# Business communication

## Prof. Stefania Vitulli

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The first part of the course introduces corporate communication - focusing on communication-based intangible assets -, country culture and cultural models.The second part, focused on green values as competitive advantage for corporate image and reputation, introduces definition of environmental sustainability and circular economy models, best practices and case histories of green marketing, environmental communication, effective approach to green stakeholders.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

* identify and interpret multidisciplinary theoretical and conceptual foundations helpful to develop a critical understanding of corporate communication as a strategic asset (knowledge);
* understand how corporate communication interacts with ethical and profit decision making and how cultural indexes may impact on cultural conflicts (knowledge);
* develop conceptual knowledge on the design and use of corporate communication in a multicultural environment (knowledge);
* apply theoretical and conceptual knowledge of global issues/opportunities of a strategic and holistic perspective of corporate communications in multicultural global and local contexts (practical skills);
* develop critical decision making by recognizing, assessing, and analyzing complex cultural environments and developing sustainable cultural solutions for a multistakeholder approach in corporate communication (transferable skills);
* operate effectively within an international multicultural team engaged in corporate communication practices (transferable skills).

***COURSE CONTENT***

The program includes the following topics arising in multi-cultural business contexts.

*Module 1*

* Communication-based intangible assets
* Influence, Reputation, Trust as keywords in the contemporary corporate communications scenario
* Corporate communication: evolution and revamping, from uberization to executive branding to corporate communication officer skills.
* CEO branding as a key transformative role
* Country culture and Hofstede's indexes; globalization and glocalization.

*Module 2*

* Take a stand: how ethical purpose can change the corporate dialogue with stakeholders.
* Green communication and its evolution in the reputation economy
* An effective approach to green stakeholders. Green consumers: mainstream or niche?

***READING LIST***

*Required readings*

R. Gambetti-S. Quigley (eds), *Managing corporate communication: a cross-cultural approach,* Palgrave MacMillan, London, 2012 (Chapters 1, 2, 6, 9, 10).

S. Vitulli, *CEO branding in the reputation economy, EGEA, Milano, 2021*

J. Grant, *The green marketing manifesto,* John Wiley&Sons, NJ, 2007.

E.T. Brioschi (a cura di), *International Communication. A spatial projection of total business communication,* Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2015. (Introduzione. Capitoli I.3; II.1, II.2).

A list of further required readings on corporate communication, country culture, environmental communication and all the sustainable peculiar topics will be indicated in Blackboard. Further slides, reports, and essays will be indicated in Blackboard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

This course is expected to be highly interactive. Students are expected to proactively contribute to class discussion and to the building of concepts step by step, with role playing in case study analysis, essays presentations and group discussions.

Some business communication experts working either in the company or in the communication agency field will be invited as guest speakers to provide their points of view on the current corporate communication and sustainability challenges.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students can choose between a multiple assesssment route and a single assessment route.

*Multiple assessment route*

The exam will consist of four parts:

– a midterm exam on module 1 (theoretical open-ended questions): 40%;

* a group assignment on module 1 (expected output: corporate communication strategy plan): 20%;
* a Group assignment on module 2 (expected output: sustainability company’s brief): 20%;
* a final written exam (case study) on module 2: 20%.

The four parts are mandatory and students must achieve a PASS (i.e. a mimum of 18 points) in at least 3 out of 4. Students who do not pass the multiple assessment route are evaluated according to the single assessment route.

For the multiple assessment route, attendance to briefs, individual and teams’ presentations and the four parts of exam is mandatory. Dates of compulsory presence will be indicated at the beginning of the course in BlackBoard.

*Single assessment route*

Students will be assessed through:

* a written test based on 3 theoretical open-ended questions (40% of the final grade) and a case study on corporate communication plan (20% of the final grade) relevant to all the course materials uploaded in Blackboard and the required readings (60% of the final grade);
* the submission of an individual assignment (expected output: sustanability communication strategy): (40% of the final grade).

Students must achieve a pass (i.e. a mimum of 18 points) in each part. Students can take the written exam in one of the exam dates scheduled during the academic year.

*Assessment criteria*

The student's preparation is evaluated according to grading scales which are published on Blackboard.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

*N. ECTS* - 8

*Enrollment requirements -* Basic knowledge of marketing is highly recommended. Students who do not have such knowledge are encouraged to acquire it to the extent necessary during the course.

*Language of instruction* - English

*Attendance* – Attendance is always strongly recommended. For the multiple assessment route, attendance to briefs, individual and teams’ presentations and the four parts of exam is mandatory. Dates of compulsory presence will be indicated at the beginning of the course in BlackBoard.

*International dimension* - International teaching materials are used throughout the course. Students will have the opportunity to attend a virtual exchange project in cooperation with Appalachian State University.

*Business connection* - The course makes extensive use of contemporary business cases and examples. Examples are also supported by guest speakers from business companies.

*Professional context* - In professional life, corporate communication is a management function connected with all the activities of the company and organizations generically speaking. Understanding the cultural context and how it affects professional life, stakeholder behavior, economic and political context is fundamental to manage effectively and in an efficient process companies and organizations in increasingly global and multicultural contexts.

*Further information* – Additional information regarding the course schedule and delivery, learning assessment, expectations and policies, general announcements, and additional course materials will be posted on Blackboard.