School of the Arts and Media

MDIA3008: ISSUES & CRISIS COMMUNICATION

COURSE OUTLINE

SEMESTER 1, 2016

CRICOS Provider no. 00098G
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Schedule</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details for Course Convener</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Details</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Aims</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning Rationale</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance Requirements</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Evaluation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Information for Students</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referencing Guidelines</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Submission Requirements</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Tasks: Learning Outcomes &amp; Graduate Attributes</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 1: Short Essay</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 2: Presentation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 3: Critical Analysis OR Crisis Communication Plan</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Overview</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Reading List</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>29 Feb-4 Mar</td>
<td>Introduction to issues and crisis communications</td>
<td>Lecture and tutorials begin in Week 1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7-11 March</td>
<td>A relational approach to issues and crises</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>14-18 March</td>
<td>Communicating in crisis to stakeholders</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>21-24 March</td>
<td>Utilising frames and key messages</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>28 Mar-1 Apr</td>
<td>Non-Teaching Break</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4-8 April</td>
<td>Crisis communication planning</td>
<td>Short Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11-15 April</td>
<td>Image repair strategies</td>
<td>Presentations begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>18-22 April</td>
<td>Situational crisis communication theory</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>25-29 April</td>
<td>25 April – Anzac Day public holiday</td>
<td>NO LECTURE OR TUTORIALS THIS WEEK.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2-6 May</td>
<td>The Internet and social media</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11-15 May</td>
<td>Airline crises / Developing best practice</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>16-20 May</td>
<td>BP oil spill / Leadership during crisis</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>23-27 May</td>
<td>SARS, flus, pandemics / Strategic responses</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>30 May-3 Jun</td>
<td>Sports and PR / Facing issues and crises</td>
<td>Research Portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

This course examines the interdisciplinary and relational nature of issues and crisis communication from conceptual and practical perspectives. Issues management is a managerial process that acts to provide a response strategy and early warning tool for issues that have the potential to impact organisations. The successful management of issues reduces the likelihood of crisis. Crisis management is the related process involving the development and application of strategies aimed at helping an organisation successfully deal with a sudden and significant negative event.

Issues and crisis communication refers to the PR-specific practices that emerge from these processes. Through a range of case studies, the course will explore how issues and crises impact upon organisations across the business, community, government, and not-for-profit sectors, and will engage in depth with the role of issues and crisis management and communication in strategic planning.

Course Convener

Collin Chua  
Office: Webster Room 231K  
Tel: 9385 5988  
Email: c.chua@unsw.edu.au  
Consultation time: Tuesdays, 9.30am to 11.30am

Tutoring Staff

Paul Ryder  Email: p.ryder@unsw.edu.au  
Peter Roberts  Email: p.j.roberts@unsw.edu.au

Course Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Six Units of Credit, Upper Level 3 Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 12:00-13:30 (Central Lecture Block 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutorials:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 14:00-15:30 (Quadrangle 1047)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 15:30-17:00 (Quadrangle 1047)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 09:00 - 10:30 (UNSW Business School 114)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue 10:30 - 12:00 (UNSW Business School 114)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 13:00 - 14:30 (Quadrangle G046)</td>
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<td>Tue 14:30 - 16:00 (Quadrangle G046)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 09:00 - 10:30 (Mathews 102)</td>
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<td>Wed 10:30 - 12:00 (Mathews 102)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 09:00 - 10:30 (Webster 306)</td>
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<td>Thurs 10:30 - 12:00 (Webster 306)</td>
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Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course the students should be able to:

1. Conceptualise the significance and functions of issues and crisis communication in an organisational setting.
2. Provide detailed analyses of issues and crisis communication at a conceptual and strategic level.
3. Understand the key principles behind designing and developing a crisis communication plan.
4. Think strategically about the role/s of various publics and stakeholders in issues/crisis communication cases.
5. Assess and evaluate the impact of the media in issues and crisis communication in an in-depth fashion.

Teaching and Learning Rationale

This is a level 3 course. It builds on skills developed in levels 1 and 2 courses. It will allow students to develop diverse conceptual and strategic skills in PR and professional practice. Both lectures and tutorials will be open to dialogue and collaboration with the aim of exploring case studies and material in a productive and rigorous fashion.

This course is NOT about rote learning, but rather involves actively thinking about and engaging with a number of conceptual frameworks, professional skills, case studies, analytical material, and strategic plans. Students are expected to take control of their own learning, rather than passively expect information to be delivered to them.

Teaching Strategies

All students are expected to come each week to both lectures and tutorials well prepared with notes on the readings and case studies, together with any points of inquiry they want to pursue. The readings and case studies are intended to be thought provoking, and you will need to devote at least 2-3 hours per week to preparation. If you do not keep up with the readings and lecture material you will find it difficult to pass the course. The course is aimed at building productive and lively communities of inquiry in both lectures and tutorials.

The course will have a UNSW Moodle site, where you can find lecture notes and a range of other basic course resources. [https://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/login/index.php](https://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/login/index.php)

Course Readings

The Course Readings will be available on the course Moodle site, which will also contain a range of supplementary course materials.
The course is designed to progressively develop over the weeks; if you do not keep up with the readings you will not be able to fully understand the material nor build a coherent set of skills and knowledge.

**Attendance Requirements**

A *student is expected to attend all class contact hours*. A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without failure is made by Student Administration and Records.

If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, their request should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance. A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course’s learning outcomes and/or volume of learning. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

For more information about the SAM attendance protocols, see the SAM policies and guidelines webpage: [https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/](https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/)

**Course Evaluation**

Your feedback gathered from the CATEI surveys at the end of the session offers valuable input. Your experiences and suggestions are important, and there is always room for improvement in terms of content and teaching strategies.

**Essential Information for Students**

A webpage with essential information about UNSW policy and guidelines for SAM students can be accessed at: [https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/](https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/).
Referencing Guidelines

If required in the assessment criteria, written work must demonstrate the use of correct referencing. If you use an incorrect referencing system, your work will be marked down. This course will use the Harvard system: http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/onlib/ref.html

Assessment Submission Requirements

Students are required to submit their written work online to Turnitin, via Moodle. Click on ‘Assignments’ in the course Moodle page. No hardcopy submission of written assignments is necessary.

Students are expected to put their name and student number on every page of their assignments.

If you experience any technical issues, you can contact the IT Service Centre (+612 9385 1333). If you have any issues pertaining to human error (i.e., you have submitted the wrong document), you should contact the Course Convenor.

Assessments must be successfully submitted by the specified due date and time, or it will be deemed late. It is the responsibility of each individual student to ensure that any work is successfully submitted by deadline, and in its correct format.

A Cover Sheet is NOT required for online submissions. However, please be aware that when you submit a UNSW course assignment online through a facility such as Turnitin, you are automatically acknowledging that you have understood and abided by the University requirements in respect of student academic misconduct outlined in the Student Code Policy and Student Misconduct Procedures, both of which are available here: (https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/StudentMisconduct.html).

You are also declaring that the assessment item is your own work, except where acknowledged, and has not been submitted for academic credit previously in whole or in part. In addition, you are declaring that the assessor of this item may, for assessment purposes:

• provide a copy to another staff member of the University
• communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (such as Turnitin) which may then retain a copy of the assessment item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking.

Penalties for Late Assessment

1. An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date.
2. The late penalty is the loss of 3% of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late. Lateness will include weekends and public holidays.
3. Work submitted fourteen days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but for the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component a student will be deemed to have met that requirement.
4. Work submitted twenty-one days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.
Applying for an Extension

1. A student seeking an extension should submit a SAM extension application form (https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/forms/) to the Course Convenor before the due date.
2. The Course Convenor should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
3. The Course Convenor can only approve an extension up to five days. A student requesting an extension of greater than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
4. If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.

Applying for Special Consideration

Sickness, misadventure, or other circumstance beyond your control may prevent you from completing a course requirement or may significantly affect your performance in assessable work. In cases of illness or misadventure affecting a number of different courses, you may make formal application for Special Consideration. Should you choose to do so, you should apply as soon as practicable after the problem occurs and within three working days of the assessment due date.

You can apply for consideration for the affected assessments through your Student Profile in myUNSW.

Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Short Essay</td>
<td>1, 4, 5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Presentation</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a Critical Analysis</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b Crisis Comms Plan</td>
<td>1, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Refer to page 5 of this Outline for the list of Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes. There are two options for assessment task 3; only one needs to be attempted. Summaries of the three assessment tasks are provided in the following section.
- In order to pass this course, you must make a serious attempt at ALL assessment tasks.
Policy on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- **Copying**: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another’s ideas or words without credit.

- **Inappropriate paraphrasing**: changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another’s ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student’s own analysis to bring the material together.

- **Collusion**: working with others but passing off the work as a person’s individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person’s academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person’s work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

- **Duplication**: submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

**It is not permissible to buy essay/writing services from third parties**; the use of such services constitutes plagiarism because it involves using the words or ideas of others and passing them off as your own. Further, **it is not permissible to sell copies of lecture or tutorial notes**, as you do not own the rights to this intellectual property.

If you breach the **Student Code** with respect to academic integrity the University may take disciplinary action under the **Student Misconduct Procedure** (see above).

Details of what plagiarism is can be found on the Learning Centre’s Website [Plagiarism & Academic Integrity website](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism), in the myUNSW student A-Z: Guide [https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Plagiarism.html](https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Plagiarism.html) and in Appendix A of the **Student Misconduct Procedure** ([pdf](https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf)).

The Learning Centre also provides substantial educative written materials, workshops, and tutorials to aid students – individual assistance is available on request.

Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

**UNSW makes use of the similarity detection tool Turnitin. For this course you are required to submit an electronic version of your written assignments so they may be reviewed using this procedure.**
Assessments

There are three assessment components: in order to pass the course you must seriously attempt and submit or fulfil all of its assessment components.

1. Short Essay (due 12pm, Friday 8 April, Week 5.)

Value: 25%
Submission: Turnitin
Word length: 1000-1500 words

Choose ONE essay question to respond to.

1. What is the importance of issues and/or crisis communications for contemporary organisations and companies?
2. What are the specific and relevant insights that stakeholder theory provides for issues and/or crisis communications?
3. How does framing theory provide specific and relevant strategic tools for issues and/or crisis communications?

This assessment is intended to test your developing understanding of the related functions of issues and crisis communications AND your ability to communicate this clearly and effectively.

You are expected to engage with the readings and lecture materials to date, and provide a clear, conceptually rigorous response, from an academic perspective. A sound theoretical knowledge will provide the base for you to acquire an effective sense of operational requirements as well as to develop a useable toolkit of practical strategic/tactical competencies as you enter the industry.

You are advised to select your question with care, as they pose different challenges. For instance, question one is quite general – to do well, your challenge will be to provide a rigorous and effectively supported rationale, instead of simply providing a set of broad and generalised statements. With questions two and three, your challenge will be to show that you are developing a strong overall understanding of issues and/or crisis communication, instead of simply providing a narrow response drawn from just one week’s worth of reading.

Assessment Criteria:

- Proper and fluent written expression.
- Development of a conceptually coherent and thoughtful essay.
- Productive engagement with relevant developments, perspectives, and conceptual frameworks from course readings and lectures.
- Accurate and properly presented referencing.
- Professional visual presentation and formatting.
2. Presentation (starting from the Week 6 Tutorial.)

Value: 25%

You will be assigned into a small group (of three to four people), and allocated a week to give a Presentation that addresses the week’s topic. In your Presentation, your group is required to critically examine a case study of your choice that is relevant to that week’s topic.

The Presentation is a group assessment, and you are expected to work in collaboration. Your group will present for 10 minutes x number of people in the group (e.g., 3 group members, 30 minutes). Your tutor will hold your group strictly to this time limit.

You should treat this task as a means to practice putting together and preparing a professional client Presentation. When delivering Presentations at university level, a common weakness is to simply talk through a collection of points, or recap the week’s material. For this task, you will be assessed on the quality of your presentation skills, AND the quality of your insights, NOT simply how well you can summarise course materials. (How well can you apply the principles we are learning to analyse things for yourselves?)

You are advised to follow this general format with your Presentation.
1. **Introduction.** What are you talking about? Why is this topic relevant (i.e., why should people care)? How are you tackling the topic (what is your approach and/or methodology)?
2. **Overview.** What are the key contexts? What are the most important developments? Which are the key aspects of the issues/crisis?
3. **Analysis/Recommendations.** What are the key mistakes and/or key successes with regards to communications strategy? WHY (how can you substantiate or support your analysis)? What would you recommend? What are your insights? How can you support your points with relevant facts, data, and/or theoretical frameworks?
4. **Conclusion.** What are the key takeaways you wish to leave your audience with?

Working in a small group will typically be a common activity for working in the industry. A key premise behind this assessment task is for you to treat the complexities and uncertainties of group dynamics and interactions as a fundamental aspect of the learning process – as a valuable opportunity of practicing for and coming to terms with an activity that you will need to become proficient with.

**Assessment Criteria:**
- Ability to work professionally as a team to take charge and to lead a Presentation.
- Ability to select and develop an appropriate case study, with scope for analysis.
- Ability to coherently and persuasively communicate key ideas and points.
- Ability to provide an effective and succinct overview, showing strong understanding of the relevant industry contexts and issues relating to the selected case study.
- Ability to provide meaningful insights, analysis, and/or recommendations, properly supported by relevant concepts, data, and theory.
- Ability to respond clearly and effectively when challenged with questions.
3. Critical Analysis OR Crisis Communication Plan (due 11.59pm Sunday, 5 June, Week 13.)

Value: 50%
Submission: Turnitin

This major assessment will be worth a substantial percentage of your final mark. It has been deliberately designed this way, as working in the industry will be dependent on the success of major projects you are involved with. Some time will be set aside in classes late in the semester, in order to workshop the major assessment.

There are two choices available in terms of this major project. **You can submit an individual Critical Analysis (2,500-3000 words), OR submit a Crisis Communication Plan as a collaborative pair (3,500-4000 words).**

For the Critical Analysis, your task is to analyse ONE case study. A selection of three possible case studies to choose from will be posted on Moodle approximately two weeks before the assessment deadline. This is intended to provide some semblance of the time pressure, spontaneity, and lack of foresight that properly characterise crises and issues. **These case studies will be drawn from actual events, and will have occurred within the past five years.** Case studies will be discussed in lectures throughout the semester.

A suggested format is as follows:

1. **Introduction.** What’s the case study, and why is it relevant for issues/crisis communications? How are you tackling the topic (what is your methodology)? Do you have one or two effective research questions or hypotheses to apply? Is there a specific theoretical foundation (such as framing theory, IRT, SCCT, etc.) that you will use?
2. **Overview.** What are the key contexts? What are the most important developments? Which are the key aspects of the issues/crisis? Why?
3. **Analysis/recommendations.** What are the key mistakes and/or key successes with regards to communications strategy? Why? What would you recommend? What are your insights? How can you support your points with relevant facts, data, and/or theoretical frameworks?
4. **Conclusion.** What are the key takeaways?

For the Critical Analysis, you will be required to adhere to proper academic conventions. You are expected to draw on the relevant readings and course materials. Use of external readings and sources as supplementary material will be of benefit.

**Assessment Criteria (Critical Analysis):**
- Ability to develop a clearly argued, well-researched, and conceptually solid perspective on your case study.
- Ability to show a strong understanding of relevant principles and theoretical frameworks behind issues/crisis communication.
- Ability to provide meaningful and properly supported analysis and/or recommendations.
- Fluent and coherent written expression.
- Accurate and properly presented referencing.
- Professional visual presentation and formatting.
For a Crisis Communication Plan, you will be working as a collaborative pair, with a partner of your choice. Both parties will receive the same mark/grade, so please choose your partner carefully. (You do NOT have the option of working on this task individually, as Crisis Communication Plans are typically produced by small teams of people working together in a collaborative fashion; hence why you are required to work with a partner for this task.)

For this task, you are required to create a comprehensive, effective, and clearly navigable Crisis Communication Plan for a company or organisation. (You are advised to choose a small-to-medium enterprise.) Please refer to the assessment criteria below.

This company/organisation can be hypothetical or actual. If you choose an actual company/organisation, you will need to attach a signed letter from a company representative holding a senior management position, confirming that: (1.) They are giving you permission to create a Crisis Comms Plan for the company/organisation; (2.) The company/organisation does not have a pre-existing Crisis Comms Plan.

For the Crisis Communication Plan, you will be required to adhere to accepted industry practice conventions. While you are expected to make productive use of relevant readings and lecture materials, and to use external readings and sources as supplementary material if you wish – these do not need to be explicitly cited in the Plan, as it is intended to be a professional business report, not an academic piece of writing.

You will be learning about the various elements of a Crisis Communication plan throughout the course, and key aspects will be discussed during the lectures. Some useful resources will also be available on Moodle.

* Each pair should submit ONE Crisis Communication Plan to Turnitin. The other student should simply submit ONLY a cover page, with basic information such as your name, student number, and the details of your partner.

Assessment Criteria (Crisis Communication Plan):

- Relevant selection and overview of a hypothetical company/organisation in need of a Crisis Communication Plan.
- Appropriate coverage of and engagement with organisational history, reputation, goals, and industry context.
- Effective identification and analysis of the organisation’s key risks and issues.
- Ability to effectively put together and present the necessary components of a comprehensive Crisis Plan relevant to your selected organisation.
- Fluent and coherent written expression.
- Professional visual presentation, in accordance with the conventions of a business report format.
## WEEKLY OVERVIEW

### WEEK 1
**Introduction to issues and crisis communications**

**Readings**


**Overview**

The lecture will present an overview of the course, as well as provide an introduction to the distinctive and specialised PR fields of issues and crisis communication, which can be traced to the disciplines of issues management and crisis management – specific processes in business management which have become increasingly important and demanding of attention in the past several decades. **Tutorials will begin in Week 1.**

### WEEK 2
**A relational approach to issues and crises**

**Readings**


**Overview**

This week, we will examine the relationship between issues and crisis management, and issues and crisis communication. We will begin to look more deeply at the operational role and processes of these specialised sub-disciplines, while also engaging with some of the approaches, models and frameworks that have been developed within issues management and crisis management.
WEEK 3
Communicating in crisis to stakeholders

Readings


Overview

This week, we examine the notion of stakeholders, which is a key business term. We will engage with stakeholder theory, in terms of its relevance for issues and crisis management and issues and crisis communication. Why/how should we identify key stakeholder groups for a specific organisation/industry, and why/how can we tailor our communications and key messages effectively to target specific key stakeholder groups? One point of focus will be the importance of internal communications.

WEEK 4
Utilising frames and key messages

Readings


Overview

This week, we will engage with a fundamentally important aspect of issues and crisis communications – key messages. In order to develop a better understanding of how to conceptualise and construct key messages – which serve as essential tools in issues and crisis communication – we will look at framing theory, as well as the related approach of agenda setting. In the process, we will examine the notion of Corporate Social Responsibility, which has come to the forefront in many ways within the corporate world.

NON-TEACHING WEEK: 28 March to 1 April.
WEEK 5
Crisis communication planning

Readings

Overview
A Crisis Communication Plan is a key tool in crisis management and crisis communication. What actually goes into putting together a Crisis Communication Plan? What kinds of templates, overviews, lists, instructions, should be included? What are the components and necessary steps? Even if you do not choose the Crisis Communication Plan option for your major assessment, knowing how to put together a good Crisis Communication Plan is an essential part of the discipline.

WEEK 6
Image repair strategies

Readings


Overview
This week, we will tackle one of the two influential theoretical approaches within crisis communications – an approach that has been termed Image Repair Theory (IRT). We will look again at reputation management as a key aspect of crisis communication, and explore how the Image Repair Theory approach provides a practical toolkit that can be used to develop strategic recommendations and responses for actual case studies and crises.
**WEEK 7**  
Situational Crisis Communication Theory

**Readings**


**Overview**

This week, we will tackle the second of the two prominent theoretical approaches within crisis communications – an approach called Situational Crisis Communication Theory, developed in some ways as an attempt to advance beyond Image Repair Theory. We will explore how this approach provides a diagnostic toolkit that can be used to develop strategic recommendations and responses for actual case studies and crises.

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**NO LECTURE OR TUTORIALS IN WEEK 8**  
*(Monday 25 April Anzac Day public holiday)*

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**WEEK 9**  
The impact of the internet and social media

**Readings**


**Overview**

The advent and popularisation of the internet and social media has had a substantial impact on issues and crisis management and issues and crisis communication. This week, we will explore the practical implications of how the internet and social media have impacted upon issues/crisis communication. Does the internet and social media actually exacerbate issues and crises? How has social media strategizing grown in importance?
**WEEK 10**

**Airline crises / Developing best practice**

**Readings**


**Overview**

A primary and ongoing goal in this course is to develop a sense of ‘best practice’ in issues/crisis communication. In the remaining three weeks of the course, we will engage with a number of case studies, which will give us the opportunity to apply a range of the tools acquired to date in the course, while continuing to develop this sense of ‘best practice’. This week’s case study is the JetBlue Airways Valentine’s Day Crisis of 2007; we will also address the Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 tragedy, which has rapidly become a case study illustrating several major mistakes in crisis communication.

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**WEEK 11**

**BP Deepwater Horizon Explosion / Leadership during crisis**

**Readings**

Harlow, William Forrest, and Rachel Martin Harlow, 2013, ‘Compensation and Corrective Action as the BP Response to the Deepwater Horizon Incident’, *Communication Research Reports*, 30:3, pp. 193-200


**Overview**

This week’s case study is the BP Deepwater Horizon Explosion of 2010, which resulted in a catastrophic oil spill. We will be dissecting and critiquing the response of BP during this crisis, and examining a number of facets involved in shaping public perception, such as external and internal stakeholder relations, key messages, the consequences of BP’s prior reputation, and the importance of effective leadership during crisis. This case study will also provide us with a further opportunity to study framing strategies.
WEEK 12
SARS, flus and pandemics / Strategic responses

Readings


Overview

This week, we will look at the 2002/2003 SARS outbreak, which began in China and rapidly spread to Asia and other parts of the globe. In the lecture, we will explore and compare the responses of governments as they struggled to manage public perception of the crisis, paying particular attention to Hong Kong and Singapore. What are the strategic lessons that we can take away? We will also use this case study to follow up on how social media is used in crisis communication.

WEEK 13
Sports and PR / Facing issues and crises

Readings


Overview

This week, we will look at the arena of Sports PR in relation to issues and crisis, paying particular attention to a central issue that is specific to Sports PR, and which has too often become compounded to explode into crisis – the issue of player transgression. We will explore the distinct strategies and practices required for issues and crisis communication with Sports PR, discussing a few case studies from Australia and America. This week’s material will also enable us to gain a better understanding of the differences between Image Repair Theory and Situational Crisis Communication Theory.
Further Reading


Journals

*Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal*
*Journal of Business Communication*
*Journal of Business Ethics*
*Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*
*Journal of Communication Management*
*Journal of Public Relations Research*
*Public Relations Review*

* This is a list of supplementary reading resources, which may be helpful in doing further research. You are, of course, encouraged to move beyond these suggested texts.