

CJT 722: Seminar in Crisis Communication

Tuesday, 6:15-8:45 p.m., 223 Grehan

Professor: Dr. Shari Veil

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Course Description: This course follows the crisis communication management process through the stages of pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis. The pre-crisis stage discusses planning and environmental scanning. The crisis stage discusses communication strategies for crisis management. The post-crisis stage depicts crisis as an opportunity for organizational learning and for rebuilding or expanding public trust. The course uses a case approach throughout.

Learning Outcomes:

- The students will be able to explain how communication can prevent, cause, accelerate, and assist in the recovery from a crisis event.
- The students will be able to perform a risk assessment and develop a crisis communication plan.
- The students will be able to select the relevant communication theories to fit a crisis situation.
- The students will be able to assess a crisis communication response for adherence to best practices in risk and crisis communication and critically analyze the ethical, cultural and social implications of the case.

ASSIGNMENTS (approximately 350 POINTS)

Discussion Questions (50 POINTS)

By 10:00 a.m. every Tuesday, submit two thought provoking discussion questions or points of contention based on the readings and a paragraph providing the context for each question or contention and a reflection responding to each question or contention (no definition questions or any question that is answered in the readings). *All discussion questions/ contentions must be submitted on Canvas by 10 a.m. to receive credit.*

Crisis Du Jour (20 POINTS)

On your assigned day you will deliver a 3-minute presentation to the class and turn in a 2-page max (double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font, times new roman) summary on a crisis that made headlines in the last year. In both the presentation and summary you will describe the situation including where you learned of it (with proper citation) organization(s)/ individual(s) involved, current status, key issues, and your assessment of the response thus far. You must use at least three references in your summary and cite them properly according to APA. If you are not able to present on the initial day chosen you must secure a trade and both parties must notify me a week before the first of the presentations.

Article Review (20 POINTS)

Find a research article that helps you better understand an aspect of crisis communication. Write a 2-page max (double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font, times new roman) review including full APA citation, summary, analysis (positive and negative attributes), and an argument for why it should be added to the reading list next year. Articles must be approved at least one week prior to presentation. No article can be presented more than once. Once an article has been approved, it cannot be selected by another student. Reviews will be presented in class.

Reaction Papers (90 POINTS)

Students will receive a question based on the reading assignment for each lecture/discussion week. Students are required to write answers to nine of the ten questions using the readings for that week (with proper citations) to support their answers. Answers cannot exceed 500 words and will be discussed in class. Students receive up to 10 points for each weekly assignment. Students can choose to complete all ten questions to receive up to 10 bonus points.

Activities (approximately 30 POINTS)

There will be in-class activities, assignments, case discussions, and reflection papers throughout the semester. Points for these activities may not be made up without an excused absence.

Drafts (15 POINTS)

You will submit drafts of your paper during the semester. Drafts must show progress throughout the semester.

Final Paper (100 POINTS)

Each student will write a 20-25 page crisis case analysis. The format will include an introduction of the study, a literature review of the theoretical lens, a methods section detailing data collection, an analysis of the study through the theoretical lens and discussion of how the theoretical perspective was extended through the analysis, and study conclusions. Students will need to cite *at least* 20 peer-reviewed sources.

Final Paper Presentation (25 POINTS)

Each student will present their final paper. Using PowerPoint as an AV tool, students will explain the background of the study, the theoretical lens, and the analysis of the case through the theoretical lens. Presenters must involve the audience through examples, activities, or discussion.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Assignment Policy: All assignments, unless otherwise noted, are due at the beginning of class even if a student is absent from class or running late. In practice, communication that is not timely in a crisis becomes useless, regardless of the reason. In research, if you miss the deadline for a conference submission, you will not be given special allowances. If you are ill or gone the day an assignment is due you may email the assignment *before* the start of class. *Assignments turned in after the start of class will be docked a minimum of five points. Assignments not turned in by the end of class will receive zero points.*

Attendance Policy: This class is based on discussion of the readings and examples presented in class. If you are not in class you will not be able to participate fully in the class and you will miss instruction on assignments and activities. Daily attendance will not be taken, however, assignments and activities will be collected for points. If you are not in class, you cannot make-up the points missed. If you are not in the classroom when assignments are distributed you will not have the opportunity to do the assignment (eg. if you come in the classroom after an activity or leave early). In addition, if you do not turn in the assignment when collected you will not receive points for the assignment (forgetting to turn in a project at the end of the hour is considered the same as not doing it). Allowances will be made only with documentation for the most dire of circumstances (the computer lab not being open, printer not working 10 minutes before class, computer crashing when you didn't save a backup, oversleeping, traffic, trouble parking, etc. are not dire circumstances). S.R. 5.2.4.2 defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit "reasonable cause for nonattendance" by the professor. Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. Senate Rule 5.2.4.2 states that faculty have the right to request "appropriate verification" when students claim an excused absence because of illness or death in the family. Students anticipating an absence for a university-related function need to provide documentation from their coach or advisor prior to the absence. Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays no later than the last day in the semester to add a class. Information regarding dates of major religious holidays may be obtained through the religious liaison, Dean of Students Office, 2 Alumni Gym, (859) 257- 2754.

Grading Scale: 90-100%=A; 80-89%=B; 70-79%=C; 60-69%=D; 59% and lower=E
Mid-term grades will be posted in myUK by the deadline established in the Academic Calendar (<http://www.uky.edu/Registrar/AcademicCalendar.htm>)

Diversity / Harassment: All members of this class will be treated with respect. Freedom of expression requires tolerance of opinions that may be offensive to some. However, conduct which constitutes harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, color, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, age, beliefs, or disability is strictly prohibited. If you feel uncomfortable in the classroom, please let me know so it can be corrected.

Special Needs: If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (725 Rose Street, Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407).

Grievance Procedure: Occasionally, students are unsatisfied with some dimension of the course. In such cases, students should schedule a meeting, first, with the instructor. If the student and instructor cannot reach a satisfactory resolution, a joint meeting will be scheduled with the associate dean for graduate studies.

Academic Dishonesty: Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the university may be imposed. Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found at the following website: <http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited. Part II of *Student Rights and Responsibilities* (available online <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code>) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. *Thus, all work produced for this class must be original and not previously or concurrently submitted in another class or venue.* In cases where students feel unsure about the question of plagiarism involving their own work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission. When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgement of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work, whether it be a published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file found online, or something similar to this. *Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be.* Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone. When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources of information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain (Section 6.3.1). *Taking credit for work you did not do or giving credit to others for work they did not do (including signing someone's name to a group activity) is academic dishonesty.* Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

CJT 722 DAILY SCHEDULE

Dates and assignments are subject to change

September 1: Perceptions of Risk and Crisis

Expectations, The Endurance

- **In-Class Activity:** Identify the prodromes (warning signals), acute phase (trigger point), and chronic phase (response strategies) of *The Endurance* crisis. Do you believe there was a resolution? Why or why not? What role did leadership play in this crisis?

September 8: Defining Crisis Management

Crisis Du jour - Greg

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**
 - 1) Heath, R. L., & Millar, D. P. (2004). A rhetorical approach to crisis communication: Management, communication processes, and strategic responses. In D. P. Millar, & R. L. Heath (Eds.), *Responding to crisis: A rhetorical approach to crisis communication* (pp. 1-18). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
 - 2) Coombs, W. T. (2010). Parameters for crisis communication. In W. T. Coombs & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *Handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 17-53). New York: Wiley-Blackwell.
 - 3) Coombs, W. T. (2010). Crisis communication and its allied fields. In W. T. Coombs & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *Handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 54-64). New York: Wiley-Blackwell.
 - 4) Fink, S. (1986). Identifying the crisis. In S. Fink, *Crisis management* (pp. 71-79). New York: AMACOM.
- **Reaction Paper:** What are the differences between a routine emergency and a crisis? How are they identified, communicated, managed, confused?

September 15: Issues Management – Identifying the Prodromes

Crisis Du jour - Chelsea

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**
 - 1) Jones, B. L., & Chase, W. H. (1979). Managing public policy issues. *Public Relations Review*, 5(2), 3-23.
 - 2) Crable, R. E., & Vibbert, S. L. (1985). Managing issues and influencing public policy. *Public Relations Review*, 11(2), 3-16.
 - 3) Kuhn, T. (1997) The discourse of issues management: A genre of organizational communication. *Communication Quarterly*, 45(3), 188-210.
 - 4) Gonzalez-Herrero, A., & Pratt, C. B. (1996). An integrated symmetrical model for crisis- communications management. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 8(2), 79-105.
 - 5) Jaques, T. (2012). Issues management as a strategic aspect of crisis prevention. In B. A. Olaniran, D. E. Williams, & W. T. Coombs (Eds.), *Pre-crisis planning, communication, and management: Preparing for the inevitable*. (pp.17-35). New York: Peter Lang.
- **Reaction Paper:** Has the application of issues management in crisis communication research stretched the concept too far from its original purpose? Are there benefits/detriments to constraining issues management study to activist and policy issues?

September 22: Organizational Legitimacy

Crisis Du jour - Audrey & Austin

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**

- 1) Metzler, M. S. (2001). The centrality of organizational legitimacy to public relations practice. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Handbook of public relations* (pp. 321-333). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 2) Massey, J. E. (2001). Managing organizational legitimacy: Communication strategies for organizations in crisis. *Journal of Business Communication*, 38(2), 153-182.
- 3) Suchman, M. C. (1995). Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches. *Academy of Management Review*, 20, 571-610.
- 4) Boyd, J. (2000). Actional legitimation: No crisis necessary. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 12(4), 341-353.
- 5) Veil, S. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Petrun, E. L. (2012). Hoaxes and the paradoxical challenges of restoring legitimacy: Dominos' response to its YouTube crisis. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 26(2), 322-345.

- **Reaction Paper:** Are organizational image, reputation, and legitimacy the same things? How are they similar? How are they different?

September 29: Making Sense of Crises

Mann Gulch, Crisis Du jour - Robert

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**

- 1) Sitkin, S. B. (1996). Learning through failure: The strategy of small losses. In M. D. Cohen & L. S. Sproull (Eds.), *Organizational learning* (pp. 541-578). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 2) Veil, S. R. (2011). Mindful learning in crisis management. *Journal of Business Communication*, 48(2), 116-147.
- 3) Weick, K. E. (1993). The collapse of sensemaking in organizations: The Mann Gulch disaster. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38(4), 628-652.
- 4) Coffelt, T. A., Smith, F. L. M., Sollitto, M., Payne, A. R. (2010). Using sensemaking to understand victims' responses to a natural disaster. *The Northwest Journal of Communication*, 39(1), 11-35.

- **Reaction Paper:** Can organizations assist in collective sensemaking post-crisis, why or why not? How is sensemaking related to crisis learning?

October 6: Terrorism Risk and Response

Guest Lecture – Dr. Kimberly Stoltzfus

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**

- 1) FEMA. (2015). *Terrorism*. Retrieved from <http://m.fema.gov/terrorism>
- 2) Weimann, G. (2014). *New terrorism and new media*. Washington, DC: Commons Lab of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.
- 3) Archetti, C. (2014). *Terrorism, communication, and the war of ideas: Al-Qaida's strategic narrative as a brand*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Singapore.
- 4) Pearl, R. F. (2007, Jan. 3). International terrorism: Threat, policy, and response. *CRS Report for Congress*. Retrieved from <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL33600.pdf>

- 5) Masse, T. (2007, Feb. 2). The Department of Homeland Security's risk assessment methodology: Evolution, issues, and option for congress. *CRS Report for Congress*. Retrieved from <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homsec/RL33858.pdf>
- **Reaction Paper:** What are some of the most significant challenges to preventing acts of terrorism propagated in the name of religion?

October 13: Chaos & Resilience

Disaster in Japan, Crisis Du jour - Tim

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**
 - 1) Murphy, P. (1996). Chaos theory as a model for managing issues and crises. *Public Relations Review*, 22(2), 95-113.
 - 2) Sellnow, T. L., Seeger, M. W., & Ulmer, R. R. (2002). Chaos theory, informational needs, and natural disasters. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 30(4), 269-292.
 - 3) Horsley, S. (2014). The method in their madness. Chaos, communication, and the D.C. snipers. *Journal of Communication Management*, 18(3), 295-318.
 - 4) Sherrieb, K., Norris, F. H., Galea, S. (2010). Measuring capacities for community resilience. *Social Indicators Research*, 99, 227-247.
 - 5) Veil, S. R. & Bishop, B. W. (2014). Opportunities and challenges for public libraries to enhance community resilience. *Risk Analysis*, 34(4), 721-734.
- **Reaction Paper:** How can literature on community resilience help us better understand the application of chaos theory to crisis management?

October 20: Crisis Warnings and Disaster

Guest Lecture – Dr. Jeannette Sutton

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**
 - 1) Perry, R. W. (2007). What is a disaster? In H. Rodriguez, E. L. Quarantelli, & R. R. Dynes, *Handbook of Disaster Research* (1-15). New York: Springer.
 - 2) Fordham, M., Lovekamp, W. E., Thomas, D. S. K., & Phillips, B. D. (2013). Understanding social vulnerability. In D. S. K. Thomas, B. D. Phillips, A. Fothergill and W. E. *Social Vulnerability to Disasters* (1-29). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, Taylor and Francis.
 - 3) Bliss, L. (2015, July 21). Why you don't really care about the next "big one." *CityLab*. Retrieved from <http://www.citylab.com/weather/2015/07/why-you-dont-really-care-about-the-next-big-one/398969/>
 - 4) Schulz, K. (2015, July 20). The really big one. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/07/20/the-really-big-one>
- **Reaction Paper:** Are disaster and crisis just different names for the same phenomena, or are there inherent differences between the two that make them irreducible?

October 27: Planning and Practicing

Planning Exercise

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**
 - 1) Fearn-Banks, K. (2011). The crisis communications plan. In K. Fearn-Banks *Crisis communications: A casebook approach* (4th ed.), (pp. 301-339). New York: Routledge.

- 2) Nikolaev, A. G. (2010). Thirty common basic elements of crisis management plans: Guidelines for handling the acute stage of “hard” emergencies at the tactical level. In W. T. Coombs & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *Handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 261-281). New York: Wiley-Blackwell.
 - 3) Borda, J. L., & Mackey-Kallis, S. (2004). A model for crisis management. In D. P. Millar, & R. L. Heath (Eds.), *Responding to crisis: A rhetorical approach to crisis communication* (pp. 117-137). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
 - 4) Seeger, M. W. (2006). Best practices in crisis communication: An expert panel process. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 34(3), 232-244.
 - 5) Veil, S. R., Buehner, T., & Palenchar, M. (2011). A work in-progress literature review: Incorporating social media in risk and crisis communication. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 19(2), 110-122.
- **Draft 1:** 3 pages of a nugget of an idea that might turn into a paper.

November 3: Rhetorical Perspectives

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**
 - 1) Olaniran, B. A., & Williams, D. E. (2004). Burkian conternature and the vigilant response: An anticipatory model of crisis management and technology. In D. P. Millar, & R. L. Heath (Eds.), *Responding to crisis: A rhetorical approach to crisis communication* (pp. 75-94). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
 - 2) Ware, B. L. & Linkugel, W. A. (1973). They spoke in defense of themselves: On the generic criticism of apologia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59, 273-283.
 - 3) Benoit, W. L. (1997). Image repair discourse and crisis communication. *Public Relations Review*, 23(2), 177-186.
 - 4) Bostdorff, D. M., & Vibbert, S. L. (1994). Values advocacy: Enhancing organizational images, deflecting public criticism, and grounding future arguments. *Public Relations Review*, 20(2), 141-158.
 - 5) Yang, S-U., Kang, M., & Johnson, P. (2010). Effects of narratives, openness to dialogic communication, and credibility on engagement in crisis communication through organizational blogs. *Communication Research*, 37(4), 473-497.
- **Reaction Paper:** Should corporations engage in value advocacy, why or why not, and how does the rhetoric change when communicated by a corporation vs. non-profit, activist group, or other entity?

November 10: Reputation Management & SCCT

Press Conference Activity

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**
 - 1) Coombs, W. T. (2007). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 10(3), 163-176.
 - 2) Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2006). Unpacking the halo effect: Reputation and crisis management. *Journal of Communication Management*, 10(2), 123-137.
 - 3) Lyon, L., & Cameron, G. T. (2004). A relational approach examining interplay of prior reputation and immediate response to a crisis. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 16(3), 213-241.
 - 4) Kim, H. J., & Cameron, G. T. (2011). Emotions matter in crisis: The role of anger and

sadness in the public's response to crisis news framing and corporate crisis response. *Communication Research*, 38(6), 826-855.

- **Draft 2:** 5 pages of something somewhat coherent that will contribute to your final paper.

November 17: Mediated Crisis

Paper Meetings and Article Reviews

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**

- 1) Rasmussen, L. (2015). Planned Parenthood takes on Live Action: An analysis of media interplay and image restoration strategies in strategic conflict management. *Public Relations Review* 41, 354-356
- 2) Diers, A. R., & Donohue, J. (2013). Synchronizing crisis responses after a transgression: An analysis of BP's enacted crisis response to the Deepwater Horizon crisis in 2010. *Journal of Communication Management*, 17(3), 252-269.
- 3) Veil, S. R. (2012). Clearing the air: Journalists and emergency managers discuss disaster response. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 40(3), 289-306.
- 4) Wigley, S., & Fontenot, M. (2011). The Giffords shootings in Tuscon: Exploring citizen-generated versus news media content in crisis management. *Public Relations Review*, 37, 337-344.
- 5) Wigley, S. (2011). Telling your own bad news: Eliot Spitzer and a test of the stealing thunder strategy. *Public Relations Review*, 37, 50-56.

- **Article Reviews & Discussion**

November 24: Perceptions, Preparedness, & Culture

When the Levees Broke

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**

- 1) Paek, H.-J., Hilyard, K., Freimuth, V., Barge, J. K., & Mindlin, M. (2010). Theory-based approaches to understanding public emergency preparedness: Implications for effective health and risk communication. *Journal of Health Communication*, 15, 428-444.
- 2) Heath, R. L., Lee, J., & Ni, L. (2009). Crisis and risk approaches to emergency management planning and communication: The role of similarity and sensitivity. *Journal Public Relations Research* 21(2), 123-141.
- 3) Lachlan, K. A., Burke, J., Spence, P. R., & Griffin, D. (2009). Risk perceptions, race, and Hurricane Katrina. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 20 295-309.
- 4) Kim, I., & Dutta, M. J. (2009). Studying crisis communication from the subaltern studies framework: Grassroots activism in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 21(2), 142-164.

- **Reaction Paper:** How does culture affect risk perceptions and crisis sensemaking? How does it affect a community's ability to "bounce back" from a crisis?

December 1: Work Day

- **Draft 3:** 10 pages of something that is coming together as a real paper due by noon Dec. 2nd via email: shari.veil@uky.edu

December 8: Crisis Renewal, Leadership, and Virtuous Responses

Paper Meetings

- **Readings & Discussion Questions:**

- 1) Seeger, M. W., & Ulmer, R. R. (2001). Virtuous responses to organizational crisis: Aaron Feuerstein and Milt Cole. *Journal of Business Ethics, 31*, 369-376.
- 2) Seeger, M. W., Ulmer, R. R., Novak, J. M., & Sellnow, T. L. (2005). Post-crisis discourse and organizational change, failure, and renewal. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 18*(1), 78-95.
- 3) Ulmer, R. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. (2010). Considering the future of crisis communication research: Understanding the opportunities inherent to crisis events through the discourse of renewal. In W. T. Coombs & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *Handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 691-697). New York: Wiley-Blackwell.
- 4) Veil, S. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Heald, M. (2011). Memorializing crisis: The Oklahoma National Memorial as renewal discourse. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 39*(2), 164-183.

- **Reaction Paper:** What is the role of leadership in moving to a discourse of renewal?

December 15: Final Presentations and Final Papers Due at 6:00 p.m.