Emergency Management Communications
AP/DEMS 3704
Fall 2024

Course Information

Course Instructor: Alain Normand
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Phone: no phone number on campus
Office Hours & Location: online by
appointment, no office on campus

Course Time & Days: Wednesday 19h00
Class Location: TBD
Course eClass site:

Land Acknowledgment

York University recognizes that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which York University campuses are located that precede the establishment of York University. York University acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat. It is now home to many First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region (LA&PS Land Acknowledgement).

Course Overview

Course Description

Introduces students to the essentials of all stages of emergency management communications. Relying heavily on case studies, this course teaches the theory of effective communications, particularly in a crisis context. Students will also develop their own presentation/media skills.

Course Learning Objectives

- Cognitive: Understand and apply knowledge - By the end of this course, the student will be able to complete a comprehensive Emergency Information plan.

- Psychomotor: Create and present communication material - By the end of this course, the student will be able to design messages specific to various emergency situations.
- Affective: Modify and adapt attitude - By the end of this course, the student will be able to develop a personal approach in order to become an effective crisis communicator:

Topics covered: Public awareness and education, media coordination, social media and emergencies, crisis communications strategies, interviews/scrums/press conferences, public alerting, internal communications, public confidence, crisis communications teams, call centres, public inquiries/board of inquiry, debriefing, amateur radio, messenger and audience, perception and persuasion, incident management system.

Course Format and Organization

In-class lectures augmented by assigned readings from the course manual or from hand-outs provided online. In-class discussions encouraged heavily and will make use of polling software and twitter. Chat and online discussions will also be arranged through e-class web site.

Technical Requirements

Several platforms will be used in this course (e.g., eClass, Prezi, etc.) through which students will interact with the course materials, the course director/TA, as well as with one another.

Here are some useful links for student computing information, resources, and help:
- Student Guide to eClass
- Student Guide to eLearning at York University

To determine Internet connection and speed, there are online tests, such as Speedtest, that can be run. If you need technical assistance, please consult the University Information Technology (UIT) Student Services web page. For more specific assistance, please write to askit@yorku.ca.

Course Communication Plan
- Student will use the e-class forums to discuss topics and communicate but use of WhatsApp and other media is optional
- An emergency phone number will be provided to students during the course in order to reach the course director

Course Expectations

[This optional section acts as a quick reference guide for learners to help them understand how to get the most out of your course. Consider including advice about your expectations for the course on the following:

- How students should engage with others and course materials
- How students should complete their course readings and activities
- What counts as effective notetaking in the course
- How much time students should set aside in order to engage with course material and course activities]

Course Evaluation

- 1 Interview case study, 15%
- 1 Press release 10%
- 1 Essay 25%
- 1 Team press conference15%
- Mid-term quiz 10%
- Participation 5%
- Final exam 20%

Assignments:

- Individual assignments
1. Interview: simulation on a real-life situation that the student selects and studies (Emphasis on the message and sender). The student will play the role of the spokesperson and will be interviewed by the course director posing as a reporter. All interviews will be done through skype of zoom application (Note: interviews may be recorded to create a realistic environment and provide an opportunity for students to evaluate themselves)
2. Press release: students will write a press release/media release on the situation used for their interview using methodology and principles presented in class
3. Essay: Written report on a topic selected from a list of questions to be provided during class

- Team assignment
1. Press Conference to present governmental or corporate crisis response actions and their impact on the citizens of the community or the clients of the corporation, based on a real emergency selected by the group. Teams of four or five students. We aim to present these to the class as a simulated online press conference by each team with an opportunity for the rest of the class to represents the media. (Note: Presentations will be video recorded to create a realistic environment) A question period must be planned as part of this assignment. (Emphasis on organisation, message, and empathy)

Case studies selection

- Students will use the list provided as suggestions for case studies
- Other situations and personal experience may be accepted but to be cleared by course director first
- Must be emergency management related, and have a strong communications planning component
- Presentation should be based on accepted principles
- Communications are based on what should have happened, not what actually occurred

Final exam

- Scenario provided where the student is the Public Information Officer for the situation
- Students must plan the management of the public information for this emergency including:
  - Assigning roles and responsibilities
  - Developing key messages
  - Planning information strategy with events and deadlines
  - Prepare briefing notes for the EOC including rationale for the approach and the messages selected

Course Schedule: Weekly Readings and Activities

Required Course Materials

- Textbook: Emergency Information Management, Normand, A, June 2017, ebook, TopHat Publishers (join code to be provided at a later date)

Optional Materials

- Handout using e-class and electronic distribution only (green policy, save trees)

Course Schedule

Topic title	Topics presented	In class Wednesday evening 19h00 discussion	If due this week
Important note: topics and case studies may change to reflect more current situations at the time of the session			
Week one: September 4 *Session title:* **Introduction, the Messenger**	>Introduction >Syllabus >Communication Basics >The messenger	Communication chain failures	Profiles: Getting to know you
Learning Outcome(s):	Understanding the basics of communication and the qualifications of the messenger		
Week two: September 11 *Session title:* **The Audience**	>The audience >Perception and outrage >Approaches to reaching groups	Risk communication gap	
Learning Outcome(s):	Understanding the audience; perception vs scientific facts		
Week three: September 18 *Session title:* **Coding and decoding**	>Public confidence >Key messages >Com. Vs crisis com. >Strategies & policies >Persuasion	The WE fiasco	
Learning Outcome(s):	Preparing the message for maximum efficiency		
Week four: September 25 *Session title:* **Transmission modes**	>Direct vs indirect >Sources >Public Alerting >Traditional media	Never cry wolf	*(Prepare for the October 2 quiz)*
Learning Outcome(s):	Understanding how messages get transmitted to the public		
Week five: October 2 *Session title:* **Media management**	>Press releases >Interviews and scrums >Press conferences >Traps and pitfalls, bridging	No comment	Quiz (10%): 30 minutes limit to answer, short answers
Learning Outcome(s):	Understanding how media works and how to prepare		

Week six: October 9 *Session title:* **Social Media** *Guest speaker*	>Social media use in EM >Crowdsourcing >Accuracy >Speed	Fake news	Press release (10%): Must be posted on eclass by midnight on October 13
Learning Outcome(s):	Understanding the impact of social media in emergency management		
October 16	**READING WEEK**		
Week seven: October 23 *Session title:* **Pre-emergency communication**	>Public awareness >Public education >Stakeholder relations >Public engagement	Neighbourhood preparedness plans	Interviews (15%): online interviews over the weekend of October 26 and 27, five minutes per student, by appointment
Learning Outcome(s):	Strategies to engage the public in emergency preparedness		
Week eight: October 30*Session title:***Emergency Communication***Guest Speaker Joe Almeida*	>Amateur Radio>Incident management>Information centres>Public/Emergency Information Officer (PIO/EIO)	COVID communication: overload?	
Learning Outcome(s):	Roles and responsibilities for communication during emergencies		
Week nine: November 6 *Session title:* **Post-emergency communication** *Guest speaker Suzanna Alsayed*	>Log-keeping >Scribes >Debriefing >Reporting >Public inquiries	Science and facts vs politics and profit	Essay (25%): must be posted to Turnitin by midnight on November 17, -5% off per day late
Learning Outcome(s):	Knowing how to follow-up after the emergency is over		

Week eleven: November 13 *Session title:* **Communication plans**	>The communication plan: putting it all together >Preparing for the final exam >Course recap	*(to be determined based on needs at that time)*	
Learning Outcome(s):	Learning to develop crisis communication plans		
Week ten: November 20 *Session title:* **Press conferences class presentations**	>Press conferences	*(note press conferences will take up the full three hours of the class time)*	Press conferences (15%): zoom presentation to the rest of the class
Learning Outcome(s):	Practical application and developing public speaking skills		
Week twelve: November 27 *Session title:* **The future of emergency communication**	>Complete press conferences if necessary >Future outlook >Changing technology >Public expectation	Your career plans	Prepare for the final exam worth 20%
Learning Outcome(s):	Being ready for change		
December 5 to 20 (to be onfirmed	**FINAL EXAM (date to be confirmed)** >Scenario will be provided, develop a comprehensive crisis communication plan for the scenario by following questions from exam sheet, three hour limit, open book exam.		

Course Policies

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information:

- Student Rights & Responsibilities
- Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Please also review the following course policies:

Academic Integrity

As a student at York University, you have a responsibility to both understand and uphold the integrity of the academic experience. The Faculty of Liberal Arts &

Professional Studies supports the International Center for Academic Integrity's definition of academic integrity. That is, you will be committed to acting in all academic matters, even in the face of adversity, with honesty, trust, fairness, courage, respect and responsibility. Here is how you can demonstrate academic integrity in the completion of this course:

- **Respect the ideas of others**: Your course work should represent your own knowledge and ideas. You should not falsely claim credit for ideas that are not your own, by presenting another's work as yours. If you are quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing another person's work in order to support your own ideas, identify the work and the author through proper citation practices. For more information about how to cite properly, use the Student Papers and Academic Research Kit (SPARK). You can improve your writing, research, and personal learning abilities through the Learning Commons, or by visiting the Writing Centre or ESL Open Learning Centre.
- **Respect your peers**: Know when you are allowed to collaborate. Ask your instructor about what group work entails when it comes to the sharing of work. In test situations and assignments, don't steal or give answers to your peers, whether in-person or online (e.g., in group chats and/or on third-party content-sharing websites, such as Chegg, Course Hero, etc.). Both cheating and aiding in a breach of academic honesty are violations of York University's academic honesty policy.
- **Respect your course instructor(s)**: Understand what your instructors are asking of you in class, as well as on assignments, tests and/or exams. If you are unsure, ask your professor or teaching assistant. They are committed to making you feel supported and want to assess you fairly and with integrity. Please do not submit the same piece of work for more than one course without your instructor's permission. That can be considered an act of cheating.
- **Respect yourself**: When you act with integrity, you know that your work is yours and yours alone. You do not allow others to take tests for you. You do not buy or otherwise obtain term papers or assignments. You do the work. As a result, you know that you *earned* the grades that you receive, so you can be proud of your York degree. By acting with integrity in your course work, you are also practising a valuable professional skill that is important in all workplaces.
- **Take responsibility**: If you have acted in an academically dishonest way, you can demonstrate courage and take responsibility for your mistake. You can admit your mistake to your course instructor as soon as possible.

Students who engage in academic dishonesty can be subject to disciplinary action under the *Senate Policy on Academic Honesty*. Your lack of familiarity with the Senate Policy does not constitute a defense against its application. Some academic offences

can also constitute offences under the Criminal Code of Canada, which means that you may also be subject to criminal charges.

Using Generative Artificial Intelligence in this Course

This course is about evaluating communication using a personal and critical methodology. Use of AI such as ChatGPT is not recommended. Your personal views on the topics covered will not be reflected accurately using AI tools. The assignments evaluation will take into consideration whether the submissions are based on your own work or that of the AI.

Turnitin

To promote academic integrity in this course, students will normally be required to submit their written assignments (Essay Assignment only) to Turnitin (via the course's eClass site) for a review of textual similarities and the detection of possible plagiarism. In so doing, students will allow their material to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used only for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin service are described on the Turnitin.com website. York students may opt out of using Turnitin. If you wish to opt out, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Accessibility

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to achieve excellence, the University recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to perform at their best. The University encourages students with disabilities to register with Student Accessibility Services to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors through their Letter of Accommodation (LOA).

Please let your instructor know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course. Sufficient notice is needed so that reasonable steps for accommodation can be discussed. Accommodations for tests/exams normally require three (3) weeks (or 21 days) before the scheduled test/exam to arrange.

Religious Observance Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making reasonable and appropriate accommodations to adherents for observances of special significance. Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for course examinations, tests, or deadlines conflict with a date of

religious significance, please contact the instructor within the first three (3) weeks of class. If the date falls within the formal examination periods, you must complete and submit a Religious Accommodation for Examination Form at least three (3) weeks before the start of the exam period.

Intellectual Property

Course materials are designed for use as part of this particular course at York University and are the intellectual property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third-party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian copyright law. Students may not publish, post on an Internet site, sell, or otherwise distribute any course materials or work without the instructor's express permission. Course materials should only be used by students enrolled in this course.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g., uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a charge of misconduct according to York's *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities*, the *Senate Policy on Academic Honesty*, and/or legal consequences for copyright violations.

Student Conduct in the Learning Environment

York University is committed to fostering teaching and learning environments that are free of disruptive and/or harassing behaviour, are physically safe, and conducive to effective teaching and learning. Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy, civility, and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Individuals who fail to adhere to such standards and who violate University or public law may be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

For more information, see the policies on Disruptive and/or Harassing Behaviour in Academic Situations and Student Conduct and Responsibilities, as well as the *Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities*.

Netiquette for eClass and Online Learning

Students and instructors have a joint responsibility to create and maintain a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities*. Please review and familiarize yourself with behaviours that support "netiquette" in virtual classrooms by consulting the Student Guide to eLearning.

Student Notice of Recording for Online Teaching and Learning

Activities for this course involve recording, in partial fulfillment of the course learning outcomes. Images, audio, text/chat messaging that have been recorded may be used and/or made available by the University to students enrolled in the course and those supporting the course for the purpose of materials review, for assessment, etc. Recordings will be managed according to the University's Common Record Schedule and will be securely destroyed when no longer needed by the University. Your personal information is protected in accordance with York University's *Guidelines on Access to Student Records and Protection of Privacy* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Access to online materials, including recordings or live meetings, is subject to York University's *Senate Policy on Computing and Information Technology Facilities*.

The University will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of the recorded information, but cannot provide a guarantee of such due to factors beyond the University's control, such as recordings being forwarded, copied, intercepted, circulated, disclosed, or stored without the University's knowledge or permission, or the introduction of malware into computer system which could potentially damage or disrupt the computer, networks, and security settings. The University is not responsible for connectivity/technical difficulties or loss of data associated with your hardware, software, or Internet connection.

By engaging in course activities that involve recording, you are consenting to the use of your appearance, image, text/chat messaging, and voice and/or likeness in the manner and under the conditions specified herein. In the case of a live stream recording, if you choose not to have your image or audio recorded, you may disable the audio and video functionality. If you choose to participate using a pseudonym instead of your real name, you must disclose the pseudonym to your instructor in advance to facilitate class participation.

You are not permitted to disclose the link to/URL of an event or an event session recording or copies of recording to anyone, for any reason. Recordings are available only to authorized individuals who have been directly provided the above instructions/link for their use. Recordings for personal use, required to facilitate your learning and preparation of personal course/lecture notes, may not be shared with others without the permission of the instructor or event coordinator, and may not be published, posted, linked to, or otherwise made available online, including on social media feeds, even if those feeds are private.

Student Support and Resources

To help you succeed academically, York University offers a wide range of resources and services. Everything from writing workshops and peer mentorship to wellness support and career guidance is available to fulfill our LA&PS students' needs. Explore the links below to access these on-campus resources:

- Academic Advising is available to provide students support and guidance in making academic decisions and goals.
- Student Accessibility Services are available for support and accessibility accommodation when required.
- Student Counselling, Health & Wellbeing offers workshops, resources, and counselling to support your academic success.
- Peer-Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) Program provides student study sessions for students to collaborate and enhance their understanding of course content in certain courses.
- Student Numeracy Assistance Centre at Keele (SNACK) supports students in courses involving math, stats, and Excel.
- The Writing Centre provides multiple avenues of writing-based support including drop-in sessions, one-to-one appointments, a Multilingual Studio, and an Accessibility Specialist.
- ESL Open Learning Centre (OLC) supports students with building proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking English.
- Learning Skills Services provides tips for time management, effective study and learning habits, keeping up with coursework, and other learning-related supports.
- Learning Commons provides links to supports for time management, writing, study skills, preparing for exams, and other learning-related resources.
- Roadmap to Student Success provides students with timely and targeted resources to help them achieve academic, personal, and professional success.
- Office of Student Community Relations (OSCR) is responsible for administering the *Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities* and provides critical incident support.
- goSAFE is staffed by York students and can accompany York community members to and from any on-campus location, such as the Village Shuttle pick-up hub, parking lots, bus stops, or residences.

For a full list of academic, wellness, and campus resources visit Student Support & Resources.