Corporate Communication meets twice weekly. Class sessions are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10:00 a.m. until 11:50 a.m. There is only one section of this course. The course director is James S. O’Rourke, Director of the Fanning Center for Business Communication. Office: 234-B Mendoza College of Business. Telephone: 574.631.8397. Home: 574.272.1773. Mobile: 574.339.1836. E-mail: jorourke@nd.edu.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS


PURPOSES OF THE COURSE

• To provide students with an appreciation for the increasing importance and substantive role played by the Corporate Communication function within business organizational structures.

• To assist students in understanding the intersection of interests and interplay of influence in three large arenas: the press, the public, and private enterprise.

• To give students an appreciation of the interdependence between Corporate Strategy and Corporate Communication.

• To encourage students to explore the role of Corporate Communication in such areas as corporate identity, image, and reputation; corporate advocacy; media relations; investor relations; government affairs; employee communication; and crisis management.

• To assist students in seeing the ethical implications of management decisions regarding communications with various stakeholders, including the community, the public-at-large, corporate shareholders, the financial press, employees, and creditors.
GENERAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

• You must complete the assignments described in this syllabus and submit them on the specified dates.

• You must participate fully and actively in our classroom discussions and case review sessions.

• You must prepare thoroughly for class, arrive promptly, and make classmates and guests alike feel that the learning process is both rewarding and worthwhile.

GRADING

This is a case-based course. Your grade for the semester will depend on your response, in writing and in classroom discussion, to the cases I have selected for the course.

You will be asked to produce written analyses to two separate case studies. You will also research, organize, compose and present to your classmates an original case study focusing on an issue of direct significance to the course. You will receive two evaluations for that assignment, one for the written portion and a second for the spoken portion.

Because this is a collaborative research and writing assignment, all members of a case group will customarily receive the same grade for their work. The instructor reserves the right, however, to assign differential grades in unusual circumstances to fairly reflect the achievements of each student.

Grade weights will be distributed as follows:

• Case Analysis #1. ................................................................. 20%
  Due: Tuesday, January 20, 2015

• Case Analysis #2. ................................................................. 20%
  Due: Tuesday, February 3, 2015

• Original Case Study (final paper). ................................. 30%
  Due: Tuesday, February 24, 2015

• Original Case Study (oral presentation)............................. 15%
  Due: Thursday, 19 February & Tuesday, 24 February, 2015

• Classroom Discussion & Participation. ............................. 15%
As with all other courses here at Notre Dame, grades are important for all degree-seeking students. They are somewhat less important, however, than learning outcomes. Your careful attention to classroom discussion and written assignments will be central to your success in this course and to your understanding of the subject we will study.

ASSIGNMENTS

Case Analyses. You are required to write a full analysis of two of the cases listed in the calendar portion of this syllabus. Your analysis should include these steps:

- **Step 1: Define the business problem and write a problem statement.** What’s the basic issue here? Tell your reader in one or a few paragraphs about the essence of the business problem that you have identified.

- **Step 2: Rank-order the critical issues.** As you consider relevant information and underlying assumptions, can you identify the critical issues in this case? Can you rank order them from most-to-least important?

- **Step 3: Identify key stakeholders.** Who is most directly affected by this situation in this case? What’s at stake for them? Can you identify any indirect stakeholders. Are any individuals or groups at odds with one another?

- **Step 4: Specify interested observers in this case.** Identify those without a direct stake in the outcome of the case who may, nonetheless be interested. Consider NGOs, single-issue special interest groups, the news media, elected officials, or members of the immediate community.

- **Step 5: List options for actions.** What alternatives are available to the manager or executive in the case? What are the strengths or drawbacks of these alternatives? Which alternative solution would you select? Why? Make your most rational argument in favor of this solution.

- **Step 6: Decide how to implement the solution.** What should the executive in the case do first? How should that executive go about implementing the solution you've chosen? Be specific, give details.

- **Step 7: Explain how to communicate your analysis.** Which communication channels should the executive use? Which audiences should he or she speak with? What sort of timing should you consider?

Your case analysis should take at least five, but no more than eight single-spaced pages to explain. Please use graphs, matrices, charts or other visuals or illustrations that you think will assist your reader in understanding your analysis and solution. Please assume that whoever will
read your analysis will also have read the case. Your case analyses (valued at 20% apiece) will be due on the scheduled discussion date for each particular case.

If we do not discuss the case in class for some reason – we may be pre-empted by a guest speaker from time-to-time – you have until the next class date to turn in your solution to that case. After the next class meeting, you may no longer analyze that case study for credit unless you are specifically granted permission to do so by the instructor.

**Group Case Presentation.** You are required to find one (or, perhaps, two) partners and form a case study group that will examine an issue, event, or topic related to the substance and goals of this course. Your objective will be to produce a written case study, similar in content, style and appearance to those cases (Harvard, Notre Dame, Virginia, Western Ontario, Dartmouth, and other business schools) you receive during your graduate study here.

You and your partners must submit a one-page statement of topic, subject outline, and preliminary sources consulted. When you do so, you may select a presentation date from among those listed on the last page of this syllabus.

Your presentation should be approximately 30 minutes in length, followed by a few minutes for questions from your classmates. Please plan to support your presentation with appropriate graphics, samples, examples, or visual aids.

The written portion of this assignment will include:

- **An (A) Case.** This may vary in length, but are generally between 6 and 12 pages, single-spaced with standard, one-inch margins, exclusive of attachments and apparatus. This document describes what happened in the case, defines who the key players are, and outlines the management and corporate communication problem(s) they face. This document should end at a crucial decision point for the manager or executive involved.

- **A Teaching Note.** This document, which will vary in length from 3-to-5 pages (perhaps more in complex cases), should outline the critical issues involved, provide a general approach to presenting the case for group discussion, and should include suggested discussion questions as well as suggested solutions.

- **A (B) Case.** If secondary decision points present themselves in the course of describing and analyzing the case, please separate those decision points into a (B) case for classroom discussion.

- **A PowerPoint File.** You must create a PowerPoint slide deck to support your oral presentation of the case. Please consider visual support for your case discussion, and the use of classroom technology to help carry your message.
• **An Abstract.** Please create a brief abstract, between 35 and 50 words, that describes the case, its contents, the issues and challenges facing the managers involved. Sample abstracts: [http://www.nd.edu/~fanning/cases/cases/html](http://www.nd.edu/~fanning/cases/cases/html).

• **A Flash Drive.** Please include electronic copies of all documents on a flash drive (which I will return). The written portion of this assignment will be evaluated separately from the oral presentation. The entire assignment will account for 45% of your final grade in the course. All members of the group will customarily receive the same grade for each portion of the assignment. In unusual circumstances, your instructor reserves the right to grade individual contributions separately.

I will expect to see draft copies of your (A) Case, Teaching Note, and PowerPoint slides well in advance of your presentation to the class. Please contact me directly to arrange for an appointment to review your work-in-progress and to map out a plan to produce a publication-quality set of documents by the end of the semester.

**THE ETHICS OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION**

Language, as you know, has great power. It can convey impressions, communicate knowledge and information. It can transmit feelings and emotion, as well. Language, depending on how it is used, can inspire, enrage, inform, persuade, entertain, assure, or offend.

Business writers, as well as those who speak on public occasions, occupy a special position of power. Their words can influence others, urging them to action, or restraining them from acting. Their words can be a source of inspiration and motivation to others. Because of this, writers and speakers must choose their topics, organizational patterns, evidence, and words with great care.

Three basic principles guide our discussion of ethics in this course. First, we contend that *all parties in the communication process have ethical responsibilities.* Second, *ethical writers, readers, speakers, and listeners possess attitudes and standards that pervade their character and guide their actions before, during, and after their speaking and writing.* Third, *corporate communication is not value-neutral.* What you say, what you write, and how you choose to speak and write will have consequences for your audience. Your obligation is to speak and write for the betterment and benefit of your audience. To do otherwise is a serious ethical lapse.

Public communication is held to a higher standard of responsibility than private communication. To speak or write freely and privately among friends with no expectation that your words will become public is one thing. To speak in public or to write for publication with the expectation that your words will receive widespread attention is quite another. Please understand that public communication is a serious matter, particularly if you occupy a position of responsibility. And please know that if words have the power to injure or harm others, they can inflict harm on the sender, as well.
THE NOTRE DAME MBA HONOR CODE

As graduate students of business at the University of Notre Dame, you have adopted a Code of Honor by which you will behave. You each have a copy of that code and should know that I fully support it, both in letter and spirit.

For us, that code will mean simply that you must do your own work. I will ask that you work in a small group to produce an original case study, but all other assignments will involve you producing work on your own. I expect that you will engage in active discussion with your classmates, and will seek out experts and others whose views may be useful to you. But, in the last analysis, I will expect that what you submit to me with your name affixed to it is, in fact, your own work.

If you have questions or concerns about any of this, please come to see me or your representative on the MBA Honor Council.

COURSE POLICIES AND STANDARDS

The policies and standards of Corporate Communication are precisely the same as those for Management Communication. Please consult your copy of the syllabi for those courses for information regarding deadlines, absence from class, incomplete assignments, excuses and work preparation. A brief discussion of the College plagiarism policy is included in that syllabus.

Extensions. An extension of the due date for any assignment in this course is not automatic. If you have a legitimate reason for wishing to accelerate or delay submission of an assignment, you must contact your instructor. From time-to-time, job interviews, illness, or other matters may keep you from attending class. Please let your instructor know in advance and every effort will be made to accommodate your request.

Rewrites. You may rewrite any assignment, with the permission of your professor, on which you have received a failing grade. No matter how well accomplished the rewritten version of the assignment may be, you will not receive a grade higher than “C” for that assignment. You may not rewrite an assignment more than once. Obviously, you should spend your time and energy on the original version of the assignment before it is due.

Assistance. If you have any problems or need help, please say so. Feel free to call on me or come to see me at any time. Call me at home, if you wish. I am sincere about that. My reason for being here is to help you; just ask for it.

Last Drop Date. The last day to disenroll from this course is Friday, January 30, 2015.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 13 Jan 2015</td>
<td>THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT FOR AMERICAN BUSINESS</td>
<td>10:00 - 10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Intro: Syllabus distribution and course overview.</td>
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<td>11:00 - 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>Reading: Argenti, Chapter 1: “The Changing Environment for Business.”</td>
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<td>Thu 15 Jan 2015</td>
<td>MANAGING COMMUNICATION AND CORPORATE STRATEGY</td>
<td>10:00 - 10:35 a.m.</td>
<td>Case Study: Argenti, Galen Healthcare System, pp. 45-46.</td>
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<td>Case Analysis #1 is Due.</td>
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<td>11:00 - 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>Tue 20 Jan 2015</td>
<td>IMAGE, IDENTITY, AND REPUTATION</td>
<td>10:00 - 10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Discussion: Visualizing Corporate Identity.</td>
<td>PowerPoint: “Corporate Logotypes,” 8 slides.</td>
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<td>11:00 - 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>Readings: Argenti, Chapter 4, “Image, Identity, and Reputation.”</td>
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<td>Thu 22 Jan 15</td>
<td>MANAGING CORPORATE REPUTATION</td>
<td>10:00 - 11:00 a.m.:</td>
<td>Lecture: Corporate Reputation: A Manageable Asset with Strategic Value.</td>
<td>PowerPoint: “Corporate Reputation,” 20 slides.</td>
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<td>11:00 - 11:10 a.m.:</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>11:00 - 11:10 a.m.:</td>
<td>Overheads: “The News Media,” 5 transparencies.</td>
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<td>Reading: Argenti, Chapter 5, “Corporate Responsibility.”</td>
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<td>Thu 29 Jan 15</td>
<td>NO CLASS MEETING</td>
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<td>Your instructor will be in New York, attending a board of trustees meeting of the Arthur W. Page Society. Your task is to use this time to prepare your group case presentation for your classmates.</td>
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<td>11:00 - 11:10 a.m.:</td>
<td>Reading: Argenti, Chapter 6, “Media Relations.”</td>
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<td>Handout: AntennaGate: Apple’s Loss of Signal (B) in class.</td>
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<td>Assignment: Case Analysis #2 is Due.</td>
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<td>Thu 05 Feb 15</td>
<td>CRISIS COMMUNICATION: REBUILDING A DAMAGED BRAND</td>
<td>10:00 - 10:50 a.m.:</td>
<td>Case Study: Taco Bell Corporation: Public Perception and Brand Protection.</td>
<td>PowerPoint: “Taco Bell Corporation,” 34 slides.</td>
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<td>10:50 - 11:00 a.m.:</td>
<td>Reading: Argenti, Chapter 10, “Crisis Communication.”</td>
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<td>11:00 - 11:50 a.m.:</td>
<td>Groups: Taco Bell Corporation, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Taco Bell’s Chief Competitor.</td>
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Tue 10 Feb 2015  CRISIS COMMUNICATION: PRESERVING PUBLIC TRUST
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.: Lecture: Managing and Communicating in a Crisis.
                  PowerPoint: “Crisis Communication,” 20 slides.
11:00 - 11:10 a.m.: Break
11:10 - 11:50 a.m.: Case Study: Carnival Cruise Lines: Wreck of the Costa Concordia.
                  PowerPoint: “Wreck of the Costa Concordia,” 17 slides

Thu 12 Feb 2015  INVESTOR RELATIONS
10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Lecture: Corporate Communication and Investor Relations.
11:00 - 11:10 a.m. Break
                  Reading: Argenti, Chapter 8, “Investor Relations.”

Tue 17 Feb 2015  EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION
10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Lecture: Best Practices in Internal Communication.
11:00 - 11:10 a.m. Break
11:10 - 11:50 a.m. Case Study: Yahoo!: Online Company Prefers Brick-and-Mortar Model.
                  Reading: Argenti, Chapter 7, “Internal Communications.”

Thu 19 Feb 2015  GROUP CASE PRESENTATIONS
10:00 - 10:30 a.m. Group #1
10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Group #2
11:00 - 11:10 a.m. Break
11:10 - 11:40 a.m. Group #3

Tue 24 Feb 2015  GROUP CASE PRESENTATIONS
10:00 - 10:30 a.m. Group #4
10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Group #5
11:00 - 11:10 a.m. Break
11:10 - 11:40 a.m. Group #6