

COM441 – Master of Science – Global Strategic Communication Capstone Syllabus - Spring 2017

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Office Hours: Prior to or immediately after class sessions on Thursdays or by appointment. Please contact me when necessary via email for less timely matters or [cell/text for timely matters.](#)

Capstone Class Meetings

The Capstone course is largely an independent, self-directed activity for each student. However, class review and discussion meetings will be held on select Thursdays throughout the semester from 7 p.m. – 9:20 p.m. in SOC Room 13. There will be a five-minute break midway during the class meetings.

Class meetings are required and will support the development and successful completion of the Capstone project. Refer to the schedule below for specifics on the class meetings.

Course Description: This is the culminating course in the Master of Science - Global Strategic Communication program. Students will synthesize and apply knowledge and skills from previous courses to demonstrate competence in a specialized area of global strategic communication of interest to them. The Capstone project proposal must be approved by the instructor.

For the project, students will submit a comprehensive work, specifically 1) a research plan and report, and 2) a strategic communication plan with fully-developed, supporting materials and content. In addition, students will develop fully annotated and professional-quality final presentation.

The Capstone provides strategic communication graduate students the opportunity

- to gain specialized in-depth knowledge in a communication practice area (such as crisis communication, change management, internal communication, CSR/sustainability, communication ethics) OR a program problem/opportunity in a specific company within an industry (such as non-profit, banking, higher education, energy, communication agencies/consulting firms) of their choosing,
- to identify industry/company resources, publications, professional organizations, people in that practice area or program problem/opportunity,
- to connect with professionals in that practice area or company program problem/opportunity via interviewing, and
- to develop original/creative supporting materials and content to be used when implementing the strategic plan.

(Prerequisites: Required courses in the MS Global Strategic Communication curriculum.)

Capstone Expectations

Students are expected to

- Work independently and be self-directed in designing, developing and executing the Capstone project.
- Review the syllabus for project milestone assignments and required class sessions.

- Prepare for meetings by completing the necessary preparations to engage and advance their Capstone project along the established timeline.
- Submit assignments to the instructor when due.
- Stay informed via Capstone updates in the course announcements in Sakai.

Course Text

There is no course text for the Capstone. Students will receive slide decks and/or handouts to support development and completion of the Capstone project. Students should build their own professional resource binder/file with these materials as a communication practice reference.

Capstone Objectives (CO)

Students will work independently in using the research process and the strategic communication planning process -- demonstrating competence in research, analysis, plan development, implementation, evaluation/measurement and budgeting -- in developing a research plan and a strategic communication plan for a communication practice area or a company program problem/opportunity.

Students should view their role as an advisor, educator and integrator in when developing and working on the Capstone project. A key outcome of the Capstone project are fully-developed materials and content that would be used in implementing the strategic communication plan.

Students must demonstrate their grasp of the following:

- Utilizing the research process to develop a communication plan.
- Identifying industry principles, theories, frameworks and/or models to guide analysis of the practice area or program problem/opportunity.
- Developing a communication plan based on research findings.
- Creating an original/creative communication materials and content to support the plan’s goal(s)/objectives.
- Selecting measurement and evaluation measures to determine project’s impact.
- Managing the project’s financial, time and people resources effectively and efficiently.
- Presenting the plan, with supporting materials and content, with expertise and professionalism.

Course Schedule (Subject to change if necessary. Students will be notified of changes in advance.

Note: No work will be accepted after the due date.)

| Week | Date | Work/activities |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 1 CO A | January 19, class session | Discuss the Capstone project assignment. Review of the research plan and the strategic communication plan. <u>Due Saturday, January 21, midnight:</u> Submit course project proposal into Sakai Assignment Dropbox. (Proposal sheet can be found in Capstone course Resources in Sakai.) |
| 2 CO A | January 22-28 – Self-directed project work | Receive feedback on proposal. If necessary, 1/1 follow up with instructor. |

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| | | Begin to conduct primary (identify 3 interviewees, set up interviews for week 2/3 & develop interview questions); and secondary research (identify info/data needed and sources.) Complete research by end of week 3. |
| 3 CO B | February 2, class session | Review of communication principles, theories, frameworks and models for analysis. Complete research. Present interviewees and interview questions to class – 5 min. |
| 4 CO A & B | February 5- 11 - Self-directed project work | Conduct analysis of research findings. <u>Due Saturday, February 11, midnight:</u> The Research Report |
| 5 CO A & B | February 16 – 1/1, 15-minute meeting | Discuss feedback on the research report and communication plan development. |
| 6 CO C, E & F | February 23, class session | Review plan sections -- situational summary, goals and S.M.A.R.T. objectives, stakeholder/audience analysis, strategy, implementation/timeline, budget/costs and anticipated measurement/evaluation. <u>Due Saturday, February 25, midnight:</u> Communication Plan DRAFT |
| 7 CO G | March 2, class session | Review role of the curriculum vitae(CV), resume and brief bio for a communication professional as well as presentation skills. Receive feedback on the Communication Plan DRAFT. |
| | March 9 | Spring Break NO CLASSS |
| 8 CO C, E, F & G | March 12-18 - Self-directed project work | <u>Due Saturday, March 18, midnight:</u> The Curriculum Vitae Assignment |
| 9 CO C, E, F & D | March 23, 1/1, 15-minute meeting | Discuss focus and status of the plan and supporting materials and content. |
| 10 CO D | March 26 – April 1 – Self-directed project work | <u>Due Saturday, April 1, midnight,</u> Submit the fully-developed materials and content to support the communication plan. |
| 11 CO A - F | April 2 – 8 – Self-directed project work | Receive feedback on materials and content. <u>Due Saturday, April 8, midnight:</u> Compilation document of final research report, communication plan and fully-developed communication materials and content. |
| CO G | April 13 | Holy Thursday NO CLASS Receive feedback on final report, plan and materials and content. |

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| | | Due Saturday, April 15, midnight: Presentation slide deck |
| 12 CO G | April 20, class session | Presentations - 5 |
| 13 CO G | April 27, class session | Presentations - 4 |

Grading

All course requirements will be graded on point values. Total point value for the course is 1,000 points. Grades can be found in the Course Gradebook on Sakai. The points/weight of each requirement is:

| Activities/Assignments | Points | Weighting |
|---|---------------|------------------|
| Class Session and Engagement | 60 | 6% |
| Week 1 – Capstone Proposal | 50 | 5% |
| Week 3 – Status Update of Interviewees & Interview Questions - 5 min in-class presentation | 30 | 2% |
| Week 4 – The Research Report | 200 | 20% |
| Week 6 – Communication Plan DRAFT | 160 | 16% |
| Week 8 – Curriculum Vitae Assignment | 100 | 10% |
| Week 10 – Material and Content Proof Submission | 50 | 5% |
| Week 11 – Final Project Submission | 200 | 20% |
| Week 12/13 - Presentation | 150 | 15% |
| Total | 1000 | 100% |

At the end of the course, a letter grade will be assigned based on total points gained using the table below.

| Letter Grade | Points | Percentage |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| A | 930 - 1000 | 93% - 100% |
| A- | 900 - 929 | 90% - 92% |
| B+ | 870 - 899 | 87% - 89% |
| B | 830 - 869 | 83% - 86% |
| B- | 800 - 829 | 80% - 82% |
| C+ | 770 - 799 | 77% - 79% |
| C | 730 - 769 | 73% - 76% |
| C- | 700 - 729 | 70% - 72% |
| D+ | 670 - 699 | 67% - 69% |
| D- | 601 - 669 | 60.1% - 66% |
| F | 600 or below | 60% and below |

Assignments

Students will receive an assignment description and requirements for each assignment one week before its due date. Written assignments will be submitted via assignments in Sakai. Written assignments are firm and due on schedule outlined above. **No work will be accepted after the due date.**

It is the responsibility of the student to notify me, at least 24 hours in advance, if their work will not be submitted on time. Late work is accepted at my discretion and will be graded down one or more grades.

Technology Help Desk

Access issues or questions on Sakai should be directed to the Help Desk at:

Campus Phone: X84487

Off-campus Phone: 773.508.4487

Email: helpdesk@luc.edu or sakai@luc.edu

School of Communication Academic Integrity

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents.

Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet,

- print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
 - Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit;
or
 - Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at <http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source>.

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty, and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.