**COM 4580:**

**Strategic Communication Theory & Practice**

**Class time**: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:45 AM – 12:05 PM

**Class location**: LNCO 1110

**Professor:**

Jakob (Jake) Jensen, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

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Office Hours (by appointment only): Tuesday & Thursday, 9:30 – 10:30 AM

**Course Description:**

COM 4580 introduces students to strategic communication theory and practice which is the foundation of several professional activities (e.g., public relations, advertising, marketing, and health promotion). Students will learn strategic communication basics (e.g., segmentation, targeting, branding, positioning), strategic communication planning (e.g., the RACE model, the Strategic Communication Planning Matrix) as well as become familiar with foundational research in persuasion and social influence (e.g., consistency theories, stages of change, Cialdini’s six loci of influence). The course prepares students for professional practice and/or advanced study in strategic communication. COM 4580 is also well-suited for students interested in pursuing an MBA, MPP, MPH, J.D., or PhD.

**Learning Objectives:**

* Find and utilize marketing research databases
* Identify key publics & target markets
* Craft meaningful goals & objectives
* Craft effective strategies & tactics
* Identify suitable metrics for evaluation
* Perform basic evaluation
* Learn foundational strategic communication theories

**Required Texts:**

Tybout, A. M., & Calder, B. J. (2010). [*Kellogg on Marketing*](http://www.amazon.com/Kellogg-Marketing-Alice-M-Tybout/dp/0470580143/ref=pd_sim_b_2#_) (2nd Edition). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons.

Cialdini, R. B. (2008). [*Influence: Science and Practice*](http://www.amazon.com/Influence-Practice-Robert-B-Cialdini/dp/0205609996/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1304177471&sr=1-2) (5th Edition). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

**Requirements and Grading:**

Assignment % of final grade

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Test #1 | 10% |
| Test #2 | 20% |
| Test #3 | 35% |
| Test #4 | 35% |

**Plus/Minus System:**

COM 4580 uses a plus/minus system with one twist: there is no A+ or A- because the U does not recognize an A+ (thus making the A- problematic). More details concerning the grading scheme are included below.

**Grade Calculation:**

One's course grade will be determined by the (weighted) average of the grades on the tests. Each test will receive a percentage (and a letter grade to help students interpret their score), with numerical equivalents as follows:

Test Grade Letter Grade

90% and up A

87% and up B+

83% and up B

80% and up B-

77% and up C+

73% and up C

70% and up C-

67% and up D+

63% and up D

60% and up D-

59% and below F\*

\*Students that score lower than a 55% will be assigned a grade of 55% (so that one low grade cannot jeopardize their chances of passing COM 4580). However, students who cheat, do not show up for the test, or otherwise exhibit poor behavior will receive a zero (00%). Also, students who take the test at an alternative test time for a non-University approved reason will not be eligible to receive the 55% float.

For example, a student who received an 83% (B) on the first test, a 68% (D+) on the second test, and a 94% (A) on the third test, and an 81% on the fourth exam would have a course average of 83.5%.

(test 1 % × test 1 weight) + (test 2 % × test 2 weight) + (test 3 % × test 3 weight) + (test 4 % × test 4 weight)

(83% × .10) + (68% × .20) + (94% × .35) + (81% × .35) = 83.5%

(8.3) + (13.6) + (32.9) + (28.35) = 83.5%

To convert the course average into a course grade, the following scale will apply:

Course Average Course Grade

90% and up A

87% and up B+

83% and up B

80% and up B-

77% and up C+

73% and up C

70% and up C-

67% and up D+

63% and up D

60% and up D-

59% and below F

Thus, our hypothetical student would have a B (83.5% is above 83% and below 87%).

**ADA Statement:**

Any student who, because of disability, may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact the professor immediately so that the necessary accommodations can be made.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an honest and professional manner. Any attempt (successful or not) to behave dishonestly will result in an automatic zero for the course. For information on proper conduct at the University of Utah, see: <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>

**Lecture Attendance**:

Students are expected to be in class; however, attendance is not formally recorded for lecture. If a student misses a lecture, then she/he is responsible for making up the missed material. Lecture material is not repeated and lecture notes are not available from the professor or teaching assistants.

**Extra Credit**

Professor Jensen will announce extra credit opportunities in class. Do not email Professor Jensen asking if you have “missed” extra credit opportunities because of an absence. It is the responsibility of the absent student to learn, from their classmates, what has transpired in lecture.

**Exam Attendance:**

Students are required to be in attendance and on time for all exams. Any student that arrives after the official start of class on a test day will be docked 1 letter grade for every 10 minutes of lateness. In other words, a student who is 40 minutes late for the exam has failed.

Do not miss exams. Class exams are a priority and all other activities are secondary. Professor Jensen rarely gives make-up exams and unapproved absences are recorded as an F (0.0%).

If a student wants to miss an exam for a University-sponsored activity (e.g., playing in a volleyball tournament), then the student **must** contact Professor Jensen (at least) two weeks in advance of the absence. If a student fails to contact Professor Jensen in this time period, then the absence is not excused. Students requesting this type of absence should bring a note from a coach as well as evidence that the absence cannot be avoided.

Professor Jensen reserves the right to refuse any excuse at any time regardless of documentation. Students should approach Professor Jensen at the end of lecture to gain approval.

**Going Over Exams:**

Students can request a hand grade of any exam in COM 4580. Professor Jensen asks that this only be done in situations where the student truly believes something may be amiss (i.e., the grade is counter to expectation). After requesting the hand grade, the student will receive an email reporting the results. While Professor Jensen does offer hand grading, he does not meet with students to “go over” exams. Material is taught in class, all exam questions are evaluated for fairness, and hand grading is offered to catch any possible errors in test entry.

**Note**:

Professor Jensen reserves the right to alter this syllabus at any time. He will announce any changes in class. Students are expected to routinely check the online syllabus for changes.

**Fall 2014 Calendar**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | General Topic | Specific Topics Covered |
| **Unit 1: Strategic Communication Basics** | | |
| Aug. 25 | Introduction | Course overview; creating customers/markets  Read: Chapter 1 (Tybout & Calder) |
| Aug. 27 | Segmentation & Targeting | Introduction to market segmentation and targeting  Read: Chapter 2 (Tybout & Calder)  Optional Reading: Ch. 13 (Tybout & Calder) |
| Sept. 1 | Secondary Marketing Research | Finding and using marketing data  Read: Chapter 3 (Tybout & Calder)  Optional Reading: Ch. 18 (Tybout & Calder) |
| Sept. 3 | Positioning | Introduction to brand/product positioning  Read: Ch. 4 & 5 (Tybout & Calder)  Optional Reading: Ch. 7 (Tybout & Calder) |
| Sept. 8 | Evaluation & Metrics | Marketing metrics  Read: No reading |
| Sep. 10 | **Exam 1** | 20 multiple-choice question on Unit 1 |
| **Unit 2: Strategic Communication & Branding (An Advertising Perspective)** | | |
| Sep. 15 | Introduction to Strategic Communication & Branding | Creating brands; differentiation, extension; brand communities  Read: Ch. 6 (Tybout & Calder)  Optional Reading: Ch. 14 (Tybout & Calder) |
| Sep. 17 | Brand Stories | Recovering the history of a brand  Read: No reading |
| Sep. 22 | Primary Marketing Research | Original data collection  Read: No reading |
| Sep. 24 | Innovation | Invention vs. innovation; diffusion of innovations  Read: Ch. 13 (Tybout & Calder)  Optional Reading: Ch. 16 (Tybout & Calder) |
| Sep. 29 | Brands in the Digital World | Branding; Digital Strategy  Read: No reading |
| Oct. 1 | **Exam 2** | 20 multiple-choice question on Unit 2 |
| **Unit 3: Strategic Communication Planning (A PR Perspective)** | | |
| Oct. 6 | Introduction to Strategic Communication Planning | Trust; RACE model; Marriott School’s Strategic Communication Planning Matrix |
| Oct. 8 | What do Your Customers really want: Pricing & Assortment | Sandwich strategy; product assortment issues |
| Oct. 13 | NO CLASS | FALL BREAK (October 11th – 18th) |
| Oct. 15 | NO CLASS | FALL BREAK (October 11th – 18th) |
| Oct. 20 | Where are Your Customers:  Kickstarting | Kickstarter  Read: No reading |
| Oct. 22 | What Kind of People are Your Customers: Understanding Personality | Big 5 Personality Traits; Sensation Seeking  Read: No reading |
| Oct. 27 | Keeping Your Customers: Inoculation | Inoculation Theory  Read: No reading |
| Oct. 29 | **Exam 3** | 20 multiple-choice question on Unit 4 |
| **Unit 4: Strategic Communication – 6 Loci of Persuasion (A Research Perspective)** | | |
| Nov. 3 | Introduction to 6 Loci of Persuasion | Introduction to 6 loci of influence  Read: Chapter 1 (Cialdini) |
| Nov. 5 | Reciprocation | Reciprocation  Read: Chapter 2 (Cialdini) |
| Nov. 10 | Commitment & Consistency; Authority | Commitment and Consistency  Read: Chapters 3 & 6 (Cialdini) |
| Nov. 12 | Social Proof | Social Proof  Read: Chapter 4 (Cialdini) |
| Nov. 17 | Liking | Liking  Read: Chapter 5 (Cialdini) |
| Nov. 19 | NO CLASS | PROFESSOR JENSEN AT CONFERENCE |
| Nov. 24 | NO CLASS | PROFESSOR JENSEN AT CONFERENCE |
| Nov. 26 | NO CLASS | THANKSGIVING |
| Dec. 1 | Scarcity | Scarcity  Read: Chapter 7 (Cialdini) |
| Dec. 3 | **Exam 4** | 30 multiple-choice question on Unit 4 |

\***There is no Final Exam** in COM 4580. Thus, December 3rd is the last day of class.