PRINCIPLES OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION / JMC 2200:001 / Fall 17
M/W 5-6:15 / 427 EPB
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Office hours: Tues 9-11:30 and by appointment
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University policies governing this course: http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-syllabus-insert

Contact guidelines: For basic questions about the class or assignments (due dates, etc.), please first check course schedules, assignment instructions, syllabus as distributed in class or posted on course ICON site. E-mail is good for simple questions that I can answer in a sentence or two. (Note that I will communicate through your Ulowa email address only.) For more complicated questions or concerns, I'd like to talk with you; please see me during office hours or make an appointment. If you miss class, please check with a classmate; you are responsible for all changes, assignments, or other information announced in class.

ABOUT THE CLASS
The term “strategic communication” covers a lot of territory: public relations, advocacy/activism, health communication, marketing communication, investor relations, fundraising, media relations, lobbying, content marketing. All have at their core the planned effort to influence others by providing information and developing relationships. Throughout the class we’ll balance two perspectives: as students, you will read academic research and journalistic accounts and ask questions about the role of public relations and strategic communication; as potential practitioners, you will read textbooks and industry publications to become familiar with the field. You’ll also adopt one of most important habits of successful strat comm pros – curiosity, keeping up with news from a variety of sources.

COURSE GOALS
• To introduce the field of strategic communication
• To develop the concepts and skills needed for advanced coursework.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
The specific objectives of this course are to increase students’ awareness and understanding of:
• The scope and structure of the strategic communication industry
• Strategic communication concepts, terms, and practices in a variety of settings
• How organizations and causes use strategic communication to achieve goals
• The history of strategic communication as a practice and profession
• Regulatory and ethical considerations in strategic communication
• The role of planning, research, and evaluation in strategic communication campaigns
• The impact of new technologies on strategic communications
• How to analyze strategic communication problems
• The interdependence of strategic communication practices and media content

SJMC LEARNING OUTCOMES
The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified particular learning outcomes that every student should obtain by the time they earn a JMC degree. You can find more information about these learning outcomes here http://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/undergraduate-programs/assessment. This course, which is a foundation course for majors, contributes to the following areas:
• Understand the principles of media literacy and develop the skills necessary to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media messages across multiple media domains. Much media content is strategic communication.
• Understand that clear, concise, correct writing is at the heart of journalistic expression and that reporting and communicating it effectively requires a knowledge and achievement of the highest, professionally-accepted standards in all work. You’ll practice some professional writing formats.
• Understand the diversity of groups (including communities defined by gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion and sexual orientation) in a global society in relationship to communications. Effective strategic communication is audience based.
• Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in real space and cyberspace, and demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and their historical development. Public relations and strategic communication have guidelines similar to—but different from—journalism.
• Understand the history of media in the context of industries and identify transformations in audiences, engagement, and business practice over time. What we know as public relations and strategic communication developed to meet communication needs of organizations

READING
Required text: Wilcox, et al. Think Public Relations, 2nd ed (2013). Allyn and Bacon. Available at University Bookstore, copy on reserve in J-School Resource Center. It’s a breezy text that provides a broad context for the profession now. We’ll add to it in class and through reading in other books, journals, web as posted on ICON. You'll also do regular reading and listening to keep up with news.
WHAT TO EXPECT IN CLASS
A mixture of lecture and discussion with problem solving exercises, group work, guest speakers, and videos. You should prepare for class by reading assigned material from textbook, public relations trade publications, and other sources. Public relations practitioners must keep up with news and issues; classes will include discussion of current events. I will count on you all to make this a good class by being active participants. Ask questions, share your thoughts and reactions—tell a joke (and give me a break by laughing at my sorry attempts).

ASSIGNMENTS/EVALUATION

Exams 200 pts
Three exams (50, 75, 75) cover lecture, reading, and discussion + current events. Typical exam format is short answer, matching terms, multiple choice, short essay.

Practice quizzes 25 pts
Occasional online quizzes to help keep you on track with concepts and terms

Strat comm research and writing 100 pts
Analysis of publics/stakeholders (50)
Elements of strategic plan (25)
Case analysis. (25)

News/trends/media 25 pts
Set up Feedly news reader account (5)
Present news in class (10)
Read/respond to a longform/feature article (5)
Listen/respond to a podcast (5)

Class preparation and participation 25 pts
In-class activities, one-minute papers practice quizzes, most not announced in advance. You may have an occasional short research/writing assignment to prepare for class discussion. Those assignments are due in class and must be typed. You must be in class to receive credit. No credit awarded after class ends. In-class work cannot be made up.

Total 375 pts Final grade calculation (A+ not used) =

A 100% to 94.0%
A- 94.0% to 90.0%
B+ 90.0% to 87.0%
B 87.0% to 84.0%
B- 84.0% to 80.0%
C+ 80.0% to 77.0%
C 77.0% to 74.0%
C- 74.0% to 70.0%
D+ 70.0% to 67.0%
D 67.0% to 64.0%
D- 64.0% to 61.0%
F 61.0% to 0.0%

ATTENDANCE AND CLASSROOM POLICIES

Our class is a no-screen zone. Take notes on paper with a pen/pencil. Cell phones away—in your bag, not on your desk. A screen is a distraction and a physical and psychological barrier between you and me, you and the material, and you and your classmates. You are less likely to talk, less likely to pay attention to discussion, and less likely to remember what we do. Research shows laptop/tablet use in class results in lower grades. (Occasionally, you’ll use a laptop or tablet for in-class activities.)

I expect that you will come to every class. That’s your responsibility; I won’t keep track. Exams will be difficult if you miss a lot of class—we’ll cover material that is not in the reading. Participation points will be given for in-class activities—not announced in advance.

You are responsible for all material, assignments, and schedule changes whether or not you attend class.

Please talk with me if class or an assignment conflicts with a religious observance.

Arriving late or leaving early may occasionally be unavoidable, but please don’t make it a habit. If you have an on-going conflict with this class, please resolve it or drop the class.

This will be an informal and, I hope, friendly and enjoyable class. Please respect your classmates, the J-School, and me by following these guidelines:
• no cell phones (that means turned off, put away, no checking messages or texting—really!)
• no food unless you bring enough to share (water, coffee, soda ok—don’t leave cups, cans)
EXAM AND ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

**Exams** must be **taken as scheduled.** If you have an unavoidable conflict, talk with me in advance. In an emergency or illness, be in touch as soon as you can, in advance if possible. Exams (but not in-class work) missed because of mandatory participation in recognized student org activities may be rescheduled consistent with CLAS/university policies. Please talk with me if class obligations conflict with a religious observance.

**Please submit your work as specified for each assignment.** For major writing assignments, you will upload a copy to ICON and also turn in hard copy. In some cases, I will ask for hard copy OR ICON submission—read assignment carefully. Pages must be stapled. If not, I will base your grade on the first page. Unless I tell you otherwise, assignments must be **typed.** Please note: I will not accept assignments by e-mail.

Always **keep a copy** of your assignments. We all do our best, but papers or electronically submitted material can go astray. You are responsible for providing a copy if necessary.

**Representing the work of someone else as your own or getting credit in two classes for the same work is academic dishonesty.** While I encourage you to discuss assignments with others, I expect that anything you hand in is your own research, analysis, and writing. I expect that each person in a group has contributed equally and can provide a full description of his or her effort. Work for this class must be original—not revised versions of research or writing you have done or are doing for another class. Please talk with me if you have questions or want to discuss specific situations.

**Late work** is accepted only in cases of illness or other emergencies that you have discussed with me. Note: computer or printer problems do not count as emergencies; plan ahead; remember to back up your work.

**Correct and careful writing** is a basic expectation for all assignments.

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**ROUGH SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS, AND TESTS**

**Find full details on ICON / dates may change**

**Week of**

**THE BIG PICTURE: CONCEPTS, CAREERS, CLEARING UP CONFUSIONS**

Aug 21/23  Intro to class / Definitions and basics / organizations/field

Aug 28/30  Working in strat comm and PR / Stakeholders and publics

Sept 6  (no class Monday) / Origins of public relations as a practice

Sept 11/13  Legal and ethical issues  (Analysis of publics assignment due*)

Sept 18/20  Catch up / Exam one

**PR / STRAT COMM PLANNING PROCESS**

Sept 25/27  Planning overview and research

Oct 2/4  Audiences / Persuasion

Oct 9/11  Goals and objectives

Oct 16/18  Strategies, channels, tactics

Oct 23/25  Messages and creative concepts / (Strategic plan assignment due*)

Oct 30/Nov 1  Evaluation / Exam two

**STRAT COMM / PR IN ACTION**

Nov 6/8  Media relations / Social media, content marketing

Nov 13/15  PR in corporations / Crisis communication

Nov 20/22  THINKING / BREATK

Nov 27/29  Govt relations and advocacy / Communication for nonprofits

Dec 4/6  Catch up / TBD (Case analysis assignment due*)

Final exam week  Exam three

*Detailed reading and assignment schedules will be posted on ICON. Test and assignment dates may be changed. You are responsible for all changes announced in class or posted on ICON.*