CMNS 480 Communications

COURSE NAME/NUMBER

FACULTY/DEPARTMENT

UFV CREDITS

4

COURSE DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Crisis Communication

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

Crises are unexpected threats for which response time is short. Their origins can be natural (as with ice storms or tsunamis) or human (as with acts of terrorism or oil spills). This course uses Canadian and foreign examples to explore how to (and how not to) deal with serious challenges to public safety. To do so, it draws on both theoretical and practical approaches to communicating with diverse audiences in crisis situations.

Note: This course is offered as CMNS 480 and MACS 480. Students may take only one of these for credit.

PREREQUISITES: 60 university-level credits, including six credits of lower-level MACS and/or CMNS.

COREQUISITES: None

SYNONYMOUS COURSE(S):

(a) Replaces: N/A
(b) Cross-listed with: MACS 480
(c) Cannot take: MACS 480

TOTAL HOURS PER TERM: 60

STRUCTURE OF HOURS:

Lectures: 25 Hrs
Seminar: 25 Hrs
Laboratory: Hrs
Field experience: Hrs
Student directed learning: 10 Hrs
Other (specify): Hrs

OTHER:

WILL TRANSFER CREDIT BE REQUESTED? (lower-level courses only) Yes ☐ No ☐
WILL TRANSFER CREDIT BE REQUESTED? (upper-level requested by department) Yes ☒ No ☐
TRANSFER CREDIT EXISTS IN BCCAT TRANSFER GUIDE? Yes ☒ No ☐

Course designer(s): Eric Spalding, Madeleine Hardin, and Michelle Riedlinger

Supporting area consultation (CWC) Date approved: October 7, 2012
Curriculum Committee chair: Tetsuomi Anzai Date of meeting: n/a
Dean/Associate VP: Jacqueline Nolte Date approved: February 15, 2013
Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC) approval Date approved: February 15, 2013

Department Head: Samantha Pattridge Date of meeting: March 1, 2013
LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Describe the communication process in the context of a crisis or disaster;
- Demonstrate the basic requirements of a crisis plan;
- Explain risk and its impact on crisis communication;
- Evaluate the role of Internet communication (including social networking) in disaster-response communication;
- Recognize the conditions under which authorities define a social problem as a crisis;
- Assess how the public and private sectors use the threat of a crisis to effect policy changes;
- Demonstrate research, observation, scholarly-writing and presentation skills.

METHODS: (Guest lecturers, presentations, online instruction, field trips, etc.)

May vary by instructor, but typical methods would include: lectures, in-class discussions, group discussions, student-led activities, videos, practice tests.

METHODS OF OBTAINING PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT RECOGNITION (PLAR):

☐ Examination(s)  ☑ Portfolio assessment  ☐ Interview(s)  ☐ Other (specify):

☐ PLAR cannot be awarded for this course for the following reason(s):

TEXTBOOKS, REFERENCES, MATERIALS: [Textbook selection varies by instructor. Examples for this course might be:]


SUPPLIES / MATERIALS:

STUDENT EVALUATION: [An example of student evaluation for this course might be:]

15% Essay one
20% Midterm exam
20% Essay two
5% Report on in-class discussion
20% Final exam
15% Student-led activity
5% Attendance and participation

COURSE CONTENT: [Course content varies by instructor. An example of course content might be:]

This course explores issues surrounding communication in times of crisis. It explores both critical/theoretical approaches and practical/applied approaches to crises and crisis communication.

Week 1  What crises are
Week 2  From natural disasters to human error: types of crisis
Week 3  Preparing a crisis plan
Week 4  Maintaining a positive relationship with key publics
Week 5  The uses of the Internet in crisis communication
Week 6  Adaptability and experience: what to do in the midst of a crisis (part 1)
Week 7  Adaptability and experience: what to do in the midst of a crisis (part 2)
Week 8  Tips on communicating effectively with the media during a crisis
Week 9  Dealing with affected parties following a crisis
Week 10  When and how to apologize
Week 11  Crisis evaluation: evolving in the aftermath of a crisis
Week 12  Fear of crises in a risk society
Week 13  How authorities use crises for commercial and political gain