



湖北工业大学  
HUBEI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

<b>Course Title</b>	Strategic Issues and Crisis Communication Management
<b>Course Code</b>	COMM 5512
<b>Semester</b>	Summer 2026
<b>Course Length</b>	4 Weeks, 60 Contact Hours
<b>Credits</b>	4
<b>Instructor</b>	TBA
<b>Office</b>	TBA
<b>Email</b>	TBA
<b>Prerequisite</b>	Graduate standing in Communication, Public Relations, Media Studies, Organizational Leadership, Business.

### Course Description:

How do contemporary organisations anticipate complex reputational risks, manage stakeholder expectations, and communicate strategically during crises in highly mediated global environments? Strategic Issues and Crisis Communication Management critically examines advanced theories, frameworks, and professional practices related to issues management, crisis communication, organizational resilience, and reputation governance.

This graduate-level course explores the strategic relationship between organizational communication, public trust, stakeholder engagement, and institutional legitimacy during periods of uncertainty, disruption, and reputational vulnerability. Students investigate how organisations identify emerging issues, assess environmental risks, respond to crises, and recover credibility across political, corporate, governmental, nonprofit, and global communication contexts.

Using advanced case analysis, applied research, strategic simulations, and critical discussion, students examine crisis typologies including cyber security breaches, social media controversies, operational failures, public health emergencies, environmental incidents, leadership scandals, and global supply chain disruptions. Particular emphasis is placed on ethical leadership, strategic decision-making, stakeholder accountability, media relations, digital communication ecosystems, and cross-cultural communication challenges.

Students develop advanced competencies in environmental scanning, stakeholder analysis, crisis planning, strategic messaging, scenario development, media response coordination, and reputation management. Through professional communication exercises and collaborative simulations, students apply theoretical concepts to real-world organizational communication challenges while strengthening

analytical, research, and leadership skills relevant to advanced professional practice and graduate-level inquiry.

**Course Goals:**

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate competency in the following general education core goals:

- **Critical Thinking Skills** – Students will engage in analytical thinking, demonstrating the ability to critically evaluate, synthesize, and apply knowledge to complex problems, and construct well-reasoned solutions and arguments.
- **Independent Research and Inquiry** – Students will conduct independent research, utilizing academic resources to explore relevant topics, formulating research questions, analyzing data, and presenting findings in a coherent, scholarly manner.
- **Problem-Solving and Application** – Students will apply theoretical concepts and methodologies learned in the course to real-world problems, demonstrating the ability to develop practical solutions informed by academic inquiry.
- **Global and Cultural Awareness** – Students will gain awareness of the global and cultural contexts relevant to the course, appreciating diverse perspectives and considering the implications of their studies in a broader, international context.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Critically distinguish between organizational issues, risks, crises, and reputational threats within contemporary communication environments;
- Evaluate advanced theories and models of issues management and crisis communication;
- Conduct sophisticated environmental scanning and stakeholder analysis for organizational communication planning;
- Analyze organizational crisis responses using strategic, ethical, political, and cultural frameworks;
- Design evidence-based communication strategies for crisis prevention, response, and reputation recovery;
- Develop professional crisis communication materials including strategic response plans, executive briefings, media statements, stakeholder communication frameworks, and digital response strategies;
- Assess the role of traditional media, digital communication, and social media publics in shaping crisis narratives and organizational legitimacy;
- Apply ethical reasoning and leadership principles to organizational communication decision-making processes;
- Demonstrate advanced research, analytical writing, and professional presentation skills relevant to graduate-level communication practice;
- Collaborate effectively within complex crisis simulations and strategic communication planning environments.

**Textbooks/Supplies/Materials/Equipment/ Technology or Technical Requirements:**

Coombs, W. Timothy. *Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing, and Responding*.

Heath, Robert L., and H. Dan O'Hair. *Handbook of Risk and Crisis Communication*.

Ulmer, Robert R., Timothy L. Sellnow, and Matthew W. Seeger. *Effective Crisis Communication: Moving From Crisis to Opportunity*.

Fearn-Banks, Kathleen. *Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach*.

## Course Requirements:

### **Critical Issues Analysis Journal (15%)**

Students maintain a graduate-level analytical journal documenting critical reflections, environmental scanning observations, stakeholder analysis, media monitoring activities, and evaluations of organizational communication strategies related to contemporary crisis and reputation management cases.

### **Seminar Participation and Scholarly Discussion (15%)**

Students complete advanced reading responses, contribute substantively to seminar discussions, engage critically with theoretical frameworks and case studies, and participate actively in collaborative workshops and simulations.

### **Environmental Scanning and Stakeholder Analysis Project (20%)**

Students conduct strategic environmental analysis and stakeholder mapping exercises focused on identifying emerging organizational risks, communication vulnerabilities, and reputational challenges.

### **Crisis Communication Simulation and Response Exercise (15%)**

Students collaborate in a professional crisis simulation involving strategic response development, media communication, executive decision-making, stakeholder coordination, and digital communication management.

### **Midterm Graduate Case Study Presentation (15%)**

Students conduct an in-depth analysis of a major organizational crisis and deliver a professional presentation evaluating communication strategies, ethical implications, stakeholder impact, leadership response, and organizational outcomes.

### **Final Strategic Issues and Crisis Communication Plan (15%)**

Students develop a comprehensive graduate-level strategic communication plan integrating environmental intelligence, stakeholder engagement, crisis response frameworks, digital communication strategy, and reputation recovery planning.

### **Attendance and Professional Engagement (5%)**

Students are expected to attend all sessions, demonstrate professional conduct, contribute actively to collaborative learning activities, and engage constructively in advanced seminar discussions and simulations.

### **Assessments: Activity**

Critical Issues Analysis Journal

Seminar Participation and Scholarly Discussion

Environmental Scanning and Stakeholder Analysis

### **Percent Contribution**

15%

15%

20%

Project	
Crisis Communication Simulation and Response Exercise	15%
Midterm Graduate Case Study Presentation	15%
Final Strategic Issues and Crisis Communication Plan	15%
Attendance and Professional Engagement	5%

**Grading:**

Final grades will be based on the sum of all possible course points as noted above.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage of available points</b>
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	64-69
D-	60-63
F	0-59

**Course Schedule:**

*The schedule of activities is subject to change at the reasonable discretion of the instructor. Minor changes will be announced in class, major ones provided in writing.*

<b>COMM 5512 Schedule</b>		
<b>Lecture</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
L1	Introduction to Strategic Issues and Crisis Communication	Course Reader
L2	Contemporary Theories of Risk and Crisis Communication	<i>Coombs</i> , Ch.1
L3	Organizational Reputation and Institutional Legitimacy	<i>Heath &amp; O'Hair</i> , Ch.2
L4	Stakeholder Theory and Strategic Communication	Selected Journal Articles
L5	Environmental Scanning and Risk Intelligence	Industry Reports
L6	Crisis Typologies and Organizational Vulnerabilities	<i>Ulmer et al.</i> , Ch.2
L7	Ethics, Transparency, and Accountability in Crisis Communication	Supplemental Readings
L8	Leadership Communication and Executive Decision-Making	Case Studies
L9	Media Relations and Public Narrative Formation	<i>Fearn-Banks</i> , Ch.4
L10	Social Media Escalation and Digital Crisis Environments	Multimedia Sources
L11	Cyber Security, Technology Failure, and Information Crises	Industry Reports
L12	Political, Corporate, and Public Sector Crisis Communication	Selected Articles
L13	Midterm Case Study Workshop	Independent Research

L14	Midterm Graduate Presentations	Review Materials
L15	Crisis Response Writing and Strategic Messaging	Communication Samples
L16	Internal Communication and Organizational Culture During Crisis	<i>Coombs</i> , Ch.5
L17	Community Relations and Public Trust Recovery	Supplemental Readings
L18	Global and Cross-Cultural Crisis Communication	<i>Heath &amp; O'Hair</i> , Ch.8
L19	Supply Chain, Environmental, and Public Health Crises	Industry Case Studies
L20	Legal Considerations and Regulatory Communication	Policy Documents
L21	Crisis Simulation: Strategic Response Coordination	Workshop Materials
L22	Reputation Recovery and Organizational Renewal	<i>Ulmer et al.</i> , Ch.9
L23	Developing Integrated Strategic Communication Plans	Independent Research
L24	Final Project Consultation and Advanced Review	Course Reader
L25	Final Presentations and Reflective Seminar Discussion	Final Review

### **Accommodation Statement:**

Academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow.

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or otherwise fails to meet the standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in coursework may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or outside the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

### **Other Items:**

#### **Attendance and Expectations**

All students are required to attend every class, except in cases of illness, serious family concerns, or other major problems. We expect that students will arrive on time, be prepared to listen and participate as appropriate, and stay for the duration of a meeting rather than drift in or out casually. In short, we anticipate that students will show professors and fellow students maximum consideration by minimizing the disturbances that cause interruptions in the learning process. This means that punctuality is a must, that cellular phones be turned off, and that courtesy is the guiding principle in all exchanges among students and faculty. You will be responsible for the materials and ideas presented in the lecture.

**Assignment Due Dates**

All written assignments must be turned in at the time specified. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior information has been obtained from the instructor. If you believe you have extenuating circumstances, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

**Make-Up Work**

The instructor will not provide students with class information or make-up assignments/quizzes/exams missed due to an unexcused absence. Absences will be excused and assignments/quizzes/exams may be made up only with written documentation of an authorized absence. Every effort should be made to avoid scheduling appointments during class. An excused student is responsible for requesting any missed information from the instructor and setting up any necessary appointments outside of class.

**Access, Special Needs, and Disabilities**

Please notify the instructor at the start of the semester if you have any documented disabilities, a medical issue, or any special circumstances that require attention, and the school will be happy to assist.