

**UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

*Credit: 3 Units*

**Course Outline/Syllabus**

**JRN3018:PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

**1.0 Course Description**

This subject introduces students to contemporary Kenyan and international Public Relations and Organizational Communication practice. Students should develop an understanding of contemporary public relations in the context of international and external organizational communication and in the relationship between practice and theory.

**2.0 Purpose**

The aim of this course is to teach students the ingredients of good communication, the role of Public Relations in organizational communication. The course is also intended to help students acquire proficiency in communication, understand how individuals are shaped by organizations, to understand the critical role of communication in the achievement of overall organizational goals and to develop good communication skills.

**3.0 Course Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of the course students should be able to:

- Understand the value of organizational communication in the attainment of overall goals of an organization
- Apply the various approaches of communication applicable in organizations
- To examine and critique the role of communication in contemporary organizations
- To explore and apply the concepts and theories relevant to communication in organizational contexts
- improve your ability to identify and propose solutions to organizational communication problems
- Know the various hindrances to effective communication and how they can be overcome
- Apply ethical, legal and sound management principles at the workplace, in their interaction with the media and other communication industries.
- use information and communication technology to write, edit, design, produce and package information

## **4.0 COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **4.1 Week 1: Introduction to Organizational Communication**

#### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the session you should be able to:

- Define an organization and explain its key characteristics and explain the nature of an organization
- Appreciate the importance of communication in the achievement of organizational goals.
- Understand the Theoretical Foundations and principles of Organizational Communication

Activities

Reading. Health L Robert (2001) Handbook of Public Relations - Chap 28

Class discussions

### **4.2 Week 2: Types of Communication**

#### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this session you should be able to:

- Explain the communication process and its key components
- Explain the nature, strengths and weaknesses of interpersonal and written forms of communication
- Appreciate the importance of non-verbal communication
- Explain the main barriers to verbal and written communication

Activities

Reading Fundamentals of Contemporary Business Communication - Chapter One

Class discussions

### **4.3 week 3: Systems Approach to Organizational Communication**

#### **Learning Objectives**

At the end of the learning session students should be able to:

- Show the relevance of systems theories to Organizations
- Identify systems components of components, and Processes
- Apply systems theories to organizational communication

Activities:

Class Discussions

Reading: Miller, K (2009).Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes. Chapter 4

### **4.4 Week 4: Communication approaches in Organizations**

#### **Learning Outcomes**

On completion of the session you should be able to:

- Explain the various types of Vertical Communication
- Understand the importance of Horizontal Communication

- Understand the value of Group and Network communication

*Activities and Assignments*

Read Ober,S (2001). *Fundamentals of Contemporary Business Communication*.  
Chapter 2.

Class discussions

#### **4.5 Week 5: Public Relations and Crisis Communication**

##### **Learning Objectives**

On completion of the topic you should be able to

- Understand the nature of organizational crises
- Initiate various Public Relations strategies for crisis management
- Resolve various types of organizational conflicts

##### **Activities**

Read Course Text: Health L. Robert (2001).A Handbook of Public Relations-Chap 11  
Miller,K (2009) *Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes*.

Chapter 9

#### **4.6 Week 6: Networks and Channels**

##### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the session you should:

- Understand the importance of Communication Networks in organizational settings
- Be familiar with Network types and Channels

Reading: Fielding, M (1997). *Effective Communication in Organizations*: Juta and Co Ltd, Cape Town, South Africa

#### **4.7 Week 7: Mid –Term Exam**

#### **4.8 Week 8: Issues Management**

##### **Learning Objectives**

At the end of the session you should be able to:

- Appreciate the importance of anticipating and analyzing issues
- Identify key publics to support key public policy issues
- Media Planning
- Group communication

*Activities*

Class discussions

Reading: Health: Chapters 10,11 and 12

#### **4.9: Week 9: Effective Organizational Communication**

##### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the session you should be able to:

- Identify Barriers to effective Organizational Communication

- Appreciate the nature of Intercultural barriers
- design approaches for overcoming communication Barriers,
- Listening as well as giving
- Feedback

Reading: Ober, S

Discussion on Communication structures in USIU

#### **4.10 Week 10: Public Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility**

##### **Learning Objectives**

At the end of the session you should be able to:

- Appreciate the significance of socially responsible actions for Public Relations
- Evaluate Stakeholder and Environmental demands
- Understand the importance of community relations

*Activities and assignment*

*Reading: Heath: A Handbook of Public Relations Practice-Chapter 31*

*Class discussions*

#### **4.11 Week 11: Business Communication**

##### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the session you should be able to:

- Understand business context of organizational communication
- Improve business writing skills
- Develop better business language skills

*Activities*

Reading: Ober, S.Fundamentals of Contemporary Business Communication

Class discussions

#### **4.12 Week 12: The New Communication Technologies**

##### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the Session you should be able to:

- Explain the role of New Communication Technologies in Public Relations
- Understand the impact of the Internet on public Relations Practice
- Understand new trends of Public Relations and Globalization

Reading: Miller, Katherine: Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes. Chapter 13

Class discussions

#### **4.13: Week 13: Presentation of Group Assignments**

#### **4.14 Week 14: Final Exams**

## 5.0 Teaching Methodology

The course will be conducted through Lectures, Group discussions, Case Studies and Group Projects

## 6.0 READING MATERIALS

Recommended Course Texts

Heath, L. R (2001). *A Handbook of Public Relations*: Sage Publications, USA.

Ober ,S (2007) *Fundamentals of Contemporary Business Communication*. Houghton Miffling G Co., USA

### 6.1 Suggested Reading

Ian Brooks (2003, 2nd Ed).*Organisational Behaviour*: Pearson Education Limited, England

Fielding, M (1997). *Effective Communication in Organizations*: Juta and Co Ltd, Cape Town, South Africa.

Cees, B.M & Van riel (1995) *Principles of Corporate Communication*: Prentice Hall, Great Britain.

Miller,K(2009).*Organizational Communication: Approaches and Processes,5<sup>th</sup> edition*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning,USA.

## 7.0 EVALUATION

### Course Work

<b>Class attendance and participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Term Paper</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Group Work</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Mid-Semester Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b><u>30%</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 %</b>

