

EFFECTIVE INTERNAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Course code	<i>MNG 284</i>
Compulsory in the programmes	<i>International Business and Communication, Business Management and Marketing</i>
Level of studies	<i>Undergraduate</i>
Number of credits	<i>6 ECTS (48 in-class hours + 6 consultation hours + 2 exam hours, 104 individual work hours)</i>
Course coordinator	<i>Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bahman Peyravi (head of course)</i>
Prerequisites	<i>None</i>
Language of instruction	<i>English</i>

THE AIM OF THE COURSE:

Effective internal business communication is essential for the success of any organization. This course on internal (business) communication aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to communicate effectively within an organization. Students will learn about the principles and practices of internal communication, and how it can impact an organization's overall performance. The course will cover various forms of internal communication, such as email, memos, reports, and presentations, as well as how to adapt communication style to different audiences and use technology effectively. Through exercises and assignments, students will have the opportunity to practice their communication skills and receive feedback. By the end of the course, students will have a strong foundation in internal business communication and be able to apply it in their workplace.

MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (See Annex), ASSESMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Degree level learning objectives	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. Introduce students to the core concepts of internal communications in contexts of communication technology and HRM.	BLO1.1. BLO2.1.	Midterm test, coursework/ presentation	Lecture
CLO2. Discuss and analyse issues related to internal communication situations, causes and effects.	BLO2.1. BLO4.1.	Midterm test, final exam	Lecture and Seminar
CLO3. Assess and analyse internal communication, problems and solutions.	BLO1.2. BLO2.1. BLO4.1. BLO4.2	Midterm test, final exam, Coursework/ presentation	Seminar

CLO4. Develop a set of effective internal communication capabilities, employees individual skills, and specific techniques for business communication.	BLO1.1. BLO2.1. BLO3.2	Midterm test, final exam, Coursework/ presentation	Lecture and Seminar
CLO5. Understand internal communication as a key element in the set of required soft skills needed in internal collaboration toward organizational goals.	BLO1.1. BLO2.1.	Midterm test, final exam, Coursework/ presentation	Lecture and Seminar
CLO6. Apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills with colleagues in a changing environment	BLO1.2. BLO2.1. BLO4.2. BLO4.2.	Midterm test, coursework/ presentation, final exam	Lecture and Seminar
CLO7. Demonstrate knowledge and ability to evaluate and assess internal communication theoretical concepts, strategies and techniques to be applied in real-life scenarios	BLO1.2. BLO2.1. BLO4.1. BLO4.2.	Midterm test, coursework/ presentation, final exam	Seminar

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are fully applicable and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty, and cheating can and will lead to a report to the ISM Committee of Ethics. With regard to remote learning, ISM remind students that they are expected to adhere and maintain the same academic honesty and integrity that they would in a classroom setting.

COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	In-class hours	Readings
Session 1: Presentation of course aims and assignments Time schedule, midterm & final exam, case studies, etc. Introduction to the topics: Internal Communication	2	
Session 2: Internal communication and the associations with organizational purpose, culture and strategy. - Responsible communication leadership - Organisational purpose and values - Internal communication and organisational culture - Internal communication and corporate strategy	4	Ruck, K. (2020) Parts I-1

Practical Exercises: Planning Business Messages		
Session 3: Theoretical and practical positioning of internal communication • <i>Defining internal communication</i> • <i>Internal communication and the excellence theory of public relations</i> • <i>Internal communication and a rhetorical approach to public relations</i> • <i>Internal communication and a critical theory approach to public relations</i> • <i>Critical theory and power</i> • <i>Internal communication and relationship theory</i> • <i>Internal communication and employee voice</i> • <i>Internal communication and employee involvement and participation</i> • <i>Internal communication and distortion, democracy and cooperation</i> Practical Exercises: Organizing and drafting business messages	4	Ruck, K. (2020) Parts I-2
Session 4: The evolution of practice and the changing role of the practitioner • The roots of modern-day internal communication – the employee publication • Propaganda or freedom: The editorial dilemma • New technologies and new thinking challenge the dominance of the house organ • Emergence of internal social media and employee engagement • Reflections on the evolution of practice • Contemporary internal communication practice • The internal communication function • Internal communication as a profession • Professional development of the internal communication practitioner • Effective business partnering Practical Exercises: Proposal and Formal Reports	4	Yaxley, H. Ruck, K. and Ann Pilkington, A. (2020) Parts II-3
Session 5: Dimensions of internal communication and implications for employee engagement • Evolution of employee engagement • Components of engagement Practical Exercises: Business Presentations	4	Ruck, K. Welch, M. (2020) Parts II-4
Midterm exam	2	

Session 6: Case Study Presentations Presentation + Q&A	4	
Session 7: Case Study Presentations Presentation + Q&A	4	
Session 8: <i>Keeping employees informed and employee voice: Adopting an employee-centric perspective</i> • Keeping employees informed: Topics of interest • Keeping employees informed: Quality of information • Defining employee voice • Receptiveness to employee voice • Employee voice mechanisms • Keeping employees informed and organisational engagement • Employee voice and organisational engagement Practical Exercises: Interviewing and following up methods	4	Ruck, K. (2020) Parts II-5
Session 9: Strategic planning processes • The RADAR model for planning • Creative problem-solving • Problem exploration – ‘why’ technique • Problem exploration – other people’s definitions • Scenario planning • Setting objectives and targeting employee groups • Targeting employee groups 95 • Strategic thinking Practical Exercises: Revising Business Messages – positive and Negative messages	4	Ruck, K. (2020) Parts III-7
Session 10: Stress management in Internal communication Workshop	4	
Session 11: Communicating change • Why does change communication matter? • What is this thing called change? • Where can change communication go wrong?	4	Harrison, P. Ruck, K. (2020) Parts III-7

- What can change management theory tell us? - What makes behavioural change happen? - What causes resistance to change and how should it be addressed? - What content do staff want in change communication? - How can managers lead the organisation through change? Case Study Presentations Presentation + Q&A		
Session 12: CONTENT AND CHANNEL MANAGEMENT Medium theory: Channels and content - Medium theory - Information richness - Channel preferences - Channel attributes - Channel usage and perceived effectiveness - Mapping content to channels - Champions for health campaign: Correlating channels to outcomes	4	Ruck, K. (2020) Parts IV-11
Session 13: General Review: Internal Communication	2	
	Total: 48 hours + 2	
CONSULTATIONS	6	
FINAL EXAM	2	

FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION

Type of assignment	%
<i>Group Components 30%</i>	
Group Presentation of Practical case	30
<i>Individual Components 70%</i>	
Participation in seminars (Transcultural Leadership Summit)	10
Mid-Term Exam	25
Final Exam	35
Total:	100

DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

The lecturer reserves the right to choose the form of the exam. Details about the structure of the exam and the grading policy will be presented on the first day of the lectures and will be published online.

The presentations will take place during the seminars. Students will be asked to present/ oppose on a given topic. Details about the presentation scope and the grading policy will be presented on the first day of the lectures and will be published online.

1. The **final exam** will account for **35%** of the final grade and will cover the topics covered after mid-term exam.
2. The **mid-term test (25%)** will cover the content of Lecture 1-5. Types of questions will be announced during the course.
3. The **practical case** (presentation) will account for **30%** of the final grade. It will be an extensive negotiation case in which 2 teams negotiate on a specific negotiation scenario.
4. The **seminar grade** will account for **(10%) of the final grade**. In class performance is key to this class, this includes simulations, presentations and **active participation** in class. Seminar grades will be published after completing the course. **Note:** mere physical attendance in the classroom will not be counted in the seminar participation grade.

RETAKE POLICY

If final (cumulative) mark of the course, including final exam score, is insufficient, students will be allowed to exercise their right of retake. The retake exam will cover all lectures and case-discussion topics discussed in class during the course. Re-take exam will constitute 60% of the final grade. Participation and Practical Case cannot be re-taken, but will be counted into the final grade, as graded before. Acquired scores from all assignments will be summed up and the final (cumulative) grade will be given. The lecturer reserves the right to choose the form of the exam.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

Attendance and participation in the lectures and seminars are not obligatory, however strongly recommended. Studying solely from slides/ course book is not considered to be a sufficient preparation for the exam.

Regarding final group presentations:

- The number of groups and members will vary according to final enrolment in this course.
- Preliminary, there will be 8 groups of 4/5 students in each seminar group.
- Cases will be assigned by lottery during the first two weeks.
- Final case presentations will take place during the last 2 weeks during seminars. The presentation submission schedule may vary and will be announced in the first weeks.
- Specific rules apply for in-class/online presentations.
 - a. Presentations can neither be re-scheduled nor retaken
 - b. In case of serious reasons, individual students may be allowed to switch with another student. Students are responsible for arranging the changes and must inform the lecturer at least 2 weeks in advance.

Due to the dynamic nature of the content of the course, additional material can be assigned during the course. In case of unforeseen events the schedule will be adapted.

Readings are selected from books available in ISM library. When older editions are also available for free and legal download the links will be provided.

Lecture slides are the intellectual property of teaching instructor and there is no obligation to upload them for immediate access of students. Taking screenshots/photos of the screen during lectures is not allowed without written consent of the lecturer.

REQUIRED READINGS

Obligatory readings:

1. Tourish, D. 2013. The Dark Side of Transformational Leadership: A Critical Perspective. Routledge.
2. Gregory, A., Willis, P. 2013. Strategic Public Relations Leadership. Routledge.
3. Fairhurst, G.T., Uhl-Bien, M. 2012. Organizational discourse analysis (ODA): examining leadership as a relational process. The Leadership Quarterly, 23(6), pp. 1043–1062.
4. Johansson, C.D., Miller, V., Hamrin, S. 2014. Conceptualizing communicative leadership: a framework for analysing and developing leaders' communication competence. Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 19(2), pp.147–165.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

1. Edelman. 2019. Edelman Trust Barometer. Available at: <https://www.edelman.com/trust-barometer>.
2. Kenny, G. 2014. Your company's purpose is not its vision, mission, or values. Harvard Business Review. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2014/09/your-companys-purpose-is-not-its-vision-mission-or-values>
3. Lawler, E.E. 2015. Rethinking corporate purpose. Forbes. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/edwardlawler/2015/06/23/rethinking-corporate-purpose>
4. Margolis, S. nd. What is an organization's Purpose? Available at: <https://sheilamargolis.com/core-culture-and-five-ps/the-five-ps-and-organizational-alignment/purpose/>
5. Baldoni, J. 2011. Purpose is what your organization needs most. Here's how to get it. Forbes Leadership Forum.

Further literature will be announced in the course.

NOTE: Reading for assignment cases (final presentation in groups) will be assigned to specific to students later during the first two weeks.

DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Business Management

Programmes:

*International Business and Communication,
Business Management and Marketing, Finance,
Industrial Technology Management*

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	BLO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the business disciplines
	BLO1.2. Students will be able to conduct a contextual analysis to identify a problem associated with their discipline, to generate managerial options and propose viable solutions
Students will be socially responsible in their related discipline	BLO2.1. Students will be knowledgeable about cross-cultural communication aspects, cultural intelligence and international conflict resolutions through negotiations
Students will be technology agile	BLO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	BLO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	BLO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	BLO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	BLO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper

Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Social Science

Programmes:

*Economics and Data Analytics,
Economics and Politics*

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	ELO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the key economics disciplines
	ELO1.2. Students will be able to identify underlying assumptions and logical consistency of causal statements
Students will have skills to employ economic thought for the common good	ELO2.1. Students will have a keen sense of ethical criteria for practical problem-solving
Students will be technology agile	ELO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	ELO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	ELO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	ELO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	ELO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper