

Victoria Management School

**MGMT 308 ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

Trimester One 2011

**COURSE OUTLINE**

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**COURSE COORDINATOR**

**Sashi Meanger**

Room: RH1032, Rutherford House

Phone: 463-6924

Email: [sashi.meanger@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:sashi.meanger@vuw.ac.nz)

Website: [www.vuw.ac.nz/vms](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/vms)

**ADMINISTRATOR**

**Luisa Acheson**

Room: RH 1022, Rutherford House

Phone: 463-5381

Email: [luisa.acheson@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:luisa.acheson@vuw.ac.nz)

**TUTORIAL COORDINATOR**

**Garry Tansley**

Room: RH 915, Rutherford House

Phone: 463-6968

Email: [garry.tansley@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:garry.tansley@vuw.ac.nz)

**Trimester Dates**

Teaching Period: Monday 28 February – Friday 3rd June

Study Period: Monday 6 June – Thursday 9 June

Examination Period: Friday 10 June – Saturday 2 July (inclusive)

**Withdrawal from Course**

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before 11 March 2011.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is 14<sup>th</sup> of May. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an 'Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late' including supporting documentation

The application form is available from either of the Commerce Faculty's Student Customer Service on the Ground floor Rutherford House.

**Class Times and Room Numbers**

Lectures: Tuesday: 2.40pm – 4.30pm (GB LT 4)

Lectures commence Tuesday, 1 March 2011.

Tutorials: Times vary. All students must attend one 1 hour tutorial per week. Tutorials will commence in Week 3 of the course and finish in Week 10. To pass the course you must go to **6** of the **7** scheduled tutorial sessions. Once times are finalised you must go to your **assigned tutorial time**. Students requesting a change will have to provide documentary evidence of reasons for the change. Please contact the tutorial coordinator with all queries about tutorials.

## Introduction

MGMT308 Organisational Communication will examine the range of contemporary topics and perspectives in organisational communication. It will introduce concepts and issues that will enable students to explore the process of how people communicate in organisational settings. It will attempt to provide tools to examine the ways in which communication in organisations operates at different levels including mass media and public, group and interpersonal communication. Communication processes set up the contexts in which we make sense of organisational life. Through learning to analyse these processes, it is possible to critically question the identities, relationships, and ethics that are created and maintained in organisational communication.

The intent has been to design a course which provides an appropriate introduction to the broad field of organisational communication, which challenges students to think independently and critically about contemporary topics and perspectives. Students will demonstrate independent and critical thinking about how organisational communication works, and they will show that they understand and can use communication perspectives to observe situations and analyse issues in organisational life. Students will be encouraged to investigate and evaluate how organisations can create and maintain success in communication.

## Overall Course Objectives

The course has several objectives, which include:

- examining contemporary issues and perspectives in communication both globally and in New Zealand
- comprehending the complex interaction of organisational communication
- defining issues critical to the organisational communication processes
- understanding the skills of effective communication in organisations
- understanding organisational communication theory
- improving competence in organisational communication practices
- developing an ability to effectively manage change related communication.

## Course-related Student Learning Objectives

On successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

Objective	By the end of this course, students should be able to:	Addressed via
1	Demonstrate an understanding of some major theoretical frameworks and concepts relevant to organisational communication and use such frameworks to critically evaluate and develop tools for organisational communication.	Assignment 1 & 2, tutorials and exam
2	Develop an ability to communicate reason / argument / recommendations etc related to critical analysis of a specified managerial situation using a specific theoretical framework.	Assignment 2, tutorials and exam
3	Recognise the importance of critical analysis, leadership and change related communication	Assignment 2, tutorials and exam

## Readings

There is **no required** textbook for this course however handouts for key topics will be handed out in class.

**Recommended reading** (for assessments): On 3-day loan at Pipitea library.

- Adler, R. (2002). *Communicating at work*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Bordow, A., & More, E. (1991). *Managing organisational communication*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- Cheney G., Christensen L. T., Zorn T. E., Ganesh, S. (2004). *Organizational Communication in an Age of Globalization: Issues, Reflections, Practices*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press.
- Daniels, Tom D., Barry K. Spiker, Michael J. Papa (1997). *Perspectives on organizational communication*. Boston, Mass. : McGraw-Hill.
- Eisenberg, E. M., & Goodall, H. L. (1997). *Organizational communication: Balancing creativity and constraint*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: St Martin's Press.
- Griffin, E. A. (2003). *A first look at communication theory*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Jones, J. & Grant, B. (1991). *Writing, setting and marking essays: A guide for students and staff*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Auckland : Higher Education Research Office, University of Auckland.
- Littlejohn, S. W. (2002). *Theories of human communication*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Miller, K. (2003). *Organizational communication: Approaches and processes*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Pearce, W. Barnett. (1994). *Interpersonal communication: Making social worlds*. New York, NY : HarperCollins.
- Shockley-Zalabak, P. (1999). *Fundamentals of organizational communication*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Longman.
- Verderber, K. S. & R. F. Verderber (2001). *Inter-act: Interpersonal communication, concepts, skills and contexts*. 9th ed. Australia; Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Westwood, R. I., and Linstead, S. (Eds.) (2001). *The language of organization*. London: Sage.
- Wood, J. (1997). *Communication theories in action: An introduction*. Belmont, CA.: Wadsworth.

Finding extra material on organisational communication:

- There is a wide range of **books** on organisational communication in the university library, and these are **scattered** around many parts of the collection – most can be tracked by searching for communication as a key word. Books can be requested and sent down from Kelburn via the Intersite service.
- You can also use the university catalogue and electronic databases to find **journal articles** or current material from **New Zealand print media**. See 'external links' folder on Blackboard for suggestions in using these databases. Many journals are available online - these can be found via the catalogue or the databases.

Apart from specific database material via the library, and for bibliographic searching, the internet is usually NOT a good source to use for assignments. If you use internet material it should be at the level of a third-year (or above) textbook or journal article, and you should have a good reason for using it.

Additional Readings will be distributed as required.

## Course Delivery

The course consists of one two hour lecture per week and assigned tutorials per week. Lectures are run over all 12 weeks of the course and tutorials are run over seven weeks of the course. There is an expectation that students will attend all lectures and tutorials offered. Lectures will start in week one of the course and tutorials in week three of the course.

Week	Dates	TOPIC	Assessments
1	Mar 1	<i>Introduction, Course Outline</i>  Lecture: What is Organisational Communication?  <i>No Tutorials</i>	
2	Mar 8	Lecture: Organisational Communication – Theory  <i>No Tutorials</i>	
3	Mar 15	Lecture : Rationality and Decision Making Participation in Groups and Teams  <i>Tutorial: Introductions, Assignments and Projects</i> <i>Communication Theory analysis</i>	
4	Mar 22	Lecture: Social Relationships and Networks  <i>Tutorial: Business Communication/Essay</i>	
5	Mar 29	Lecture: Global and Multicultural Communication  <i>Tutorial: Organisational Communication</i> <i>(Rationality Case study)</i>	Assessment 1 Short Essay 12 noon, Tue 29 March  Proposal Presentations starts
6	Apr 5	Lecture: Public Communication  <i>Tutorial: Proposal presentations, Case study</i>	
7	Apr 12	Lecture: Communication Plan/Media Relations  <i>Tutorial: Proposal presentations</i>	
		<b><i>Mid Semester Break</i></b>	
8	Apr 31	Lecture: Ethics and Values in Communication  <i>Tutorial: Proposal Presentations, Media Relations</i>	
9	May 3	Lecture: Leadership and Communication  <i>Tutorial: Proposal Presentations, Communication Plan</i>	
10	May 10	Lecture: Power and Control in Organisational Life  <i>No Tutorials</i>	Assessment 2 Project Report 12 noon, Tue 10 May
11	May 17	Lecture: Change Related Communication  <i>No Tutorials</i>	
12	May 24	Lecture: Career Workshop/Analysis of OC Career Paths  <i>No Tutorials</i>	

## Expected Workload

A total of 150 hours of work is expected from students in this course. That consists of 31 hours of lectures and tutorials, eight hours per week outside classes during teaching weeks spent reading, studying and writing assignments, and a further 23 hours revising during mid-trimester break and study week.

## Group Work

While the course has a tradition of study group collaboration, there are no group assignments. However there are important elements in the assessment process that are strictly individual. Collaboration on individual assignments is not allowed beyond general discussion as to how one might interpret the nature of the assignment question. Please do not work together to formulate a response and do not loan out your completed assignments. You will be expected and encouraged to work in groups on in-term cases and assignments; however reports must be individual submissions.

## Assessment Requirements

Assessment	Title	Weight	Date
1	<b>Short Essay: Communication</b>  Word count: 1000 words maximum, excluding references	15% of final grade	Due 12 noon Tue 29 March
2	<b>Project</b>  Proposal (10%) Presentation and one page summary  Report (25%) Word count: 2500 words maximum, excluding references	35% of final grade	In Assigned Tutorials  Due 12 noon Tue 10 May
3	<b>Final Examination</b>	50% of final grade	Examination Period: Friday 10 June – Saturday 2 July (inclusive)
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	

### *Assignments in Detail*

- There will be opportunities to ask about assignments in class.
- Please check out the notes on ‘handling assignments’ below, including the cover sheet outline.
- See course readings on Blackboard on essay writing, referencing, and critical reading skills.
- All assignments will be assessed for clear and correct writing style, correct formatting and referencing.

#### **1. Short Essay: Communication 15% of final grade**

Word Count: 1000 words, excluding references.

**Objective:** to extend students’ ideas about ‘communication’ in organisations.

This is a short essay based on class sessions in weeks one and two, and readings from sources on ‘organisational communication’. (See the **Recommended Reading** list in this outline).

**Task:** According to Cheney et al. (p. 6),

*'The transmission-oriented view of communication ...does not begin to account for the subtleties and complexities of the larger process by which we make sense of our world, relate to one another, exert influence, maintain cultures, and sometimes affect the course of human events'.*

Discuss this proposition, comparing the 'transmission' model of communication with at least one other perspective. Use examples to illustrate your discussion.

**Assessment criteria:**

- Demonstrate independent and critical thinking about what is 'communication'.
- Combine independent reading with class work and recommended reading material.

Essays are to be delivered in the MGMT 308 drop-off box 24 **on the mezzanine floor of Rutherford House** by 12 noon Tue 29 March.

**2. Project 35% of final grade**

Proposal (10%) and Report (25%)

Word Count for Report - 2500 words, excluding references.

**Objective:** To research and explore critical issues in organisational communication.

**Task:** Your instructions for completing this assignment are as follows:

- Choose an organisation or event you are familiar with or one where you can gain access for research.
- Consider and select critical organisational communication issues applicable to the organisation. (See list below)
- Research these issues and with a theoretical perspective discuss and apply the critical issues to the organisation or current event.
- The outcome of your project should contain conclusions and possible recommendations for the organisation.

A list of suggested topics for you to research is provided below or you may choose other areas. Your topic should be specific, investigating at least one main issue or a particular aspect. All topics, in the form of a proposal, will be approved by your lecturer before you begin your research.

The project has two components.

- The presentation of your Proposal is worth 10 per cent of the total mark, and
- The Report is worth 25 per cent of the total mark.

**Proposal Presentation:** During selected tutorials, you will give a **5 minute** presentation of your proposal to the class.

- The presentation will convey which organisation you have chosen and why,
- which critical organisational communication issue(s) you have chosen in relation to the organisation and why,
- your plan of research, and
- what you propose to find from your research.
- The presentation will be assessed for both content and the manner in which it was presented.

**Written Report:** In 2,500 words you should write a report about the topic you researched in line with your proposal. The report should reflect your understanding and critical analysis of the topic. Reports are to be delivered in the MGMT 308 drop-off box 24 **on the mezzanine floor of Rutherford House** by 12 noon Tue 10 May.

Research for your topic should include:

- Recommended texts
- Current and relevant Journals
- Newspaper and other media resources

Research should also include material from the organisation you researched including interviews with appropriate personnel.

Critical Issues Topics:

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Communication Theory            | • Public Relations                           |
| • Rationality and Decision Making | • Organisational Culture                     |
| • Communication Modification      | • Organisational Power                       |
| • Social Relationships            | • Organisational Politics                    |
| • Perception                      | • Organisational Conflict                    |
| • Communication in Organisations  | • Negotiation                                |
| • Cross Cultural Communication    | • Workplace Ethics and Values                |
| • Gender Communication            | • Organisational Change                      |
| • Interpersonal Communication     | • Globalisation and OC                       |
| • Transactional Analysis          | • Impact of Changing Workforce on OC         |
| • Networks                        | • Information Technology and OC              |
| • Groups and Teams                | • Organisational Development                 |
| • Leadership                      | • Organisational Communication in the Future |
| • Public Communication            | • Public Relations                           |
| • Structure and Design            | • Organisational Culture                     |

**Assessment criteria**

- Demonstrate your overall understanding of course material and chosen topic.
- Demonstrate a critical perspective.
- Be original and show what you have researched and learned.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills.

**3. Final Examination:      50% of final grade**

Students who enrol in courses with examinations are obliged to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period. The final examination for this course will be scheduled at some time during the period from Friday 10 June – Saturday 2 July 2011.

Students must achieve a minimum of 40% of marks in the examination to pass the course.

**Objective:** To assess your overall understanding of course material.

**Task:** This is an OPEN BOOK examination which will include short essay-type questions and a case study. You can bring in any notes you want to, as well as recommended readings. Dictionaries can also be brought in. Questions will cover a range of topics from the whole course.

**Assessment criteria:**

- Demonstrate critical thinking about organisational communication.
- Demonstrate independent reading and thinking.
- Demonstrate your overall understanding of ideas and topics covered in the course.

**Handing in assignments:**

Assignments should be dropped in the relevant MGMT308 Box #24 on the Mezzanine floor of Rutherford House (Pipitea Campus) in hard copy form by the **due time and date**. All completed assignments must have a cover sheet. The cover sheet is in Annex A. Students must also keep an electronic copy of their work archived in case the original assignment goes missing. Failure to do so will jeopardise any claim by you that your work was submitted in the rare cases where your work goes astray.

Assignments received after the due time will be deemed to be late, and must be handed to the Administrator for this course in RH1022 where your assignment will have the **time, date and signature** noted on the front cover by the person receiving it.

*Note: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCA programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.*

**Policy on Remarking**

Every attempt is made to ensure that the marking is consistent across tutors and fair to students. Students may ask for their written work to be remarked. The course coordinator will do the remarking and provide comments. The original marking sheet is removed to ensure the process is independent. If the mark differs by 10% or less the two marks are averaged. If it exceeds 10% then it is independently marked by a third marker and the average of the two closest marks is taken. Experience from previous years is that almost all remarks are within 10% and where there is a change in mark, half the assignments go up and half go down. Occasionally there is a significant shift in the mark.

Application for remarks must be made within 5 days after the marks are available. To apply for a remark, complete the request for re-examination of assessed work form (Annex B) stating which sections (criteria listed in the mark sheet) you wish re-examined. Write on why you think the mark does not, in your view, fairly reflect the quality of your work. Hand this with your assignment into the following place:-

RH 1022, Rutherford House where your assignment will have the **time, date and signature** noted on the front cover by the person receiving it. Allow up to 5 days for remarks to be completed.

**Referencing**

There are many different styles of referencing and the Faculty of Commerce & Administration at VUW has decided to make APA (American Psychological Association) referencing style the common standard across the Faculty. The Commerce and Central Libraries hold the APA Style Guide. You can also access the information from the online VUW library site.

**Tutorial Signup Instructions:**

Tutorial signup is done through the online programme; 'S-Cube'. You will be notified by email when to sign-up to a tutorial using this system. Go to the signup website at: <https://signups.vuw.ac.nz> and



enter your SCS username and password to log into the system. If you have been unable to sign up by the end of the second week please contact the Tutorial Coordinator - Garry Tansley.

## Penalties

- (i) In fairness to other students, work submitted after any deadline will incur a penalty for lateness. **The penalty is 2 of the marks available (marks available means what the assignment is worth i.e. 20% or 20 marks) for an assignment submitted after the due time on the due date for each part day or day late.** (for example if an assignment is out of 20 and the assignment receives 50% then one day late means the mark will be out of 18 and the student will receive 50% of 18). **Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays** will be included when counting the number of days late. Assignments received **more than 7 days after the due date** will not be accepted and the student will **automatically fail the Mandatory Course Requirements**.
- (ii) Course Outlines provide a signal to students of forthcoming workload, dates of submission etc, and thus student study plans should take account of course requirements across all courses. Consequently, workload issues related to other courses and employment will not be accepted as reason for dispensation from mandatory requirements or waiver of penalties. **Extensions** to submission deadlines for any assigned work will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**.
- (iii) Students who are unable to comply with any of the mandatory requirements should make a written application for an extension to the due date for submission of assigned work or for waiver of a penalty, **in advance**, to the **Tutorial Coordinator**, providing documentary evidence of the reasons of their circumstances.

All such applications must be made **before** the deadline and be accompanied by documentary evidence, eg a medical certificate, or counsellor's report clearly stating the degree of impairment, and the dates the illness or event prevented you from undertaking your academic studies. This can be applied retrospectively.

- (iv) In the event of unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. serious illness, family bereavement or other exceptional events), that precludes an application in advance, students should make contact with the **Tutorial Coordinator** as soon as possible, and make application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable.
- (v) Word limits should be adhered to, especially so when they provide a guide to limiting the student's coverage of a topic. **The penalty will be 10% of the grade for an assignment which is 10% over the word limit.**

## Mandatory Course Requirements

To meet Mandatory Course Requirements, students are required to:

- a. Attend at least 6 out of the 7 tutorial sessions;
- b. Sit the final examination;
- c. Submit all assignments within the allowable timeframe (see Penalties section above); and
- d. To obtain at least 40 per cent of the examination marks available.

Students who fail to satisfy the mandatory requirements for this course but who obtain 50% or more overall, will be awarded a "K" grade.

Standard fail grades (D or E) will be awarded when the student's overall course mark falls below the minimum pass mark, regardless of whether the mandatory course requirements have been satisfied or not.

Notice of Failure to meet Mandatory Course Requirements will be posted on Blackboard.

## **Class Representative**

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

## **Communication of Additional Information**

Information on course-related matters will be announced at class and posted on the **Blackboard** website at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/>. It will be crucial for you to regularly check Blackboard for messages, announcements and materials.

## **Email Contact**

Students wishing to contact staff by email should adhere to the following instructions:

Include the **Course Code**, your **Name**, your **Student ID** and the **Topic** in the subject area of the email, eg MGMT308\_Smith\_Pauline\_3000223344\_Ass1 Query

All students must use their VUW SCS email account and ID. Otherwise, email will be classified as Spam and will be dumped without being read. All emails with attachments will be dumped, unless requested by staff.

## **Use of Turnitin**

Student work provided for assessment in this course **will be checked** for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. 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.

**For the following important information follow the links provided:**

### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

### **General University Policies and Statutes**

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study).

Find out about academic progress and restricted enrolment at

[www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress).

The University's statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at

[www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar) (See Section C).

Further information about the University's academic processes can be found on the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at

[www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic/default.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/default.aspx)

### **AVC (Academic) Website: information including: Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support**

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx)

### **Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices**

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/>

### **Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme**

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/mentoring/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/)

## Annex A



### *Victoria Management School*

### **MGMT308 Assignment Cover Sheet**

Assignment	✓
Assignment one (1)	
Assignment two (2)	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student

ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Tutor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tutorial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Tutorial Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Tutorial Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Due: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have read and understood the university policy on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism.  
I declare this assignment is free from plagiarism.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*Extension of the due date (if applicable)*

Date extension applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

Extension granted until: \_\_\_\_\_

Extension granted by: \_\_\_\_\_

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***Submit to the Second Floor of the Murphy Building to the box labelled with MGMT308 and your Tutor's Name***

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**Victoria Management School**

**MGMT 308**

**Request for re-examination of assessed work.**

	Assessment affected <i>e.g. Assignment 1 or Assignment 2</i>	
Student ID	Name as it appears in your enrolment	Tutorial No.
Contact Details	Phone _____ _____ Email _____	

**Specify which section (criteria specified in the mark sheet) you wish to be re-examined**

*Note: requests to re-examine “all” criteria will not be considered.*

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**Clearly state why you believe each of these sections should be re-examined:**

*Note: “I think it is worth more,” is insufficient.*

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In requesting a re-examination of my submitted work, I understand that the result may be an increase OR decrease in the mark obtained.

.....  
Signature

.....  
Date