

# Political Communication

Semana Tec 2024

<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. Brett Bessen
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:brettbessen@tec.mx">brettbessen@tec.mx</a>
<b>Time</b>	Mon to Fri; 11-3
<b>Room</b>	A4-220

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Understand Mexico’s contemporary media landscape
- Study public opinion using surveys
- Critically evaluate political communications
- Craft effective political messaging using social science principles

## CLASS ACTIVITIES

### Mapping the Media Landscape (25%)

As a class, we will compile a Wikipedia-style document on Mexico’s contemporary media landscape. Our document will include information about major media sources (including their coverage and biases) and citizens’ media consumption habits. Students will work in groups to research and write an assigned section of the class document. Groups will share their findings during class discussion and will have the opportunity to “fact check” sections written by other groups.

### Conducting Surveys (25%)

Students will write well-crafted survey questions (in Spanish) on a topic of their choice. As a class, we will then compile a survey questionnaire that each student will share with 3 – 5 of their friends or family members. Students will analyze the resulting data and individually submit: 1) a written description of one question (or index), including descriptive statistics, and 2) a compelling data visualization.

### Analyzing Political Rhetoric (25%)

Individually, students will analyze a significant instance of political rhetoric, such as a speech or political campaign (excluding single ads). You will analyze the speaker’s intentions, the main rhetorical elements of the text, and persuasive techniques used. Your final product should be a 1-to-2-page document introducing the text and examining its rhetorical strategy.

### Communications Strategy (25%)

In groups, students will craft a communications strategy for a group of (or on a topic of) their choice. Groups can include political parties, NGOs, interest groups, social movements, etc. The final product should: 1) elaborate the goals of communications strategy, 2) summarize current opinion about the topic, 3) propose slogans and frames for communications, 4) outlines venues for communicating with the public.

## GRADES

Semena Tec is graded on a pass-fail basis, where grades above 70% are counted as passing. Students are required to 1) **attend class each day** and 2) **complete the 4 activities** to pass the course.

## ATTENDANCE AND TIMELINESS

**Attendance is required;** students need to be in class every day to pass the course. *Students who show up more than 30 minutes late without instructor approval need to complete a short-written assignment to make up for missed class time.* Failure to complete this assignment will result in a failing grade for the course.

# Course Schedule

Day	Topic	Readings	Agenda
May 6	<i>Mass Media and Democracy</i>	Julio Juárez Gámiz and Marco Arellano Toledo. "The fourth era of political communication in Mexico"  María Elena Gutiérrez-Rentería, " <a href="#">Digital News Report: Mexico.</a> " Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Discussion:</b> Role of the Media</li> <li>○ <b>Reading:</b> Fourth Era of Pol Communication</li> <li>○ <b>Lecture:</b> Media Freedom and Democratization</li> <li>○ <b>Activity:</b> Mapping the Media Landscape</li> </ul>
May 7	<i>Understanding Public Opinion</i>	Lupu, Noam. "Party brands and partisanship: Theory with evidence from a survey experiment in Argentina." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 57.1 (2013): 49-64.  Cornejo, Rodrigo Castro. "Who Believes in Fraud in the 2006 Mexican Presidential Election? Election Denialism, Partisan Motivated Reasoning, and Affective Polarization." <i>Latin American Research Review</i> (2024): 1-22.  <a href="#">Writing Survey Questions</a> , Pew Research Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Discussion:</b> Lupu 2013/Castro Cornejo 2024</li> <li>○ <b>Lecture:</b> Public Opinion</li> <li>○ <b>Reading:</b> Pew Research, Writing Survey Questions</li> <li>○ <b>Activity:</b> Writing Survey Questions</li> </ul>
May 8	<i>Conducting Survey Research</i>	Lupu, Noam et al. <i>Pulse of Democracy</i> , 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Lecture:</b> Basics of Analyzing Surveys</li> <li>○ <b>Activity:</b> Analyzing your Survey Questions</li> </ul>
May 9	<i>Analyzing Political Communication</i>	Martin, James. <i>Politics and rhetoric: A critical introduction</i> . Routledge, 2013.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Reading:</b> Martin 2013, 4 - 6</li> <li>○ <b>Lecture:</b> Rhetoric and Elements of Discourse</li> <li>○ <b>Activity:</b> Analyzing Political Rhetoric</li> </ul>
May 10	<i>Crafting Political Communication</i>	Lau, Richard R. "Classic models of persuasion." <i>The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Persuasion</i> . 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Reading:</b> Lau 2019, Political Persuasion</li> <li>○ <b>Lecture:</b> Political Persuasion</li> <li>○ <b>Activity:</b> Communications Strategy</li> </ul>