

Joseph Watson, Jr.
Carolyn Caudell Tieger Professor of Public Affairs Communications
Department of Advertising and Public Relations
Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of Georgia

120 Hooper Street, Suite 211-C
Athens, GA 30602
(202) 297-5959
joseph.watson@uga.edu
Twitter: @ProfJoeWatson

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Communications and public affairs leader with over 20 years of experience in the public and private sectors. Expertise in developing new programs, leading organizations, and managing successful issue advocacy campaigns.

- Lead first academic program in the nation to provide students with practical training in the strategy and practice of public affairs communications focused on public policy and politics.
- Established and directed an innovative communications group for a Fortune 100 company, in a fast-paced, results driven environment, working with third-parties, trade associations, and key stakeholder groups to advance company's policy priorities and projects.
- Served in a Senior Executive Service position in President George W. Bush's Administration and managed the domestic policy division of a telecommunications agency.
- Launched a successful national advertising and public relations campaign to raise awareness of the value of nuclear energy.
- Led communications and public affairs campaigns in Illinois and New York that resulted in the establishment of the first clean energy standards in the nation to include nuclear energy facilities.
- Managed a successful public affairs campaign to phase-out of the wind production tax credit.
- Garnered bipartisan congressional support for a \$200 million U.S. Department of Energy grant.
- Authored provision in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 requiring the federal government to purchase renewable power.
- Won numerous actions in federal court for telecommunications providers to permit the siting of cellular communications towers pursuant to the 1996 Telecommunications Act.

EDUCATION

Harvard Law School

Juris Doctor, 1997

- Editor, *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*
- Third Year Paper: *The Essential Facilities Doctrine and the Compulsory Wheeling of Electricity*
- Argued amicus curiae brief before the United States Court of Military Appeals

Bradley University

Bachelor of Science in Political Science, *magna cum laude*, 1994

- Founder, Mock Trial Society
- Recipient of Deans Scholarship and Provost-Garrett Scholarship

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

University of Georgia

Carolyn Caudell Tieger Professor of Public Affairs Communications, Athens, GA, 2017 to Present

- Instruct undergraduate and graduate students in public affairs communications theory, strategy, and tactics.
- Develop college's curriculum and course offerings in public affairs communications.
- Engage external practitioners in preparation and guest instruction of courses to enrich the academic experience and prepare students for post-graduate practice.
- Conduct scholarship in public affairs communications and support and pursue grant opportunities.
- Support Department of Advertising and Public Relations initiatives to update curriculum.

Director, Public Affairs Communications Program, Athens, GA, 2017 to Present

- Lead first academic program in the nation to provide students with practical training in the strategy and practice of public affairs communications focused on public policy and politics.
- Organize panel events to educate students on public affairs communications practice.
- Manage guest speaker program featuring public officials and public affairs practitioners.
- Raise funds in support of Public Affairs Communications Program.
- Promote the Public Affairs Communications Program via earned, paid, social, and digital media.
- Direct Public Affairs Professional Certificate program for Grady College students.
- Collaborate with the School of Public and International Affairs on courses, activities, and events in support of SPIA's Applied Politics program.
- Direct GradyDC Washington summer semester internship program.
- Provide guidance to Tieger Fellows who have day-to-day responsibilities for the program's media relations, program promotion, and social and digital media

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Exelon Corporation

Director, Public Advocacy, Chicago, IL, 2013 to 2017

- Led strategic communications and public affairs campaigns to foster support for corporate public policy objectives and projects utilizing tools such as advertising, third-party engagement, spokespeople, grassroots, media relations, and social and digital media, as well as risk management.
- Advised CEO and C-suite executives of a Fortune 100 company on communications and public advocacy strategy.
- Organized public events and secured participation in existing forums to advance corporate objectives.
- Developed key messaging, consistent with public opinion research, and media strategy for communications efforts.
- Managed Public Advocacy department's external consultants and corresponding budget.
- Collaborated with corporate communications on brand PR, brand management, advertising, and reputation management.

- Led employee engagement program for public affairs campaigns and facilitated internal communications.
- Facilitated executive engagement in support of public affairs efforts, including development and placement of advertising, op-eds, letters to the editor, and speaking engagements.

Director, Federal Government Affairs, Washington, DC, 2005 to 2013

- Advocated business interests before Congress, the Administration, and federal agencies, as its government relations representative.
- Developed favorable legislation and public policy initiatives for business by working with policymakers throughout the federal government on a wide range of matters including energy, tax, and financial issues.
- Briefed senior executives on public policy developments and facilitate the assessment of impacts on corporation.
- Engaged in fundraising activities in support of corporate public policy objectives.

U.S. Department of Commerce

Associate Administrator, Washington, DC, 2004 to 2005

- Managed domestic policy division of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration at the U.S. Department of Commerce that serves as the principal adviser to the President of the United States on telecommunications and information policy.
- Researched and analyzed telecommunications laws, regulations, legislation, and policies.
- Organized public meetings on issues including RFID and development of the Internet.
- Moderated panel discussions on a variety of legal and public policy issues.
- Produced published reports on a number of subjects including next generation Internet Protocol, Internet and broadband usage, and access to federal rights of way.
- Developed policy and position papers on telecommunications and information technologies.
- Prepared policy recommendations for the White House and the U.S. Department of Commerce on telecommunications and information policy.
- Delivered remarks and presentations detailing the Administration's policies on telecommunications and technology.

U.S. Senator Peter G. Fitzgerald

Legislative Director, Washington, DC, 2002 to 2004

- Managed legislative staff who advised Senator on a range of issues that came before the Senate.
- Developed legislative strategies and analyzed parliamentary procedure.
- Provided advice on all votes which occurred in the full U.S. Senate, as well as the Senate Committees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Governmental Affairs, and Small Business and Entrepreneurship.
- Drafted legislation on a number of energy issues including nuclear power, oil and gas production, renewable energy, and electricity restructuring, as well as telecommunications matters.

Legislative Counsel, Washington, DC, 1999 to 2002

- Advised Senator on energy and telecommunications policy in relation to his assignments to the Senate Committees on Energy and Natural Resources and Commerce, Science, and Transportation.
- Prepared Senator for committee oversight hearings and business meetings.
- Analyzed legislation, reviewed Congressional testimony, drafted statements, and wrote questions for witnesses.

Hopkins & Sutter

Associate, Chicago, IL, 1997 to 1999

- Counseled clients in regulated industries such as electric utilities, natural gas companies, telecommunications service providers, and railroads.
- Advised an electric utility, with respect to the Illinois Electric Service Customer Choice and Rate Relief Law of 1997 that deregulated the Illinois electricity market, in preparation for a rulemaking.
- Won numerous actions in federal court to permit a wireless telecommunications service provider to site cellular towers pursuant to provisions in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.
- Represented clients in proceedings before the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, the Circuit Court of Cook County, and the Illinois Commerce Commission.
- Successfully argued numerous motions in federal court.

PUBLICATIONS

Scholarly Book Chapters

- **J. Watson**, J. Firth, & J. Peters (in press). “Law and (Lack of) Order in Complex Crises,” in Y. Jin, B. Reber & G. Nowak (Eds.) *Advancing Crisis Communication Effectiveness: Integrating Public Relations Scholarship with Practice*, Routledge.
- D. Clementson, **J. Watson**, M. Greenwell (in press). “Media Relations for Government/Public Affairs Crises: Ethical and Unethical Components of Scandal and Spin,” in Y. Jin, B. Reber & G. Nowak (Eds.) *Advancing Crisis Communication Effectiveness: Integrating Public Relations Scholarship with Practice*, Routledge.

Textbooks and Instructional Materials

- Author, *Introduction to Public Affairs Communications: A Guide for Practitioners*, A Top Hat Interactive Text, 2017.

Articles and Other Publications

- Co-author, Education can and should address lack of civility in politics, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, November 1, 2020.
- Author, *When faculty put their politics first, students lose*, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, October 2, 2018.
- Author, *Participating in the Political Process*, *American Gas Magazine*, June 2010.
- Co-author, *A Nation Online: Entering the Broadband Age*, September 2004.

- Co-author, *Improving Rights-of-Way Management Across Federal Lands: A Roadmap for Greater Broadband Deployment*, April 2004.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- University of Georgia, *Grady Greats: On the Road to 2020 – What Journalists and Media Leaders Owe the Public in the Election Year*, Panel Discussion, January 2020.
- University of Georgia, Department of Advertising and Public Relations / Crisis Communications Think Tank, Sticky Crisis Think Tank, *Navigating Crisis Communication on Racial Issues in Public Affairs*, April 2019.
- Association for Development and Cooperation Moldova / University of Georgia, Cox International Center, Workshop, *Public Affairs Communications for Government Communicators*, Chisinau, Moldova, October 2017.
- Association for Development and Cooperation Moldova / University of Georgia, Cox International Center, Workshop, *Opposition Management*, Chisinau, Moldova, October 2017.
- University of Georgia, Grady College Department of Advertising and Public Relation and Center for International Trade and Security Communications Workshop, *Impact of Public Affairs Communications on Brand Image*, Athens, GA, September 2017.
- University of Georgia, Business and Public Communications Fellows Program, *Lobbying in the United States: Law and Media Coverage*, Athens, GA, September 2017.
- University of Georgia, Department of Advertising and Public Relations Executive Council Annual Meeting, *Public Affairs Communications Program*, Athens, GA, April 2017.
- Nuclear Energy Institute, Nuclear Site Communicators Meeting, *Public Advocacy in Illinois and New York*, Detroit, MI, September 2016.
- National Conference of State Legislators, Nuclear Legislative Working Group, *Nuclear Advocacy*, Oak Ridge, TN, June 2015.