Hello. Welcome to CMS 4580. I’m Susan McFarlane-Alvarez, and I’ll be your professor for this semester’s work. In this course, you’ll learn about communication practices within organizations before, during and after crisis and change. This course falls under the umbrella of Corporate Communication. I encourage you to read through this syllabus carefully. We will learn through online modules, participation in discussions, screening of videos, assignments, exams and through online assessments.

**Course Description:**

**Number and Title:**

CMS 4580 (CRN 20435)  
Crisis & Change Communication

**Credit Hours:**

3.0 semester credit hours

**Catalog Description:**

Introduction to crisis and change communication and application, covering crisis communication theory, management approaches during corporate changes, and the influence of culture on crisis and change communication.
Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites:
CMS 2010 with a minimum grade of C

Computer Requirement:

Each CSU student is required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for the student's academic program. Students will sign a statement attesting to such access. For further information on CSU's Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to


Computer Skill Prerequisites:

- Able to use the Windows™ operating system
- Able to use Microsoft Word™ word processing
- Able to send and receive e-mail using the Clayton State University e-mail system, using Outlook™ or Outlook Express™
- Able to attach and retrieve attached files via email
- Able to use a Web browser.

In-class Use of Student Notebook Computers:

Students may need to bring their own notebook computers for use during in-class assignments. Computers will be required to access course materials and to communicate with your instructor. The instructor will provide advanced notice about class meetings in which notebook computers will likely be needed.

Desire2Learn (Online Classroom):

On-line activity will take place in Desire2Learn, the virtual classroom for the course.

You can gain access to Desire2Learn, by signing on to the SWAN portal and selecting: "D2L" on the top right side. If you experience any difficulties in Desire2Learn, please email or call The HUB at TheHub@mail.clayton.edu or (678) 466-HELP. You will need to provide the date and time of the problem, your SWAN username, the name of the course that you are attempting to access, and your instructor's name.
Major Student Activities:

- Reading and studying from the course text book
- Completing assignments for homework with deadlines
- Taking notes during online lectures
- Participating in online discussions
- Submitting assignments via Learning Management System (D2L)
- Watching videos and completing exams on D2L

CMS 4580 - Crisis and Change Communication - 3.0 semester credit hours
Introduction to crisis and change communication and application, covering crisis communication theory, management approaches during corporate changes, and the influence of culture on crisis and change communication.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
The primary objectives of this survey course are to familiarize students with the basic concepts and principles of crisis communication; to provide students with knowledge of theories and research regarding effective crisis communication management and image restoration practices.

At the end of the course, students should have attained knowledge and understanding of the following central concepts:

- How communication can prevent, cause, accelerate, and assist in the recovery from a crisis event in the corporation.
- Risk assessment and the crisis planning process.
- Applicable theories and image restoration strategies.
- Best practices in risk and crisis communication.
- Audience diversity and vulnerable populations in a crisis.
- Practical applications and ethical implications of crisis planning and response.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach by Kathleen Fearn-Banks. 4th Edition
- Access to your Clayton State University email, the Internet, MSWord and PowerPoint.
- Access to D2L: Important Note – In the first week of class, it is imperative for you to ensure that you can access D2L and that you have configured your browser for optimum running of D2L on your laptop’s system configuration.

Recommended Others:


Method of Instruction
The primary method of instruction is the asynchronous online class lecture. Students will also learn through group discussions and exercises, individual assignments, screenings and guest lecture.

McFarlane-Alvarez • CMS 4580 • Spring 2016
Instructor Information:

Instructor: Dr. Susan McFarlane-Alvarez
Office Phone: 678-466-4761
Office Location: Music Building, Room 217
Email: SusanMcFarlane-Alvarez@clayton.edu (quickest contact)
Web: faculty.clayton.edu/smfarlanealvare
Meeting Times: Online
Meeting Room: Desire to Learn (D2L)
Office Hours: M & W 9:00 – 9:45 a.m.; and 11:10 -- 12:30 and online, or by appointment

- **Textbook Information:** A textbook is required for this course. You can find this in the on-campus bookstore (The Loch Shop), or online from most booksellers, including Amazon, half.com, etc.:

Texts:


Text Coverage:

Chapters 1 – 7, & 10, 12, 15
Evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Study Abstracts</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Communication Plan</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; Activity (D2L)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam/Response</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 - 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mid-term Progress Report:

The mid-term grade in this course, which will be issued by February 29, reflects approximately 25% of the entire course grade. Based on this grade, students may choose to withdraw from the course and receive a grade of "W." Students pursuing this option must fill out an official withdrawal form, available in the Office of the Registrar, or withdraw on-line using the Swan by mid-term, which occurs on March 4. Instructions for withdrawing are provided at this link. The last day to withdraw without academic accountability is March 4, 2016.
The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Readings should be completed in time for discussion on the date under which they appear. Review of lectures posted on indicated Fridays is a required component of this Hybrid course. Material covered will provide important guidelines for client work, or directions for assignment completion.

### Crisis & Change Communication Schedule

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Readings should be completed in time for discussion on the date under which they appear. Review of lectures posted on indicated Fridays is a required component of this Hybrid course. Material covered will provide important guidelines for client work, or directions for assignment completion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Focus, Reading, Assignment</th>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>01/11 M</td>
<td>Course Overview</td>
<td>Email &amp; D2L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>01/15 F</td>
<td>D2L Orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>01/18 M</td>
<td><strong>MLK Jr. Day Holiday: No Class</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>01/21 (Th)</td>
<td><em><strong>No Show Reporting Deadline</strong></em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>01/22 F</td>
<td>READ: Chapter 1 – Crisis Communication Today</td>
<td>1: Crisis Comm Today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/05 F</td>
<td>Read Chapter 4: When Crisis Strikes</td>
<td>2: Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/12 F</td>
<td>Read Chapter 5: Social Media</td>
<td>5: Social Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/15 (M)</td>
<td>[Midterm grade submission opens]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>02/19 F</td>
<td>Read Chapter 6: Rumors &amp; Cybercrises</td>
<td>6: Rumors &amp; Cyber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>02/25 Th</td>
<td>Due: Case #1 – Proctor &amp; Gamble</td>
<td>Case #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>02/29 M</td>
<td>[Midpoint grade submission CLOSES]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>03/04 F</td>
<td>[Midpoint Full Semester - last day to withdraw and receive a W grade]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>03/07 M</td>
<td>***SPRING BREAK BEGINS: NO CLASSES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>03/11 F</td>
<td>***SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>03/18 F</td>
<td>Overview: Crisis Communication Plan Assignment Requirements</td>
<td>15: Crisis Communication Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>03/25 F</td>
<td>Read: Chapter 7: Textbook Cases</td>
<td>7: Textbook Cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>04/03 M</td>
<td>Due: Case #2 – Johnson &amp; Johnson</td>
<td>Case #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>04/08 F</td>
<td>Read Chapter 10: Natural Disasters</td>
<td>10: Natural Disasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>04/18 M</td>
<td>Due: Case #3 – Hurricane Katrina</td>
<td>Case #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>04/22 F</td>
<td>Read Chapter 12: Product Failure &amp; Tampering</td>
<td>12: Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>05/02 M</td>
<td>Last Class: Wrap-up</td>
<td>Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Course Policies:

General Policy
Students must abide by policies in the Clayton State University Student Handbook, and the Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities. The Student Handbook is part of the Academic Catalog and Student Handbook, which begins on page 6.

University Attendance Policy
Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students’ ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine that excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

Course Attendance Policy
Students are expected to access the online course materials and participate in the required discussions, activities and assignments. Course tracking can be used to assess the amount of “attendance” in an online course. Any student who fails to attend the orientation session or complete a scheduled assignment during the first week of class will be reported to as a “No Show”.
In order to remain an active participant in this course, you MUST:
- Make active use of D2L materials
- Remain engaged in all components, modules and activities for the course
- Stay engaged while reviewing lecture components
And remember, while you may feel remote or removed from a “real” class environment, your interaction in the online environment is indeed easier to track and assess, in terms of how much time you spend on modules, and your engagement with course components.
For your own benefit, enjoyment and success in this course, stay engaged, limit distractions as you focus on the course components online, and take responsibility for your motivation and focus throughout the course.

Participation Requirements:
Course modules will be assigned on a weekly basis according to the Course Schedule and include objectives, a lesson guide and expectations for completing assignments. You are expected to actively participate in all aspects of the course. This includes visiting the D2L site and all its components on a regular basis, completion of assigned readings, homework assignments, and tests or quizzes and participation in online discussions.
Generally, students will ONLY be allowed to make up exams or assignments in the case of documented emergencies or valid excuse, with written or printed evidence of the reason for your absence, and with established written agreement with the instructor. Even if you have a verbal agreement with the instructor, you MUST follow up with an e-mail to receive written confirmation of our agreement.

Make-up examinations will be offered at the Professor’s discretion, and will be given only if they are taken before graded examinations are returned to students. In the event that a make-up examination cannot be taken before exams are returned to other students, the missed examination will not count in calculating the course grade. This means that other graded work will be responsible for a greater weight in determining the course final grade.

**Online Etiquette (Netiquette)**
Discussion, chat, and e-mail spaces within this course are for class purposes only, unless otherwise stated. Please remember to conduct yourself collegially and professionally. Unlike in the classroom setting, what you say in the online environment is documented and not easily erased or forgotten.

The following guidelines apply:
• Avoid using ALL CAPS, sarcasm, and language that could come across as strong or offensive.
• Use proper punctuation, grammar and be sure to edit your contribution before posting.
• Read all postings before posting your responses to discussion topics so as to not unnecessarily repeat information.
• Keep chat comments brief and to the point.
• Focus on one topic at a time when chatting or posting to discussions.
• Remember that unlike in face-to-face learning environments what you say in discussions and chats is documented and available to be revisited. Choose your words and discussion topics carefully.
• E-mail should only be used for messages pertaining to the course. Please refrain from sending forwards, jokes, etc. within e-mail.

**Academic Dishonesty**
All instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work involved. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Community Standards. Judicial procedures are described beginning on page 19 in the section of the Academic Catalog and Student Handbook titled, Procedures for Adjudicating Alleged Academic Conduct Infractions.
Plagiarism Detection Software.
Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. You should submit your papers in such a way that no identifying information about you is included.

Disruption of the Learning Environment
Behavior which disrupts the teaching–learning process during class activities will not be tolerated. While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in a classroom setting, more serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening behavior. A student who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed from class. A student who is dismissed is entitled to due process and will be afforded such rights as soon as possible following dismissal. If found in violation, a student may be administratively withdrawn and may receive a grade of WF.

More detailed descriptions of examples of disruptive behavior are provided in the Clayton State University Academic Catalog and Student Handbook starting on page 14.

Writing Assistance
The Writers’ Studio 224 is located in the A&S building, room 224. There you can talk with trained writing consultants about your speech outlines and writing projects. They are available to work with you at any stage of your outline, from generating ideas to organizing your paper to understanding how to format it correctly. The service is free; you may drop in and wait for a consultant or sign up for a regular appointment. But remember: you, not your consultant, are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the papers you submit.

Aside from meeting with consultants one-with-one, you can also participate in writing workshops. In these workshops, faculty and consultants will guide you in discussions and activities important to academic writing topics. You will be identify, analyze, integrate, and synthesize writing principles through a series of writing exercises. Remember that we are here to collaborate with you as you develop your own experiences as a student-writer.

Visit our website for more information: http://clayton.edu/writersstudio.

There you will find a link to register for appointments online: http://clayton.mywconline.com

(Note: first-time users need to complete a one-time registration prior to using the online appointment website).
Other Policies

- All examinations, presentations and assignments must be the result of the students own work and effort
- Switch off cell-phones and other distracting devices when reviewing lectures and other materials.

Tips for Success in this Class:

- Keep up with assigned readings
- Review materials on D2L between classes and when you’ve missed a class
- Check your e-mail frequently

Words of Wisdom:

Be courteous. Support and encourage each other. Participate actively.

Operation Study
At Clayton State University, we expect and support high motivation and academic achievement. Look for Operation Study activities and programs this semester that are designed to enhance your academic success such as study sessions, study breaks, workshops, and opportunities to earn Study Bucks (for use in the University Bookstore) and other items. See the following site for details:

http://www.clayton.edu/operation-study