

COURSE INFORMATION

Course title:	Strategic Communications, Public Relations, and Crisis Management		
Course code:	BAMA 580B	Credits:	1.5
Session, term, period:	2021W2, Period 6	Class location:	HA 335
Section(s):	001	Class times:	T/Th 10:00 am-12:00 pm
Course duration:	Jan 4-Feb 10, 2021	Pre-requisites:	N/A
Division:	Marketing & Behavioural Science	Co-requisites:	N/A
Program:	MBA		

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor:	Tamar Milne, MA Applied Communications		
Phone:	604-827-4951	Office location:	HA 577
Email:	tamar.milne@sauder.ubc.ca	Office hours:	Th, 12:00-1:00 pm, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public relations (PR) is the field within business that strategically develops organizational reputation. In very recent years, reputation management – based on the establishment of trust through public engagement, crisis management, and social responsibility – has developed into a top priority of global CEOs and organizational leaders.

This course will prepare you to think purposefully about managing an organization's strategic communications and relationships with its diverse publics to achieve its goals, fulfill its purpose, and meet its social responsibilities. The prep material, lectures, discussions, and assignments will focus on the following key areas of communications and public relations strategy:

- Trust and reputation management
- Stakeholder and community engagement (including Indigenous and Government relations)
- Media relations and content management
- Issues and crisis management
- Persuasion and personal PR
- Communications analytics

COURSE FORMAT

Class time will include a combination of lectures, discussions, guest speakers, and activities. You are expected to prepare for and attend each class according to the course schedule and the detailed instructions provided in Canvas.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

1. Explain the importance of trust and reputation to business success.
2. Identify an organization's relevant communities and stakeholders and to determine how to engage effectively with them.
3. Anticipate business issues and risks and prepare strategies and communications to prevent or mitigate negative effects.
4. Formulate persuasive approaches to engaging with various audiences.
5. Develop analytical methods to assess organizational reputation and public relations activities and gain actionable insights.

ASSESSMENTS

Summary

<u>Component</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Insight Briefs (three at 10% each; Individual)	30%
Crisis Simulation (Teams)	15%
Final Project (Individual or Pairs)	40%
Active Participation* (Individual)	<u>15%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

Details of Assessments

Insight Briefs – 30% (three at 10% each; Individual)

The purpose of the Insight Briefs is to provide you with the space and structure to integrate the course content into your business toolkit and to communicate your progress and exploration to the instructor (who will aim to respond with ideas and resources to support your ongoing development). Three times at regular intervals in the course, you will be asked to reflect on what you have learned and to formulate at least one new personal insight about how strategic communications and public relations might serve your business or professional goals. Some light research may be necessary, but submissions will be brief (max. 1 page). More details will be provided on Canvas and in class. Refer to the Course Schedule for due dates.

Crisis Simulation – 15% (Teams)

The purpose of the Crisis Simulation is to model the experience of navigating a company's response to an urgent and rapidly changing situation. Working in small, self-selected teams in a simulation during class time, you will assume the role of a leadership team responding to a business crisis. The crisis will develop through stages, and you will be required to complete a prescribed (and graded) task at each stage. Upon completion of the simulation, you will reflect on the experience in a brief written submission. The grade weight of the various components of the simulation will total 15% of the course grade. More details will be provided on Canvas and in class. Refer to the Course Schedule for the simulation and reflection due dates.

Final Project – 40% (Individual or Pairs)

The purpose of the Final Project is to provide you with the opportunity to apply the course content to a business or professional topic that interests you and that will support your career goals. Working either individually or in pairs, you may choose one of the following (or similar) strategic communications project types:

- Reputation Audit
- Stakeholder or Community Engagement Plan
- Content Marketing Plan
- Crisis Communications Plan

Sample outlines/sections recommendations for each type of project will be provided on Canvas. Prior to the final class, you will submit a brief proposal to outline your chosen project, and the instructor will review it and either approve it or request clarifications or revisions. (There are no marks for this submission; it is simply an early checkpoint to support assignment success.)

Regardless of the chosen type, all final projects will have a maximum of 5 pages (plus cover page and appendices) and will require the following:

- Overview of the relevant business context (summary of internal and external situation analysis);
- Stated objectives;
- Key indicators that would be used to measure performance against the objectives; and
- Researched sources.

More details will be provided on Canvas and in class.

Active Participation – 15% (Individual)

You are expected to actively participate in class activities and discussions – which will require reading/viewing of all assigned materials before each class, preparing personal positions on the topics raised, and sometimes even seeking additional relevant materials in special areas of interest to share with the group.

Note that quality of contributions is valued over quantity, and evaluation of in-class participation will emphasize critical thinking, creativity, and practical application. Note also that participation marks must be earned through actively engaging with the class during lectures, discussions, and activities; simply attending class does not equal “participation”.

LEARNING MATERIALS

Canvas

Students will be required to access Canvas for class preparation instructions, assigned readings and multimedia, and assignment resources.

Course Package

Students will be required to purchase a small course package (access to an online simulation) for approximately USD\$25, available from the Harvard Business Publishing site:

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/891622>.

There is no textbook for this course; except for the online simulation, all other prep materials will be available free either through Canvas or via publicly available websites.

COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Class Preparation

Guidance on how to prepare for each class will be posted on Canvas. It is your responsibility to understand what is required and to complete the necessary readings and other preparations that are directed.

Missed or Late Assignments

Late submissions will not be accepted and will receive a grade of zero. There are no make-up opportunities for missed submissions.

Regrading of Assessments

Requests for regrading of assignments must be submitted within one week of the assignment grades being returned to the class. The request must identify the reason(s) why you believe your answer(s) and score(s) should be reviewed. The outcome may be either an increase, no change, or a decrease in the assigned grade.

Academic Concessions

If extenuating circumstances arise, please contact the RHL Graduate School program office as early as reasonably possible, and submit an [Academic Concession Request & Declaration Form](#). If an academic concession is granted during the course, the student will be provided options by RHL, or by the instructor in consultation with RHL, per [UBC's policy on Academic Concession](#).

POLICIES APPLICABLE TO COURSES IN THE ROBERT H. LEE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Attendance

Excepting extenuating circumstances, students are expected to attend 100% of their scheduled class hours. Absent students limit their own academic potential and that of their classmates, and they cause unnecessary disruption to the learning environment. Students missing more than 20% of the total scheduled class hours for a course (including classes held during the add/drop period) without having received an academic concession will be withdrawn from that course. Withdrawals, depending on timing, could result in either a "W" or an "F" standing on the transcript.

COVID-19 Policies for Attendance & Academic Concessions:

If a student feels unwell, they should stay home and send a courtesy email to each impacted instructor and cc their program manager. The student should also submit an [Academic Concession Request & Declaration Form](#).

If a student suspects possible COVID-19 infection, they should use the BC Ministry of Health's [self-assessment tool](#), to help determine whether further assessment or testing for COVID-19 is recommended.

If a student is required to self-isolate (e.g., while waiting for test results), they should follow the steps above (stay home, email instructor(s) and program manager, submit an [Academic Concession Request & Declaration Form](#), and follow BC Health Guidance.

Students who are required to quarantine, should get in touch with their Program Manager to discuss the possibility of academic concessions for each impacted course. The Program Manager will work closely with your instructors to explore options for you to make up the missed learning.

Covid-19 Safety in the Classroom:

Masks: Masks are **required** for all indoor classes, as per the BC Public Health Officer orders. For our in-person meetings in this class, it is important that all of us feel as comfortable as possible engaging in class activities while sharing an indoor space. For the purposes of this order, the term "masks" refers to medical and non-medical masks that cover our noses and mouths. Masks are a primary tool to make it harder for COVID-19 to find a new host. You will need to wear a medical or non-medical mask for the duration of our class meetings, for your own protection and the safety and comfort of everyone else in the class. Please do not eat in class. If you need to drink water/coffee/tea/etc., please keep your mask on between sips. Students who need special accommodation are asked to discuss this with the program office.

Seating in class: To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, please sit in a consistent area of the classroom each day. This will minimize your contacts and will still allow for the pedagogical methods planned for this class to help your learning.

Visit the following website for the most recent updates regarding COVID-19 protocol on campus: <https://students.ubc.ca/campus-life/returning-to-campus>.

Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive for classes and activities on time and fully prepared to engage. Late arrivals may be refused entry at the discretion of the instructor or activity lead. Students arriving later than halfway through a scheduled class will be treated as absent for that class.

Electronic Devices

Devices such as laptops, tablets, and cell phones are not permitted to be used in class unless directed by the instructor for in-class activities. Students who do not follow the School's policy in this regard may be required to leave the room for the remainder of the class, so that they do not distract others. Research shows that students' use of laptops in class has negative implications for the learning environment, including reducing their own grades and the grades of those sitting around them.

Citation Style

Please use the American Psychological Association (APA) reference style to cite your sources.

Details of the above policies and other RHL Policies are available at:
<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=12,199,506,1625>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise, and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated, nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty, and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available on the UBC Senate website at <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>.

Respect for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The UBC Sauder School of Business strives to promote an intellectual community that is enhanced by diversity along various dimensions, including status as a First Nation, Metis, Inuit, or Indigenous person, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, social class, and/or disability. It is critical that students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives be valued in and well-served by their courses. Furthermore, the diversity that students bring to the classroom should be viewed as a resource, benefit, and source of strength for your learning experience. It is expected that all students and members of our community conduct themselves with empathy and respect for others.

Academic Integrity

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if

the matter is referred to the President’s Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

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All materials of this course (course handouts, lecture slides, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the instructor or licensed to be used in this course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline and could be subject to legal action. Any lecture recordings are for the sole use of the instructor and students enrolled in the class. In no case may the lecture recording or part of the recording be used by students for any other purpose, either personal or commercial. Further, audio or video recording of classes are not permitted without the prior consent of the instructor. Students may not share class Zoom links or invite others who are not registered to view sessions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

UBC’s Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Subject to change with class consultation)

Class	Date	Topic	Assessments due
1	Tue, Jan 4	Intro: Strategic Communications and PR Stakeholder Engagement	
2	Thu, Jan 6	Reputation Management	
	Sun, Jan 9		Insight Brief 1 due by 11:59 pm
3	Tue, Jan 11	Issues Management	
4	Thu, Jan 13	Corporate Communications (Indigenous, Government, and Employee Relations)	
	Sun, Jan 16		Insight Brief 2 due by 11:59 pm
5	Tue, Jan 18	Content and Media Relations	
6	Thu, Jan 20	Persuasion and Personal PR	
	Sun, Jan 23		Insight Brief 3 due by 11:59 pm
7	Tue, Jan 25	Crisis Management	
8	Thu, Jan 27	Crisis Simulation	
	Sun, Jan 30		Crisis Reflection due by 11:59 pm
9	Tue, Feb 1	Guest Speaker – Active Discussion	
	Wed, Feb 2		Final Project Proposal due by 11:59 pm
10	Thu, Feb 3	Insights and Analytics; Big Picture	
	Exam Week	Final Project due	Final Project due – date TBD by RHL