

School of Information Management

MMIM 542 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Trimester Two 2007

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

Course Coordinator:	Name	Dr. Brian M Harmer	
	Room	EA 228	
	Tel	463 5887	Email: brian.harmer@vuw.ac.nz
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Preferred contact method is email, and every effort will be made to respond within one working day. Face to face meetings by appointment (not on Wednesdays except in emergency)			
Programme Coordinator	Ms Irma Huth		
	Room	EA 121	
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Class Times and Room Numbers

Seminars will be held from 5:40 pm to 7:30 pm in Railway West Wing room 214 (RWW214) on the Tuesdays of term time in trimester two. There will be no seminars during the mid term break.

Course Objectives

The course aims to explore a number of key communication theories and see how they can be applied to individual and collective behaviour to make communication more effective in the modern business.

Course Content

The course will make particular and reflexive use of sensemaking theory to examine ways in which the chosen theories can be integrated with the student's prior knowledge and experience and thereby equip him or her with tools for sensible participation in, and contribution to, organizational life.

Among the theories to be addressed are:

- Sensemaking theory
- General systems theory

- Structuration theory
- Adaptive structuration theory
- Social identification theory
- Network theory and analysis
- Uses and gratification theory
- Agenda setting theory
- Gatekeeping theory
- Uncertainty reduction theory
- Computer mediated communication
- Media richness theory

- Other theories may be introduced as the course requires from time to time

Typically, seminars will be in two parts: (a) a student led exploration and discussion of assigned readings relevant to the topic of the day, and (b) an exploration of how the theory can be sensibly, practically, and beneficially applied to organizational communication.

Expected Workload

Typically, students should plan to spend 12.5 hours per week on any 15 point course. Two of these hours are spent in seminars, and the remainder of the time is available for assigned readings, completion of assignments, preparation for presentations, and pursuit of additional readings arising from the topics covered.

Group Work

It is anticipated that the enrolment in this class will be low in 2007, and group work is therefore deemed impractical.

Readings

No text book is mandated for this course. Students will be required to access Blackboard each week, to obtain the references for required readings for the coming week (3 to four readings per week). All readings will be obtainable from Proquest, the Web, or else will be distributed in hardcopy when copyright allows.

Materials and Equipment

No additional materials or equipment are mandated. However, all participants must have access to an Internet capable computer, and be able to deliver all written assignments as MS Word (.doc) files. Access to a printer is important.

Assessment Requirements

In view of the small enrolment expected, students will be expected to undertake considerable independent exploration of topic assigned each week.

Task	Description	Assessment criteria	Marks
Locate and critique	Find article that encapsulates the material under discussion and provide a written critique, and make a presentation to the class	Each student will be required to find independently an article or book chapter that illustrates the major issues of the assigned topic in whole or significant part. This will happen three times in the course for each student. Marks will be given for (a) appropriateness and credibility of selected material (1.5 pts)	15

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (b) understanding of the topic as demonstrated in the discussion of the material led by the class (1.5 pts) (c) Ability to apply the material to real life situations as demonstrated in the written critique submitted (2 pts) <p><i>Due on various dates to be negotiated</i> (3 x 5 points)</p>	
Written Essay 1	First essay on a topic to be assigned	<p>Approximately 3,000 words. Points will be awarded for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) appropriate structure – introduction, literature review, discussion, conclusions (3 pts) (b) Appropriate review of literature (NOT annotated bibliography) (6 pts) (c) Sound and appropriate argumentation in the discussion (6 pts) (d) Appropriate conclusion and identification of opportunity for further investigation (3 pts) (e) Grammar, spell check, citation styles, layout (2 pts) <p><i>Due Friday 17 August, 2007</i></p>	20
Written Essay 2	Submission to selected journal as discussed in class – topic to be assigned	<p>Approximately 3,000 ~ 5,000 words as prescribed in the selected journal guidelines to authors. Points will be awarded for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Identification of suitable journal and brief discussion of why (5pts) (b) appropriate structure – introduction, literature review, discussion, conclusions (3 pts) (c) Appropriate review of literature (NOT annotated bibliography) (6 pts) (d) Sound and appropriate argumentation in the discussion (6 pts) (e) Appropriate conclusion and identification of opportunity for further investigation (3 pts) (f) Grammar, spell check, citation styles, layout (2 pts) <p><i>Due Friday 12 October, 2007</i></p>	25
Poster	A poster on the relevance of one of the theories to organizational communications	<p>A1 sized poster detailing your exploration of how a particular theory might be practically exploited in your place of work Layout guidelines and marking schedule to follow (10 pts) <i>Due Friday 5 October, 2007</i></p>	10
Participation Journal	A weekly journal commencing in week 2	<p>Two pages per week (approximately) in which you are required to “make sense” of all your experiences related to this course. The format will be discussed in class in week 1.</p>	30
Total			100

Penalties

Generally speaking, word limits are offered as guidelines and will not incur penalties unless variations are significant.

Late submissions are not acceptable unless they have been agreed with the coordinator prior to the date on which they are due. Unsignalled lateness will result in the available marks being reduced by 5% per day.

Mandatory Course Requirements

To obtain a pass mark in this course, students must attempt (and submit) all required assessment tasks either by the required dates, or by some later date mutually agreed between the student and course coordinator (See section 2 of the Assessment Handbook).

Communication of Additional Information

Teaching materials will be made available under the course resources section of the relevant course in Blackboard. Students who do not habitually use their VUW student address should contact ITS so that their student account will automatically forward messages from Blackboard to whatever email address is in common use by the student. Any immediate communication

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building - it includes the ground floor reception desk (EA005) and offices 125a to 131 (Level 1). The office is available for the following:

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Notice of Turnitin Use

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. At the discretion of the

Head of School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to www.vuw.ac.nz/policy.

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website www.vuw.ac.nz/fca under Important Information for Students:

- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5233 ext. 8977. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5842.