

**COM4930: Special Topics
Corporate Communication
Spring 2025
Period 4: MWF 10:40 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Location: Rolfs 211
Section #2231, Class #20687
Class Dates: 1/13/25 - 4/23/25**

Instructor: Pasha Agoes, Ph.D.
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Office: 415 Rolfs Hall
Phone: (352) 294-7588
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-4pm (Or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course is about the importance of creating a coordinated corporate communication system and describes how organizations can benefit from important strategies and tools to stay ahead of the competition. Dr. Agoes will share case studies and examples from his 17-year experience of being a corporate communications consultant, and also examples that highlight the strategies companies have used to stay ahead. These case studies will provide students with the opportunity to participate in real decisions that managers and leaders have to make on a variety of real problems. Corporate Communication is so important that most organizations will eventually reach a point at which they realize they need to invest in building a corporate communications team responsible for various activities.

In this class students will learn about:

1. The Changing Environment for Business.
2. Communicating Strategically.
3. An Overview of the Corporate Communication Function.
4. Corporate Brand and Reputation.
5. Corporate Responsibility as per the standards of ISO 26000.
6. Media Relations.
7. Internal Communications.
8. Investor Relations.
9. Government Relations.
10. Crisis Communication.

REQUIRED TEXT

Corporate Communication, 8th Edition (2023)
By Paul A. Argenti

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Will be provided by Dr. Agoes as needed via Canvas.

INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS

Students should expect that Dr. Agoes will:

1. Convey knowledge of and passion for course material.
2. Conduct the class in a manner that is engaging.
3. Assign meaningful work that allows you to engage the course, its content and material.
4. Grade assignments and provide helpful feedback in a timely manner.
5. Reply to your emails in 48 hours or less.
6. Attempt to relate material in this course to your personal and professional life, as well as to relevant global, social, and political contexts.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to give themselves to and engage this course fully. If students do this, they will **gain invaluable knowledge and experiences**. To help accomplish this goal, students are expected to:

1. Complete all assigned readings each week.
2. Complete and submit all assignments on time.
3. Participate actively in all discussions and course activities.
4. Contribute positively to the classroom and group climate.
5. Take an initiative-taking approach to the course, including personal accountability for your behavior and academic progress in the class.
6. Stay in contact with Dr. Agoes throughout the semester to manage any issues.

CANVAS REQUIREMENT

Check your UFL.edu email and our Canvas course regularly. All class functions are performed on Canvas. If you have computer/internet or Canvas-related problems or questions, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-HELP [4357], or email helpdesk@ufl.edu.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

I. Exam

The exam may be taken one time only and may be completed only during the exam availability dates indicated on the course calendar. The exam consists of multiple choice, multiple answer, matching, true/false, and/or written response questions.

II. Chapter Quizzes and Exams

Quizzes are taken in class on a weekly basis to check learning. Students will also take two exams.

III. Reflection Notes

Each week students are expected to upload a reflection (1-2 paragraph is fine) on Canvas regarding their thoughts on that week's content. In addition, students are required to respond to two other students to stimulate discussion.

IV. Case Study Group Presentation

Students will be required to pick a topic pertaining to corporate communication. A separate and detailed assignment description will be provided.

GRADES

Points:

Assignments	Points
Quizzes (10 quizzes at 5 points each).	50
Reflection notes (13 reflection notes at 3 points each).	39
Group Presentation on a corporate communication topic.	100
Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
Total	389 points

ASSIGNMENT LETTER GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

A/- = Excellent. In addition to excellent quality and performance, work that earns an “A” exceeds minimum requirements and expectations.

B+/- = Exceptionally good. A grade of “B” indicates successful completion of all assignment requirements with little room for improvement. Please note that all minimum requirements must be satisfactorily completed to earn a grade of “B” or better. Writing skills and overall performance are above average.

C+/- = Good. A grade of “C” is the most commonly earned grade on course assignments. It indicates work in good standing. All minimum requirements are met, although some might need improvement. Writing skills are average to excellent.

D = Passing but below average. The assignment's minimum requirements are not met and/or quality of work is less than average.

E = Not passing. Minimum requirements are not met and quality of work is poor, or work displays plagiarism.

FINAL GRADES

Below is the percentage and point break-down for each letter grade. Please be advised that final letter grades are determined by the number of points earned.

Scale for Final Grades
A=93-100%
A-=90-92%
B+=87-89%
B=83-86%
B-=80-82%
C+=77-79%
C=73-76%
C-=70-72%
D+=67-69%
D=63-66%
D-=60-62%
E=0-59%

Special Note Concerning an Incomplete

A grade of "Incomplete" is given only to a student with extreme circumstances that prevent the student from completing course requirements during the semester in which they are enrolled. Please be forewarned that an "Incomplete" can only be given to a student who has completed at least 50% of the class and who is passing the course with a grade of "C" or better at the time the Incomplete is negotiated. See the University's policy for more information.

Note: A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For more information on UF's Grading Policy, see:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#hgrades>

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE AND LATE WORK POLICY

Our class meets in-person during our scheduled time. Class attendance is **required**. Students are expected to participate during class meetings.

Students get three absences in this class; no questions asked. Afterward, Dr. Agoes will begin to deduct **20 points for each unexcused absence from the final grade**. An **excused absence is possible** with a note from a clinic or doctor, a letter notification for a career interview, or a notification from the Athletic department.

Excused absences are consistent with university policies in the undergraduate catalog (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>) and require appropriate documentation.

Dr. Agoes will take attendance in each class. If a student is quarantined due to COVID-19, the student must contact the professor and provide documentation. If several students in class are absent due to COVID-19, Dr. Agoes may choose to record lectures and provide access to those quarantined students.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late work is either points deducted or rejected. All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. EST (before midnight) the latest. It is imperative that students plan ahead. It is the student's responsibility to be certain that their computer is compatible with Canvas. In the event of an extreme emergency that will prevent a student from participating in class assignments for an extended period of time (e.g., hospitalization), please notify Dr. Agoes as soon as possible to discuss options for a grade of Incomplete (for more about grades of Incomplete, see notes under "Final Grades").

In a communications class, it is especially important for everyone to:

1. Display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and students.
2. Pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities.
3. Avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom.
4. Avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, reading the newspaper, surfing the internet, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.)

COURSE HOMEPAGE

The course homepage on *Canvas* (<https://elearning.ufl.edu/>) will be central to the class. You will be able to access readings, worksheets, and the class discussion boards through the homepage. I will update it regularly with news and syllabus changes. Although I will make announcements in class and/or send e-mails regarding the assignments and schedule, it is your responsibility to check the homepage for updates.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

Your attendance and participation in class is significant to your success in the class. Attendance will be taken daily via roll call. Only three absences for whatever reason will be allowed. Beginning with the 4th unexcused absence, you will lose 20 points per absence off of your final grade.

An excused absence is possible with a note from a clinic or a doctor, a letter notification for a career interview, or a notification from the Athletic department or other UF department if the student is participating in a UF event. If students are not on present at the start of class, this disrupts the entire class, and students will be considered late. If a student leaves class early, this will also be considered as a ‘tardy.’

Three instances of tardiness count as one absence. If a student is only in attendance for under 40 of the 50 minutes of class, the student will be counted as ‘absent’ and not just ‘tardy.’

Requirements for class attendance, make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

GRADING POLICIES

“No Name”: Any and all assignments that do not have your full name on each document will receive an automatic 2-point penalty.

Late Assignments: You are permitted to submit 1 late assignment during the semester without penalty (to be turned in no later than 1 week after the due date in order to receive credit). Except for this one-time allowance, no assignments or make-up exams will not be accepted (*even for partial credit*) without a University-approved absence.

“Re-Do” Assignments: I do not allow students to “re-do” an assignment once it has been graded or to do an additional assignment in place of another assignment (e.g., homework, extra credit).

Further information on grading policies can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

CLASS RECORDINGS

While this is a face-to-face course, some of our sessions may occur over Zoom, around campus, or will be in the form of a pre-taped lecture for you to watch. The dates for these lectures are indicated on the day-by-day part of the syllabus.

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for

personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The William & Grace Dial Center for Speech and Communication Studies strives for a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. Students are expected to behave according to the UF student code of conduct in their classes. This means treating their instructors and fellow classmates with respect. To ensure a positive learning environment, students should not: make complaints publicly (in front of other students); attack the instructor verbally, physically, or in written form; or express reactions in the classroom that would bring harm to other students.

Failure to meet the UF code of conduct can impact a student’s class participation grade or result in referral to the UF judicial office. Class atmosphere can be made or broken by the approach that students take to the challenges of the course. Students that support others, show good humor in the face of obstacles, show dedication in the face of setbacks, and show grace when others are not doing as well will help to create a positive communication climate.

In a communication class, it is especially important for each of us to:

- Display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and students;
- Pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities;
- Avoid racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom;
- Avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, surfing the internet, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.).

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. *See the <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/> site.* It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

U MATTER, WE CARE

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

HONOR CODE

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’ Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult the instructor for this class.” For more information, refer to UF’s Student Conduct & Honor Code, <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/>

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor(s). The instructor(s) is only responsible for these instructional materials.

COMMUNICATION STUDIES MINOR

The William & Grace Dial Center for Speech and Communication Studies offers a minor in Communication Studies (CMS). Our CMS minor is consistently one of the largest minors within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Employers increasingly want to see oral communication skills, and students find the minor pairs well with any major or even fulfills their

requirement for an outside concentration. The total minor is just 18 credit hours. Your Public Speaking course counts as one of the core courses for the minor. You can find more information at https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/colleges-schools/UGLAS/CMS_UMN/. Visit our website at <https://dialcenter.clas.ufl.edu/>

PUBLIC SPEAKING LAB

The Public Speaking lab offers assistance to those seeking to develop effective speaking skills across academic disciplines. We are open to all of the UF academic community, including undergraduates, graduate students, TAs, faculty, and UF alumni. We take walk-ins, but you can make an appointment at this link, and find the Dial

Center: <https://tutortrac.clas.ufl.edu/TracWeb40/Default.html>

The following hours are available:

- Monday: 11am – 5pm
- Tuesday: 10:30am – 5pm
- Wednesday: 10am – 3:30pm, 4-5pm
- Thursday: 10:30-11:30am, 1-5pm
- Friday: 9:30-10:30am, 11am – 3pm

If you have a question about the Lab or need help with public speaking, feel free to contact the Lab Director at publicspeakinglab@clas.ufl.edu

CAMPUS RESOURCES

- Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit <https://umatter.ufl.edu/> to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit <https://counseling.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>

University Police Department: Visit <https://police.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit <https://ufhealth.org/locations/uf-health-shands-emergency-room-trauma-center>

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit <https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/> or call 352-273-4450.

- Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: <https://it.ufl.edu/helpdesk/> or call at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu

Career Connections Center: <https://career.ufl.edu/> or visit the Reitz Union Suite 1300, or call 352-392-1601.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Visit <https://uflib.ufl.edu/find/ask/> or call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.

Teaching Center: <https://umatter.ufl.edu/office/teaching-center/> or visit 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment call 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215

Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; Visit <https://www.sfa.ufl.edu/written-student-complaints> for more information.

Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): View <https://em.ufl.edu/> for more information.

CHANGES TO COURSE SYLLABUS/CALENDAR

Dr. Agoes reserves the right to update or change portions of this course syllabus and calendar in order to make the class a better experience for everyone. This may be in response to suggestions from students, from Dr. Agoes' own observations, or as the result of requirements by the Department, College, or University. Changes will be posted to the course site on Canvas, and also communicated in class.

RIGHT TO PRIVACY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ensures that student records (for any students over 18 years of age) are kept confidential. Dr. Agoes will not release a student's grade to anyone other than the student, or school officials who are given permission to view the student's progress. Anyone other than student (or an approved school official) may not request any information (beyond simple directory information) about a student, their progress, or their status as a student in Dr. Agoes' class—this includes parents, partners, and other students. For more information, see the University of Florida website for The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COURSE PROBLEMS

If a student has any concern regarding the course, contact Dr. Agoes via immediately. However, please do NOT contact Dr. Agoes for computer, internet and/or Canvas-related problems. Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-HELP [4357], or email to helpdesk@ufl.edu for these matters.

UF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES POLICY

For University of Florida Students, the following guidelines apply: Students, upon prior notification of their instructors, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of

time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances.

If a faculty member is informed or is aware that a significant number of students are likely to be absent from class because of a religious observance, the faculty member should not schedule a major exam or other academic event at that time. Of special note in the Spring 2025 semester are the periods of Lent and Easter (March 5-April 17), Ramadan (February 28-March 29), and Passover (April 12-20).

A student who is to be excused from class for a religious observance is not required to provide a second party certification of the reason for the absence. Furthermore, a student who believes that they have been unreasonably denied an education benefit due to religious beliefs or practices may seek redress through the student grievance procedure.

The UF Religious Holidays Policy is available at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#religiusholidaystext>

WEEKLY SCHEDULE SPRING 2025

DATE	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Week 1	-Introduction to the Course -Chapter 1: The Changing Environment for Business	Quiz 1 on Friday Reflection note 1 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 2	Chapter 2: Communicating Strategically.	Quiz 2 on Friday Reflection note 2 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 3	Chapter 3: An Overview of the Corporate Communication Function.	Quiz 3 on Friday Reflection note 3 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 4	Chapter 4: Corporate Brand and Reputation.	Quiz 4 on Friday Reflection note 4 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 5	Chapter 5: Corporate Responsibility as per the standards of ISO 26000.	Quiz on 5 Friday Reflection note 5 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 6	Chapter 6: Media Relations.	Quiz 6 on Friday Reflection note 6 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 7	EXAM #1 (CH 1-6) on Friday, 2/28/25	N/A
Week 8	Chapter 7: Internal Communications.	Quiz on 7 Friday Reflection note 7 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 9	Chapter 8: Investor Relations.	Quiz on 8 Friday Reflection note 8 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 10	Spring Break	NO WORK – HAVE FUN!
Week 11	Chapter 9: Government Relations (GovRel – How to obtain a “Social License”).	Quiz 9 on Friday Reflection note 9 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 12	Chapter 10: Crisis Communication.	Quiz 10 on Friday Reflection note 10 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 13	Group Presentations	Reflection note 11 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 14	Group Presentations	Reflection note 13 due on Sunday 11:59 p.m.
Week 15	Exam Review on 4/21/25 FINAL EXAM (CH. 7-10) on 4/23/25 at 211 Rolfs Hall.	No quiz. No reflection note due.