

CMNS2530: Strategic Communication

Newcastle City Precinct
Semester 2 - 2023



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

The School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness and accountability in dealings with others. The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.

OVERVIEW

Course Description

This course will provide students with an understanding of the fundamental communication and relational concepts and processes that underpin strategic communication and public relations strategy. The course focusses on organisational communication behaviour and strategic engagement with key publics, and the role of strategic communication within an organisation. Using a problem-based learning approach, students will work collaboratively to identify, analyse and address real-world communication issues. Students will develop strategic responses that are underpinned by relevant theoretical, ethical and legal frameworks.

Requisites

If you have successfully completed CMNS3530 you cannot enrol in this course.

Assumed Knowledge

Completion of all 1000 level courses within the Bachelor of Communication and CMNS2140 Principles of Public Relations.

Contact Hours

Newcastle City Precinct

Lecture

Face To Face On Campus

1 hour(s) per Week for 12 Weeks starting Week 1

Lecture weeks 1-12 only

Tutorial

Face to Face On Campus

2 hour(s) per Week for 13 Weeks

Unit Weighting Workload

10

Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

COURSE OUTLINE

www.newcastle.edu.au

CRICOS Provider 00109J

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator **Newcastle City Precinct**
Dr Elaine Xu
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(02) 403 39238

Consultation:
Weekdays between 8 AM and 3 PM, by appointment only.

Teaching Staff Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.

School Office **School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences**
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SYLLABUS

Course Content Topics will include:

1. Key concepts of communication and public relations strategy
2. Thematic engagement through the examination of organisational communication for key publics such as media relations, employee relations, community relations/CSR; and other stakeholder relations.
3. Developing strategic responses to identified communication issues that are underpinned by public relations theory and comply with legal and ethical standards for organisational communication.
4. Developing applied communication skills needed to produce strategic public relations materials in an organisational context.

Course Learning Outcomes **On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Explain key concepts of strategic communication, stakeholders and publics in an organisational context;
2. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of key theories in underpinning and informing approaches to contemporary practice;
3. Identify key issues and trends in strategic organisational communication practices and effectively communicate research outcomes;
4. Develop strategic responses that conform with the ethical and legal dimensions of organisational communication.

Course Materials **Other Resources:**

- See Canvas for details.

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment Due
1	17 Jul	Introduction to Strategic Communication	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	
2	24 Jul	The Building Blocks of Strategic Communication: Audience, Message, Context, and Feedback	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 2 due in class Assessment 1: Journal entry on Week 3's topic due by Friday midnight
3	31 Jul	Stakeholders and Key Messages as Part of Cohesive Organisational Communication	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 3 due in class Assessment 1: Journal entry on Week 4's topic due by Friday midnight
4	7 Aug	Rhetoric and Persuasion	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 4 due in class Assessment 1: Journal entry on Week 5's topic due by Friday midnight
5	14 Aug	Dialogue, Organisation-Public Relationships, and Organisational Listening	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 5 due in class Assessment 1: Journal entry on Week 6's topic due by Friday midnight
6	21 Aug	Visual Communication Strategies	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 6 due in class Assessment 1: Journal entry on Week 7's topic due by Friday midnight
7	28 Aug	Media Relations and Strategic Partnerships with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs)	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 7 due in class Assessment 1: Journal entry on Week 8's topic due by Friday midnight
8	4 Sep	Employee Relations and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I)	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 8 due in class Assessment 1: Journal entry on Week 9's topic due by Friday midnight
9	11 Sep	Corporate Social Responsibility and Mutually Beneficial Community Partnerships	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 9 due in class
10	18 Sep	Strategic Communication for the Public Good: Communication for Development and Social Change	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 10 due in class Assessment 4: Strategic Communication Response due by Sunday midnight
Mid Term Break				
Mid Term Break				
11	9 Oct	Potential and Pitfalls of Communicative AI and	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 2: Tutorial Activity for Week 11 due in class

		AI-Mediated Strategic Communication (Group Presentations, depending on class sizes)		Assessment 3: Organisational Communication Analysis due in class (depending on class sizes)
12	16 Oct	Group Presentations	Lecture and Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 3: Organisational Communication Analysis due in class
13	23 Oct	Group Presentations	Tutorial (2-hour)	Assessment 3: Organisational Communication Analysis due in class
Examination Period				
Examination Period				

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 4 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Learning and Project Journal - 30%	Weeks 2-8, Friday midnight	Individual	30%	1, 2, 3, 4
2	Tutorial Activities - 10%	During tutorials in Weeks 2-11	Individual	10%	1, 2, 3, 4
3	Organisational Communication Analysis - 30%	During tutorials in Weeks 11-13 (depending on class sizes)	Group	30%	1, 3, 4
4	Strategic Communication Response - 30%	Week 10, Sunday midnight	Individual	30%	1, 2, 3, 4

Late Submissions

The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Learning and Project Journal - 30%

Assessment Type Description

Online Learning Activity

You will submit six weekly journal entries that critically reflect on the prescribed course reading and respond to the prompt for the topics. You must engage with the prescribed reading, using it to support your reflection, explain how it has informed your understanding of the topic, and/or shaped your response to the prompt. As part of your reflection, you will also share your professional and/or personal experiences with strategic communication texts and, where appropriate, include recent examples that illustrate the key concepts covered in the prescribed reading.

Academic referencing (APA 7th edition) is required for all scholarly, industry, and creative sources used in the assessment. A full reference list must be provided at the end of your journal entry (excluded from the word count).

Weighting

30%

Length

300 words for each journal entry (+/- 10%)

Due Date

Weeks 2-8, Friday midnight

Submission Method

Online

Assessment Criteria

Available on Canvas

Return Method

Not Returned

Feedback Provided

Online - Qualitative and quantitative feedback

Assessment 2 - Tutorial Activities - 10%

Assessment Type Description

Tutorial / Laboratory Exercises

You will complete an online quiz independently on Canvas at the start of the tutorials in selected teaching weeks. You have a maximum of 30 minutes to complete the online quizzes. Each quiz will comprise 10 questions which relate to the prescribed course reading. You will prepare for the online quizzes by completing the prescribed reading for the topics, paying close attention to the key concepts covered in the reading and the definitions and examples provided in the reading.

Weighting

10%

Length

Weekly quiz with 10 questions (max. 30 minutes)

Due Date

During tutorials in Weeks 2-11

Submission Method

In Class

Online

Assessment Criteria

Not applicable

Return Method

Not Returned

Feedback Provided Online - Quantitative feedback

Assessment 3 - Organisational Communication Analysis - 30%

Assessment Type	Presentation
Description	<p>In groups of no more than four, you will present the findings and recommendations from your analysis of how an organisation implemented and utilised strategic communication during a crisis. Each group will be provided with a model/theory to apply to explain, justify, and/or interpret their findings. In the group presentation, your group must identify the organisation you are analysing, the type of crisis the organisation is experiencing or has recently experienced, your findings on the strengths and failings of the organisation's strategic communication, and provide recommendations (best practices) to improve their strategic communication.</p> <p>Each group will present for a total of 25 minutes, which comprise approximately 5 minutes of presentation per student and 5 minutes for the group to respond to questions from the class. Group presentations will be scheduled in Weeks 11-13. The groups and topics will be allocated during Week 2 tutorials. Approval must be sought to increase the group size.</p> <p>Every group must create presentation slides for the oral presentation and submit both the presentation slides and presentation script to Canvas for marking purposes. Academic referencing (APA 7th edition) is required for all scholarly, industry, and creative sources used in the assessment. A full reference list must be provided at the end of your presentation slides.</p>
Weighting	30%
Length	25-minute group presentation
Due Date	During tutorials in Weeks 11-13 (depending on class sizes)
Submission Method	Online
Assessment Criteria	Available on Canvas
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	In Class - Qualitative feedback Online - Quantitative feedback

Assessment 4 - Strategic Communication Response - 30%

Assessment Type	Report
Description	<p>You will write a report that describes and evaluates organisation's strategic use of social media to communicate with internal and/or external audiences. You will do this by monitoring and analysing the organisation's social media presence across all their social media platforms over a 2–3-week period. You must collect relevant data and/or statistics about the organisation's use of their social media platforms and include this information in your report.</p> <p>In your report, you must identify the organisation you are analysing, list the organisation's social media channels and internal/external audiences, describe how the organisation uses social media to engage with internal and/or external audiences, and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the strategic and tactical activities undertaken on their social media channels. You must also integrate relevant key concepts and theories covered in this course into your analysis and interpretation of your findings.</p> <p>Academic referencing (APA 7th edition) is required for all scholarly, industry, and creative sources used in the assessment. A full reference list must be provided at the end of your journal entry (excluded from the word count). If you include figures and tables in your report, captions must be provided and, where necessary, you must cite your source(s).</p>
Weighting	30%
Length	1500 words (+/- 10%)
Due Date	Week 10, Sunday midnight
Submission Method	Online
Assessment Criteria	Available on Canvas
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - Qualitative and quantitative feedback

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.
- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision.

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the [Oral Examination \(viva\) Procedure](#). In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or

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2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
 3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
 4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.
- Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:
<https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>

**Important Policy
Information**

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/no-room-for/policies-and-procedures> that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

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