UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Corporate Communication and Brand Management - 1

2627-2-E1806M011-E1806M011-1-T1

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide students with the fundamental theoretical and applied knowledge required to understand contemporary corporate communication and the strategic management of brands in competitive and global markets. The course examines the role of communication in the relationships between companies and their stakeholders, the construction of corporate identity, image and reputation, communication planning, internal communication, media relations, intercultural communication, social media management, business writing and brand journalism.

By the end of the course, students will have acquired knowledge and understanding of the main concepts, models and tools of corporate communication and brand management, with particular reference to integrated communication, the management of corporate intangible assets, and the coherence between corporate identity, positioning, key messages and stakeholders' perceptions.

Students will also be able to apply this knowledge to the analysis of business cases, campaigns, contents, tools and communication situations, assessing the coherence between communication objectives, audiences, channels, languages and expected results. The course aims to develop critical judgement in the evaluation of communication and brand-management choices, with attention to reputation, credibility, ethical implications and the relationship between business, markets and society.

The course also contributes to the development of communication skills, through the acquisition of an appropriate disciplinary vocabulary and the ability to discuss and present corporate communication and brand-management problems and solutions clearly. Students will be equipped to continue studying the topics independently, also in relation to the evolution of digital media, social media, corporate communication practices and brand strategies.

Contents

The course addresses corporate communication and brand management as strategic levers for building, governing

and protecting relationships between organisations, markets and stakeholders. Starting from the foundations of business communication, the course examines the role of communication in economic systems and competitive dynamics, integrated communication, corporate audiences, analogue and digital tools, and the main areas of corporate communication.

Particular attention is devoted to the relationship between communication, corporate identity, image, reputation and brand management. The course also explores internal communication, communication with co-makers and external stakeholders, product and brand communication, marketing communication, media relations, social media management, business writing, brand journalism, intercultural communication and crisis communication.

The course adopts an economic-managerial and applied perspective, aimed at understanding how companies and brands design, coordinate and evaluate their communication activities in competitive, digital and global contexts.

Detailed program

The course examines the main areas of corporate communication and brand management, with particular reference to the role of communication in the construction of corporate identity, reputation, stakeholder relationships and the strategic management of the brand.

Communication in the contemporary company
The stakeholder-oriented company. Definition of corporate communication. The Communication Department and the other corporate functions involved in communication activities. The evolution of corporate communication in competitive, digital and global contexts.
Corporate personality, corporate identity, corporate image and corporate reputation
The concepts of corporate personality, corporate identity, corporate image and corporate reputation. From positioning to key messages. The strategic process leading from personality to reputation. Corporate communication tools. Visual identity.
Corporate communication and brand management
The brand as a corporate intangible asset. Coherence between corporate identity, brand identity, positioning, brand promise, tone of voice and stakeholders' perceptions. The relationship between corporate reputation, brand reputation and the communicative value of the brand. Brand communication, storytelling, branded contents and stakeholder relationships.
Communication planning
The communication planning process. Analysis of the context and of relevant stakeholders. Definition of communication objectives. Strategy, messages, channels and tools. Implementation of communication activities. Evaluation of results and continuous improvement.
Internal communication
Definition, purposes and areas of internal communication. Internal communication, corporate culture, organisational identity and employee engagement. Actors and tools of internal communication. Emerging digital tools for communication and collaboration.
Media relations management
Definition and purposes of media relations. The media system and the role of the media in shaping corporate and brand image and reputation. Managerial and ethical principles. Tools for managing media relations.
Intercultural sensitivity and communication
Culture and communication. Verbal and non-verbal communication. Models of cultural differences. International communication strategies. Intercultural sensitivity and competence in corporate and brand communication contexts.
Social media management for corporate and brand communication
Definition and key characteristics of social media. Differences between traditional media, digital media and social platforms. Social media for corporate communication and brand communication. Opportunities, risks, content credibility, influencers, digital communities and online reputation.
Business writing
Core competences for professional writing. Simplicity, synthesis, structure, style and appropriateness of language

in relation to audiences, objectives and channels. From business writing to web writing. Professional writing, corporate communication and brand communication.
Brand journalism
The information system, disintermediation and re-intermediation. Origins and development of brand journalism. Content development and distribution. Skills and techniques of brand journalism. Artificial intelligence, ethics and professional standards in the production of corporate and brand contents.
Applications and business cases
Analysis of cases, campaigns, contents and tools in corporate communication and brand management, with attention to the coherence between objectives, audiences, messages, channels, reputation and expected results.

Prerequisites

No specific prior knowledge of corporate communication and brand management is required. However, students are expected to have acquired the basic knowledge of marketing, economics and business management provided by their degree programme, since the course examines corporate communication and brand management as strategic levers within the competitive, relational and reputational processes of organisations.

In order to take and register the exam, students must comply with the prerequisites established by the Degree Programme regulations. In particular, where required, the Marketing exam grade must already be registered before the grade for Corporate Communication and Brand Management can be recorded.

Students enrolled in a specific class group must attend classes and take the exam within their assigned group. It is not possible to enrol in one class group and attend classes or take the exam in another, unless otherwise provided by official Degree Programme or University regulations.

Teaching methods

The course is taught in Italian and takes place in person.

Teaching activities combine lecture-based teaching and interactive teaching. The lecture-based component is devoted to the theoretical and conceptual framing of the main topics of corporate communication and brand management, with reference to the concepts, models, tools and managerial practices covered in the course.

The interactive component is designed to apply course contents to business cases, real examples, communication campaigns, brand-management activities, digital contents and concrete communication situations. During classes, students may be involved in guided discussions, case analyses, short individual or group exercises, classroom debates and applied activities concerning communication planning, the construction of identity and reputation, brand management, social media, media relations and business writing.

The indicative structure of the teaching activities is as follows:

20 two-hour classes delivered in person through lecture-based teaching;
8 two-hour activities delivered in person through interactive teaching, devoted to case analyses, exercises, guided discussions and applied activities.

No remote teaching activities are planned, unless otherwise provided by the Degree Programme or the University.

Assessment methods

Learning will be assessed through an individual final examination, designed to evaluate students' knowledge and understanding of the concepts, models and tools of corporate communication and brand management, as well as their ability to apply them to the analysis of situations, cases and problems concerning corporate and brand communication.
There are no mid-term tests. At the end of the course, attending students who are duly enrolled in the course on the e-learning platform will be able to take a final written pre-exam. The written pre-exam consists of a single comprehensive test covering the whole course programme and both course modules: the module taught by Prof. Codignola and the module taught by Prof. Bisio.
Both attending and non-attending students may in any case take the exam orally, provided that they are regularly registered for the official exam session. The oral exam also consists of a single comprehensive test covering the whole course programme and both course modules: the module taught by Prof. Codignola and the module taught by Prof. Bisio.
The examination material, both for the written pre-exam and for the oral exam sessions, consists of the textbook indicated in the "Textbooks and reading materials" section, which must be studied in its entirety: **Alessandra Mazzei, Silvia Ravazzani, Comunicazione d'impresa, Pearson, 1st edition, 2024**. Exam preparation based on unauthorised handouts or materials is not allowed.
The written test may include closed-answer questions, open questions, short argumentative questions, applied exercises and/or case analyses. The oral exam consists of an interview on the topics covered by the textbook and the course programme. In both assessment modes, the evaluation aims to assess: mastery of the theoretical contents; accuracy and precision in the use of disciplinary language; the ability to connect the different topics of the course; the ability to apply concepts and tools to the analysis of business cases and situations; and independent judgement in the evaluation of communication and brand-management choices.
The assessment criteria are as follows: correctness and completeness of the knowledge acquired; clarity of presentation; appropriate use of specialist terminology; ability to summarise and argue; ability to apply concepts to concrete examples, cases or problems. The assessment is expressed out of thirty. The final grade reflects the overall level of achievement of the expected learning outcomes for the whole course.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Alessandra Mazzei, Silvia Ravazzani, Comunicazione d'impresa, Pearson, 1st edition, 2024.

Semester

Second sem.

Teaching language

Italian

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION | PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS