Welcome to Foundations of Strategic Communication!

Welcome students! Foundations of Strategic Communication serves as an entry course for the MASC program. For many of you this course is the first step on your journey to earn your Master’s degree and I’m very excited to be working with you. I’ve been where many of you are now. In 2016 I completed my Master’s in Strategic Communication from an online program. I am familiar with the challenges of balancing work, family, and other commitments in addition to school work. Please know that as your instructor I’m here to support your learning. I want you be successful in this course and to hopefully have fun as we learn together. If you have any questions, issues, concerns, don’t hesitate to reach out.

Let’s take a look at some of the course logistics.

**How will the course be structured?**

The course will be delivered as a synchronous-asynchronous hybrid. Each week you will have work to complete on your own time. This will usually include lectures, readings, discussion posts, and an assignment. Weekly content and assignments will be posted by Monday. This content is subject to change, so please check class content on ICON weekly. Most weeks students will have between 2-4 hours of work to complete. (Group projects and more in-depth assignments may take longer).

We will also have synchronous sessions to facilitate discussion, work together and build community as a group of learners. Because many of you are balancing several responsibilities, the live sessions meet every other week. **Our live sessions will meet on the first, third and fifth (when applicable) Thursdays of the month.**

**Our live sessions will be delivered on the following dates:**

- February 4th
- February 18th
- March 4th
- March 18th
- April 1st
- April 15th
April 29th
May 6th (TBD)

Class time is from 5:30-8:00 PM (Although most nights we won’t use the entire class time).

Synchronous sessions will include discussions on the course content, group exercises/activities, work time and group presentations. If you need to miss a synchronous session, be sure to let me know in advance. All sessions will be recorded and shared in ICON.

What will we be learning this semester?

The topics we’ll be covering include:

- An overview of strategic communication as a discipline
- An introduction to the research and strategy development processes
- Strategic communication theories
- Ethics & law
- Media relations & networks/platforms
- Writing
- An Introduction to crisis & risk communication
- An introduction to corporate & internal communications
- Industry spotlights

The skills we’ll be developing include:

- The ability to identify roles and functions of strategic communication in our society and culture
- Creating a strategic communication plan. This includes research, planning, communication, evaluation – and the use of communications strategies and tactics to achieve organizational goals and objectives
- Writing correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communication professions, audiences and the purposes they serve
- The ability to critically evaluate potential effects of strategic communication practices

What tools will I need to complete the course work?


Other Readings: Other readings and assigned materials will be made available on the class ICON website. All readings should be completed before class meetings or completing assignments.
**Media/System Requirements:** Computer with high speed Internet access, a camera and microphone. (Need technical support? Contact the Division of Continuing Education technical support staff at dce-techsupport@uiowa.edu).

**Are there other University policies I should be aware of?**

You can view other University policies here:

**Absences and Attendance**
Students are responsible for attending class and for contributing to the learning environment of a course. Students are also responsible for knowing their course absence policies, which will vary by instructor. All absence policies, however, must uphold the UI policy related to student illness, mandatory religious obligations, including Holy Day obligations, unavoidable circumstances, or University authorized activities (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences). Students may use the CLAS absence form to aid communication with the instructor who will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused. The form is located on ICON within the top banner under “Student Tools.”

**Academic Integrity**
All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College’s Code of Academic Honesty. Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through UI email. Visit this page for information: (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code).

**Accommodations for Disabilities**
UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student is then responsible for discussing specific accommodations with the instructor. More information is at https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/.

**Administrative Home of the Course**
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and related policies. Other
colleges may have different policies. CLAS policies may be found here: https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

Classroom Expectations
Students are expected to comply with University policies regarding appropriate classroom behavior as outlined in the Code of Student Life. This includes the policies and procedures that all students have agreed to regarding the Steps Forward for Fall 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly, all students are required to wear a face cover when in a UI building, including a classroom. In addition, the density of seats in classrooms has been reduced. In some instances, this will allow 6 feet or more of distance while other cases, it may be less. Regardless, wearing face coverings and maintaining as much distance as is possible are vital to slowing the spread of COVID-19. In the event that a student disrupts the classroom environment through their failure to comply with the reasonable directive of an instructor or the University, the instructor has the authority to ask that the student immediately leave the space for the remainder of the class period. Additionally, the instructor is asked to report the incident to the Office of Student Accountability for the possibility of additional follow-up. Students who need a temporary alternative learning arrangement related to COVID-19 expectations should contact Student Disability Services (https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/fall-2020/covid-19-temporary-learning-arrangements/; +1 319 335-1462).

Class Recordings: Privacy and Sharing
Some sessions of a course could be recorded or live-streamed. Such a recording or streaming will only be available to students registered for the course. These recordings are the intellectual property of the faculty, and they may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit written consent of the faculty member. Students may not share these sessions with those not in the class; likewise, students may not upload recordings to any other online environment. Doing so is a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and, in some cases, a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Communication and the Required Use of UI Email
Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to the UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within UI (Operations Manual, III.15.2).

Complaints
Students with a complaint about an academic issue should first visit with the instructor or
course supervisor and then with the Chair of the department or program offering the course; students may next bring the issue to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; see this page for more information: https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities.

Final Examination Policies
The final exam schedule is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals with a few exceptions made for particular types of courses such as labs or off-cycle courses: https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for people of all gender, sexual, racial, religious, and other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited in MyUI to optionally share the names and pronouns they would like their instructors and advisors to use to address them. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (https://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod; +1 319 335-0705 or diversity.uiowa.edu)

Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, please see https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/.

What is the grading scale for the course?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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What if I have questions, concerns or need to discuss something with the instructor?

As I stated above, I want you to be as successful as possible in this course. I’m here to support your learning. I also know that right now we are living through very difficult times and many of you are experiencing additional stress and uncertainty. **If you are having difficulty completing the course content, I encourage you to contact me as soon as possible.** In most cases, if we communicate early enough, we can develop a plan to help you complete the work. If you have any questions or need assistance of any kind, I’m available to talk via email, phone, text or Zoom. I try to respond within 24 hours. Weekends might take longer.

Where can I find assignment instructions and other course resources?

This information can be found in the Files section in ICON. Check the folders titled “Course Resources” and “Assignments.” If you’re not finding what you need there, you can reach out to the instructor.

Tell me about the course schedule.

The course schedule is listed below. This information can also be found in ICON. As a reminder, this schedule is tentative and subject to change. All changes will be announced in ICON.

**WEEK 1: January 25th**

Topic: Course intro, understanding strategic communication

Assignments:
- Watch intro videos, assignment overview videos, read syllabus
- Watch lecture video
- Respond to discussion prompt
- Begin work on your website (watch video and see document in ICON for instructions; rough draft due February 18th)
• Select an organization to work with this semester (watch video and see document in ICON for instructions)
• Read Chapter 1 (pages 1-24)

WEEK 2: February 1st

Topic: Introduction to the research process, creating your strategic communication plan

**Live Session: February 4th: Introductions, recap of course overview, review week 1 material, introduce week 2 material

Assignments:
• Watch lecture videos
• Read Chapter 4, sections 4.1 & 4.2 (pages 81-90)
• Read Chapter 5 (pages 109-125)
• Respond to discussion prompt
• Complete Assignment 1 (instructions in ICON, due February 18th)
• Continue work on website rough draft (Due February 18th)

WEEK 3: February 8th

Topic: Theory

Assignments:
• Watch lecture videos
• Read Chapter 4, section 4.3 (pages 90-103)
• Read other supplemental material as assigned
• Respond to discussion prompt
• Complete Assignment 2 (Instructions in ICON, due February 25th)

WEEK 4: February 15th

Topic: Ethics & Law

**Live Session: February 18th: Theory recap/activity, ethics & law intro, possible guest speaker**

Assignments:
• Watch lecture videos
• Read Chapter 3 (pages 57-79)
• Read other supplemental material as assigned
• Respond to discussion prompt

WEEK 5: February 22nd

Topic: Writing

Assignments:
• Watch lecture videos
• Read Chapter 6 (pages 131-153)
• Read other supplemental material as assigned
• Respond to discussion prompt
• Complete Assignment 3 (Due March 11th)

**WEEK 6: March 1st**

Topic: Media Relations

**Live Session: March 4th**
- Writing recap, media relations activity, intro to social media, intro to industry spotlight presentations

Assignments:
- Watch lecture videos
- Read Chapter 7 (pages 159-183)
- Read other supplemental material as assigned
- Respond to discussion activity; bring pitch ideas to live session on March 4th

**WEEK 7: March 8th**

Topic: Social Media

Assignments:
- Watch lecture videos
- Read Chapter 8 (pages 187-208)
- Read other supplemental material as assigned
- Respond to discussion prompt
- Complete Assignment 4 (due March 18th)

**WEEK 8: March 15th**

Topic: Corporate & internal communication, CSR

**Live Session: March 18th**
- Social media recap, Corporate, CSR, Internal intro, possible class activity

Assignments:
- Watch lecture videos
- Read Chapter 9 (pages 215-238) Chapter 10 (pages 243-263) and Chapter 11 (pages 269-294)
- Read other supplemental material as assigned
- Respond to discussion prompt
- Begin website revisions

**WEEK 9: March 22nd**

Topic: Crisis & risk communication

Assignments:
• Watch lecture videos
• Read Chapter 12 (pages 301-320)
• Read other supplemental material as assigned
• Respond to discussion prompt
• Complete Assignment 5 (Due April 1st)

WEEK 10: March 29th

Topic: Industry spotlight: Public affairs, government relations and political communication
**Live Session: April 1st** *(Groups 1 presentation, discussions)*

Assignments:
• Read Chapter 15 (pages 381-401)
• Read/watch other supplemental material as assigned
• Respond to discussion prompt
• Continue work on Group Presentation Assignment (see video and instructions in ICON)
• Continue website revisions

WEEK 11: April 5th

Topic: Industry spotlight: Nonprofit, health, grassroots & education

Assignments:
• Read Chapter 14 (pages 357-375)
• Read other supplemental material as assigned
• Respond to discussion prompt
• Continue work on Group Presentation Assignment
• Continue website revisions

WEEK 12: April 12th

Topic: Industry spotlight: Sports, tourism & entertainment
**Live Session: April 15th** *(Groups 2 & 3 presentation, discussions)*

Assignments:
• Read Chapter 13 (pages 327-351)
• Read other supplemental material as assigned
• Respond to discussion prompt
• Continue work on Group Presentation Assignment
• Continue website revisions

WEEK 13: April 19th

Topic: Industry spotlight: International public relations and public diplomacy

Assignments:
• Read Chapter 16 (pages 403-421)
• Read/watch other supplemental material as assigned
• Respond to discussion prompt
• Continue work on Group Presentation Assignment
• Begin final website revisions

WEEK 15: April 26th

Final Presentations
**Live Session April 29th: Group Presentations 4 & 5, Course wrap-up**

Assignments:
• Prepare for final exam (TBA)
• Final website revisions (due December 11th)

WEEK 16: May 3rd

• Course wrap-up
• Finalize website/course portfolio
• Prepare for final exam

**FINAL EXAM TBA**