REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Fall Semester 2023
Syllabus
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Course: MEJO 724 | **Schedule:** Asynchronous

Instructor:	Dr. Lucinda Austin	**Office Hours:**	Wednesdays, 3:30-4:30 p.m. on Zoom
E-mail:	lucinda.austin@unc.edu		Or by Zoom appointment, as needed

DESCRIPTION

How do communicators strategically measure, monitor, and manage the organizational assets of brand image and reputation? What is the impact of reputation in business practice? Through a comparative case study approach, students will learn how to assign value to and manage reputation, regardless of their professional role and whether they work in the government, corporate, or non-profit sector. Students will examine how crisis communication and corporate social responsibility influence reputation.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:
1. Understand the concept of reputation.
2. Describe the role of reputation management in business practice.
3. Consider established approaches for measuring and monitoring reputation.
4. Recognize threats, assess risks, and plan messages to minimize negative impact on reputation.
5. Apply communication theories in crisis communication and corporate social responsibility to enhance organizational reputation.
6. Examine differences in reputation management in nonprofit, government, and business sectors.
7. Analyze cases of reputation management for evidence of success.

COURSE VALUES

- **Integrity and honesty:** All work should be your own, including research reports, tests, etc.
- **Completeness and thoroughness:** The best projects will meet all the objectives and requirements of the assignment.
- **Preparedness:** Complete reading assignments before class and be prepared to participate in class discussions. Turn assignments in on time.
- **Accuracy:** Data must be accurate and not falsified.
- **Professional courtesy:** Demonstrate courtesy toward your fellow classmates. Respect diverse backgrounds and opinions so that we may all gain insights from one another. Avoid disruptive classroom behaviors.

HONOR CODE

All students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the Honor Code. I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (http://honor.unc.edu). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Associate Lucinda Austin, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students. All work submitted for this course must be your own work. All sources used for information must be properly cited. The ideas and content within your materials must be original and not copied

from others. In our industry, we are expected to be original and creative all of the time. If you have any questions about whether your use of reference material is appropriate, please see me.

TEXTBOOK AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Required Textbooks

Doorley, J. and Garcia, H. F. (2020). *Reputation management: The key to successful public relations and corporate communication* (4th ed.). New York: Routledge. (The only book you'll need to buy or rent; the rest of our readings are free for you to access through UNC)

Langham, T. (2018). *Reputation management: The future of corporate communications and public relations*. Emerald Publishing Limited. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/unc/detail.action?docID=5602160

Pollock, T. G., and Barnett, M. L. (2012). The Oxford Handbook of Corporate Reputation. https://academic-oup-com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/edited-volume/38669

Optional Book
Mantere, P. A. and S. (2008). *Strategic reputation management: Towards company of good*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Supplemental Readings
Supplemental readings (e.g., journal articles, blogs, etc.) will be assigned for each class week. Readings will be made available through Sakai whenever possible.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Participation and Discussion Forum
This involves in-class participation, including leading discussion forums. As part of your participation grade, you will be expected to submit responses to two discussion questions and two responses to others prior to each class on Sakai based upon the assigned readings or cases for the week. Questions should demonstrate that you have completed the assigned readings and are playing an active role by contributing your thoughts, reactions, and opinions about the class topic. In addition, you will create a forum thread for your case study critique and case study presentation (see assignments below) and pose a minimum of three questions to the class for discussion and interaction on your case and respond to comments and questions. New class weeks start on Mondays: **Discussion questions and forum posts should be up prior to the next week's content (Sunday, 11:59 p.m.).** To help place limits on your time and energy for this activity, please try to limit word counts to 200 to 500 words max for discussion question responses. Responses to others can be much shorter (50 to 150 words max). For some topics, you will be asked to post your response before seeing others' posts (e.g., when responding to case questions, etc.).

Case Study Critique
Select a reputation management case study to read and critique from the Sage Business Cases database (access through UNC Libraries). You will be required to: 1) submit a 3-4 page synopsis and critical analysis of the case study, 2) give one recorded 3-minute report on the case study found according to the assignment parameters posted on Sakai, and 3) lead the class in a discussion topic on the class forum about the research presented. Be analytical in both your critique and discussion, which will be counted equally in your grade. Expanded assignment descriptions with parameters and grading criteria will be posted in Sakai under the "assignments" tab.

Case Study Report
After critiquing a case study, you will prepare your own case study report, based upon a reputation management case. This may be a case connected to an organization where you have a connection, or currently work, or could be another case of interest from current events. The case should be no more than 10 years old. You may use examples or data from the Sage Business Cases, but should do your own research from the organization(s)' website, social media, news stories, original source documents, etc. Case study reports may incorporate secondary research, such as available data and publications on the communication initiative, and primary research, such as observation and interviews with communications professionals. Reports should detail the following for the chosen campaign or initiative: the reputation issue and background for development of the present initiative, audiences for initiative, theory and evidence-base for the initiative, formative research conducted, communication activities undertaken, evaluations conducted for the communication initiative, and your own critique and discussion of the case study and its implications for the practice of reputation management. You will present an overview of your case study and your critique, discussion, and implications in a 10-minute recorded presentation. Expanded assignment descriptions with parameters and grading criteria will be posted in Sakai under the "assignments" tab.

Reflection
A reflection paper about the course content will be due for the final class period. The reflection should connect to your own personal career goals and the importance of reputation in your industry, reflecting upon the entire semester's course readings holistically, as well as the cases examined. What is the value of reputation, as you see it now? What do you see as the biggest challenges connecting to managing reputation? Expanded assignment descriptions with parameters and grading criteria will be posted in Sakai under the "assignments" tab.

Grading Breakdown

Participation in Discussion Forum	15%
Case Study Critique	20%
Case Study Critique Presentation	10%
Case Study Paper	30%
Case Study Presentation	15%
Reflection	10%
Total	**100%**

Grading Scale
Graduate grades are H, P, L, F. Your grade is determined by active participation in class, the quality of your assignments, and your work in relation to others.

Grade	Description
H	Mastery of course content at highest level; Outstanding attainment and truly outstanding performance in the class and on assignments
P	Strong performance overall in the class and on assignments; Solid attainment
L	Marginal attainment; Performance in the class and on assignments below the acceptable level for graduate students. Able to apply the material and extrapolate ideas in only some instances. May not be participating or handing in assignments on time.
F	Failed performance; Unacceptable attainment. May be missing class, failing to read or engage with the material, or unwilling to apply the material.

COURSE POLICIES

Please read all assignments before class so you may join in the discussion forum. This is a group-learning environment. Please come to the forum with ideas, comments, etc.

All course information is posted on Sakai and most assignments will be uploaded using Sakai: You will find the course syllabus, course schedule, assignments, supplemental readings, and other important information about the course on Sakai. Additional information will be posted throughout the semester for upcoming course dates and assignments. You also can obtain the e-mail addresses of your classmates on Sakai. It is your responsibility to keep up with Sakai and the content there. Your grades are posted in Sakai only so that you can stay updated on your progress; overall grades on Sakai are rough approximations of your overall grade in the course.

Deadlines are firm. If you miss a deadline, you will receive a 10% reduction in your assignment grade for each 24-hour period the assignment is late. After 72 hours, the assignment will not be accepted and will be given a grade of zero. Late assignments must be e-mailed. In the case of a needed extension, students should communicate with the professor in advance of the assignment due date. If connectivity issues present a challenge, please contact the instructor: you will not be penalized for these.

Email and Communication: You are encouraged to e-mail me with any questions or comments you have throughout the semester or chat me in Teams. If you don't understand an assignment or have questions, please ask. It's sometimes hard to anticipate what students don't know or understand. I will do my best to respond within 24 to 48 hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is your responsibility to check your e-mail and Sakai regularly for messages and updates.

Syllabus Changes: The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

AI (Chat GPT and other applications):
Please familiarize yourself with the university's guidance and considerations for using AI programs when conducting research (https://provost.unc.edu/generative-ai-usage-guidance-for-the-research-community). Below are the university's guidance for AI use in classes:

Generative AI is extremely useful; however, it has the following limitations:
- How output is arrived at is not clear as the internal processes used to produce a particular output within the generative AI cannot be determined.
- The output is based on existing data (often scraped from online sources) and may reflect biases that should be acknowledged; it may also be inaccurate or entirely fabricated, even if it appears reliable or factual.
- AI evokes a range of intellectual property concerns; sourcing and ownership of information is unclear, and the status of AI output raises numerous questions—e.g., is output equivalent to a published resource? What citational responsibilities are in place for various AI interactions?

Usage Philosophy
Use of generative AI in your coursework is based on the following principles:
1. **AI should help you think.** Not think for you.
   Use these tools to give you ideas, perform research (in compliance with point 2 below), and analyze problems. Do not use them to do your work for you, e.g., do not enter an assignment question into ChatGPT and copy & paste the response as your answer.

2. **Engage with AI Responsibly and Ethically:** Engage with AI technologies responsibly, critically evaluating AI-generated outputs and considering potential biases, limitations, and ethical implications in your analysis and discussions. Utilize AI technologies ethically, respecting privacy, confidentiality, and intellectual property rights. Ensure that the data used for AI applications is obtained and shared responsibly and in compliance with relevant regulations.

3. **You are 100% responsible for your final product.**
   You are the user. If the AI makes a mistake, and you use it, it's your mistake. If you don't know whether a statement about any item in the output is true, then your responsibility is to research it. If you cannot verify it as factual, you should delete it. You hold full responsibility for AI-generated content as if you had produced the materials yourself. This means ideas must be attributed, facts are true, and sources must be verified.

4. **The use of AI must be open and documented.**
   The use of any AI in the creation of your work must be declared in your submission and explained. Details on how to source your AI usage are explained below.

5. **These guidelines are in effect unless I give you specific guidelines for an assignment or exam.** It is your responsibility to ensure you are following the correct guidelines.

6. **Data that are confidential or personal should not be entered into generative AI tools.**
   Putting confidential or personal data (e.g., your One Card details) into these tools exposes you and others to the loss of important information. Therefore, do not do so.

Guideline Specifics
Not following these guidelines may be a reportable violation to the UNC Honor Court.
Assignments

- Writing and Presentation: In principle, you may submit material that contains AI-generated content, or is based on or derived from it, if this use is properly documented. This may include drafting an outline, preparing individual sections, combining elements, removing redundant parts, and compiling and annotating references. Your documentation must make the process transparent – the submission itself must meet the relevant standards of attribution and validation.

- Multimedia Assignments: In principle, you may submit material that contains AI-generated content, or is based on or derived from it, if this use is properly documented. This may include the generation of images, audio, music, video, etc. Your documentation must make the process transparent – the submission itself must meet the relevant standards of attribution and validation.

- Mathematical and Statistical Analysis, Data Analysis, Data Interpretation, Coding of Data, generalizing data to a problem set or any other forms of quantification of language or concepts, etc.: Generative AI can be used for these purposes; however, the output must be verified via your own mathematical calculations and proof of work provided in your assignment.

- Readings and Discussions: Generative AI can be used to analyze readings. However, you must also do the readings. Generative AI analysis is not a substitute for reading the works themselves. Similarly, participating in online discussions of readings requires that you provide your own contributions. Unless I specifically allow it, do not generate responses to readings using AI.

- Research: If you use AI to support your research, you must account for and document your use. Possibilities include topic brainstorming, search assistance, source evaluation, and summaries and source documentation. Track your use of AI throughout these stages, and then document this assistance as you submit the project. Any material generated through AI in your projects should also be documented in your citations.

- Simulations: In principle, you may use AI tools for advice or brainstorming. It should not, however, be used to find cheats or other unfair advantages. If a report is part of the assignment, your documentation of how you used AI in completing the simulation must make the process transparent.

- Group Work: Group work guidelines are based on the type of assignment above (e.g., a group written assignment will use the guidelines for written assignments).

- In-Class Activities: Instructions on the appropriate use of AI for in-class activities will be provided by me.
- Written & Oral Exams: Unless I explicitly grant permission, the utilization of AI tools is prohibited and could potentially constitute a reportable violation to the UNC Honor Court. If the use of AI tools is explicitly permitted, you are required to adhere to the guidelines concerning AI citation, verification, and clarity as outlined below.

Sourcing Use of AI

- Accuracy: Generative AI may invent both facts and sources for those facts. Verification is your responsibility, whether the source of the error is you or the AI makes no difference. You need to check the facts, the quotes, the arguments, and the logic, and document what you did to validate your material.
- Attribution: All ideas that are not originally your own have a source and that source must be attributed. Please be aware that generative AI tends to invent sources. You have a two-fold obligation with respect to attribution:
  1. If a source is identified, find and attribute the original source of the idea, identify the location of the text within the source, and provide a working link to the location (if the source is available online). If you are not able to locate the source, delete that content.
  2. Document the process by explaining how you used generative AI in a work statement that will accompany your submission of major projects in the class. As you submit a project, develop, and include an appropriate version of the below statements:
     - "I attest that this project did not use AI at any stage in its development or in the creation of any of its components."
     - "I attest that this project made use of AI in the following ways:"
       You must then use the following form to document your usage. *

Usage	Tool Used (e.g., ChatGPT-4)	How you edited the output, if at all	Conversation Link (If available)
Topic selection			
Brainstorming and idea generation			
Research			
Source valuation			
Outlining/planning			
Drafting			
Media creation			
Peer review			
Revising			
Polishing			
Other			

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Attendance and participation: No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:
1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC).

Accessibility Resources and Services: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: https://ars.unc.edu or email ars@unc.edu.

Counseling and Psychological Services: CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: https://caps.unc.edu/ or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

Title IX
Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – titleixcoordinator@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Policy on Non-Discrimination
The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered, and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied. If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at safe.unc.edu) or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office, or online to the EOC at https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/.

CLASS SCHEDULE

*Schedule is subject to change—always use the updated version on Sakai. Any revisions to the following outline will be discussed in class and posted on Sakai. Reading assignments will be posted on Sakai.

Date	Content	Due
Week 1 **Aug. 21-25**	Overview | Introduction | Syllabus What is reputation and why is it important?	Doorley Ch 1; Langham, Ch 1-2 Pollock, Ch. 1, 5 Readings on Sakai
Week 2 **Aug. 28-Sept. 1**	Measuring Reputation	Langham, Ch. 3-4 Pollock, Ch. 2, 3, 8 Readings on Sakai
Week 3 **Sept. 6-Sept. 8** **(Sept. 4 Labor Day;** **Sept. 5 Wellness** **Day)**	Building and Monitoring Reputation	Langham, Ch. 5-6 Pollock, Ch. 19, 21 Readings on Sakai
Week 4 **Sept. 11-15**	Trust and Ethics in Reputation Communication	Doorley, Ch. 2 Pollock, Ch. 23 Readings on Sakai
Week 5 **Sept. 18-22**	Building Public Relationships and Working with Stakeholders	Langham, Ch. 8 Doorley, Ch. 3, 8, 9 Readings on Sakai
Week 6 **Sept. 26-29** **(Sept. 25 Wellness** **Day)**	Managing Reputation Online and Social Media	Doorley, Ch. 4 Langham, Ch. 8 (online section) Readings on Sakai
Week 7 **Oct. 2-6**	Case Study Critiques and Response	**Case Critiques, Due Oct. 2, 11:59 p.m.** **Discussion Forum Responses, Due Oct. 6, 11:59 p.m.**
Week 8 **Oct. 9-13**	Corporate Social Responsibility, Activism, and Reputation	Langham, Ch. 11 Doorley, Ch. 12 Readings on Sakai
Week 9 **Oct. 16-18** **(Oct. 19-20 Fall** **Break)**	Reputation Management and Crisis Communication	Doorley, Ch. 10-11 Langham, Ch. 10 Pollock, Ch. 22 Readings on Sakai
Week 10 **Oct. 23-27**	Government and Reputation	Doorley, Ch. 6 Readings on Sakai
Week 11 **Oct. 30-Nov. 3**	Nonprofit and Reputation	Readings on Sakai
Week 12 **Nov. 6-10**	Business and Reputation	Doorley, Ch. 5 Langham, Ch. 12 Pollock, Ch. 11 Readings on Sakai

Week 13-14 **Nov. 13-21** **(Thanksgiving** **Break Nov. 22-24)**	Case Study Presentations and Response	**Case Presentations, Due Nov. 15,** **11:59 p.m.** **Discussion Forum Responses, Due** **Nov. 21, 11:59 p.m.**
Week 15 **Nov. 27-Dec. 1**	Gender and Diversity and Reputation	Langham, Ch. 7 Doorley, Ch. 7 Readings on Sakai
Week 16 **Dec. 4-6** **(Last Day of class** **Dec. 6)**	Final: Reflection and Contemplation	**Reflection: Due Dec. 6, 11:59 p.m.**