CMGT 502: Strategic Corporate Communications

Professors:
Rebecca Weintraub, Ph.D.
Email: weintrau@usc.edu

Jessica Neff, PhD.
Email: jessicaneff@gmail.com

Course description
This class will be taught in a flipped classroom mode. This means that much of the traditional lecture material will be on-line. You will access this material through Blackboard. You are expected to come to class having done all of the reading and all of the online material. In class we will do the work you would normally do as homework. In the case of CMGT 502, this means the case work.

This course focuses on the roles and responsibilities of the corporate communication function with all of a company’s stakeholders.

Stakeholders are those individuals or groups who have an interest in the success or failure of the enterprise. This course will examine the strategic communication demands placed on the corporation by a variety of stakeholders: employees, customers, shareholders, the local community, and society at large represented by the media.

Managing relationships with these stakeholders presupposes that processes exist within a corporation to facilitate communications with these constituents on an ongoing basis. In a time of significant change, both technological and societal, it is more important that companies communicate more effectively than ever. As Frank M. Corrado put it, “managers have learned that in the new marketplace of ideas, it is incumbent upon them to develop a perspective, a way of thinking that provides them with a facility in dealing with constituencies, arguing proactively and aggressively the corporate vision expressed by the board.” He concludes that effective communications strategy and tactics can make important contributions in:

- helping value the firm correctly in the marketplace so as to maximize shareholder value and lessen chances of unfriendly takeover;
- building employee morale and effectiveness in difficult economic times, thus increasing productivity and profitability;
- improving the marketing of products by lending credibility to their efficacy and value;
- managing crises;
- effectively communicating with the public via the media; and
CMGT 502 Syllabus

- enabling a corporation to transform itself into more agile and flexible company to compete more effectively in a changing business environment.

There are seven modules in this course. They are:
1. Jan 15 Module 1

   Vision and Mission

   **Homework:**
   Before the first class:
   Read Boulding
   Go through the on-line material
   Read the first 4 chapters in Bolman and Deal

   In class:
   Discuss Boulding and Bolman and Deal
   Discuss Vision and Mission
   In dyads students will create ConsoE Vision and Mission

   Present:
   Each dyad presents the Vision and Mission
   Ungraded assignment

2. January 22 Module 2

   Communication and Strategy

   **Homework:**
   Before class
   Continue reading Bolman and Deal
   Continue the rest of the reading for that module
   Go through the on-line material

   In Class:
   Review the Puzzle
   Assign teams of 4 for case
   Rest of the class work on the case

3. January 29 Module 2

   Comm and Strategy II

   Homework:
   Before Cass
Continue the readings
Work with team on presentation

In Class:
Present SC Plan executive summary
Turn in both executive summary and the plan materials
All materials should be in PPT

4. February 5 Module 3

Employee Communication

Homework:
Before class
Online material, including focus group stakeholder analysis
Readings

In Class
Assign groups
Review raw survey results
Begin work on the SC Plan

5. February 12 Module 3

Employee Comm II

Homework:
Before class:
With team keep working on Employee SC Plan
Continue the readings
Work with team on presentation and plan materials

In Class:
Present SC Plan executive summary
Turn in both executive summary and the other materials
Have the other materials done in PPT

6. February 19 Module 4

Human Resources Communication

Homework:
Before Class
Do all readings
Do the on-line materials
In class:
Discuss benefits communication
Assign teams
Begin working on the SC Plan

7. February 26 Module 4

HR Comm II

Homework:
Before class:
With Team keep working on HR SC Plan
Continue the readings
Work with team on presentation and plan materials

In Class:
Present SC Plan executive summary
Turn in both executive summary and the other materials
Have the other materials done in PPT

8. March 5 Module 5

Investor Communication and Manager Communication

Homework:
Before Class
Do all readings
Do the on-line materials

In class:
Discuss Investor communication
Assign teams
Begin working on the Investor SC Plan

9. March 12 Module 5

Investor and Manager Communication II

Homework
Before Class:
Do readings on Manager Communication
Do online materials; include review of personal comm plan
Continue working on Investor Comm Plan
In class:
Present Investor Comm Exec Summary
Have them do a role playing exercise on coaching based on Personal Comm Plan

10. March 19 Spring Break

11. March 26 Module 6
Media Relations and Marketing

Homework:
Before Class
Do all readings
Do the online materials

In class:
Discuss marketing communication
Assign teams
Begin working on the Marketing SC Plan

12. April 2 Module 7
Media Relations and Marketing II

Homework
Before Class:
Do readings on Manager Communication
Do online materials;
Continue working on MarComm Plan

In class:
Present Investor MarComm Exec Summary
Have them do the Advice to Shane individual assignment in class
Turn in MarComm Plan

13. April 9 Module 8
Mergers, Acquisitions and Crisis Comm

Homework:
Before Class
Do all readings
Do the online materials
In class:
Discuss Crisis communication
Assign teams
Begin working on the Crisis SC Plan

14. April 16 Module 8

Mergers, Acquisitions and Crisis Comm II

Homework
Before Class:
Finish Readings
Continue working on Crisis Plan

In class:
Present Investor Crisis Exec Summary
Turn in Crisis Plan

15. April 23 Module 8

Mergers, Acquisitions and Crisis Comm III
Homework:
Crisis M&A Readings

In class:
M&A class assignment
Discuss M&A

16. May 2  Final Presentations

Individual Presentations of their Final Project Plan
Plans turned in
Assignment:
Choose an organization that you can gather data upon
This can be non-profit, profit, government, NGO.

Based on your research into the organization (and this can be secondary research if you cannot get direct access) determine a strategic goal for an issue facing it and then an SC goal. Using all manner of research, work your way through the SC Model.

Learning objectives
CMGT 502 Syllabus

- To recognize and respond to the communication expectations of various corporate stakeholders.
- To be able to create and implement a strategic corporate communications plan.
- To utilize a variety of communication tools and techniques.
- To write an academic literature review and apply the materials to a real workplace situation.

Textbooks and materials

Required Texts:


CMGT 502 Weekly Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 02</td>
<td>(continued from previous week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 03</td>
<td>(continue previous week reading)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 05</td>
<td>(continued from previous week)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• HR Communication: Almost Everything You Need to Know (handout) |
| Week 07 | (continued from previous week) |
| Week 09 | (continued from previous week) |
| Week 10 | Spring Break |
**CMGT 502 Syllabus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 12</th>
<th>(continue previous week reading)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>(continued from previous week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>(continued from previous week) Read case material for M&amp;A assigned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading policy**
**Course Components**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Individual Assignments</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Case Study Assignments (6 times 5%)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Case Studies Peer Reviews</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Final Paper: Stakeholder Analysis Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Percentage</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participation (10%)**

All seven modules feature group discussion. The issues to be discussed revolve around the module’s themes and incorporate concepts from the reading, content shared in the online production, and the case study work. These discussions are where students demonstrate their ability to apply the concepts of the content they are studying. Students synthesize the content and then they offer feedback to each other. The instructors will also give feedback and encourage deeper thinking.

**Case Study Assignments (30%)**

There are six group case studies in this course. Their purpose is to create real-life scenarios for the students to experience. Students will be mainly assigned to work in groups to solve the challenge of the case. They will present their summary actions to the rest of the class via posting their case to a discussion. They will receive peer feedback as well as feedback (in the full-class boards) from the instructor.

At the conclusion of each module, you will have the opportunity to assess the contributions of your group members via a survey. The scores of group members will be averaged to give you a peer review score for that module. However, if you personally do not turn in your peer reviews by the due date, you will receive a zero for the peer review.

**Case Study Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective/Criteria</th>
<th>Beginning 1-9 pts</th>
<th>Developing 10-19 pts</th>
<th>Accomplished 20-29 pts</th>
<th>Exemplary 30-35 pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification of the Main Issues/Problems</td>
<td>Identifies and understands few of the issues in the case study</td>
<td>Identifies and understands some of the issues in the case study</td>
<td>Identifies and understands most of the main issues in the case study</td>
<td>Identifies &amp; understands all of the main issues in the case study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of the Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incomplete analysis of the issues</th>
<th>Superficial analysis of some of the issues in the case</th>
<th>Thorough analysis of most of the issues</th>
<th>Insightful and thorough analysis of all of the issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Effective solutions/strategies

| Little or no action suggested, and/or inappropriate solutions to all of the issues in the case study | Superficial and/or inappropriate solutions to some of the issues in the case study | Appropriate, well thought out comments about solutions, or proposals for solutions, to most of the issues in the case study | Well documented, reasoned and appropriate comments on solutions, or proposals for solutions, to all issues in the case study |

Links to course readings and additional research

| Incomplete research and lacking links to any readings | Limited research and documented links to any readings | Good research and documented links to the material read | Excellent research into the issues with clearly documented links to class (and/or outside) readings |

Stakeholder Analysis Final Paper (30%)
Due May 2 at 6:30PM Hardcopy only

Choose an organization that you are able to gather data upon. This can be non-profit, profit, government, NGO.

Based on your research into the organization (and this can be secondary research if you cannot get direct access) determine a strategic goal for an issue facing it and then an SC goal. Using all manner of research, work your way through the SC Model.

The Stakeholder Analysis paper should be 7 to 10 pages.

- **Proper bibliographic citations must be used.**
  Citations must include page number and be on the same page as the citation. A full bibliography must be at the end of the paper, Annenberg’s standard is American Psychological Association (APA) format and you are expected to follow this exactly. Failure to do so will result in severe point penalties. Please note that in APA style, it is not customary to use direct quotes from sources. Also, it is rare to see direct quotes evident in business communication materials, so you are discouraged from using direct quotes in this paper. Rather, it is highly recommended that information be conveyed via paraphrasing the content and crediting the
author at the end of the sentence. Tailor what is being said in your own words, crediting the source, of course. However, if you do use a direct quotation, you must cite the author, year of publication and page number of the source in accordance with APA style. Information on proper citing in APA style can be found in your APA Style Guide (6th edition) or via academic websites.

- For example, the Online Writing Lab for Purdue University is an excellent source for learning about APA style [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)
- Proper citation is critical. Failure to follow these guidelines is considered plagiarism—whether you intended it or not.
- If you find an interesting point cited from a different source, you are expected to find the original.
- This is because you don’t know what the context was. So, we do not expect to see “Smith as cited in Jones . . .” If you cannot find the original, note that. But also know that if we can find it, we will assume you should have been able to find it.
- You will also collect primary data about the stakeholder group you are analyzing, the risk analysis, impact and attitude, perceptions etc. You will use APA style for this primary research as well.

### Stakeholder Analysis Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Student submits accurate, thought-provoking analysis grounded in scholarly research on a stakeholder group for an organization.</td>
<td>66-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clearly and thoroughly examines all pertinent aspects of the stakeholder group via Strategic Communication Analytical Process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formulates innovative, sound conclusions supported by empirical evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Optimally structures and organizes content.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accurately cites all source material in accordance with APA style standards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| • Student submits accurate analysis grounded in scholarly research on a stakeholder group for an organization. | 56-65  |
| • Clearly and thoroughly examines most pertinent aspects of the stakeholder group via Strategic Communication Analytical Process. |        |
| • Formulates sound conclusions supported by empirical evidence.        |        |
| • Effectively structures and organizes content.                        |        |
| • Accurately cites all source material in accordance with APA style standards. |        |

| • Student submits analysis grounded in scholarly research on a stakeholder group for an organization. | 46-55  |
| • Clearly examines some pertinent aspects of the stakeholder group via Strategic Communication Analytical Process. |        |
| • Formulates clear conclusions—most of which are supported by empirical evidence. |        |
| • Adequately structures and organizes content.                          |        |
| • Accurately cites most source material in accordance with APA          |        |
### Style Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Standards</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student submits superficial analysis on a stakeholder group for an organization.</td>
<td>36-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examines some pertinent aspects of the stakeholder group via Strategic Communication Analytical Process with a vague purpose.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulates conclusions—some of which are supported by empirical evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffectively structures and organizes content such that readers will likely have a hard time tracking the flow of ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cites some source material in accordance with APA style standards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Standards</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student submits incomplete analysis with no clear connection to scholarly research.</td>
<td>35 points or lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examines few relevant aspects of the stakeholder group via Strategic Communication Analytical Process with no clear purpose.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulates vague conclusions—none of which are bolstered by empirical evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffectively structures and organizes content such that readers will have a hard time tracking the flow of ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omits or incorrectly cites source material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Grade Ranges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93.0% or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89.0%-92.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.0%-88.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.0%-86.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>79.0%-82.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.0%-78.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73.0%-76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70.0%-72.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60.0%-69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.9% or lower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Late Policy

Late assignments for module activities are not accepted. Term paper loses 5% per day late. No exceptions.

### Group Work
CMGT 502 Syllabus

You will work within a new group for every module during the course to complete the case study assignments, inclusive of the final project. All will be randomly assigned. You will receive the assignments no later than midnight on the first Wednesday of the module.

- Please be aware that you and your group members will be completing a Peer Feedback Survey at the end of every module as well as for your final group project.

Academic integrity policy

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor.

It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than yourself. If you have doubts about any of these practices, confer with a faculty member.

Resources on academic honesty can be found on the Student Judicial Affairs Web site (http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS):

1. "Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism" addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations and citations in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's Writing Program;

2. "Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty" addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration.

The “SCampus” (http://www.usc.edu/scampus) contains the university's Student Conduct Code and other student-related policies.

Disabilities policy

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to your instructor as early in the semester as possible. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html
Library access

As a USC student, you have access to all the library resources and the Annenberg Librarian, Chimene Tucker (cetucker@usc.edu), is available to assist you with any inquiry you may have.
http://www.usc.edu/libraries/services/remote_user_services/

Instructor information

Rebecca Weintraub has spent more than thirty years in the field of strategic communication, executive coaching, facilitation, change management, and organizational behavior. She began her career as an assistant professor at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona) where she was also the Director of Forensics. She then joined the Hughes Aircraft company, which became Hughes Electronics, where over a fifteen-year period she held a number of positions in communication and total quality in the satellite manufacturing division before becoming Director of Corporate Communications for the Corporation, a position she held for five years. In that position she was responsible for communication strategy and tactics for the corporation as well as providing executive coaching for a variety of Hughes executives. She left Hughes Electronics to join the consulting firm of Towers Perrin where she focused on strategic organizational communication, health and welfare benefits communication strategy, and change management. Her clients included Northrop Grumman, MGM, Mazda, AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, WellPoint Health Systems, and the L.A. Times.

Dr. Weintraub is currently a Clinical Professor of Communication at USC in the Annenberg School for Communication where she is both the Director of the Communication Management Master’s Degree Program and the Director of the Center for Corporate and Community Education. She teaches strategic organizational and corporate communication classes in that program. Her Strategic Corporate Communication course was Annenberg’s first on-line course. Dr. Weintraub was awarded the 2004 Best On-line Teaching award for higher education by the US Distance Learning Association. In addition to her teaching, she provides strategic communication planning, presentation, executive coaching, management training, and facilitation consulting services to organizations in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Her clients have included such organizations as Toyota Motor Sales, Fox Networks, the Dental Health Foundation, Mindjet, the County of Los Angeles, and the Redondo Beach Unified School District, the US Navy and Department of Defense.

Dr. Weintraub received her Bachelor’s degree from UCLA and her Master’s and Ph.D. degrees from USC. She roots for whoever is winning at half-time.
### CMGT 502 Weekly Readings

#### MODULE 1

**Weeks 1, 2 and 3**

### Module 2

**Weeks 4 and 5**

### CMGT 502 Syllabus

#### MODULE 3

**Weeks 6 and 7**

#### MODULE 3

**Weeks 8 and 9**
- HR Communication: Almost Everything You Need to Know (handout)

**March 20 Spring Break**
- Spring Break comes in the middle of Module 4. This means the module runs the week before and the week after. You may, of course work on the module and final project during this time.

#### MODULE 4

**Weeks 10 and 11**

#### MODULE 5

**Weeks 12 and 13**
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|   | 24.  
|   |   |