

COURSE SYLLABUS

Skills for Impact - Media Advocacy

Instructor: Péter Sárosi, Rights Reporter Foundation

School of Public Policy at Central European University

Term: Spring 2018/2019

Credits: 1.0

Course level: 1st and 2nd year MPA students

Pre-requisites: Interest in media communication, including giving TV interviews

Course e-learning site:

Office hours: 29-30 May 2019.

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

This course helps students to gain better understanding of how to change public attitudes and/or public policies in an effective way by working with printed, online and broadcasted media. The first part of the training gives an introduction to students to the basics of media communication from the perspective of civil society activists/professionals. It refutes some common myths and false preconceptions about the media, outlines the structure, length and content of press releases and press conferences, it explains students how to organise communication within an organisation. Useful tips are given about television interviews, trainers and students discuss ethical issues and methods to evaluate communication. In the second, more practical part of the workshop participants can practice what they have learnt. They break up into smaller groups which have to build a media campaign concept, write press release and give test TV interviews to a hypothetical evening news, played by our video/reporter crew. In the third, plenary part of the workshop we analyse the campaign plans, press releases and TV interviews together and discuss lessons learnt.

Learning Outcomes

In this one and a half days training students will gain theoretical and practical skills enabling them to communicate with the mainstream media in a professional way.

By the end of the workshop, students will

- be able to work with professional media workers in an effective way
- be familiar with creating communication tools such as press releases, organise press conferences
- organise communication related tasks within an organisation, monitor and evaluate your work
- learn how to give television interviews through test interviews and avoid common mistakes

Course prerequisites:

The ability to write and speak in English, openness to other opinions and work in a team. Previous experiences with journalism or professional communicational skills are not required - only commitment to test and improve existing skills.

Course Requirements and Assessment

The course requires students to participate in exercises including writing short texts in English, working in teams and be video-interviewed by a (fictional) evening news TV reporter. We will analyse test press releases and test TV-interviews together with the group.

Readings (Mandatory and Optional)

Recommended readings:

Chip Heath and Dan Heath, [*Made to Stick*](#). Random House, 2006.

Marcia Yudkin, [*The Sound Bite Workbook*](#). *How to Generate Snappy Tag Lines, Scintillating Interview Quotes, Captivating Book or Article Titles, and Irresistible Marketing or Publicity Handles.*

Brad Philipps, [*The Media Training Bible*](#): 101 Things You Absolutely, Positively Need to Know Before Your Next Interview. 2013.

(A PDF reader with relevant chapters will be made available for participants.)

Course Outline

Thursday, May 30 O/102

Session 1: 9.00 am - 10.40 am **Working With The Media:** Challenges, methods and common mistakes I.

20-minute break

Session 2: 11.00 am -12.40 pm - **Working With The Media:** Challenges, methods and common mistakes II.

50-minute lunch break

Session 3: 1.30 pm – 3.10 pm - **Make Your Voice Heard:** students break out into smaller groups to practice media communication

20-minute break

Session 4: 3.30 pm– 5.10 pm - **Test TV Interviews:** participants interviewed by trainers

Friday, May 31 O/102

Session 9: 9.00 am - 10.40 am **Discussing Media Plans:** participants discuss the media plans created by the groups the day before

20-minute break

Session 10: 11.00 am -12.40 pm **Analysing the Test Interviews:** the group watches and discusses the TV interviews together