

## Advocacy & Politics



**Course Information**  
PSCI 4372  
Advocacy & Politics

Dr. John Daly  
**\*Updated 01.08.25**

Professor [Dr. John Daly](#)  
Email Address [daly@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:daly@austin.utexas.edu) (John.Daly@UTDallas.edu)  
Office Location 1750 Pennsylvania Ave NW Suite 900, Washington, DC 20006  
Office Hours By appointment

### **Class Materials**

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The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class, as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, they are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

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Must be enrolled in the UT System Archer Fellowship program.

### **Course Overview**

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This course is an introduction to the issues individuals face when placed in the role of persuading others to adopt an issue or idea in a political environment like Washington DC. You will learn ways of communicating ideas memorably and impactfully, techniques for building and maintaining a “brand” name that motivates people to listen to you, ways of building allies through narrative and networking, methods for framing issues so they are potentially adoptable (i.e., pre-selling), and ways to apply various theories of persuasion to political issues. The goal is for class participants to grasp concepts they will see and experience during their internship in Washington D.C. This is not a class on social movements although we will allude to some throughout the semester. It is instead about specific tools and techniques people can use to change others' opinions about issues.

### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

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#### **Upon completing the class, students will be able to:**

- 1) Explain the role that advocacy plays in shaping politics and the political environment.
- 2) Identify the primary tools used in building and maintaining a reputation in work environments.
- 3) Develop skills that will allow them to build alliances with others when trying to influence policy.
- 4) Frame issues in ways that make them more persuasive (i.e., pre-selling)
- 5) Better influence others in work settings common to Washington, DC.

### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

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#### **eLearning**

All course materials available on eLearning. All assignments, except where noted, should be submitted to eLearning. Login to your eLearning account [here](#).

#### **Required materials**

- Access to a computer and reliable internet service.
- **Machiavelli, N., *The Prince*** This book is a classic on influence (been in press since 1523. It focuses on how power is effectively used and has applications in virtually any environment (e.g., foreign policy, office settings, mergers and acquisitions) – see <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1232/1232-h/1232-h.htm>
- **Daly, John, *Advocacy: Championing Ideas and Influencing Others*** (This book offers a summary of the course materials with substantially more detail than what is presented in class)
- You should read Machiavelli's The Prince and the Daly book by **March 14**.

### **Course Policies**

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The class will have 15 sessions, which will meet in person at the Archer Center, except where noted below.

Session	Class date	Time & Class # (all times ET)	Location	Topics to cover (Additional topics may be included, depending on class discussion)	Prepare for Class
1	Tues, Jan 21	6:30-9:30 pm	Teams	Course introduction	Read Machiavelli
2-3	Fri, Jan 31	10:30 am – 5:30 pm	Archer Center	Building Credibility	Continue to read Machiavelli
4-5	Sat, Feb 1	9 am – 4 pm	Archer Center	Building Credibility (cont'd)	*submit team list
6-7	Sun, Feb 2	9 am – 4 pm	Archer Center	Communicating Clearly	
<b>CHECK-IN</b>	<b>Feb. 20</b>	6:30-9 pm	Teams	CHECK IN WITH DR DALY RE: PAPER	
<b>DEADLINE PAPER 1 DUE TO DALY</b>	<b>Fri, Mar 7</b>				Please submit to <a href="mailto:daly@austin.utexas.edu">daly@austin.utexas.edu</a>
8 – 9	Fri, Mar 14	10:30 am – 5:30 pm	Archer Center	Communicating Clearly & Partnering	Discussion in class about Machiavelli
10-11	Sat, Mar 15	9 am – 4 pm	Archer Center	Partnering & Pre-Selling 1	
12-13	Sun, Mar 16	9 am – 4 pm	Archer Center	Pre-selling 2	Read Daly for paper materials
<b>DEADLINE: PAPER 2 DUE TO DALY</b>	<b>Fri, Apr 4</b>				Please submit to <a href="mailto:daly@austin.utexas.edu">daly@austin.utexas.edu</a>
14-15	Fri, Apr 11	10:30 am – 5:30 pm	Archer Center	Persuasion Paper 2 discussion and course material on persuasion theory and tactics	Team presentations about lessons learned from paper (5 teams)

## Assignments

**Paper One: *Advocating for an Issue*:** You will have two choices for Paper 1. In either case your paper will be a team paper (*Teams of six people: Groups 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8* - These group lists will be published in the eLearning channel for this class, and a hard copy will be given to you). The length of the paper should not exceed 3000 words.

Option 1: Your team will identify an organization that is currently advocating for an issue in Washington and then write a paper discussing the ways this organization is or has pitched their idea. For instance, teams in the past have looked at organizations advocating for statehood for D.C., the legalization of marijuana, LGBTQ+ marriage, Congressional representation for Washington DC, improving eating behavior by Americans, housing policy, and the Dream Act. Your team selects the organization and its issue. You should select one organization. You should plan to interview people involved in the

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marketing of the idea as well as people who are decision-makers about the issue. Suppose that you are focused on an advocacy organization trying to get Congress to provide better dental care for older Americans. You would want to chat with the people in the organization who are pitching this idea to Congress as well as, perhaps, staff members on relevant committees who might be deciding whether to create or pass this legislation. You might consider interviewing coalition partners (e.g., AARP) as well as members of the media who cover dental issue or older people in America.

Option 2: Your second option is to pick a very specific issue from the recent past that was successfully or unsuccessfully “sold” in DC. For example:

- How did USMCA get passed (probably too broad) and signed into law?
- How were attempts to have a female on the \$20 bill delayed during the Trump Administration (more specific)?
- How did the DC area get the big Amazon deal? (more specific)
- How was “warp-speed” for the vaccine sold within the Trump Administration (more specific)
- How was the “don’t ask, don’t tell” rule eliminated during the Obama Administration?

For this option, you will interview with people who have expertise on the political advocacy involved. Critically, this is not a simple history paper. It is a focused paper on the politics behind getting the issue adopted or rejected. One other thing: For this paper, you cannot select an issue that is being currently debated in DC. It needs to be one where there has been some resolution.

**Paper 1** is due on **March 7** in **WORD format (please, no PDFs)**. **Please submit your paper through eLearning.**

We will have team-based electronic conversations about the paper the evening of **Feb. 20, 2025** according to the following schedule:

Time	Team	Members – list with names posted in eLearning
6:30-6:45 pm	1	
6:45-7 pm	2	
7-7:15 pm	3	
7:15-7:30 pm	4	
7:30-7:45 pm	5	
7:45-8 pm	6	
8-8:15pm	7	
8:15-8:30 pm	8	

Critically, **please check your topic with Professor Daly**. There are some organizations that will not respond to any requests for interviews (e.g., NRA) and there are certainly topics that are far too broad for a paper if you select Option 2.

In both Paper 1 and Paper 2 you have two goals.

1. The first is to identify **very specific tactics** people use to influence. For instance, for this paper you may encounter a person who says that one needs to build alliances with other advocacy organizations. How does the organization actually do this? Meetings? Phone calls? And, then, what specific moves does the person make at the meeting or on the phone? For instance, at a meeting a person might decide, ahead of time, what they can give on and what they can’t. On the phone, they might remind the other person about a recent social event. Or they might ask their advice on the issue rather than pushing the issue directly. Or, the organization might use X (formerly Twitter) as a way to communicate with their supporters. But how do they compose tweets to get people’s attention? How do they know their tweets are successful? (perhaps, for example, by measuring the percentage of tweets that are re-tweeted).
2. The second is to **integrate your interviews and research**. You should not submit a paper that simply contains summaries of the interviews and research. Instead, you should seek out themes that cut across interviews and then embed specific interview items within those themes. So, for

instance, you might say that one theme was the use of social media. Then you would describe how the different media is used – again with specifics.

**Paper Two: *How do people successfully influence and persuade in DC?*** Your task is to interview people (same number as you have members on your team) about their advocacy techniques and then write an integrative summary of what you learned from those interviews. The goal for this paper is to discover some secrets of successful influence. The first paper deals with organizational influence, the second deals with personal influence. Just like the previous paper the goal is to be very specific about the moves people make to influence. So when someone tells you the secret is to be trustworthy, what specific actions does that person do to build trust? Be on time for meetings? Follow-up immediately? Like the prior paper, integration is crucial. A mediocre paper would simply include summaries of the interviews one after another. An excellent paper would seek out themes and then integrate the results of various interviews into those themes. So, for example, you might find one theme would be trust. Then you would include examples from various interviews about how trust is exemplified.

In this paper you should also integrate materials from the Advocacy book into the paper. A good paper will connect what you learned in your interviews to the materials in the book. You should plan to include materials from at least seven chapters. This paper is due on **Apr. 4, 2025 in WORD format (no pdfs)** submitted to *eLearning*. **The length should be no more than 3000 words.**

Please plan on conducting a short (about 15 minute) presentation on your final paper at the last class session.

### **Late Assignments**

Students should contact the professor to request any accommodations or additional time to complete the assignment.”

### **Grading Policy**

#### **Course Requirements and Grading Policy:**

Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material. There are a total of 1,000 points that can be earned over the semester:

**Involvement in Class** (200 points) – regular participation in class discussions. Decorum and professionalism are expected in the classroom at all times. Respect for the professor, classmates and their opinions, guest speakers and their opinions and Archer Center staff are also required. The professor reserves the right to deduct points from class involvement should any improprieties occur throughout the course of the semester.

**Class Absence:** In some cases students will opt to not attend a class session because of other commitments they have made. Students should chat with me prior to the missed class(es). In most cases, students will be asked to complete a make-up assignment. Typically, the assignment is to read a book relevant to the class and write a paper describing applications of the book to their internship experience. This semester the book will be *Influence* by Robert Cialdini.

Given that the schedule for the class is published early-on it's wise to alert your internship coordinator at work about class times when you won't be able to do office-related projects.

**Papers** (800 points) – Each paper will be worth 400 points total.

### **Grading Scale**

The total points earned on a 1,000 point scale will be divided by 10 to calculate the final grade:

A (90-100)

B (80-89)

C (70-79)

D (60-69)

E (59 or lower)

Midterm grades will be based off involvement from the first sessions of class. Final grades will be reported to your home UT System institution by **May 21, 2025** and posted in accordance with their respective grade submission deadlines.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to abide by the academic rules and regulations established by the University of Texas at Dallas, which is the academic home for the Archer Center (see <https://www.utdallas.edu/conduct/integrity/> for a guide to ensuring academic integrity).

### **Harassment Reporting Requirements**

Senate Bill 212 (SB 212), which took effect as of January 1, 2020, is a Texas State Law that requires all employees (both faculty and staff) at a public or private post-secondary institution to promptly report any knowledge of any incidents of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking "committed by or against a person who was a student enrolled at or an employee of the institution at the time of the incident". Please note that both the instructor and the TA for this class are mandatory reporters and **MUST** share with the Title IX office any information about sexual harassment/assault shared with us by a student whether in-person or as part of a journal or other class assignment. Note that a report to the Title IX office does not obligate a victim to take any action, but this type of information **CANNOT** be kept strictly confidential except when shared with designated confidential employees. A confidential employee is someone a student can go to and talk about a Title IX matter without triggering that employee to have to report the situation to have it automatically investigated. A list of confidential employees is available on the [Title IX website](#).

### **Comet Creed**

*This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: "As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."*

### **Academic Support Resources**

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students. Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

### **UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures**

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

*The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor and Lecturers.*