



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
School of Continuing Studies
Public Relations and Corporate Communications

Georgetown University, MPS PR/CC | Summer 2016

MPPR-756-40: DIGITAL CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Class Meets: Wednesdays, 8:25-11:30 p.m.

Office Hours: Arranged by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Responding to scrutiny during a crisis is nothing new. Social media, however, amplifies the coverage and consequently the risk to reputation. Considering the magnitude, variety and lifecycle of these risks, traditional crisis responses that are limited to media relations responses no longer suffice. Today, communicators that are best-equipped for such crises are those who can develop and apply a multi-faceted and multi-channel strategy that not only protects their brand, but enhances it. This class equips students with the knowledge on how to use various tools, techniques and technology to successfully anticipate and navigate online firestorms and prepare themselves and their employers for the potential outcomes.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Through a variety of hands-on exercises, case studies and live drills, students will develop a disciplined approach to prepare for, navigate and overcome digital issues that start or spread online. Skills and knowledge attained from previous digital and social media classes will be tested as students:

- Navigate crisis scenarios in a digital environment
- Analyze recent crisis case studies

By the completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the fluid operating realities and context of digital crises;
- Clearly identify and track issues online;
- Assess the significance of an issue;
- Develop a sound response strategy that utilizes a number of online tools and digital channels; and
- Confidently translate that knowledge into action.

REQUIRED READINGS

The resources for this course include articles, case studies, videos, and two key books. The readings are chosen to give you a solid foundation for understanding and internalizing the coursework

- SEO 2016: Learn Search Engine Optimization With Smart Internet Marketing Strategies
Adam Clarke
ISBN-10: 151534567X or **ISBN-13:** 978-1515345671
April 2016
From \$9.97 (Amazon price)
- Attack of the Customers
Paul Gillin with Greg Gianforte
CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
ISBN: 1479244554 or **ISBN-13:** 978-1479244553

2012

From \$13.95 (Amazon price)

- The community is speaking loud and clear: Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Planned Parenthood, and the crisis of public opinion. Case Studies in Strategic Communication, 2, article 4. Harrison, V. S. (2013)
Available online: <http://cssc.uscannenberg.org/cases/v2/v2art4>

*These required texts will be supplemented by timely news articles, blog posts or current events throughout the semester. Students must be prepared to discuss any of those assigned readings in class.

All articles, book excerpts, cases, and multimedia listed on the course schedule will be distributed in advance, via the class Blackboard group. Readings not included in the initial syllabus will be provided later in the semester, so we can review real-time cases and current events.

LIBRARY RESOURCES FOR MPPR-756-40

<http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/researchcourseguides>

<http://guides.library.georgetown.edu/prcc>

ATTENDANCE

In-class discussion and practice are essential to mastering the content of this course. Students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. If you are detained from attending a class or arriving before it begins, you are responsible for notifying me via email prior to the start of class. Missing more than two classes will result in a final grade reduction of one level (for example, an A will be converted to an A-). Absences from classes, beyond the initial two, will result in further reduction of the final grade. If you are absent for more than four classes, you will be in danger of failing this course.

WORK SUBMITTED

Your assignments should meet Georgetown University's standard of excellence. Specific requirements will be distributed for each written assignment. General requirements include the following:

- Include name, course number and assignment title.
- Cite references; refer to APA Style for Electronic Media (www.apastyle.org).
- Bring one hard copy of your assignment to class the day it is due.
- When appropriate, feedback on assignments will be provided within two weeks of the assignment deadline. I will make myself available to discuss feedback on assignments, when needed.
- Do not ask for extensions on assignments, I do not offer them. Get me what you can by the due date/time.
- Do not ask for extra credit, I provide extra credit at the beginning of the semester and will not offer other opportunities.
- I will not offer incomplete grades, except in the most exceptional, unforeseeable circumstances. Job requirements do not qualify.
- Assignments are due by the start of each class unless otherwise noted.
- You are responsible for classroom information and materials, whether you are present in class or not. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to make arrangement to obtain class notes and materials. All class PowerPoint slides and materials will be posted.

COURSE POLICIES

A successful class depends on the active engagement of all students. Students should turn off all cell phones or other communication devices while in class. Class discussions should be respectful and considerate of others' views and opinions. What happens in class stays in class unless you receive

permission from the instructor to share something.

- Be on time.
- Mobile phones and tablet use should only be used for class-related activities; silence mobile phones and mute any reminders on computers and other devices.
- Feel free to use your computers, but instant messaging and chat-software is prohibited; personal use of social media channels outside of the topic of discussion or focus is prohibited.
- Feel free to call me Dan or Mr. Webber.
- Audio or video recording class discussion, presentations and lectures is prohibited.
- We will not likely take a break during each class, but feel free to use the restroom as needed.
- Please ask questions during class and feel empowered to raise your hand and share experiences, perspective or reactions to topics being discussed.
- If for some reason you need to leave early then please let me know beforehand and sit near the door to minimize any distraction. This should not be a regular occurrence.
- Given the evening hours it is okay to bring food or drink into the classroom, but be mindful of whether it will distract other students or presenters. If it does, I will ask you to leave the room or discard it in the hallway trashcan.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are 10 weekly writing assignments for this class, two project-based writing assignments and a final crisis simulation on the last day of class:

1. Weekly Class Feedback Form and class participation:

Students will be asked to fill out a feedback form and discussion analysis survey by the beginning of the next class for 10 classes (indicated in the calendar below). This will be a 1-2 page analysis on the previous class responding to questions on topics discussed during the lecture, from the readings and observations on the overall presentation. The goal of this activity is to help evolve the conversation from the previous week and build on key ideas that might require additional thought outside the parameters of class. I will take the first 10 minutes of each class (except for the first week and last week) to review these and ask for class feedback and participation.

To gain the full benefit of this class, your attention and participation is critical. This class only works if there is open dialogue and sharing of ideas around readings, individual research, the materials presented in class and through your own contributions to our discussion. This includes participating in class discussion, in working groups as determined, sharing feedback and thoughts included in the Weekly Class Feedback Form each week.

Additionally, one of the main principles we will discuss during this class is the importance of building “muscle memory” in preparing for crises. This will help you build confidence should you ever need to respond to a crisis in your careers or as we go through “simulated crisis drills” in class. As such, following the weekly discussion of the Class Feedback Form, one to three volunteers will spin the “Crisis Wheel” and be presented with a short crisis situation. They will then be asked to talk through their thought process in front of the class on what are the important issues that this particular situation presents, what they might do to respond and some key considerations that need to be taken.

Finally, at one or two points during the Summer Session, the regular class presentation will be interrupted and the class will be put into a crisis simulation. Each simulation will take 15-45 minutes and will require the team to break up into rapid response teams simulating their response strategies and supporting tactics. These situations are not real, but will encourage students to apply learnings, readings and class presentations, as appropriate.

2. Case Study Project:

To be assigned on week #3 and due the beginning of class on week #6. This will be a 2–6 page analysis on a particular current or recent crisis situation (within the last 12 months). Students will need to develop an analysis snapshot of the situation, interpret what the data means and provide a recommendation on potential next steps as if they were presenting this information to a company CEO, organization president or other institution leader (e.g., CMO, CCO, General Counsel, elected government official, commanding officer, etc.). Students will be allowed to choose their case study topic/area of focus based on current events or recent events, but all issues must already be public (no private issues or confidential information can be discussed). Students will need to develop a data-driven report on the reach of the issue, assess the potential impact and provide recommendations on what should be done (or should have been done for issues that have already occurred) along with clear rationale behind each recommendation. I am looking for your understanding of the concepts we are learning in class and your assessment of how organizations are using or can use these.

3. Digital Crisis Plan:

Write a 10-20 page digital crisis management plan for a company/organization using the framework you learned throughout the semester. You will receive detailed grading criteria prior to the assignment due date, so you know exactly what to include and how each element will be graded. It is encouraged that the plan be based on your own company/organization or the company/organization selected for the case study project, but can also be another company/organization if preferred. The digital crisis management plan can be developed for a specific anticipated issue/threat or it can be a broad plan that addresses reputational risk on a broad-scale level. The final project will be due on week #12, so there will be ample time to prepare your work and ask questions beforehand.

4. Full Crisis Simulation:

As a culmination of everything learned during the semester, the class will be put into a full crisis simulation experience on the last day of class. The class will be divided into groups and will be expected to respond to the situation(s) as they evolve. This simulation might include a variety of different social media channels, technology, actors, and other surprises to make the drill as real as possible.

Team Work

Team work is a strong component of this class and will benefit you tremendously as you rely on your classmates. I encourage team work to brainstorm ideas on papers, final projects, etc. We will also work in teams for regular class exercises.

Extra Credit Opportunity

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is the first-ever standardized approach to incident management and response. Developed by the Department of Homeland Security at the request of the President and released in March 2004, it establishes a uniform set of processes and procedures that emergency responders at all levels will use to conduct response operations.

NIMS integrates effective practices in emergency response into a comprehensive national framework for incident management, enabling a more effective and efficient response to manage domestic incidents no matter what the cause, size or complexity, including catastrophic acts of terrorism and disasters.

To better align with government agencies and to adopt best practices, many organizations in the private sector have adopted NIMS incident management and response processes and procedures. Should any of you be involved in responding to crises in the future that might activate NIMS it is helpful to have certifications already in place. In order to get the full extra credit you will need to complete the following online courses and email me copies of the certification you receive. Partial extra credit points are included below – please send me those certifications by email too. All courses are free and can be

completed at your own pace.

- **NIMS IS-700.a: NIMS, An Introduction (4 points extra credit)**
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700a.asp> (estimated 3 hours)
- **NIMS IS-702.a: Public Information Systems (4 points extra credit)**
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-702.a> (estimated 3 hours)
- **NIMS IS-100.b: Introduction to Incident Command System (8 points extra credit)**
<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is100b.asp> (estimated 3 hours)
- **IS-42: Social Media in Emergency Management (4 points extra credit)**
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-42> (estimated 3 hours)

GRADING

Graduate course grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, and F. **There are no grades of C+, C-, or D.**

Your course grade will be based on the following:

60 points – Weekly Class Feedback Form and class participation

50 points – Case Study Project (crisis snapshot)

50 points – Digital crisis plan

40 points – Full crisis simulation (last class)

20 points – *National Incident Management System Online Training/Certification (extra credit)*

Total

200 points

Grading Metrics:

Students will have the opportunity to earn a **total of 200 points** this semester. Please reference the below grading scale and assignments:

Grading Scale:

A	100 - 93
A-	92 - 90
B+	89 - 87
B	86 - 83
B-	82 - 80
C	79 - 70
F	69 and below

The instructors will provide a warning by mid-semester to any student who appears to be on track for a poor final grade.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Georgetown offers a variety of support systems for students that can be accessed on main campus or at the downtown location:

- MPS Writing Resource Program
202-687-4246
<http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/>
- Academic Resource Center
202-687-8354 | arc@georgetown.edu
<http://academicsupport.georgetown.edu>
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services
202-687-6985
<http://caps.georgetown.edu/>
- Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action (IDEAA)
(202) 687-4798
<https://ideaa.georgetown.edu/>

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

Students with documented disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center (202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu; <http://academicsupport.georgetown.edu>) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your professors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

GEORGETOWN HONOR SYSTEM

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity in pursuit of their education at Georgetown. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to, failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are held to the Honor Code. The Honor Code pledge follows:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

PLAGIARISM

Stealing someone else's work is a terminal offense in the workplace, and it will wreck your career in academia, too. Students are expected to work with integrity and honesty in all their assignments. The Georgetown University Honor System defines plagiarism as "the act of passing off as one's own the ideas or writings of another." More guidance is available through the Gervase Programs at <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>. If you have any doubts about plagiarism, paraphrasing and the need to credit, check out <http://www.plagiarism.org>.

SYLLABUS MODIFICATION

The syllabus may change to accommodate discussion of emerging topics. Also, the schedules of guest speakers may require some shifting of the agenda. The instructors will make every effort to provide as much advance notice as possible for any alterations.

COURSE SCHEDULE*

****NOTE: According to Georgetown guidance we are required to schedule one additional 3-hour class not pre-identified on the syllabus. We will discuss this during our first two classes and confirm a date/topic/location.***

DATE/TOPIC	READING DUE	ASSIGNMENT DUE	IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES
WEEK 1 (Wednesday, 5/25) Digital complications: new realities in crisis communications management and how crisis management has changed	Class Syllabus	Order books and download readings Questions about syllabus and course	Course purpose and overview Lecture
WEEK 2 (Wednesday, 6/1) Fail to prepare, prepare to fail: a look at digital crisis management plans, protocols, processes and support materials	Storify by FUTUREPerspective: Top PR Crises in 2016 and 2015 (Pick 10 stories that interest you) https://storify.com/FUTUREPersp/top-crisis-pr-stories-2014/elements/304d286e13f1a1580074b1a2 Altimeter Group: Social business Readiness: How Advanced Companies Prepare Internally (August 30, 2011) http://www.slideshare.net/jeremiah_owyang/social-readiness-how-advanced-companies-prepare Altimeter Group: Guarding the Social Gates: The Imperative for Social Media Risk Management (August 8, 2012) http://www.slideshare.net/Altimeter/guarding-the-social-gates-the-imperative-for-social-media-risk-management	Questions about syllabus and course	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules
WEEK 3 (Wednesday, 6/8) Do or do not, there is no try: spotting issues before they become crises – a look	Radian6 Webinar: Social Media Crisis Management with Shel Holtz (Video 1 hour 13 min.) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NKmFt5GKq4&feature=youtu.be	Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#1)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week

at monitoring and analysis from a crisis perspective	idisaster 2.0 blog – Social Media and Emergency Management: Data, data everywhere...Monitoring Social Media During a Crisis http://idisaster.wordpress.com/2012/05/17/data-data-everywheremonitoring-social-media-during-a-crisis/		Lecture modules <u>Case study assigned</u>
WEEK 4 (Wednesday, 6/15) Community management: navigating issues and crises during attacks	Gillin and Gianforte (2012). <i>Attack of the Customers</i> Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 – When Customers Attack • Chapter 2 – How Attacks Happen • Chapter 3 – Studies in Social Media Crises • Chapter 4 – Why Customers Attack • Chapter 5 – The Attackers • Chapter 6 – Ordinance 	Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#2)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules
WEEK 5 (Wednesday, 6/22) Search engine optimization and search engine marketing with a slant towards crisis preparedness and rapid response	Melissa Agnes Crisis Management Blog (October 18, 2012): Interview with SEO for Crisis Management Expert, Colton Day http://www.melissaagnescrisismanagement.com/interview-with-seo-for-crisis-management-expert-colton-day/ UC Davis spent \$175,000 to scrub online pepper spray references; <i>The Fresno Bee</i> : http://www.fresnobee.com/news/state/california/article71700862.html Adam Clarke (2016). SEO 2016: Learn Search Engine Optimization With Smart Internet Marketing Strategies Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 – Introduction to how Google works • Chapter 2 – Keyword research. The most important step of SEO • Chapter 3 – On page SEO. How to let Google know what your page is about • Chapter 4 – Link building. How to rank extremely high on Google • Chapter 5 – Social media & SEO 	Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#3)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 6 – Web analytics in a nutshell. How to measure your success 		
WEEK 6 (Wednesday, 6/29) Dark properties, micro sites, web assets, virtual war rooms	Adam Clarke (2016). SEO 2016: Learn Search Engine Optimization With Smart Internet Marketing Strategies Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7 – Troubleshooting common SEO problems & how to fix them Chapter 8 – Local SEO. SEO for local businesses Chapter 10 – Powerful SEO tools 	<u>Case study project</u> Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#4)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules
WEEK 7 (Wednesday, 7/6) How to shape content for social media in crisis; the voice of your response and where you put your content	The community is speaking loud and clear: Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Planned Parenthood, and the crisis of public opinion. Case Studies in Strategic Communication, 2, article 4. Harrison, V. S. (2013) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available online: http://cssc.uscannenberg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/v2art4.pdf 	Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#5)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules <u>Digital crisis plan assigned</u>
WEEK 8 (Wednesday, 7/13) To engage or not to engage: Wikipedia, forums and message boards as a hotbed for issues management	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Best_practices_for_editors_with_close_associations http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:FAQ/Organizations http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:For_publicists_publicizing_a_client%27s_work https://www.facebook.com/notes/corporate-representatives-for-ethical-wikipedia-engagement-crewe/start-here-faq/184170971688158 <i>Public Relations Journal</i> Vol. 6, No.2: Measuring Public Relations Wikipedia Engagement: How Bright is the Rule 2012 http://www.prsa.org/Intelligence/PR_Journal/Documents/2012DiStaso.pdf <i>MotherBoard</i> : Meet the PR guru who	Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#6)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules

	wants to help corporations get heard on Wikipedia 4/3/2013 http://motherboard.vice.com/blog/meet-the-pr-guru-who-wants-to-help-corporations-get-heard-on-wikipedia		
WEEK 9 (Wednesday, 7/20) Wikipedia, forums and reviews continued – case studies and hands-on exercise	Gillin and Gianforte (2012). <i>Attack of the Customers</i> Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7 – Customer as Critic – The Power of Peer Reviews Luca and Zervas (2013). Fake it Till You Make it: Reputation, Competition, and Yelp Review Fraud http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2293164	Join the Corporate Representatives for Ethical Wikipedia Engagement (CREWE) Facebook group Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#7)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules
WEEK 10 (Wednesday, 7/27) Recovery: how a thoughtful social media program can help pick up the pieces and restore trust post-crisis	SocialMedia.org: Rogers Communications: Haters Can Be Lovers, presented by Keith McArthur – March 27, 2012 (Video: 29 min.) http://vimeo.com/42370339 PRSA.org: Domino's Delivers During Crisis: The Company's Step-by-Step Response After a Vulgar Video goes Viral http://www.prsa.org/Intelligence/TheStrategist/Articles/view/8226/102/Domino_s_Delivers_During_Crisis_The_Company_s_Step#.VxpuM_krKUk Fight Viral with Viral: A Case Study of Domino's Pizza's Crisis Communication Strategies http://cssc.uscannenberg.org/cases/v1/v1art6/	Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#8)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules
WEEK 11 (Wednesday, 8/3) Business Intelligence: Learning how to use "The Hidden Internet" and how this impacts social media and the digital footprint	<i>The Economist</i> – Jan. 5, 2013: The bloodhounds of capitalism http://www.economist.com/node/21569028	Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#9)	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules
WEEK 12 (Wednesday, 8/10) Cyber security	RSA Conference 2012 (Video – 50 min.): The Seven Most Dangerous New Attack Techniques, and What's Coming Next http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FoLe_Cr26g	<u>Digital crisis plan due</u>	Crisis wheel It's been an interesting week Lecture modules

	Verizon's 2013 Data Breach Investigations Report http://www.verizonenterprise.com/DBIR/2015/		
WEEK 13 (Wednesday, 8/17) Tying it all together – full crisis drill	Review lecture notes and readings from semester; prep any materials needed in advance	Weekly class feedback form and discussion analysis survey (#10)	Full crisis drill