

Syllabus – COM3312: Crisis Communication – Summer 2016

Monday-Thursday 10:20 am-12:25 p.m.

Walker 208

Dr. Mildred F. “Mimi” Perreault

Office: 133 Walker Hall

Office Hours: by appointment, however office hours must be confirmed by email 24 hours before meeting.

E-mail: perreaultmf@appstate.edu

Twitter: @mediatingmimi

Website/Blog: www.mimiperreault.com

ASU Learn: <http://asulearn.appstate.edu/> (course documents)

Class Hashtag: #3312CC

ABOUT THE COURSE

Course description:

This course examines the variables involved in crisis planning, communication and management. To do so, we must consider the organization’s vulnerabilities, the environment in which it thrives, the stakeholders who can influence its operation and the strategies best suited to maintaining or enhancing its reputation. The media plays a crucial role in crisis management and we will discuss this factor throughout the course. The relationship between public relations and journalism in times of crisis can be integral to the responses of the people and publics involved in that crisis. We will consider how the media acts as a catalyst as well as intermediary in this process. Some of the questions that will arise will be: Is the relationship inherently antagonistic? Should it be?

By the conclusion of the course, participants should have developed a deeper understanding of the range of crises facing organizations, an enhanced appreciation of communication tactics that can be brought to bear in such situations and a greater familiarity with the historical antecedents of current crises.

Required text:

1. Fearn-Banks, Kathleen. (2011). *Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach* (4th ed). (BOOKSTORE)
2. Davis, Lanny J. (2013). *Crisis Tales*. (AMAZON)

Tips for success: This class is a lot of work and moderately difficult. In addition to course readings you will be required to work in groups throughout the semester. Students will be given time in class to do work, but you may be required to complete some work outside of class time. Don’t complain during crunch time. Your work and commitment to this class will be treated as if I was your employer. Keep positive and ahead of schedule and you will succeed. I guarantee you will learn a GREAT DEAL from this class that will benefit you in any profession you choose.

*** All assignments/stories should be backed up on a flash drive or copied and pasted in an email in case you have issues with the computers. I also suggest you cut and paste anything you write into the body of an email and send it to yourself. Corrupt files or files that cannot be opened must be redone. No exceptions. I would also like you to bring all completed assignments on a jump drive to class in case you need to make edits. Also save your work for your portfolio, which is due your senior year.**

COURSE CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

Class Presentations

Classroom time will consist of lectures, video clips, discussion, in-class and out-of-class assignments, and small group projects. Readings in addition to the textbook will also be distributed during the course. Students should participate and contribute to class discussion, as participation is part of your grade. Material discussed in class is not necessarily found in the textbook; therefore, you must attend class to receive the lecture materials. Not all PowerPoints, Prezis and lecture notes will not be made available outside of class or office hours. However, some course materials may be posted on ASULearn and should be downloaded before the start of the class.

Classroom Etiquette

Courtesy applies in the classroom. **When you are in class, I expect you to pay attention. It is inappropriate to text, instant message, use iPods, or use the computer for any other use besides class. If you do so, you will be counted absent.** Please turn off all cell phones and pagers before coming into class. Also, please respect the opinions of your fellow students. Lack of preparation for class lectures, failing to read assigned readings before class, or a lack of courtesy will be reflected in your participation grade. Because of the nature of social media and content on social media, take note that sometimes we will come across offensive things, including language, videos, etc. You can leave the room at any time if this content offends you, but you should return at the end of class or explain this to the professor in an email before the next class.

Technology

Cellphones, tablets, and laptops are all great things, however most days we will not be using them. Taking notes is a crucial tool in public communication, journalism and public relations, and as such, you'll be learning it in this class. We will make extensive use of the computers for writing and editing stories, searching for information for stories and storing the records of the course. You may be expected use your own mobile devices for multimedia assignments. **Note: While you are free to use computers for in-class writing assignments during lecture/discussion please do not plan to use your computer to take notes during class.**

Communication

Email is the official communication at Appalachian State University. I send notices, assignment updates, etc., through email so please make sure you check your App State email daily. In addition, feel free to email me with any brief questions you may have. If you need clarification please plan to attend office hours or ask questions in class. You should read assignments enough in advance to provide yourself with the time to ask questions and clarify the assignment. **I will respond to email within 24 hours**, unless the email is sent Friday after 5 p.m. All emails sent Friday after 5 p.m. will be responded to by Monday at 5 p.m.

Late work

All assignments and exams must be completed as scheduled. Late or make-up work will NOT be accepted unless I have approved it before the due date and only at my discretion, generally for extraordinary or documented circumstances. Late or make-up work will NOT be accepted for unexcused absences. In addition, students should upload assignments to ASULearn and provide a print out depending on the assignment's requirements – **no e-mail assignments will be accepted.** If you miss receiving an assignment because you were absent, you do not get a free pass – the assignment must be turned in on the due date. Please keep copies of your returned work in case

there are any issues at the end of the course. Students must contact the Dean of Students' office with extenuating circumstances to receive an excuse for missed or late work.

If you are absent for a class where an out-of-class assignment was assigned, you still must turn in the assignment the day it is due. As a professional, deadlines are of the utmost importance. Therefore, if there is an in-class assignment due and you are absent, it may NOT be accepted. It is not fair to other students who attend class if you receive extra time to complete assignments when you are absent.

Special Assistance

It is my hope that you succeed in this class. If you have any special needs that you feel I should be aware of to assist you in your learning process, please feel free to set up a conference with me during my office hours or at some other time. It is always better to let me know ahead of time if you are facing challenges so we can work together to address the issues in the proper way.

Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you have a disability and may need reasonable accommodations in order to have equal access to the University's courses, programs and activities, please contact the Office of Disability Services (828.262.3056 or www.ods.appstate.edu). Once registration is complete, individuals will meet with ODS staff to discuss eligibility and appropriate accommodations.

Writing Center

The University Writing Center (Room 008, Belk Library & Information Commons) is open Monday through Thursday from 9am-9pm and Friday from 9am-1pm. Consultants will work with you one-on-one and provide assistance with style, organization, content, voice, grammar, and documentation. In addition to your draft and/or any pre-writing notes, bring your assignment to your session. To make an appointment, call 262-3144. However, please note that just because the writing center has assisted you does not mean that your paper is without flaws.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense that not only comprises your personal integrity, but the integrity of Appalachian State and your fellow classmates. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, lying, copying, cutting and pasting without attribution, failing to attribute sources, cheating during exams or other assignments, multiple submissions of the same material in different courses, assisting others in violating the code, signing someone else's name on the attendance sheet, use of unauthorized study aids, and falsifying any university document. Any offense will be taken extremely seriously. The academic dishonesty policy can be found in the university catalog. One of the most common violations is plagiarism, is defined as:

“Plagiarism is intentionally or knowingly presenting words, ideas or work of others as one's own work. Plagiarism includes copying homework, copying lab reports, copying computer programs, using a work or portion of a work written or created by another but not crediting the source, using one's own work completed in a previous class for credit in another class without permission, paraphrasing another's work without giving credit, and borrowing or using ideas without giving credit.”

The Academic Integrity Code you agreed to abide by when you applied here is as follows:

- Students will not lie, cheat, or steal to gain academic advantage.

- Students will oppose every instance of academic dishonesty.

Academic Policies of the University

Please become familiar with the information on this website:

<https://academicaffairs.appstate.edu/resources/syllabi-policy-and-statement-information> . It contains information about Academic Integrity, Disability Services, Attendance Policy (including religious observances), and Student Engagement with Courses.

Public Relations and Attribution

For public relations, you must attribute all non-publicly known facts. Publicly known facts are facts that can be confirmed by four or more sources. If you take any words from another source (news article, research findings), and you don't attribute it, this constitutes plagiarism. Therefore, all assignments using sources must be documented both in-text and in a bibliography using APA style. In addition, you must cite a source and use direct quotes if you take a source word-for-word (which should be used sparingly and ONLY if you can't say something better yourself). Taking large chunks of work nearly word-for-word from someone else is plagiarism, even if you cite the source. If you are not sure if something constitutes violation of academic dishonesty, please ask me. Otherwise, I will assume you know how to properly cite. Your work should be more than 60 percent your own, meaning that cited material should make up no more than 40 percent of your work.

I do not tolerate plagiarism. If you plagiarize in any way, you will receive a zero for the assignment, a possible deduction of an additional letter grade for the entire course, or you may receive a zero for the entire course. In addition, you will be turned into the Office of Student Conduct. There will be no exceptions.

If you are not sure if something constitutes violation of academic dishonesty, please ask me. In this case, it is better to be safe and ask than to ask for forgiveness.

Attendance Policy

This is a communication class, and communication classes require interaction. You must be present to do so. Therefore, attendance is required and is taken daily. This course may be different than many of your other university courses in the sense of hard deadlines. If you are absent from work in the PR profession, you may miss assignments and opportunities. Since class discussions and participation are part of your final grade, your attendance is essential to your success in the course. **Attendance will be taken during each class meeting.** If any circumstances affect you from coming to class, please contact me **PRIOR** to the class meeting. It is your responsibility to contact another student for materials and information missed during class and not the instructor.

If you are not in class fail to notify me within 48 hours of class time, you are considered absent. Just as with a full-time job, you will receive two personal days for excused or unexcused absences without any penalty to your final grade. For each additional absence over two, your final course grade will be reduced by 5%. **If you miss six or more classes, you will fail the course automatically. NO EXCEPTIONS!!!!** Especially for this course, attendance directly affects your grade outcome!

Students are expected to arrive on time; three "tardies" (more than 5 minutes late) will yield one (1) unexcused absence. If for any reason you cannot make it to class, you must notify your instructor in advance of your absence. No exceptions. This means if you miss class and fail to

notify me before it begins, it will count as an unexcused absence regardless of circumstances. Also, you are responsible for any material you missed during that absence and you do not get an extension of the assignment's due date. **Credit or make-up assignments must be approved PRIOR to missing class.** Please contact a fellow classmate for class notes. Please do not email me asking what you missed. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor prior to missing class the reasons for such an absence.

Also, missing a class when a guest speaker is present or mandatory attendance will result in an automatic 5% final grade reduction, regardless of circumstances.

Also, if you are discourteous in the classroom (see conduct of the course), your grade will be penalized.

Inclement Weather Policy

If the university is closed for inclement weather, a video lecture may be given. You will be responsible for accessing the lecture online, viewing the lecture and taking notes. I will be more than happy to answer any questions about the missed material as long as they are asked in a timely manner.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Grading guidelines

All written (typed) work submitted for this course must be coherent, logical, and carefully edited. In public relations, any work that does not meet this standard is considered unacceptable and may even cost you your job. In addition, misspellings, syntax and grammar errors, and other writing problems are unacceptable in upper-division college writing, especially in work by journalism students.

Points will be deducted from your assignments based especially on the following errors: Factual (content), attribution/misquotation (content), libel (content), AP style (mechanics), format/organization (mechanics), grammar/spelling errors (mechanics), clarity (content), bad/foul language, and uninteresting/stale (content).

Grammatical errors will severely reduce your grade. You will not be successful in public relations unless you can write well. Period. For spelling, one misspelled word will result in a grade of a "B." For each additional error you will lose a letter grade. More than three errors will earn you an "F." Therefore, you should always proofread your work carefully. If you misspell the client's name or organization, you will receive an automatic F. Inaccuracies will also result in significant grade deductions.

The grading criteria are: blog, story or news release is publishable as is (A); publishable with minor editing (B); publishable with major editing (C); not publishable (D or F).

All assignments must be typed. Handwritten work will not be accepted. Assignments should also be uploaded on ASUlearn or turned in hard copy if requested.

Grading

Be responsible for the grade you earn in this class. Feel free to talk to me anytime if you want to discuss your progress in this class. The grading is as follows:

Midterm Exams (20%)

Final Project	(30%)
Press Conference	(20%)
Journals	(10%)
Other Written Papers/Quizzes	(10%)
Discussion	<u>(10%)</u>
	(100%)

Final Project (30%): In a group of two to four, you will conduct a case study of a completed crisis, present it to the class, and turn in a paper. You will be graded on the analysis (see handout) and the presentation. You will receive both a group and individual grade for this assignment.

Midterm Project (20%): Crisis communication Plan (group) project. You will receive both a group and individual grade for this assignment.

Press Conference (20%): You will participate in a mock press conference both as a reporter and as a spokesperson. While this is a group assignment grades are awarded individually. The CDC handout must be read and the FEMA online training and certification must be completed as part of this assignment.

Other Written Papers/Quizzes (10%): You will turn in additional written materials, as assigned. Quizzes may be given if necessary by the instructor. This includes your case study brief presentations.

Journals (10%): Every other week (unless discussed) you will turn in a journal through ASUlearn. The journal will provide an overview and an assessment of a current crisis in the media as well as reflections on course content. These journals create a place for the professor to keep track of your understanding of course content and replace quiz grades. If the instructor does not feel students are reading course material, pop quizzes will replace the journals. These are due Fridays at 5 p.m.

Discussion/Participation: (10%): Participation is not just attendance. I expect everyone to participate. You will also present a chapter brief during the **semester**. More details will be provided in class. If you attend every day but do not contribute in class, then you will NOT receive an A in participation. If you actively participate, but miss class, then you will NOT receive an A in participation. In addition, you are expected to stay up-to-date on current crises (and current events topics in general). We will talk about those in the beginning of class. If you do not participate, you may receive a 0 in participation. If I feel the class is not prepared for the material, a pop quiz or assignment will be given. Also, if you are discourteous or disruptive in the classroom (see conduct of the course), your grade will be penalized.

How to earn an A in participation:

- Attend class
- Contribute by offering insightful or relevant comments that show careful reflection
- Show respect toward your peers/professors and respect for their points of view
- Listen actively and respectfully
- Participate at appropriate times
- Arrive to the discussion fully prepared
- Answer emails from the instructor and classmates

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional resources:

- There are a variety of other resources which would be beneficial for this course which I will post on the website.
- Not all presentations will be uploaded to ASULearn so you must attend class to get your lecture notes, if you miss you must get notes from a classmate
 - NAME OF CLASSMATE: _____,
contact#: _____
 - NAME OF CLASSMATE: _____,
contact#: _____
- Also, if you want to be a good writer, you should be a good reader. I encourage you to read and then read some, more, and any books that you enjoy.
- Subscribe online to news sites and social media trades.

Additional Information:

One of the most significant indicators of success in a course is the ability to follow directions. Therefore, if you fail to follow directions or instructions, such as word length, assignment, etc., you will be penalized accordingly.

Occasionally, it may be necessary to revise the syllabus to meet student needs, ESPECIALLY ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES. I reserve the right to revise this syllabus if the need arises.

***Extra Credit**

The instructor may give extra credit for attending events or participating in activities during the course. The expectations for extra credit will be sent out when the assignment is shared with the class. Extra credit will not make the difference in a passing or failing grade and must be turned in by the deadline stated when the assignment is shared with the class. Extra credit is a privilege and should not be expected or demanded by students at anytime.

THE SCHEDULE MAY BE REARRANGED TO ACCOMMODATE GUEST SPEAKERS

The date indicated is the first day of the class week. Material will be split up throughout the three course periods. If things are due on a specific day of the week they are indicated, however deadlines may be set or changed as needed. Assignments should be turned in before class on the day they are due unless otherwise specified.

Tentative Schedule:

Please note that there will be changes to this schedule as guest speakers are scheduled and needs arise such as guest speakers.

Schedule	
The Day of:	
June 30	Welcome course expectations and introductions Note Taking Review What is Crisis Communication?

	<p>Assignment: Dream Job write up (First journal) and presentations Tuesday Syllabus Contract Due Tuesday</p>
July 4	STATE HOLIDAY
5	<p>Dream Job presentations begin Introduction to Case Study Methods, three group assignments introduced Reading: Introduction to Crisis Communication (FB: Chap 1), Case Study Reading Assignment: Group selection-choose 3 potential group members and submit by email by Tuesday at 5 p.m. (rank in order of choice), Groups announced Wednesday in class</p>
6	<p><i>Reading:</i> Introduction to Crisis Communication (FB: Chap 1); Preface & Introduction (LD) Work in Groups</p>
7	<p>Groups announced- Brief Group Meetings <i>Reading:</i> (FB: Ch 2); Communications to Prevent Crises (FB: Chap. 3); Put The Facts Into Simple Messages: Pakistan (LD: Chap 3) <i>Reading:</i> Crisis Plan Components (FB: 301-347) Quiz over all readings to this point June 30- July 7 Assignment: Midterm CRISIS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION Plan Proposal due by Sunday night at 5 p.m., Second JOURNAL DUE FRIDAY at 5 p.m.</p>
11	<p><i>Reading:</i> Get All The Facts Out: Martha Stewart (LD: Chap 1); Get All The Facts Out: HealthSouth (LD: Chap 2); Communications When the Crisis Strikes (FB: Chap. 4)</p>
12	<p><i>Reading:</i> Put the Facts Into Simple Messages: Royal Caribbean (LD: Chap 4); Remaining Time: Crisis Team Meetings</p>
13	<p>Social Media & Crisis Communication(s) (FB: Chapter 5); Get Ahead of the Story: Macy's & Rangel (LD: Chap 5-6) Remaining Time: Crisis Team Meetings Sign Up for Chapter Brief Presentations Beginning next week</p>
14	<p><i>Reading:</i> Rumors & Cybercrisis (FB: Chap. 6); Get Ahead of the Story: Upshaw/NFL & Redskins (LD: Chap 7-8) Crisis Team Meetings Quiz over all readings to this point July 11-14 Assignment: Midterm Crisis Plan Due by Sunday at 5 p.m. Third Journal Due, 5 p.m. Friday</p>
18	<p><i>Midterm Crisis Plan Presentations</i> <i>Reading:</i> Chapter Brief presentations (FB: Chapter 7, 9, &10) Assignment: Group feedback at midnight</p>
19	<p><i>Reading:</i> Chapter Brief presentations (FB: Chapter 11,12, 13 & 14) Assignment:</p>

	CASE STUDY Proposal due at 5 p.m.
20	<i>Reading:</i> Get Ahead of the Story: Trent Lott (LD: Chap 9) <i>Reading:</i> Fight For The Truth: Rent-Way (LD: Chap 10) Fight For The Truth: The Honduras Crisis (LD: Chap 11) Press Conference Presentations
21	<i>Reading:</i> Never Represent Yourself: A Fool For A Client (LD: Chap 12); Never Represent Yourself: Fighting The Big Lie (LD: Chap 13) Quiz over all readings to this point July 18-21 Assignment: JOURNAL DUE FRIDAY at 5 p.m.
25	Crisis Team Meetings
26	<i>Reading:</i> Afterword: Penn State (LD: Afterword) Individuals in Crises (FB: Chapter 14)
27	Crisis Team Meetings
28	Case Study Presentations Last Lecture Last Quiz July 21-28 Assignment: JOURNAL DUE Monday at 5 p.m.
August 1	No in class assignment
2	No in class assignment
3	Assignment: (1) Group Feedback, and (2) FINAL JOURNAL/REFLECTIONS due today

Syllabus Contract

Please print, sign and return this page stating you have read the syllabus in its entirety and understand the course expectations.

Printed Name:

Signed Name:

Date: _____ Course: **COM3312: Crisis Communication**