. Who is who in the advocacy arena?

##### **PART 2: Lobbying in Practice**

### III. Advocacy processes and strategies

The three key participant groups in lobbying processes: government, interests groups, and media. Common elements of successful advocacy campaigns. Designing and executing an advocacy campaign.

### IV. Case studies

Practical approaches on strategies, narratives and advocacy. Cases for discussion and research may include topics on:

- Politics
- Business & Finance
- Civil rights
- Human rights & Social justice
- Ecology & Environment
- Animal rights

## 3. Assessment

Course assessment will be attained by the means of two elements:

- Lectures, seminars participation and one individual proposal: 30%
- Advocacy project (teamwork): 70%

Attendance is compulsory at least to 80% of sessions (missing more than two sessions needs to be justified).

## 4. Bibliography and teaching resources

### Recommended:

Alemanno, Alberto (2017). *Lobbying for Change. Find your Voice to Create a Better Society*. London: Icon Books.

Vance, Stephanie (2012). *The Influence Game. 50 Insider Tactics from the Washington D.C. Lobbying World that Will Get You to Yes*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

### Also:

Almiron, Núria & Xifra, Jordi (2020). *Climate Change Denial and Public Relations. Strategic Communication and Interest Groups in Climate Inaction*. London: Routledge.

Almiron, Núria & Xifra, Jordi (2021). *Rethinking Think Tanks. Experts vs Impostors / Repensar los Think tanks. Expertos vs impostores*. Zaragoza: PUZ.

Dialer, Doris & Richter, Margarethe (eds.) (2019). *Lobbying in the European Union. Strategies, Dynamics and Trends*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Freese, Barbara (2020). *Industrial-Strength Denial. Eight Stories of Corporations Defending the Indefensible, From the Slave Trade to Climate Change*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Gen, Sheldon & Wright, Amy Conley (2020). *Nonprofits in Policy Advocacy. Their Strategies and Stories*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Ghere, Richard K. (2015). *Rhetoric in Human Rights Advocacy. A Study of Exemplars*. New York: Lexington Books.

Harris, Phil & Fleisher, Craig S. (eds.) (2017). *The SAGE Handbook of International Corporate and Public Affairs*. London: Sage.

Lapira, Timothy M. & Thomas, Hershel F. (2017). *Revolving Door Lobbying: Public Service, Private Influence, and the Unequal Representation of Interests*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Moore, Simon (2014). *Public Relations and the History of Ideas*. London: Routledge.

Libby, Pat & Associates (2012). *The Lobbying Strategy Handbook. 10 Steps to Advancing any cause effectively*. London: Sage.

## **5. Methodology**

The methodology of the course may include a combination of:

- General and theoretical class presentations by the professor
- Seminars in which readings and case of studies will be discussed
- Personal enquiry, individual research and readings
- Team and collaborative work & students peer review