



MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY OF KENYA

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FACULTY OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

SEMESTER:	JANUARY - APRIL 2020
COURSE CODE:	DPR 153
COURSE TITLE:	CRISIS COMMUNICATION
LECTURER :	ALI HASSAN IDOW
TIME/DAYS:	TUESDAYS 1100HRS – 1300HRS
VENUE:	J - 09
CREDIT:	3
OFFICE HOURS:	MONDAY 0800hrs – 1600hrs
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Course Description

This course will focus on key elements of crisis communication and management – before, during and after a crisis. The necessity for effective crisis management is far much important during this century as companies/organizations are under global scrutiny and attack. The structure of the course will reflect the crisis management process: detection, prevention/preparation, containment, recovery and learning. Emphasis will be placed on practical application of crisis communications theory, with copious use of real-life case studies.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, the student should be able to:-

- Learn what constitutes a crisis – how it is distinct from day-to-day issues.
- Understand the typical stages of a crisis, and how they are changing in the social media era.
- Learn to define the crisis and identify the stakeholders most affected by it and address the ethical issues presented by the crisis.
- Write a crisis communications plan, including a core set of strategic messages for each key stakeholder group (e.g., employees, customers, government officials, key opinion leaders, community leaders, etc.).
- Understand the important of opinion/attitudinal research in crisis management.
- Develop a post-crisis plan, which includes learnings for the corporation and proof points for stakeholders on corrective actions to prevent a recurrence of the crisis

Requirements

1. **Assignments:** All submitted work should be – **Typed, Times New Roman Font type, Font size 12, Spacing 1.5, Alignment - Justified and Free of Mechanical Errors (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) and Written Utilizing APA Format.**
2. Assignments that are submitted late, without prior approved extension, will be deducted 20% per day late, including weekends, and will receive a mark of zero after 5 days.

3. Cell phones during class lectures must be switched off and kept away as this is a distractor to active listening and participation in class.
4. All students are expected to be in class before the lectures commence. This means punctuality is very important.
5. The final exam will be based on all material covered in the course including class lectures and discussions, assignments, quizzes, presentations and assigned readings.

NB: Students should avoid CUT and PASTE in their assignments as this amounts to academic fraud.

Teaching Approaches

Lectures, Student presentations, case studies and group discussions

Grading

The grade distribution of the 100 marks consists of:

CAT:	15%
WRITING CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN:	25%
MAIN EXAM:	60%

Course content and class schedule

Timeline	Subject Area	Discussion Topics
WEEK 1 & 2	Introduction and overview of the course	The key terms are crisis, crisis communication and crisis management; definition of crisis, crisis management, crisis communication, minor crisis, major crisis.
WEEK 3	Crisis and Allied fields	Issues management, risk management and communication, reputation management, disaster communication, business continuity
WEEK 4	Stages of a crisis	A crisis has 5 stages: Detection, Prevention/preparation, Containment, Recovery, and Learning.
WEEK 5 & 6	Public Opinion and Communicating with the news media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The essential role of crisis communication in the public opinion process. ▪ What the news media want to know. ▪ Spokespersons. ▪ Do's & Do not's of media interviews. ▪ Trick Questions.

WEEK 7 & 8	Communicating with internal and external publics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proactive communication prior to crisis & communicating with internal publics during a crisis. ▪ Precrisis communication with customers/consumers & during a crisis.
WEEK 9	Crisis communication theory	<p>What is a theory?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apologia theory ▪ Image Restoration theory ▪ Decision theory ▪ Diffusion theory ▪ Excellence theory
WEEK 10	Crisis communication case studies and presentation	Learning about some of the major crises the world has experienced & understanding tactics and strategies used to deal with these crises: Johnson & Johnson and the Tylenol Murders, White Star Line's Titanic sinks, Boeing Airline crisis in Ethiopia, BP oil, Exxon & The Valdez Oil Spill, Proctor & Gamble and the Satanism rumor, Snapps Restaurant & the AIDS rumor, Hurricane Katrina & New Orleans.
WEEK 11	Crisis Communication Plan	Understanding the usefulness of a crisis communication plan and how directly it is associated with a particular type of crisis. The students will be tasked to develop a crisis communication plan of an organization of their choice.
WEEK 12	CAT	-
WEEK 13	REVISION & EXAMINATION	

Recommended Texts

- Anthonissen, P. F. (2008). *Crisis Communication: Practical PR strategies for reputation management and company survival*. London & Philadelphia: Kogan Page.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). *Crisis Emergency + Risk Communication*.
- Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2010). *The Handbook of Crisis Communication*. London: John Wiley & Sons Limited.
- Fearn-Banks, K. (2009). *Crisis Communication: A Casebook Approach*. New Jersey, London: LAWRENCE ERLBAUM ASSOCIATES, PUBLISHERS.
- SEMA's Educational Series. (2008). *Crisis Communications Handbook: Summary and translation of the Swedish "Handbook I kriskommunikation"*. Swedish Emergency Management Agency.
- Walaski, P. F. (2011). *Risks and Crisis Communication: Methods and Messages*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons publication.