

PPPM 407/507

Strategic Communications

Spring 2021

4 credits

Instructor: Renée Buchanan, MPA

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Synchronous class: Thursday 6:15 pm to 8:00 pm

Asynchronous materials found on Canvas.uoregon.edu

Office hours: Thursday 5:30pm, Tuesday 5:00 pm, after class, and by appointment

## Course Description

Most organizations, and nonprofits in particular, are notorious for reacting to the latest crisis, or jumping on the bandwagon for the latest communication fad, instead of having an intentional well-thought-out strategy developed to propel the organization to fulfill its mission.

This course has two foci. First, how to thoughtfully develop a strategic communication plan that will intentionally guide the organization to achieved desired aims. Second, how to effectively reach and communicate with an organization’s different audiences, including donors, clients/program participants, community members, board members and staff.

Upon course completion, a student should be prepared to oversee the communications of an organization.

## Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Evaluate, design and/or improve a strategic communication plan with an understanding of how to reach different audience types utilizing different media channels.
2. Articulate the importance of, and evaluate, design or improve a crisis communication plan.
3. Identify key stakeholders of an organization and demonstrate how to effectively communicate with them.
4. Articulate how professional relationships, processes and communications impact outcomes, and demonstrate techniques for managing these to affect desired outcomes.
5. Articulate the importance of design or improve, and evaluate an organizations’ branding and its implementation.
6. Evaluate targeted messaging for different media such as websites, print and email communications, and social media.
7. Articulate the importance of different communication channels both internal and external to a nonprofit organization, determine which channel(s) will work for different settings, and demonstrate capacity to strategize the timing of content delivery effectively.

## Inclusion Statement

The University of Oregon supports and values diversity. To do so requires we:

* Respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals.
* Promote a culture of respect throughout the University community.
* Respect the privacy, property, and freedom of others.
* Reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidation of any kind.
* Practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others.
* Promote the diversity of opinions, ideas and backgrounds which is the lifeblood of the university.

The College of Design promotes the strengths of our multicultural community through the Equity and Inclusion Committee. For more information about the Equity and Inclusion Committee and other student resources, please see [https://blogs.uoregon.edu/design/deans-office/committees/equity-inclusion-committee/](file:////Users/reneebuchanan/Box%20Sync/UO%20Strat.%20Comm%20Class/2020/Syllabus%20Drafts/The%20College%20of%20Design%20promotes%20the%20strengths%20of%20our%20multicultural%20community%20through%20the%20Equity%20and%20Inclusion%20Committee.%20For%20more%20information%20about%20the%20Equity%20and%20Inclusion%20Committee%20and%20other%20student%20resources%2C%20please%20see%20https%3A/blogs.uoregon.edu/design/deans-office/committees/equity-inclusion-committee/).

## Course Materials

I have yet to find a great book on strategic communications focused on nonprofits that covers all the elements I feel are essential for a nonprofit professional to understand. I have selected a book that is written focused for both for- and non-profits use, and additional readings will be supplied through Canvas or will be available as online resources through the Knight Library.

Our primary book is:

* Wilson, L & Ogden, J. Strategic Communications: Planning for Public Relations and Marketing 7th Edition (Kendall, 2019) *available on Canvas!! Thanks UO for purchasing and scanning for you! If you choose to purchase, it is available as a digital version for half the cost of print.*

Additional readings will be books available as a e-books with free access through the UO Knight Library and readings will posted on Canvas.

* Leroux Miller, Kivi. Content Marketing for Nonprofits: a communications map for engaging your community, becoming a favorite cause, and raising more money (Jossey-Bass, 2013) *UO Knight Library*
* Paine, Katie Delahaye Measurement 101 for Nonprofits (Paine, 2016) *PDF will be on Canvas*
* Durham, Sarah. BrandRaising: how nonprofits raise visibility and money through smart communications (Jossey-Bass, 2010) *UO Knight Library*

## Weekly Schedule of Topics and Assignments

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Topic | Readings Due | Assignment Due |
| April 1 | Class Overview |  | Elevator PitchClass Goals |
| April 8 | Branding, Background Situation | Strat Com ch 1 – 4 (pp 1 – 75)Content Marketing ch 6 (pp 117 – 137)Readings on Canvas | Style GuideNonprofit Org IdentificationJournal |
| April 15 | Goals & Objectives | Strat Com ch 5 (pp 77 – 89)Content Mktg Part One (pp 1 – 71) | Work on Research Section!Journal |
| April 22 | Brand and Media | Brandraising Ch 5 (pp 73 – 109)Content Marketing ch 5 | Research section of Strat Com PlanJournal |
| April 29 | Key Publics, Personas | Strat Com ch 6 & 7 (pp 91 - 122)Content Marketing Part Two (pp 73 – 137)Readings on Canvas | Media ReleaseJournal |
| May 6 | Content, Messages, Strategies & Tactics | Strat Com ch 8 (pp 123 – 152)Content Marketing Part Four (pp 235 – 303) | Key Publics and PersonaOptional presentationsJournal |
| May 13 | Channels & Social Media | Strat Com ch 9 (pp 153 – 167)Strat Com Appendix B (pp 273-296)Content Marketing Part Five (pp 305 – 360)Readings on Canvas | Strategic BriefJournal |
| May 20 | Calendar & Budget | Strat Com ch 10 (pp 169 – 180)Content Mktg Part Three (pp 139 – 232) | Content Overview and CalendarOptional PresentationsJournal |
| May 27 | Evaluation & Crisis Communication | Strat Com ch 11-12 (pp 181 – 201)Readings on CanvasContent Marketing pp 62-71 | Action Planning section of Plan Journal |
| June 3 | Internal Communications and Personal Communication | Readings on Canvas | Optional PresentationsOptional AnalyticsOptional Crisis CommunicationJournal**Quiz** |
| June 10 |  |  | Final Strategic Com Plan |

## Assignments & Course Grades

Assignments must be turned in via Canvas and are typically due by midnight the day before class. No emailed copies will be accepted. Follow directions explicitly. You will have an assignment due nearly every week.

In-class assignments will factor into students’ in-class assignment, attendance, and engagement grade. Students who miss a synchronous class assignment will not be able to make up the group work. No extra credit is available.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 407 | 507 | Due Date |
| Class participation |  |  |  |
| * Synchronous Attendance
 | 5% | -- |  |
| * In-class Group Work\*
 | 5% | 5% |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Assignments |  |  |  |
| * Elevator Pitch
 | 1% | 1% | April 1 |
| * Class Goals
 | 1% | 1% | April 1 |
| * Client Org Identification
 | 1% | 1% | April 8 |
| * Style Guide
 | 5% | 5% | April 8 |
| * Writing Guide Memo
 | 5% | 5% | April 8 |
| * Media Release
 | 5% | 5% | April 29 |
| * Key Publics and Persona
 | 5% | 5% | May 6 |
| * Strategic Brief
 | 5% | 5% | May 13 |
| * Content Overview and Calendar
 | 5% | 5% | May 20 |
| * Option: Presentation, Analytics, Crisis
 | 5% | 5% | Varies/June 3 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Quiz | 5% | 5% | June 4 |
| Readings Journal | 9% | 9% | Weekly |
| BOTW  | 3% | 3% | Weekly |
|  |  |  |  |
| Strategic Communication Plan |  |  |  |
| * Research Section Draft
 | 5% | 5% | April 22 |
| * Action Planning Draft
 | 6% | 6% | May 27 |
| * Final Strategic Communication Plan
 | 20% | 25% | June 10 |

### Note on grading for Graduate (507) and Undergraduate (407)

Students registered for 407 will be expected to be perform at the quality of a senior in college. The quality of work for 507 students is expected to be at professional or emerging professional. This includes quality of writing, depth of exploration, and professionalism in presentation.

### Attendance & Class participation

Your overall grade in the course will reflect participation and attendance. Students are expected to have obtained, read, and retained the readings for each class in advance and to come prepared to discuss their content and implications. If you miss a class, please arrange to get class notes from a classmate.

### In-Class Group Work

At the end of each class in which we have group work, you will give feedback on the contributions the other people on your team made. Each week, you will receive 1 point for submitting your evaluation, and up to 4 points for your group contribution, which will be an average of what your classmates give you.

### BOTW

The top one or two submitted assignments each week from each section will be awarded the Best of the Week. Why? I’ve found I need a way to communicate when something is truly great work. However, you could still never get the BOTW, and still get an A in the class.

## Missed Class Policy / Late Assignment Policy

If you are unable to make it to class, your assignment is still due prior to the beginning of class on date the assignment is due. Late assignments will receive only partial credit. We will have in-class assignments and activities which cannot be made up.

Exceptions to these policies are rare and must be arranged **before** the due date: email me as soon as you can if anything may prevent you from submitting your work on time. If you experience an emergency that will prevent you from completing an assignment on time, notify me as soon as possible.

## Classroom Environment

In order to create a classroom in which students are comfortable expressing their opinions and perspectives, please approach the readings and others’ contributions with both an open mind and a willingness to question your own assumptions and biases.

The classroom is a place of focused learning. This requires that students arrive on time, stay until the end of the class period, do not disrupt the class by leaving the room temporarily, and refrain from non-learning activities (phones, email, etc.). Students who fail to adhere to these guidelines may be asked to leave for the remainder of the class session.

Computers and other electronic equipmentUse of electronic equipment, including cell phones, pagers, MP3 players, AND LAPTOP COMPUTERS, is prohibited during this class. Exceptions to the prohibition of laptops may be requested from the instructor and will be granted only for legitimate academic accommodation reasons. Use of laptops for accommodation reasons will be monitored throughout the term, and failure to restrict their use exclusively for this function will result in the revocation of any laptop privileges.

Professional Practice

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times.

Students should treat each other and the instructor with the professional courtesy and respect expected in workplace.

All communications relating to this course and all work turned in for this course should reflect professional standards in tone, presentation, formatting, and spelling.

### Email

Please allow 48 hours for response time. Review all files on Canvas and the syllabus prior to sending a note about course logistics.

### Incomplete Policy

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner and to turn in all materials at the designated time. In accordance with university regulations, an incomplete will only be given when “the quality of work is satisfactory, but a minor yet essential requirement of the course has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor.”

### Equity and Inclusion

The College of Design, PPPM’s home, is a community that values inclusion. We are committed to equal opportunities for all faculty, staff and students to develop individually, professionally, and academically regardless of ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic standing, cultural beliefs and traditions. We are dedicated to an environment that is inclusive and fosters awareness, understanding, and respect for diversity. If you feel excluded or threatened, please contact me and/or your department head. If contacting a person isn’t a good option for you, note that the University Bias Response Team is also a resource that can assist you. Find more information at their website at http://bias.uoregon.edu/index.html or by phoning 541-346-2037.

### Gender

Please let me know if I am using a gender pronoun for you that is inappropriate. Just let me know and I will be happy to change. I am also committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If this happens to you or a student you know, seek confidential assistance at the University Health Center and the University Counseling Center.

### Documented Disabilities

Students who have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course should see me as soon as possible.

### Academic Misconduct

You are expected at all times to do your own work. Copying content from other students and submitting it as your own work is grounds for failing the class. The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct.

### Plagiarism

Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students’ obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at: www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students.