



**The Lee Kong Chian School of Business**  
**Academic Year 2024/25**  
**Term 2**

**COMM334 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN ASIA (OVERSEAS PROJECT EXPERIENCE)**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

COMM334 – an overseas project experience – is an advanced elective module with an overseas study component designed for students majoring in communication management. With Asia’s economic ascendancy and modernisation, corporate strategic communication in Asia has taken on a new importance in the past two decades. Home to over half of the world’s population, unprecedented political, economic, media, social and technological forces in an age of discontinuities are creating a new world order for Asia. The importance of communicating strategically and the need for greater cross-cultural understanding, including being **innovative and enterprising** have never been more critical for organisations struggling to effectively communicate with diverse stakeholder groups across different geographies in this new multi-polar business environment.

An SMU-XO module, this course is divided into two segments – **Singapore and China (Hong Kong)**. The overseas experience aims to equip communication students to better understand the unique geopolitical dynamics which affect communication in a one country and two systems nation. Students will be equipped with the ability to apply theory and understand how strategic communication has evolved to influence the integration of paid, earned, shared and owned media which are vital to unearthing unique characteristics that drive communication practice in countries in Asia. In addition to gaining insights from top Asian practitioners in the region, students will also acquire in-depth knowledge of the socio-political-cultural-economic factors that underpin the practice that influence business outcomes in the world’s most populous continent. This course will prepare students in communication management to readily transit and take on responsibilities to manage communication for businesses operating across Asia.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, students will be able to accomplish the following:

- Understand the political, economic, social, media and cultural factors that influence corporate strategic communication in different countries in Asia.
- Apply the principles and theories of cultural values and Global Public Relations framework when examining the industry practices.
- Analyze the effectiveness of different strategies when engaging with multicultural, multi-ethnic stakeholders in today’s technologically driven business environments.
- Gain valuable insights from guest speakers who manage communication in Asiac
- Integrate many communication modules and apply knowledge to align business objectives and communication strategies for effective engagement with the Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong audiences.

## DESTINATION AND DURATION

Hong Kong, China. 5 – 15 May 2024

## PRE-REQUISITE/ CO-REQUISITE/ MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S)

Please refer to the Course Catalogue on OASIS for the most updated list of pre-requisites / co-requisites for this particular course. Do note that if this course has a co-requisite, it means that the course has to be taken together with another course. Dropping one course during BOSS bidding would result in both courses being dropped at the same time.

To be able to take this course, students need to have completed at least one communication module from the communication management baskets (excluding COMM-COR1304).

## ASSESSMENT METHODS\*

Quiz (MCQ) in class	15%
Quiz (Essay) in class	15%
Group Project	35%
Reflection video	15%
Class Participation	20%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

## POLICY ON USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS

Electronic devices like laptops and iPads may be used during class for academic tasks and activities related to this course **ONLY**. You are **NOT** to use them to engage in tasks unrelated to the course, like surfing the internet, checking emails, instant messaging, playing games or watching YouTube. Mobile phones, iPods, and other peripherals must be turned off and packed away before class begins.

**Please note that you are also NOT ALLOWED to record any of the lecture sessions regardless of whether you are physically in class or attending class online via zoom.**

## INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

This course combines high interaction, theory and cases. Its success depends on outstanding group dynamics. To make this work, I expect all students to please:

- Be diligently prepared by completing all readings and reviewing case studies prior to class.
- Engage in thoughtful and knowledgeable discussion, and challenge sloppy thinking.
- Ask pertinent and constructive questions that contribute to the collective knowledge.
- Be open-minded to theory as well as to the realities of corporate communication.
- Be punctual for each class.
- Display respectful and civil manners to the teaching team and your classmates.
- Refrain from any disruptive behaviors during class

### Examinations

There is no final exam for COMM334 but there will be two quizzes (online tests carried out in class) comprising 15% each (total 30%), a reflection video (15%) and a group project making up 35% of the total weightage. No make-up exams or tests will be given without prior permission.

Class participation (20%) will be assessed on quality e.g., novel ideas, useful questions, viewpoints that integrate different aspects of the discussion, introducing new facts, challenging common assumptions, sharing relevant experience etc.

### Students with special needs

I am committed to helping students with special challenges overcome difficulties with learning the subject matter. Students with special needs, whether the issue is difficulty with course material, a disability, an illness, or any other personal matters, should contact me as soon as they are aware of such problems. The sooner you contact me, the better I can help you. Rest assured I will keep your situation private and confidential.

## **CLASS AND CONSULTATION TIMINGS**

The class will be taught in 3-hour sessions. If you need to drop by my office, please arrange a consultation slot with the Teaching Assistant.

## **RECOMMENDED TEXT, NOTES AND READINGS**

Selected readings for COMM334 are taken from two textbooks by Sriramesh (2004, 2020). Additional readings from journals and industry reports are indicated in the **LESSON SCHEDULE**.

- Sriramesh, K. & Verčič, D. (2020). *The Global Public Relations Handbook: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Routledge
- Sriramesh, K., & Yeo, S.L. (Eds). (2024). *Crisis Communication Cases from Asia: A Cultural Approach*. Routledge

Lectures will discuss content and literature aimed to achieve the objectives of the course. Lecture notes will be uploaded before class lesson. Additional readings will also be assigned which will be discussed in class. Industry practitioners and/or visiting Professors will be invited as guest lecturers so that you get new perspectives and interesting insights. Guest speakers may or may not come with prepared slides. As such, it is critical that you attend all sessions of COMM334. As guest speakers may share sensitive information, all guest lectures are off-the-record. Please note that guest lectures represent views of individuals and not necessarily organizations, unless otherwise stated. This does not, however, apply to guest lectures by visiting Professors. As there may be conflicts in schedules for some of the guest speakers due to their travelling itinerary, lecture topics may have to be moved around.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

### **Academic Integrity**

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offense.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at <https://smu.sharepoint.com/sites/oasis/SitePages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx>.

### **Copyright Notice**

Please note that all course materials are meant for personal use only, namely, for the purposes of teaching, studying and research. You are strictly not permitted to make copies of or print additional copies or distribute such copies of the course materials or any parts thereof, for commercial gain or exchange.

For the full copyright notice, please visit <https://researchguides.smu.edu.sg/copyright>.

## **Accessibility**

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the university's student accessibility support team if you have questions or concerns about academic provisions: [accessibility@smu.edu.sg](mailto:accessibility@smu.edu.sg). Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

## **Digital Readiness for Teaching and Learning (DRTL)**

As part of emergency preparedness, instructors may conduct lessons online via the Zoom platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the Zoom platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.

## LESSON SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE – SUBJECT TO CHANGES)

Lesson	Topic & Readings
Week 1	Introduction to Strategic Communication in Asia – an Overview
Week 2	A Theoretical Framework for Global Public Relations Research and Practice Crisis Communication Cases from Asia: A Cultural Approach
Week 3	<b>Group project brief by corporate client A in Hong Kong, China</b> Students to meet mentors from FGS Global Hong Kong (F2F or online)
Week 4	<b>Group project brief by corporate client B in Hong Kong, China</b> Students to meet mentors from FGS Global Hong Kong (F2F or online)
Week 5	Applying Global Public Relations Framework Lesson <b>Strategic Communication in THAILAND</b>  <b>Guest speaker:</b>  Ms Sopawadee Chanthaworn Managing Director I24 Communications Consulting  <b>In-Class Quiz MCQ (15%). Online via lockdown browser</b>
Week 6	Applying Global Public Relations Framework Lesson <b>Strategic Communication in INDONESIA</b>  <b>Guest speaker:</b>  Ms Sonitha Poernomo Head, Corporate Communications Pertamina Hulu Rokan, Indonesia
Week 7	Applying Global Public Relations Framework Lesson <b>Strategic communication in PHILIPPINES &amp; VIETNAM</b>

	<p><b>Guest speaker:</b></p> <p>Ms Malyn Molina</p> <p>President &amp; Chief Operating Officer EON Group, Philippines; Former Chief Operating Officer Edelman Vietnam</p> <p><b>In-Class Quiz Essay (15%). Online via lockdown browser</b></p> <p>All groups to provide updates on project progress (1)</p>
<p>Week 8 – 13: No Lessons (Student groups to work independently on primary research)</p>	
<p>Week 14</p>	<p>Applying the Global Public Relations Framework</p> <p>Class to reconvene – updates on group project primary research (2)</p>

**Weeks 17 & 18 (OVERSEAS component)**

<b>Start of Overseas Learning Component (Hong Kong, China)</b>		
Monday 5 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SIN-HK</li> </ul>
	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Airport transfer</li> <li>Check-in hotel</li> <li>Project Check-in with Faculty</li> </ul>
Tuesday 6 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit CUHK – both groups of students to interact</li> </ul>
	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lessons/Fire-side chat with panelists from Zeno Group, Editor from Wall Street Journal, Head Comms of Lenovo, Professors from Political Science and Communication in CUHK</li> </ul>
Wednesday 7 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet Project Sponsor (mentors from FSG Global Communications) + company visit to Client A + progress review</li> </ul>
	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet Project Sponsor (mentors from FSG Global Communications) + company visit to Client B + progress review</li> </ul>
Thursday 8 May	Full Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural activity &amp; day trip to Shenzhen, China</li> </ul>
Friday 9 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visit to South China Morning Post – company visit and understanding media landscape in HK, China</li> </ul>
	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Visit (Jardine Matheson)</li> <li>Evening: SMU-HK Alumni Dinner and Drinks Session in Hotel</li> </ul>
Saturday 10 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students to work on group project</li> </ul>
	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students to work on group project</li> </ul>
Sunday 11 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students to work on group project</li> </ul>

	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students to work on group project</li> </ul>
Monday 12 May	Full day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate visit – The Peninsula Hotel + Talk by Lynn Mulholland, General Manager, Group Corporate Affairs, The Hongkong and Shanghai Hotels Limited followed by tram and tour of Victoria Peak</li> </ul>
Tuesday 13 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare for final presentation</li> </ul>
	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare for final presentation</li> </ul>
Wednesday 14 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Presentation to Client A</li> </ul>
	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation to Client B</li> <li>Celebration Dinner and Award Presentation</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Group Projection Presentation (35%)</b></p>
Thursday 15 May	AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free and easy</li> </ul>
	PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check-out Hotel</li> <li>Airport Transfer</li> <li>HK-SIN</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reflection Video (15%)</b></p>