Course Description

Strategic communication recently emerged as a new area of study as organizations strive to be better performers during the recent time of rapid changes driven by economic, technological, and environmental factors. This course is a survey of fundamental content of strategic communication in Chinese organizations (both local Chinese and global organizations in China). Drawing on perspectives and elements from the fields of strategic management, public relations, organizational communication, and marketing communication, this course introduces students to the emerging field of strategic communication, its core concepts, perspectives, components, contextual theories, and nature of its scholarship with a tailored emphasis on the Chinese context.

In this course, students will read classical works on strategy to build a foundation, to gain an understanding of the evolution of strategic communication as a field, and to learn to identify various publics (including customers, employees, shareholders, community, and media). We will examine key areas of strategic communication particularly as they are practiced in the Chinese organizational context: strategic planning, leadership and decision making, internal and external communication, Integrated Marketing Communication, CSR communication, ethical principles, and internationalization strategy. We will look at strategic practices from both sides of the ocean, that is, how local Chinese firms strategically communicate with their various publics and go global, as well as how global firms do the same with their Chinese publics as they expand into the Chinese market.

Course Objectives

- Master theoretical underpinnings of strategic communication
- Apply key strategic communication theories and concepts to the practical organizational cases,
particular the Chinese cases

- Contextually examine and evaluate performance of “Chinese” organizations from a strategic communication perspective
- Recognize and respond to the demands of various stakeholders through communication
- To gain the ability to create a strategic communication plan for “Chinese” organizations to help shape public attitudes and actions

Suggested books:


Course Evaluation

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<th>Points</th>
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<td>Class attendance</td>
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<td>Class participation</td>
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<td>Individual article presentation</td>
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a. Attendance: attendance will be recorded. You can have 3 excused absences (illness, emergency, natural disaster...). Any absence beyond that will cost you attendance point.

b. Class Participation: you are expected to be active participant for this class. That means that you are expected to read the required readings, ask questions, respond to the teacher and peer students, and participate in all class activities. Your class participation should be a reflection of your engagement with the readings and your ability to think independently and critically on the issues.

c. Individual article presentation: each student will choose articles from the syllabus and present them to the whole class. Please prepare a précis, which covers the main ideas of the article, main theories discussed, or/and the case presented (if there is any). Please also prepare some discussion questions for class/group discussion. Be prepared to circulate your précis to the whole class electronically at least 24 hours before each class time.
d. Individual writing assignment: some research assignment questions are given out throughout the semester. You are expected to answer five of them, with each no less than 1 page in length. The writing should be based on your independent research and understanding on the topic, as well you ability to connect theory with real world cases (and sometimes performing comparative analysis). Each short essay is worth 6 points.

e. Group project: please form groups voluntarily with no more than 4 people in each group, and select one of the major areas covered in the class to design a group project. Please prepare a 20 page project write-up. At the center of the project is a strategic communication plan for a real organization in China facing a real communication challenge. The purpose of the group project is to apply knowledge learned in this class to the Chinese context.

Tentative Schedule

**Week 1. Introduction of class members and the field**


**Week 2. Conceptualizing strategy (through classical readings)**


Optional:


**Week 3. Strategic communication as a new paradigm – communication as the core**


Optional:

**Week 4: Business Communication in China – the fundamentals (part I)**

Amber et al. Book Chapter 2: Trough a glass darkly – China from a Western perspective.

Amber et al. Book Chapter 3: The furniture of the mind, p87-94.

Amber et al. Book Chapter 12: Western and Chinese commercial thinking

**Week 5: Business Communication in China – classical cases (part II)**

HBR Book Chapter: The Chinese Negotiation

HBR Book Chapter: The Hidden Dragons

HBR Book Chapter: Trouble in Paradise

**Week 6: Strategic planning - the rise and fall**


Optional:


**Week 7: Leadership and decision making**


Optional:

**Week 8: Communicating with internal publics**


Amber et al. Book Chapter, Chapter 9: Rightness and correct form: The *yi* and *li* of organization in China.

Optional:


**Week 9: Communicating with external publics**


Amber et al. Book Chapter, Chapter 4: Relationships and regulation

HBR Book Chapter - HBR on Doing Business in China: To reach China’s Consumers, Adapt to Quo Qing.

Optional:


**Week 10: Integrated Marketing Communication (Introduction)**


Optional:


**Week 11: Integrated Marketing Communication (on China)**


Amber et al. Book Chapter, Chapter 6: The marketing mix.

Amber et al. Book Chapter, Chapter 7: The marketing process.

Optional:


**Week 12: Strategic communication during crisis - crisis communication**


**Week 13: Ethical issues in strategic communication**


Amber et al. Book Section, An ethical interlude, p. 128-136

**Week 14: Strategic communication of CSR**


Optional:


**Week 15: Guest lecture**

TBA

**Week 16: Chinese entrepreneurship and strategic orientation**


**Week 17: Chinese firms and Internationalization/Globalization Strategy:**


Optional:


**Week18: “Chinalization” strategy of Foreign/Western Firms**


**Week 19: Project presentation**