COMM 3337: Crisis Communication
Instructor: Dr. Leslie Y. Rodriguez
Fall 2018

Instructor Information
Email: leslie.rodriguez@angelo.edu
Telephone: 325/486-6089
Office: Library B314
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday: 2:15 pm-4:00 pm, 5:15 pm-6:00 pm; Tuesday & Thursday: 1-3:30 pm; and by Appointment

Readings

Course Description
COMM 3337 - This course focuses on crisis communication and management, emphasizing practical application of theories, strategies, and tactics from a public relations perspective.

Course Requirements: (total = 1000 points)

Exam 1 = 100 points
Exam 2 = 100 points
Crisis Communication Plan = 300 points
Group Peer Grade (Crisis Communication Plan) = 100 points
Press Release = 50 points
Case Studies & Activities = 100 points
Participation=50 points
   Great=50 points   Good=40 points   Average=30 points   Fair=20 points   Poor=10 points
Recorded Group Press Conference=200 points

Course Learning Goals:
• Identify and explain key principles of crisis communication management.
• Explain the role of strategic communication, and apply best practices of that structure in crisis situations.
• Know how to write a press release, prepare a media kit and hold a press conference during a crisis;
• Understand role of media in a crisis and demonstrate media skills and information distribution during a crisis;
• Apply crisis communication strategies with the use of critical thinking and practice ethical and legal principles for best outcomes in a crisis.
• Research, analyze and develop a crisis communication plan.

General Course Requirements
• Students will take two exams to demonstrate their knowledge of course material. Exams may consist of a variety of multiple-choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions.
• Students will participate in several case studies and activities throughout the semester to demonstrate application of knowledge learned in course.
• Students, in a group, will select an organization from the community, and create a thorough Crisis Communication Plan as established through course content and guided through an assignment sheet.
• Students will create a press release to demonstrate their knowledge of appropriate AP format.
• Students will demonstrate their ability to hold a press conference during a crisis by staging a press conference in their assigned groups.

Course Grading Based on the Following Point System

The following grading scale will be used: A=1000-900   B=899-800   C=799-700   D=699-600   F<600

Course Policies

1. **Attendance**

Regular attendance is required in this course. Attendance will be taken and counted beginning the first day of class. The student is allowed to miss 2 days without penalty to the final grade. However, a student’s absence will result in a zero for all work/assignments completed on that day. Once a student misses TWO classes, two (2) points will be deducted from the student’s FINAL average for each additional absence. This number includes both EXCUSED and UNEXCUSED absences. You will be counted absent if you are not present for the entire class. Three tardies will result in an absence. To be considered excused for a class absence, the student must be excused through the school or provide the instructor proper documentation for the absence.

2. **Missed Presentation**

If you are not present when scheduled to present and you do not have a legitimate reason for being absent (i.e., hospitalization, funeral of close family member), YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO for that presentation. Only if an absence is excused through the school or the instructor will a student be allowed to make up the presentation. If you have a legitimate reason for missing, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO MAKE UP YOUR PRESENTATION THE DAY THAT YOU RETURN. This means that you must have your documentation legitimizing your absence and your material ready. You will be FIRST to present on the day that you return. However, if you do not have a legitimate reason, remember course policy states: YOU WILL RECEIVE A “0” AS YOUR PRESENTATION GRADE.

3. **Late Tests**

If you miss a test due to an excused absence (i.e., hospitalization, funeral of close family member), you must make the test up within a reasonable length (no more than one week, desirably less.) All arrangements for making up work should be made prior to the absence, if possible, and is the student’s responsibility. A typed, signed and dated explanation must be given to the instructor upon returning to class. If the instructor notes that the absence as unexcused, the student will NOT have an opportunity to take the missed exam; as such, the student will receive a zero for the missed exam.

4. **Academic Misconduct**

****Cheating on an exam or plagiarism on any assignment will result in an F in the course regardless of a student’s numerical average. ****

5. **Class Etiquette**

Please be a courteous student and peer. TEXTING OR ANY OTHER USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS IS NOT ALLOWED. You will be counted absent and will receive a zero for any work for that day is caught texting in class. I will not announce this in class, I will only note my records accordingly.
6. **Dress Requirement**

Appropriate dress is required for presentations. Specific requirements will be announced by the instructor prior to your chapter presentation.

7. **Honor Code Policy**

Violations of academic integrity are very serious matters and are clearly documented in the ASU Student Handbook. The work a student submits in a class is expected to be the student’s own work and must be work completed for that particular class and assignment. Plagiarism means intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own. This may include your own previous work. Plagiarism includes quoting or paraphrasing from other sources without acknowledging/citing the source of your information or presenting quoted material as your own words. You must be very clear about attribution of sources and you must know how to cite sources in a paper. Please see full Honor Code Policy at http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student_Handbook.pdf

***Cheating on an exam or plagiarism on any assignment will result in an F in the course regardless of a student’s numerical average.***

8. **Disability Statement**

The Student Life Office is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting

Mrs. Dallas Swafford, Director of Student Development 325-942-2047 office or 325-942-2211 Fax  
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu University Center, Suite 112B

9. **Religious Holiday Observance**

A. “Religious holy day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code 11.20.

B. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

C. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence, however; the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.
*Tentative Schedule – COMM Crisis Communication, Fall 2018

August 27: Overview of syllabus, discussion of course requirements

August 29: Review of Public Relations Terminology

September 3: HOLIDAY

September 5: Chapter 1: A Need for More Crisis Management

September 10: Chapter 2: Effects on the Online World on Crisis Communication & Crisis Management

September 12: Class Activities and Case Studies

September 17: Chapter 3: Proactive Management Functions & Crisis Management

September 19: Class Activities and Case Studies

September 24: Chapter 4: The Crisis Prevention Process

September 26: Chapter 4 cont.

October 1: Exam 1 – Chapters 1-4

October 3: TSCA Conference

October 8: Press Releases

October 10: Chapter 5: Crisis Preparation: Part I

October 15: Chapter 5 cont.

October 17: Chapter 6: Crisis Preparation: Part II

October 22: Chapter 6 cont.

October 24: Chapter 7: Crisis Recognition

October 29: Chapter 7 cont.; Case Studies & Activities

October 31: A day to Catch Up (NOV 1: Last Day to Drop a Class or Withdraw from University)

November 5: Chapter 8: Crisis Response

November 7: Chapter 8 Cont.; Case Studies & Activities

November 12: Chapter 9: Post-crisis Concerns

November 14: Case Studies & Activities

November 19: Exam 2 – Chapters 5-9

November 21: HOLIDAY
November 26: Presentation Group Work

November 28: Presentation Group Work

December 3: Presentations

December 5: Presentations

Wednesday, December 10: NO FINAL EXAM