

# Advanced Crisis Communication

## JRSM 7410-S01

### Spring 2022

TU 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. via Zoom

#### Prof. Kim Marks Malone, APR, Fellow PRSA

**Office:** 334A Meeman Journalism Building

**Office Hours:** Monday, 3 – 4 p.m.; Tuesday, 1 – 4 p.m.; Wednesday, 3 – 4 p.m.; other hours by appointment

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#### Catalog Description

This course will explore theories and research related to communication before, during, and after a crisis. Students examine the fundamentals of organizational communication, crisis management, and strategic and crisis communication planning and examine case studies of several real-life crises: organizational crises, natural disasters, accidents, terrorism incidents, health crises, and major crises of credibility. The goal is to prepare students to better strategize, plan, execute, and evaluate crisis across a variety of types of organizations and crises. Students will be exposed to crisis management best practice principles, dominant and emerging research trends, and dominant and emerging theories. Additionally, students should become better analysts of crisis communication in the world around them.

#### Prerequisites

Graduate status

#### Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Ulmer, R.R., Sellnow, T.L., Seeger, M.W. (2017). *Effective Crisis Communication: Moving from Crisis to Opportunity*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN 978-1506315737

Readings and supplemental material will be provided via Canvas.

#### Synchronous Class Format (S01)

- Zoom is a web-based video conferencing platform. The link for the Zoom meeting is posted in Canvas.
- This is a graduate seminar with lecture and class discussions. Each week, we will discuss a new topic and I and/or designated classmates will be responsible for presenting the class with ideas for debate from the readings or examples from the field, and critically analyze the week's concepts. Please note that failure to attend class or to actively take part – even if all your assignments are turned in on time and done acceptably – will significantly affect your final grade. Be sure you have read the material BEFORE class and come prepared to discuss it.
- You need to have video turned on during class. Let me know if this is going to be an issue for you.
- You must have Microsoft Word software. I must be able to open your work to grade it.

Work submitted in a software package not noted as acceptable in this syllabus (Microsoft Word) may result in point deductions being assessed to your work.

Students who attend graduate courses online meet in real time via the videoconferencing program Zoom and must plan to spend three hours a week in class, per class. Students will need an Internet connection, speakers and a mic (or a headset with a built-in mic). This form of instruction is referred to as "synchronous" and is the signature teaching method at The University of Memphis.

Online students must have a dedicated Internet connection with stable signal to support video conferencing. Students must be in a quiet place where they can fully participate in the courses. Zoom cameras must be turned on for the duration of the class period.

### Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis Canvas login page:  
<https://memphis.instructure.com>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. On the Dashboard, click on the course card for JRSM 7410-S01.

### GRADING AND COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

This is meant as a general guideline to the major assignments within the class. More detail will be provided in class and on Canvas. Deadlines will be listed on each assignment. All work should be turned in as a Word document via Dropbox in Canvas unless otherwise noted.

**Weekly discussion posts, 20%.** You will be asked to respond to the readings in the form of a 250-300-word discussion post each week. The idea is not to regurgitate the readings but to analyze them by providing insights and comments that demonstrate knowledge and deep thinking about theories, methods, and concepts found in the week's readings. You may make connections to readings from other weeks, connections to something you have read about or learned in popular media and more. The purpose is to interact with the material in such a way as to be prepared to discuss it in class, and to write out your thoughts on the ideas presented.

You will be given a prompt each week to help guide the direction of your writing. Be sure to have your discussion post at hand during class to help remember your ideas and connections during the class discussion.

Discussion posts will be graded on (1) content – post addresses all questions asked and is appropriate in length to stimulate further discussion (250-300 words), clearly relates to the main topic and includes several supporting details and/or examples; (2) contribution – post is thoughtful, analytical and original; (3) connection – you make connections between course content, readings, and personal reflection, current events, etc.; (4) mechanics – post is well-structured, logical, free of grammatical and spelling errors.

**Assignments, 30%.** Assignments that we do to reinforce concepts covered in readings and class discussions.

**Crisis Case Study, 40%.** This assignment will give you the opportunity to apply readings, theories discussed and course discussions to a crisis communication scenario over the course of several assignments. You will introduce a crisis case of your own choosing and critique the organization's response to the crisis. The crisis cannot be one that is discussed in class/readings and must be within the last three years. It may be an ongoing crisis or one that has been resolved. You will back up your critique about the organization's response with both research and theory. You will use the same crisis for each of the Crisis Case Study assignments.

**Class participation, 10%.** You are expected to attend class and participate in the discussion. Because the focus of the class is on social media, you are also expected to be actively engaged on social media platforms, specifically Twitter.

### Grading

Weekly discussion posts	20%
Assignments	30%
Crisis Case Study	40%
Class participation	10%

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4% B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4% C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4% D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4% F 0-59.4%

### Quality of work

All work in the course should follow AP style, including proper spelling, grammar, and language. A large part of mass communication is having a polished written concept of what you are communicating. This includes all class work and presentations. Although line editing is unlikely, problems in these or other areas will result in the deduction of points.

I expect your work to be good and to be yours. What is not yours should be properly cited. In documenting sources, you should use APA formatting (both internal and external). If you need help with writing and citing sources, Purdue University's OWL is an excellent resource and can be found at [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)

### Other issues

The best and quickest way to contact me is via email ([ksmarks@memphis.edu](mailto:ksmarks@memphis.edu)). Do not use the email within Canvas, use my Memphis.edu email. I will respond to email within 24 – 48 hours. If you have a problem, do not let it snowball. Contact me ASAP.

## JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

### Portfolio requirement

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Graduate students are to begin work on their portfolio in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional

experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or SquareSpace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files and writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

### **Email**

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

### **Electronic devices**

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

### **Attendance**

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g., with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should plan to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

### **Course repetition**

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

### **Academic integrity**

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or students receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media class, students are expected to comply with copyright law and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas. Also, to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

### **Online SETEs**

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

### **Deadlines**

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

### **AP Style and grammar**

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

### **Disability and accommodations**

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

### **Diversity and inclusivity**

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory, and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Media reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

### **Weather policy**

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the University is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.

### **Student support**

Student who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.

### **COVID-19 protocols for this course**

#### **COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy - Masks and Social Distancing**

Faculty, staff, students and visitors are expected to monitor current health and safety measure requirements posted to our website and shared through other official communication channels including, but not limited to University email. Definitions related to those requirements and enforcement mechanisms appear in the [COVID-19](#)

**[Health and Safety Policy \(GE2040\)](#). Please be reminded that the University currently requires that all persons, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks indoors and in places where appropriate social distancing is not possible.**

Classroom experiences from recent semesters have shown that the campus community generally understands and complies voluntarily with the mask requirement. The policy does permit faculty members to take action for non-compliance of mask use. Additionally, if students have concerns about faculty or staff mask use, contact Human Resources at [hr@memphis.edu](mailto:hr@memphis.edu) or 901.678.3573. Faculty who are delivering on-campus instruction may remove their face mask to teach, provided they are located within a delineated teaching area that is no less than 6 feet from students.

### **Student Health**

Students who are experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing or a higher than normal temperature should inform me by email so they can be excused from class and should stay home. Students should contact their health care provider or the Student Health Center at <https://www.memphis.edu/health/>.

Students who have a positive COVID-19 test should contact the Dean of Students at [deanofstudents@memphis.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@memphis.edu) or 901.678.2187.

### **Testing & Notification**

The University will continue to provide testing for the entire campus community. The details regarding test availability and locations can be found [here](#). Do not come to campus if you are experiencing symptoms, are in isolation or quarantine due to positive test results or exposure, pending test results, or have reason to believe you have come in contact with the virus.

### **Student Resources**

Students who need additional resources can contact the Dean of Students Office at <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php>.

### **Guidelines for classes, labs and equipment in Meeman Journalism Building in Spring 2022**

- Anyone feeling sick should stay home.
- Social distance from all others at least 6 feet when possible.
- Wear a mask at all times when in University buildings and outside when social distancing isn't possible.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer regularly.
- No more than one person in the elevator at a time.
- Disinfect your workstation before and after use, including desks, keyboards, mice and screens. Wash your hands after cleaning.
- Air purifiers must run at all times during class meetings.