



Faculty of Social Sciences

KOMC24, Strategic Communication: Strategic Communication and PR in Digital Media: Theories, Practices, and Methods, 30 credits

Strategisk kommunikation: Strategisk kommunikation och PR i digitala medier: Teorier, praktiker och metoder, 30 högskolepoäng
First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by the board of the Department of Strategic communication on 2018-03-13 to be valid from 2018-03-14, autumn semester 2018.

General Information

The course is a free standing first cycle course. The course takes place in Helsingborg.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies

Strategic Communication

Depth of study relative to the degree requirements

G1F, First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

The course consists of three modules.

Module 1: Strategic Communication and Digital Media – Culture and Society, 7.5 credits

On completion of the module, the students shall demonstrate

Knowledge and understanding

- specialised theoretical and practical understanding of strategic communication in digital media,
- general knowledge of theories and theoretical concepts in the field of digital media,
- understanding of how technology and structures determine the social and cultural significance of digital media for individuals, groups, organisations and

This is a translation of the course syllabus approved in Swedish

society,

Competence and skills

- the ability to independently analyse empirical data from the perspective of the theoretical knowledge acquired in the course,
- the ability to identify and analyse opportunities and problems in the field of digital media, and report the findings in speech and writing,

Judgement and approach

- the ability to critically reflect on digital media as tools for strategic communication focusing on aspects of policy, culture and power, and the communication of organisations.

Module 2: Contemporary Public Relations, 7.5 credits

On completion of the module, the student shall demonstrate

Knowledge and understanding

- knowledge of the theoretical concepts which define public relations,
- knowledge of a range of activities associated with public relations practice,
- understanding of ways in which the discipline claims to distinguish itself from e.g. marketing and advertising,

Competence and skills

- the ability to plan and develop actions designed to enable persuasive engagement with a range of audiences in commercial, public sector and not for profit organisations,

Judgement and approach

- a critical awareness of the effectiveness, limitations and social implications of public relations activity, and have an understanding of the frameworks needed to make informed ethical judgments,
- the ability to appreciate the importance of public relations both as a creative activity and as a management function, and have a critical awareness of inherent tensions in these two framings.

Module 3: Introduction to Research Methods and Academic Writing, 15 credits

On completion of the modules, the students shall demonstrate

Knowledge and understanding

- understanding of the foundations of theory of science perspectives and research methodology,
- understanding of central research methods for collecting and analyzing data within quantitative and qualitative research method,

Competence and skills

- ability to argue for different research methods in relation to a defined research aim,
- ability to identify, formulate and solve scientific problems within a given time frame,
- ability to design and write an academic research paper,
- the ability to conduct research-based information searches using the library's databases,

Judgement and approach

- ability to identify limitations in and differences between different research strategies,
- ability to make judgments with respect to scientific, social and ethical aspects in research.

Course content

The course consists of three modules.

Module 1: Strategic Communication and Digital Media – Culture and Society (7,5 credits)

The module critically addresses the development of digital media and provides insights into the issues caused by this development. The general aim is to enable students to describe and re-examine the use of digital media in strategic communication informed by a critical approach and new knowledge and understanding.

The module deals with current key theories and concepts in the field of digital media and strategic communication from a social sciences perspective. Among the topics discussed on the course are the new challenges caused by the development of new media.

Module 2: Contemporary Public Relations (7.5 credits)

In this module students develop an appreciation of the both theoretical and practical conceptions of public relations. Study of public relations activity as practiced by commercial and not-for-profit organisations is illuminated by critical examination from a range of theoretical perspectives. Although examples will be drawn primarily from Swedish, UK and US experience, students are invited to consider public relations in a broader transnational and global context. Emphasis is placed on understanding the changing nature of the discipline, including those driven by the increasing importance of digital platforms and channels.

The module develops the student's ability to consider public relations as a strategic activity, and builds familiarity with the public relations toolkit – the range of tactical devices employed for delivering organisational messages and engaging with a range of stakeholder groups. This includes developing techniques for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of such activity.

As well as critically examining the reality of what is sometimes described as the "professional project" students are encouraged to consider ethical issues surrounding public relations activity, including power imbalances and tensions around truth, persuasion, authenticity, transparency and legitimacy.

Module 3: Introduction to Research Methods and Academic Writing (15 credits)

The module is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the foundations of social science research methods. In the second part, the students write an academic paper in strategic communication. The purpose of the course is to enable students to develop the ability to reflect critically on and evaluate research methods. Moreover, the student will write an academic paper on a defined research problem. Students write the paper in groups and plan their work in consultation with a supervisor.

During the course, workshops are organized in order to aid students in their writing. During the course, students will engage with different theory of science perspectives and research methods. The focus is on both on quantitative methods with survey and content analysis, and qualitative methods with analysis of texts and images in mass media and popular culture. Furthermore, the course deals with observation as a method in both physical and digital environments. Students will actively apply different methods and reflect on their advantages and shortcomings.

Course design

Teaching consists of lectures, supervision and workshops.

Attendance at workshops are compulsory. Students who are not able to complete a compulsory component owing to circumstances beyond their control, e.g. accident, sudden illness or similar, are offered an alternative form or date for compulsory components. This also applies to students who have missed teaching because of activities as a student representative.

In module 3, Introduction to Research Methods and Academic Writing, at least one supervisor is appointed for each essay group. Supervision is limited to the semester the student first is registered for the course. Exceptions can be made if there are special reasons. The number of supervision sessions are limited.

Assessment

The three modules in the course are assessed accordingly:

Module 1: Strategic Communication and Digital Media - Culture and Society

The module is assessed through three seminar assignments and oral presentations (1 credit per assignment) prepared in groups, and an individual assignment (4,5 credits).

Module 2: Contemporary Public Relations

The module is assessed through an seminar assignment (1,5 credits), a written exam (3 credits), and an oral exam (3 credits).

Module 3: Introduction to Research Methods and Academic Writing

The module is examined through a take-home exam in quantitative research methods (3 credits), a take-home exam in qualitative research methods (4,5 credits), an academic paper (7,5 credits), defense of the paper, and opposition of another paper (0 credits).

The course includes opportunities for assessment at a first examination, a re-sit close to the first examination and a second re-sit for courses that have ended during that school year. Two further re-examinations on the same course content are offered within a year of the end of the course. After this, further re-examination opportunities are offered but in accordance with the current course syllabus.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A.

The student's performance is assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course. For the grade of E the student must show acceptable results. For the grade of D the student must show satisfactory results. For the grade of C the student must show good results. For the grade of B the student must show very good results. For the grade of A the student must show excellent results. If a student does not achieve acceptable standards she will fail..

The course grade is determined by calculating the mean of the weighted grades of marked exams. Weighted grades are calculated by transforming the grade to numbers (A = 5, B = 4, C = 3, D = 2, E = 1), then multiplying the number with the credits assigned to the respective element of the exam. To pass the course, the student must have received at least the grade E on all components of the course marked with the grading scale E – A, F, and pass all other components marked with the grading scale Pass – Fail, and participated in all compulsory components.

Some course components such as seminars are exempted from the grading scale. In this case the grades awarded will be Pass or Fail. For the grade of Pass the student must show acceptable results. If a student does not achieve acceptable standards she will fail.

At the start of the course students are informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus and about the grading scale and how it is applied in the course.

Entry requirements

45 credits in relevant subject in social sciences, humanities or business studies of which at least 30 credits should be in strategic communication, political sciences, sociology, media studies, communication studies, service management, fashion studies, journalism or marketing.

A good command of English language both spoken and written, equivalent to English 6/B (advanced) proficiency in the Swedish secondary system, is required. Equivalence assessments will be made according to national guidelines. Foreign students are exempted from the basic university eligibility requirement of commanding the Swedish language.

Further information

The course is equivalent to the third semester of the Bachelor of Science Program in Strategic Communications and Digital media, 180 credits, and three modules in the third semester of the Bachelor of Science Program in Strategic Communications, 180 credits. The course can therefore not be included as an elective course in these programs.

Subcourses in KOMC24, Strategic Communication: Strategic Communication and PR in Digital Media: Theories, Practices, and Methods

Applies from H18

- 1801 Strategic Communication and Digital Media: Seminar 1, 1,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1802 Strategic Communication and Digital Media: Seminar 2, 1,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1803 Strategic Communication and Digital Media: Seminar 3, 1,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1804 Strategic Communication and Digital Media: Exam, 4,5 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A
- 1805 Public Relations: Seminar, 1,5 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A
- 1806 Public Relations: Oral Exam, 3,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A
- 1807 Public Relations: Exam, 3,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1808 Paper, 7,5 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A
- 1809 Opposition of paper, 0,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1810 Qualitative research methods, 4,5 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A
- 1811 Quantitative Research Methods, 3,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A