ACADEMIC COURSE WINTER SEMESTER 2023
MASTER COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT, MODULE 06-005-542

Strategic Communication:
Value Creation and Business Models for Communications (V)

Prof. Dr. Ansgar Zerfass

Monday, 15:15–16.45hrs, Nikolaistr. 27–29, Room 1.01,
on the following dates: 20.11., 04.12., 11.12., 18.12.2023;
08.01., 15.01., 22.01. 29.01.2024.
Written exam for the module on February 20, Tuesday, 09:15–11.15hrs.

Topic
This course explores the contribution of communication to value creation for corporations
and other organizations. Every inhouse communicator and every consultant should be able
to explain organizational leaders or (internal) clients why, when and how it makes sense
to use scarce resources for communication activities.

Commonplaces like the positive impact of reputation or relationships for success,
positive effects in the media or stakeholder reactions are not sufficient. What is needed
internally is a business model for communications – a model that describes the rationale
of how a communication department creates, delivers, and captures value for an organi-
zation. This will be different for any organization depending on its strategy and stakeholders,
and it might change over time. In a similar way, communication agencies and consultancies
need profitable business models that deliver value-creating services for their clients.

The course introduces core concepts like shareholder and stakeholder value, value
creation, business model design, and the use of strategic thinking for communications. It
will discuss the challenges of aligning communication activities to organizational goals;
setting-up structures, processes and digital infrastructures for communications; utilizing
techniques to position communication departments and communicators at the top and
throughout the organization; creating valuable products and services in competitive
environments; and measuring the success of communications.

Learning objectives
After finishing the course, students will be able to a) understand the principles of strategic thinking for
corporate and organizational communications, and how this helps to guide practical decisions in today’s
turbulent world; b) analyze existing business models for communications in organizations and for
consultancies; c) explain methods for aligning communication to organizational goals; d) know how to position
communication departments, agencies and communicators; e) enhance their personal profiles and
competencies as communicators; and f) utilize the power of communications for organizational value creation
both effectively and efficiently.
**Method**
The course is organized as a lecture with integrated discussions. Students should read the relevant literature prior to each session. Current research and developments in the professional field will be included in the debate. As such, participants are encouraged to browse recent issues of academic journals (Academy of Management Review; Corporate Communications – An International Journal, Communication Management, Harvard Business Review; International Journal of Strategic Communication, Public Relations Review; Long Range Planning; Strategic Management Journal; etc.) and follow the discussion in industry magazines, esp. those focusing on managing communication departments and agencies.

**Module overview and course assessment**
This course is part of the module “Strategic Communication”. Students enrolled have to attend both classes and take an exam. Assessment: Written exam (Klausur, 120 min.) in English, dealing with the content of both courses and the accompanying literature. Regular attendance during this course is required, as study regulations require 15 hours of presence time for acquiring credit points in this course. Please inform the instructor in any case of illness etc. via e-mail.

**Exchange students / Guest students**
This course and module are offered in English; they expand the offerings at the Institute for Communication and Media Studies for international students. Please note that this is a graduate level (master) course and knowledge about strategic communication, organizational communication, public relations, etc., is required. Students should enroll for the overall module between September 27 and October 2 via AlmaWeb or by contacting the lecturers. Exchange students may receive a certificate of attendance (3 ECTS), which requires full attendance during every session, and a short evaluation meeting with the instructor. Alternatively, they might take the written exam to receive a grade and 10 ECTS (if passed). Please approach the module leader, Professor Hoffmann, via e-mail until January 24 latest to arrange evaluation meetings or exams.

**Digital platforms**
Access passwords for Moodle and Zoom (see below) will be sent by e-mail to all registered students. This course will be taught in presence, but we will be able to switch to hybrid or digital teaching if necessary.

**Schedule**

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<td><strong>Conceptual foundations: Strategic communication from an organizational perspective</strong></td>
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| 20.11.2023| **Business acumen, value creation and strategic thinking**  
  Literature:  
  Gulbrandsen & Just, 2020 (Chapter 1); Gulbrandsen & Just, 2020 (Chapter 2, 3);  
  Ragas & Culp, 2021a; Zerfass et al., 2018; Zerfass & Link, 2022b |
| 04.12.2023| **Aligning communication and organizational goals**  
  Literature:  
  Volk & Zerfass, 2018; Zerfass et al., n.d.  
  Additional reading:  
  Zerfass & Viertmann, 2017 |
| 11.12.2022| **Performance measurement and evaluation**  
  Literature:  
  Buhmann & Volk, 2023; Zerfass, 2018  
  Additional reading:  
  Buhmann et al., 2019 |
| **Functional perspective: Creating valuable communication services and products** |
| 18.12.2022| **Stakeholder communications & Advising and coaching internal clients**  
  Literature:  
  Holtzhausen et al., 2021; Borner & Zerfass, 2018  
  Additional readings:  
  Macnamara, 2020; Zerfass & Franke, 2013 |
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| 08.01.2023   | Individual perspective: Developing practitioners’ competencies and mindset                      | Roles, functions, competencies, and leadership characteristics of communicators  
Literature:  
Nothhaft, 2010; Zerfass & Volk, 2017  
Additional readings:  
Fulkheimer et al., 2016; Zerfass et al., 2020; Zerfass et al., 2021 |
| 15.01.2024   | Organizational perspective: Designing excellent communication departments                       | Business models for communications in organizations  
Literature:  
Zerfass & Link, 2022; Zerfass & Link, 2022a  
Additional reading:  
Ragas & Culp, 2021c |
| 22.01.2024   | Market perspective: Developing successful strategies in the communications industry             | 15:15–16:15h  
Guest lecture  
"Communication agencies: The market, business models, and drivers of success”  
Hanning Kempe, FleishmanHillard  
Hanning Kempe is General Managing Director of FleishmanHillard Germany and Vice President of GPRA, the association of Germany’s leading communications agencies. FleishmanHillard (part of Omnicom Group) is an international communications consultancy with offices in 30 countries on several continents. Hanning Kempe is recognized as an executive communications consultant in all aspects of dialogue management, corporate strategy development, corporate, change and crisis communications and issues management. His main emphasis is on government, pharma, technology and FMCG. Before joining the agency he served as spokesperson for the CDU, the Minister of Defense in Germany and the United Nations Mission in Somalia. He was Vice President Corporate Communications at ABB Ltd., Managing Partner of Zurich based Opcon Communication and CEO of Grayling Germany & Switzerland.  
16:15–16:45h  
Business models for communication agencies, consultants, and service providers  
Literature:  
Man et al., 2016; Hoffjann et al., 2021; Ragas & Culp, 2021b |
| 29.01.2024   | Conclusion and outlook: Positioning communications as a value driver in a changing world         | Positioning communication departments and future-proofing communications  
Literature:  
Brockhaus & Zerfass, 2022; Stieglitz et al., 2022; Tench & Waddington, 2021 |
|              | Assessment                                                                                      | Details will be announced in the course.                                                                                                                                                          |
| 20.02.2024   | Contact                                                                                          | Professor Zerfass offers regular consultation hours; please visit https://bit.ly/StratKomm to see details.  
Literature (available on Moodle; sources underlined in the plan above are most relevant for the exam)  
O. Ihlen & S. Romenti (Eds.), *Public relations and the power of creativity: strategic opportunities, innovation and critical challenges* (pp. 3–22). Emerald.


professionals. Results of a survey in 46 countries. Brussels: EUPRERA/EACD. (Chapter: Future roles for communication professionals, pp. 46–69)