

**Western University**  
**Faculty of Information and Media Studies**  
**Master of Media in Journalism and Communication**

**MJCOM 9202—Advanced Communications**

Enrolment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Master of Media in Journalism and Communication program

**Instructor:** Erin Isings  
**E-mail:** [eisings@uwo.ca](mailto:eisings@uwo.ca)  
**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Meetings:** Thursdays 9-11:50 a.m.  
**Classroom:** FNB 3050

Building on the skills learned in first term, students will produce professional-level communications stories and strategies using a variety of media. Students will use a variety of methods to explore how organizations handle challenging communications issues such as:

- Crisis communications
- Strategic planning
- Ethical practice
- Generating public support for your organization's mission

The 9202 final project will be a major component of the student's digital portfolio. Our class format will be lectures, tutorials, hands-on activities and assignments.

**Course Goals/Intended Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify a crisis situation in communications and recommend appropriate strategies to address it
- Demonstrate strategic communications judgment and apply that knowledge in organizational storytelling
- Display knowledge of appropriate communications research methodologies: interview sources and consult research from libraries, archives, documents, databases and electronic sources.
- Describe various methods to generate public support through communications
- Show an understanding of legal and ethical principles relating to journalism and communications
- Perform within professional expectations in relation to deadlines, accuracy and stakeholder relations

**Course Communications**

OWL will be our primary tool for communication. Please check the announcements regularly as well as your UWO email. Additional readings, class preparations, changes to classes and information on assignments will be posted on the site.

If you have a question regarding an assignment, a reading or homework, please post it to the discussion board on OWL. This will allow your classmates to benefit from your questions. If you need to email me directly about an individual issue, allow a 24-hour turnaround for a response—and longer over the weekend.

**Course Texts**

Required

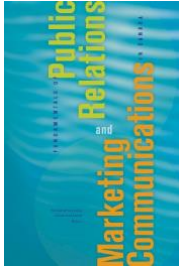
CP Caps and Spelling

CP Stylebook

Additional readings will be posted to OWL weekly.

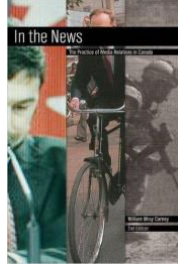
Recommended

Supplementary texts will be available via OWL.



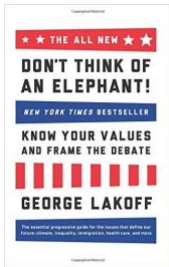
**Fundamentals of Public Relations and Marketing Communications in Canada**

William Wray Carney, Leah-Ann Lymer and Mike Coates, 2015 University of Alberta Press



**In the News: The Practice of Media Relations 2nd ed.**

William Wray Carney, 2013 University of Alberta Press



**The All New Don't Think of an Elephant - Know Your Values and Frame the Debate**

George Lakoff, 2014 Chelsea Green Publishing



**Canadian PR for the Real World**

Maryse Cardin and Kylie McMullan, 2015 Pearson Canada

- A Canadian dictionary – the Oxford English Dictionary is preferred
  - A comprehensive grammar book
- You can also access these publications online.

As future communicators, you should also

- Read newspapers daily – electronically and/or hard copy
- Listen to and/or view broadcast news, internet news, and other sources, i.e. become a news consumer

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change)

| <b>Date</b>         | <b>Readings and Activities</b> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Week One<br>Jan. 6  | Welcome to MMJC 9202           |
| Week Two<br>Jan. 13 | Crisis Comms                   |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Week Three<br>Jan. 20 | Content Marketing  |
| Week Four<br>Jan. 27  | Storytelling Project Proposal due—15%<br>Media Relations             |
| Week Five<br>Feb. 3   | Social Media Marketing   |
| Week Six<br>Feb. 10   | SEO  |
| Week Seven<br>Feb. 17 | SCENARIO DAY #1 2022 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)                              |
| Week Eight<br>Feb. 24 | READING WEEK 2022  |
| Week Nine<br>March 3  | Storytelling project due—25 per cent<br>PR pitches                   |
| Week 10<br>March 10   | MMJC Production Week (Hold this week for Production Week activities) |
| Week 11<br>March 17   | SCENARIO DAY #2 2022 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)                              |
| Week 12<br>March 24   | Strategy Week  |
| Week 13<br>March 31   | Student Presentations—Storytelling Projects                          |
| Week 14<br>April 7    | Career Discussion<br>Course wrap-up                                  |

### Assessment

Your final grade will be determined using the following:

| <u>Deliverable</u>                 | <u>Due Date</u>   | <u>Weight</u> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Storytelling project proposal      | Jan. 27           | 15%           |
| Class project                      | Various           | 10%           |
| In-class scenarios (Scenario Days) | Feb. 17, March 17 | 15%           |
| Storytelling project (final)       | March 3           | 30%           |
| Production week activities         | March 8-10        | 10%           |
| Professionalism                    | Ongoing           | 20%           |

*The above due dates are subject to change as the course progresses. Changes will be announced in class and on OWL. A full assignment sheet and rubric will be posted for the first four deliverables.*

### Professionalism

Attendance and meaningful participation are mandatory requirements of 9202's professionalism component. Being present, punctual and prepared are the bare minimum. The basics of what you are supposed to do include:

- complete readings and come prepared to discuss
- make thoughtful in-class contributions
- display a respectful and professional attitude toward others
- show initiative and a positive attitude on projects
- find solutions, not problems
- be constructive, honest, accountable and behave ethically
- represent the MMJC program and Western University in a professional manner in all interactions with the community.

I expect that you'll show initiative above and beyond the basics to earn professionalism marks. For example, you could volunteer to help during in-class exercises. You could also post integrated stories that have a particular noteworthy quality that you feel would be useful to your peers. There are many ways to earn professionalism marks; please contact me if you require further info.

Please be aware that I do consult with our technical team when calculating professionalism grades. Refer to the MMJC program policy on attendance:

[http://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/academic\\_programs/mmjc/attendance\\_requirements.html](http://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/academic_programs/mmjc/attendance_requirements.html)

The MMJC program rules are very clear about not missing class to complete work for other classes. If you are unable to attend class, refer to the notes below on accommodations. It is the full responsibility of a student who has missed a class to catch up on the work missed and to complete assignments generated during class time. It is recommended that students look out for one another (take notes, etc.) to share with the absent student.

A further note on attendance: Students who miss classes and/or fail to participate/appear will be penalized through a reduction of grades. Use of electronic devices for non-class purposes may result in a missed class penalty. If you are unable to attend class, please e-mail prior to class.

I retain copyright to all MJCOM 9202 course content uploaded and broadcasted through OWL and Zoom. I retain all copyright to my lectures and course materials. I do not authorize you to upload any course content to note-sharing websites such as OneClass, CourseHero, Studydrive or share my course content in any other way.

**Remote learning sessions for this course may be recorded**—advance notice will be given. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals under special circumstances. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

### **Assignments**

All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be penalized with a five per cent deduction per 24 hours late; deduction time starts at the beginning of class. No late assignments will be accepted after graded assignments have been returned. Please keep a copy of your assignment until you receive the original back.

When submitting work through OWL or to a directory folder, it is the student's responsibility to verify that the submission has been uploaded. All students are expected to practice appropriate time-management strategies; requests to extend an assignment's deadline will not be granted.

### **Notes on Releasing Student Work Online**

Students are not permitted to release course work to a community partner or to the public domain (internet) until they have faculty approval. This means that you must wait until I have vetted and approved your project before you can upload it online or share it via your networks. You are not permitted to post any of our in-class scenarios (mock exercises) online. Your first priority in this course is to fulfill the requirements of each assignment; once this is done then you may consider the requests of your community partners.

### **Disclosure**

If students choose to focus on a local charity or corporation as a case study or for a larger assignment, students are expected to initiate this professional relationship for MJCOM 9202 purposes. As a matter of ethics, any existing relationship – whether personal or professional – must be disclosed to me before the assignment begins. Students require approval before pursuing any assignment where there is an existing relationship.

## **Notes from the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Information and Media Studies**

### **Statement on Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)

### **Plagiarism**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. Plagiarism is a major academic (and journalistic) offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>). Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

### **Erin's note on plagiarism:**

It's expected that all submitted work will be original work by each student, and all submitted work must be original work created specifically for MJCOM 9202B. Students may not repurpose content from other coursework or past courses/internships/employment to use in MJCOM 9202B. Students are expected to recognize the limitations of wikipedia and other sources. Please see me if you have any questions.

Remember, images are subject to copyright. Images must be documented carefully and reproduced only under certain conditions.

There are also certain assignments in my course where collaboration is not permitted. This means that students are not permitted to discuss the assignment with one another.

Again, I cannot stress this point enough: **if you are ever in doubt or have any questions, please talk to me about it.**

## **Academic Accommodation**

### *Medical Accommodation*

For Western University policy on accommodation for medical illness, see:  
[www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)

Student Medical Certificate (SMC): [studentservices.uwo.ca](http://studentservices.uwo.ca) under the Medical Documentation heading

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. It will be the Dean's Office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

For work worth less than 10% of the final grade, the instructor will consider requests for academic accommodation on medical grounds made in a timely manner in writing or by appointment in office hours. Such requests need not be accompanied by documentation. The instructor may, however, decide to require documentation be submitted to the appropriate Academic Counselling office.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

## **Accessible Education Western (AEW)**

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

### **Compassionate Accommodation**

Academic accommodation (extensions, makeup tests and exams, additional assignments etc.) may be given to students on compassionate grounds. The situations for which compassionate accommodation can be given must be serious, including significant events such as death in the immediate family, trauma (fire, robbery, harassment, muggings, car accidents, etc.) or emergency situations. Documentation is required.

If a member of your immediate family is seriously ill, obtain a medical certificate from the family member's physician and submit the documentation to your Academic Counsellor. If you have been involved in a severe accident, fire or some other exceptional crises, obtain a copy of the police report or be prepared to provide the necessary documentation upon request.

### **Bereavement**

Generally, for deaths within a student's immediate family (parents, guardians, caregivers, siblings, spouses), bereavement leave is granted, upon provision of documentation. For deaths within a student's extended family, academic accommodation is given for one to three days, upon provision of documentation.

Students seeking additional bereavement leave for religious or other reasons should contact their Academic Counsellors, and provide valid documentation.

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance.

<http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

Further specific information is given in the Western Academic Calendar.

### **Support Services**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Other support services on campus:**

Office of the Registrar: [www.registrar.uwo.ca](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca)

Student Development Centre: [www.sdc.uwo.ca](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca)

Psychological Services: [www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/psych)