

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

### **SFI - Advocacy: Strategizing, Planning and Measuring Impact**

#### **Instructor:**

Marius Dragomir

#### **Department**

Central European University

Semester/term, year

Course level (MA, PhD)

# Credits (# ECTS Credits)

Pre-requisites (if applicable)

Course e-learning site:

Office hours: days, location

The SFI program is a mandatory, applied element of the MPA program. It aims to equip students with core vocational competencies that are of high value in the workplace, including team building, leadership, emotional intelligence, planning, risk management and critical reflection. The SFI modules complement academic learning on the MPA, and provide an important opportunity for practice oriented learning and broad skills development.

#### **Course Description**

Governments and politicians have been gaining increasing influence over who owns, operates, and regulates the media. Monopolistic, corrupt, or non-transparent practices constantly mar the media policy making process. Moreover, media policies are hardly keeping up with the fast changes and advancements in technology.

In this climate, progressive policies are needed to protect freedom of expression. To help build such policies, experts and think-tanks have to take a fresh approach to advocacy, focusing on facts, targets, and impact indicators. Part of this effort is a detailed analysis of the policy establishment, including institutions that propose, draft and approve laws and policies, and key influencers in these institutions as well as players outside the establishment who directly or indirectly shape the decision making process.

This course provides students the basis for planning fact-based advocacy work in the policy field. The course will draw on examples of advocacy campaigns limited to the media policy area, but the set of rules on how to strategize and plan advocacy campaigns emerging from these experiences has applicability in a broad array of policy areas. Class sessions will consist of lectures on how to structure and plan advocacy work as well as analysis of examples of advocacy projects and hands-on exercises.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

Through analysis of experiences in designing and leading advocacy work, students will learn how to strategize and plan advocacy campaigns that achieve the highest impact possible in certain political and economic contexts.

Upon course completion, students will be able to:

- Think strategically about how to set goals and targets in advocacy
- Design fact-based advocacy campaigns
- Create methodologies to estimate and measure the impact that advocacy campaigns achieves
- Design research that supports targeted advocacy projects
- Create methodologies to analyze and identify the key influencers in the policy making process

### **Course Requirements and Assessment**

Students registered for this course are expected to attend classes and participate in the exercises that will be organized in breakout groups. Students must read mandatory readings assigned to this course.

Students will be required to write **an advocacy strategy** based on the knowledge gathered during the course. This strategy will consist of a research project methodology and an advocacy plan. The strategy will be based on a template that will be given by the instructor. Students will be free to choose any country or policy topic.

### **Course evaluation:**

Review advocacy strategy (the course final assignment): 70%

Class presentations: 20%

Class participation: 10%

### **Readings (Mandatory)**

Robert G. Picard and Victor Pickard, “Essential Principles for Contemporary Media and Communications Policymaking”, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, April 2017

*Strategies for Media Reform: International Perspectives* (edited by Des Freedman, Jonathan Obar, Cheryl Martens, and Robert W. McChesney), Fordham University Press, June 2016

One of the country reports in the research series [Mapping Digital Media](#) (edited by Marius Dragomir and Mark Thompson)

### **Course Outline**

#### *Day 1*

Session 1: 9.00 am-10.40 am

#### **Introduction: advocacy experience sharing**

*The roles and functions of regulators and governments and government-appointed bodies in the media market: how do you advocate? The instructor will share experiences in advocacy on media policy-related issues in over 60 countries, focusing on lessons learned, successes and failures.*

Session 2: 11.00 am-12.40 pm

**How to write an advocacy strategy (1)**

*Key elements of advocacy strategies:*

1. *Research that supports advocacy*
2. *Key elements of an advocacy strategy*
3. *Evaluation: how to design a monitoring & evaluation matrix to measure the impact of advocacy*

Session 3: 1.30 pm-3.10 pm

**How to write an advocacy strategy (2)**

*Practical class preparing students to choose an advocacy case for the class: it can be an organization, a campaign, a project. Students will work in groups of four.*

Session 4: 3.30 pm-5.10 pm

**Advocacy strategy creation: practical exercise (1): Research that support advocacy**

*Work in groups*

*Day 2*

Session 5: 9.00 am-10.40 am

**Advocacy strategy creation: practical exercise (1): Research that support advocacy**

*Presentations of the 4 groups*

Session 6: 11.00 am-12.40 pm

**Advocacy strategy creation: practical exercise (2): Drafting an advocacy strategy**

*Work in groups*

Session 7: 1.30 pm-3.10 pm

**Advocacy strategy creation: practical exercise (3): Drafting a monitoring and evaluation matrix**

*Work in groups*

*Day 3*

Session 8: 9.00 am-10.40 am

**Advocacy strategy creation: practical exercise (2): Drafting an advocacy strategy**

*Presentations of the 4 groups*

Session 10: 11.00 am-12.40 pm

**Advocacy strategy creation: practical exercise (3): Drafting a monitoring and evaluation matrix**

*Presentations of the 4 groups*

Session 11: 1.30 pm-3.10 pm

**Final class**

*Feedback and discussion of the cases*