



## Course Description

Stresses that managers must be in a position to communicate effectively during crisis situations. Knowledge and specific skills are presented in this course to assist managers with effective communication during stressful or emergency situations.

## Course Textbook

Jordan-Meier, J. (2011). *The four stages of highly effective crisis management: How to manage the media in the digital age*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Walaski, P. (2011). *Risk and crisis communications: Methods and messages*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Burson, T. E., Brooks, B. W., & Pupchek, L. S. (2010). Skydive Carolina - "Welcome to my world". *Journal Of Critical Incidents*, 3110-116. Retrieved from Business Source Complete database.

Reynolds, B. J., & Earley, E. (2010). Principles to enable leaders to navigate the harsh realities of crisis and risk communication. *Journal Of Business Continuity & Emergency Planning*, 4(3), 262-273. Retrieved from Business Source Complete database.

## Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the stages of a crisis.
2. Assess levels and types of risk and crisis for the purpose of appropriate communication.
3. Recommend effective communication in various crisis situations.
4. Compose a risk or crisis message utilizing key techniques for maximum effectiveness and response.
5. Recommend avenues for damage control when rumors, sabotage, or other complications interfere with effective crisis communication.
6. Demonstrate how to develop a relationship with the news media for the purpose of mass communication with the public.
7. Contrast the benefits and pitfalls of using social media and other technologies in risk and crisis communication.
8. Develop a communication plan for a crisis situation in your field.
9. Profile the audience intended to receive the risk or crisis communications to ensure maximum comprehension of messages.

## Credits

Upon completion of this course, the students will earn three (3) hours of college credit.

## Course Structure

1. **Unit Learning Outcomes:** Each unit contains Unit Learning Outcomes that specify the measurable skills and knowledge students should gain upon completion of the unit.
2. **Unit Lesson:** Each unit contains a Unit Lesson, which discusses unit material.
3. **Reading Assignments:** Each unit contains Reading Assignments from one or more chapters from the textbook. Suggested Readings are provided in the Unit I, II, IV, VI, VII and VIII Study Guides to aid students in their course

of study. The readings themselves are not provided in the course, but students are encouraged to read the resources listed if the opportunity arises as they have valuable information that expands upon the lesson material.

4. **Learning Activities (Non-Graded):** These non-graded Learning Activities are provided in Units I and III-VIII to aid students in their course of study.
5. **Key Terms:** Key Terms are intended to guide students in their course of study. Students should pay particular attention to Key Terms as they represent important concepts within the unit material and reading.
6. **Discussion Boards:** Discussion Boards are part of all CSU term courses. More information and specifications can be found in the Student Resources link listed in the Course Menu bar.
7. **Unit Assessments:** This course contains two Unit Assessments, one to be completed at the end of Units I and II. Assessments are composed of written response questions.
8. **Unit Assignments:** Students are required to submit for grading Unit Assignments in Units III-VIII. Specific information and instructions regarding these assignments are provided below. Grading rubrics are included with the Unit III-VIII Assignments. Specific information about accessing these rubrics is provided below.
9. **Ask the Professor:** This communication forum provides you with an opportunity to ask your professor general or course content related questions.
10. **Student Break Room:** This communication forum allows for casual conversation with your classmates.

## CSU Online Library

The CSU Online Library is available to support your courses and programs. The online library includes databases, journals, e-books, and research guides. These resources are always accessible and can be reached through the library webpage. To access the library, log into the myCSU Student Portal, and click on "CSU Online Library." You can also access the CSU Online Library from the "My Library" button on the course menu for each course in Blackboard.

The CSU Online Library offers several reference services. E-mail ([library@columbiasouthern.edu](mailto:library@columbiasouthern.edu)) and telephone (1.877.268.8046) assistance is available Monday – Thursday from 8 am to 5 pm and Friday from 8 am to 3 pm. The library's chat reference service, *Ask a Librarian*, is available 24/7; look for the chat box on the online library page.

Librarians can help you develop your research plan or assist you in finding relevant, appropriate, and timely information. Reference requests can include customized keyword search strategies, links to articles, database help, and other services.

## Unit Assignments

### Unit III Assignment

#### Communication Plan Outline

Submit an outline of your Crisis Communication Plan due in Unit VII. The Crisis Communication Plan can be for an organization of your choice and should, at a minimum, cover the elements discussed in Chapter 8 of the Walaski textbook. Please refer to the Communication Plan rubric and the Communication Plan instructions found in the syllabus under the Unit VII Mini Project for specific assignment requirements as you complete your outline.

Write in complete sentences, and use APA formatting for any references used in your outline. (This means you must insert in-text citations in the outline and include a References page.) See the Success Center Resources page for information on outline formatting. In the CSU Student Portal, go to Success Center/Resources/Writing Resources/Writing Skills.

Information about accessing the Blackboard Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

### Unit IV Assignment

You are the CEO of a major corporation whose databases were recently hacked and sensitive customer information was stolen. The press has been hounding you for some kind of a statement regarding the situation and what the corporation is doing to protect its customers and prevent this from happening again. Would you as the CEO speak out about the crisis or would you choose a frontline spokesperson to represent the corporation? Explain your choice.

Please respond to the following questions (even if you chose the CEO to make the statement):

- What are the essential elements of a good and effective spokesperson in a crisis?
  - What criteria are considered in selecting that particular person?
  - Why do you think it would be important to have a well-trained spokesperson speak for the corporation during a crisis such as this one?
  - Why is the “head and heart” principle important for a spokesperson during a crisis?
  - Why does the media wish to speak with frontline employees during a crisis?
  - How can the spokesperson’s body language and presentation skills impact the audience?
- 
- How would you as the CEO mitigate any damage to the corporation caused by erroneous information given out by the frontline employee?

Your response to this scenario should result in a paper that is a minimum of two pages. Please be sure to reference any sources used, including your textbook. The title page and reference page should be included as well; separate from the body content. The entire paper should follow APA guidelines.

Information about accessing the Blackboard Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

## **Unit V Assignment**

### Simulated News Conference Paper

Create a crisis situation related to your field, field of interest, or place of work, and simulate a press conference. Write a paper no less than three pages including the following information:

- Introduction and description of your crisis including which stage of the crisis the press conference is taking place in.
- Description of how you will handle a press conference, including what types of media will attend, who will manage the start and finish of the conference, and who will be the designated spokesperson.
- Draft a statement that the spokesperson will present.
- Draft three trick questions that the reporters may potentially ask in this particular situation, and provide your answers to those trick questions.
- Create clear headings for each of the four sections of this paper.

Information about accessing the Blackboard Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

## **Unit VI Assignment**

### Presentation to Executive Team

Imagine you are the head of Corporate Communication in an organization that has yet to embrace social media. Assemble a presentation for the Board/Executive Leadership Team to persuade them that social media is necessary for prudent and effective crisis management. Your goal is to gain their confidence, resources, and overall endorsement of your plans to include social media in the organization’s crisis response.

Your presentation should be at least 10 slides in length with speaker notes included for each slide. There should also be a title slide and a presentation slide not included in the 10 slides. (Resources for effective PowerPoint presentations can be found on the Success Center’s Resources Page under Writing Resources and then Writing Skills: [https://mycsu.columbiasouthern.edu/student/learningresources/online/writing\\_resources/WritingSkills/](https://mycsu.columbiasouthern.edu/student/learningresources/online/writing_resources/WritingSkills/) )

Make sure to include descriptions of at least three different social media tools, how each is being used to communicate during crisis management, and rules for how to get your message across efficiently, effectively, and succinctly using these tools.

Information about accessing the Blackboard Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

## Unit VII Mini Project

### Crisis Communication Plan

Develop a crisis communication plan for an organization of your choice. Include a social media policy. You should combine the sections of the plan that you have already worked on throughout this course, being sure to make adjustments for any feedback you might have received from the professor.

Plan should be no less than five pages long and include, at a minimum, the following items:

- Title page (with clear identification of organization)
- Statement of purpose
- Scope
- Situations and assumptions
- Audience profile
- Chains of command/approval processes (operations)
- Key communication strategies
- Delegation of responsibilities
- Evaluation of communication efforts
- Guidelines specific to social media use
- References

Information about accessing the Blackboard Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

## Unit VIII Assignment

### Message Map

Create a message map for a crisis or risk situation in your field/organization. Identify who the stakeholders for the message are, potential stakeholder questions and concerns, key messages, and supporting facts. (An example message map can be found on page 72 of the Walaski textbook.)

Information about accessing the Blackboard Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

## APA Guidelines

The application of the APA writing style shall be practical, functional, and appropriate to each academic level, with the primary purpose being the documentation (citation) of sources. CSU requires that students use APA style for certain papers and projects. Students should always carefully read and follow assignment directions and review the associated grading rubric when available. Students can find CSU's Citation Guide by clicking [here](#). This document includes examples and sample papers and provides information on how to contact the CSU Success Center.

## Grading Rubrics

This course utilizes analytic grading rubrics as tools for your professor in assigning grades for all learning activities. Each rubric serves as a guide that communicates the expectations of the learning activity and describes the criteria for each level of achievement. In addition, a rubric is a reference tool that lists evaluation criteria and can help you organize your efforts to meet the requirements of that learning activity. It is imperative for you to familiarize yourself with these rubrics because these are the primary tools your professor uses for assessing learning activities.

Rubric categories include: (1) Discussion Board, (2) Assessment (Written Response), and (3) Assignment. However, it is possible that not all of the listed rubric types will be used in a single course (e.g., some courses may not have Assessments).

The Discussion Board rubric can be found within Unit I's Discussion Board submission instructions.

The Assessment (Written Response) rubric can be found embedded in a link within the directions for each Unit Assessment. However, these rubrics will only be used when written-response questions appear within the Assessment.

Each Assignment type (e.g., article critique, case study, research paper) will have its own rubric. The Assignment rubrics are built into Blackboard, allowing students to review them prior to beginning the Assignment and again once the Assignment has been scored. This rubric can be accessed via the Assignment link located within the unit where it is to be submitted. Students may also access the rubric through the course menu by selecting "Tools" and then "My Grades."

**Again, it is vitally important for you to become familiar with these rubrics because their application to your Discussion Boards, Assessments, and Assignments is the method by which your instructor assigns all grades.**

## Communication Forums

These are non-graded discussion forums that allow you to communicate with your professor and other students. Participation in these discussion forums is encouraged, but not required. You can access these forums with the buttons in the Course Menu. Instructions for subscribing/unsubscribing to these forums are provided below.

[Click here for instructions on how to subscribe/unsubscribe and post to the Communication Forums.](#)

### Ask the Professor

This communication forum provides you with an opportunity to ask your professor general or course content questions. Questions may focus on Blackboard locations of online course components, textbook or course content elaboration, additional guidance on assessment requirements, or general advice from other students.

Questions that are specific in nature, such as inquiries regarding assessment/assignment grades or personal accommodation requests, are NOT to be posted on this forum. If you have questions, comments, or concerns of a non-public nature, please feel free to email your professor. Responses to your post will be addressed or emailed by the professor within 48 hours.

Before posting, please ensure that you have read all relevant course documentation, including the syllabus, assessment/assignment instructions, faculty feedback, and other important information.

### Student Break Room

This communication forum allows for casual conversation with your classmates. Communication on this forum should always maintain a standard of appropriateness and respect for your fellow classmates. This forum should NOT be used to share assessment answers.

## Grading

Discussion Boards (8 @ 2%)	=	16%
Unit Assessments (2 @ 15%)	=	30%
Assignments (5 @ 7%)	=	35%
Unit VII Mini Project	=	19%
<b>Total</b>	=	<b>100%</b>

## Course Schedule/Checklist (PLEASE PRINT)

The following pages contain a printable Course Schedule to assist you through this course. By following this schedule, you will be assured that you will complete the course within the time allotted.

By following this schedule, you will be assured that you will complete the course within the time allotted. Please keep this schedule for reference as you progress through your course.

Unit I	Introduction – General Concepts of Risk and Communication; Stages of a Crisis
<b>Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Study Guide <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Learning Activities (Non-Graded):</b> See Study Guide
<b>Read:</b>	<b><i>Risk and Crisis Communications: Methods and Messages</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 1:</b> Introduction <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 2:</b> General Concepts of Risk and Crisis Communications <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 3:</b> Communication Fundamentals and Theoretical Foundations <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suggested Reading:</b> See Study Guide
<b>Discuss:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Response:</b> Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Comment:</b> Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
<b>Submit:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assessment</b> by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
Notes/Goals:	

Unit II	Stages I and II of Media Reporting During a Crisis
<b>Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Study Guide
<b>Read:</b>	<b><i>The Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Section II Introduction:</b> Stages of a Crisis <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 7:</b> Stage One—Fact-Finding Stage <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 8:</b> Beware the ST Factor: Remember the Context <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 9:</b> Stage Two—Unfolding Drama <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suggested Reading:</b> See Study Guide
<b>Discuss:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Response:</b> Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Comment:</b> Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
<b>Submit:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assessment</b> by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
Notes/Goals:	

Unit III	Stages III and IV of Media Reporting During a Crisis
<b>Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Study Guide <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Learning Activities (Non-Graded):</b> See Study Guide
<b>Read:</b>	<b><i>The Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 10:</b> Stage Three—Finger-Pointing Stage = Blame Game <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 11:</b> Stage Four—Resolution and Fallout <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Section II:</b> Summary
<b>Discuss:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Response:</b> Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Comment:</b> Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
<b>Submit:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assignment</b> by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
Notes/Goals:	

Unit IV	Choosing and Preparing a Spokesperson
<b>Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Study Guide <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Learning Activities (Non-Graded):</b> See Study Guide
<b>Read:</b>	<b><i>The Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Section III:</b> Spokespeople—Speed Matters and Perception is Everything <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 12:</b> Who? <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 13:</b> To CEO or not? <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 14:</b> Head and Heart <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 15:</b> Role of the Frontline <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suggested Reading:</b> See Study Guide
<b>Discuss:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Response:</b> Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Comment:</b> Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
<b>Submit:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assignment</b> by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
Notes/Goals:	

Unit V	Mainstream Media
<b>Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Study Guide <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Learning Activities (Non-Graded):</b> See Study Guide
<b>Read:</b>	<p><b><i>Risk and Crisis Communications: Methods and Messages</i></b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 7:</b> Working with the Media <b><i>The Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 17:</b> Understanding Journalists' Questions <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 18:</b> Techniques to Get Your Message Across <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 19:</b> Dealing with Difficult Questions <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 20:</b> Never Repeat the Poison: Avoid Negative Language <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 21:</b> How the Media Are Changing Rules for Interviews <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 22:</b> Lights, Camera, Action—The Interview <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 23:</b> Media Training
<b>Discuss:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Response:</b> Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Comment:</b> Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
<b>Submit:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assignment</b> by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
Notes/Goals:	

Unit VI	Social Media
<b>Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Study Guide <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Learning Activities (Non-Graded):</b> See Study Guide
<b>Read:</b>	<p><b><i>The Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management</i></b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 3:</b> Social, Interactive, and Everywhere All the Time <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 4:</b> Social Media's Role in Crisis <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 6:</b> Twitter: Is It a Fad or the "8-Bazillion Pound Gorilla?" <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Section I:</b> Summary <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 29:</b> Where? New Media Tools <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suggested Reading:</b> See Study Guide
<b>Discuss:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Response:</b> Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Comment:</b> Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
<b>Submit:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assignment</b> by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
Notes/Goals:	



Unit VII	The Crisis Communication Plan
<b>Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Study Guide <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Learning Activities (Non-Graded):</b> See Study Guide
<b>Read:</b>	<p><b><i>The Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management</i></b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 16:</b> Policy Guidelines for Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Appendix D:</b> Nine Steps to a Crisis Communication Plan <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Appendix G:</b> Social Media Resources for Crisis Communicators <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Appendix H:</b> 30 Things You Should Not Share on Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Appendix J:</b> Social Media Embracing the Opportunities, Averting the Risks <p><b><i>Risk and Crisis Communications: Methods and Messages</i></b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 8:</b> Developing a Risk and Crisis Communications Plan <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suggested Reading:</b> See Study Guide
<b>Discuss:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Response:</b> Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Comment:</b> Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
<b>Submit:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mini Project</b> by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
Notes/Goals:	

Unit VIII	Special Situations and Avoiding Mistakes
<b>Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit Study Guide <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Learning Activities (Non-Graded):</b> See Study Guide
<b>Read:</b>	<p><b><i>Risk and Crisis Communications: Methods and Messages</i></b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 4:</b> Crafting Risk and Crisis Messages—Setting Goals and Objectives and Audience Profiling <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 5:</b> Crafting Risk and Crisis Messages—Developing the Words <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 6:</b> Delivering the Message While Avoiding Common Mistakes <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chapter 9:</b> Special Risk and Crisis Communication Situations <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suggested Reading:</b> See Study Guide
<b>Discuss:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Response:</b> Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Discussion Board Comment:</b> Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
<b>Submit:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assignment</b> by Tuesday, 11:59 p.m. (Central Time)
Notes/Goals:	