

**Justice Institute of British Columbia**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

<b>Course Code:</b>	FSS375
<b>Course Title:</b>	Communicating in Crisis
<b>Prerequisite Courses:</b>	ENGL100 Academic Writing; FSS175 Emergency Scene Management
<b>School:</b>	School of Public Safety & Security
<b>Division/Academy/Centre:</b>	Fire & Safety Division
<b>Previous Course Code &amp; Title:</b>	FSS481 Communicating in Crisis
<b>Course First Offered:</b>	2011

<b># of Credits:</b>	<b>3.0</b>
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**Course Description:**

Learners will gain the knowledge and skills to develop and assess organizational and inter-agency communications plans and processes that are in place to ensure effective communications in a crisis. Learners will examine crisis communications plans as an essential element of an organizational crisis plan, consistent with the requirements of the Incident Command System. Learners will also explore the critical roles and responsibilities of a fire service leader in internal and external crisis communications.

**Course Goal(s):** The learner can prepare, communicate and test a crisis communications plan, and in the event of a crisis, can fulfill internal and external communications requirements.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, the learner will be able to:

- Prepare a service crisis communications plan, linked to the service crisis plan, that meets the requirements of the Incident Command System
- Design structures, develop processes, and formulate communications resource requirements to ensure effective crisis communications
- Identify and interact effectively with key stakeholders
- Compare and determine preferred and efficient communications channels for key audiences
- Develop key messages for dissemination to various audiences in a crisis situation
- Work effectively with the media in a crisis situation

**Course Topics/Content:**

- Developing and Implementing an Effective Crisis Communications Plan
  - Essential Elements of the Plan
  - Developing and Generating Support for the Plan
  - Linking the Plan to the Organizational Crisis Plan
  - Ensuring Fit with Incident Command System Requirements

- Communicating the Plan
- Testing the Plan
- Effective Crisis Communications
  - The Role of a Fire Service Leader in Crisis Communications
  - Defining Communications Roles, Responsibilities, Reporting Relationships, and Collaboration Requirements for Crisis Situations
  - Target Audiences
  - Developing Key Messages
- Getting the Message Out
  - Effective Communications Channels
  - Working with the Media
  - Evaluating the Effectiveness of Your Communication
  - Internal Communications During a Crisis

**Text and Resource Materials:**
**Required:**

- Barton, L. *Crisis in organizations II: Managing and communicating in the heat of crisis.*
- Henry, R.A. (2000). *You'd better have a hose if you want to put out the fire: The complete guide to crisis and risk communications.*
- Clawson Freeo, S.K. *Crisis communication plan: A PR blueprint.*
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Fire Administration. (2005). *Disaster and fire defense planning course guide.* National Fire Academy, Emmitsburg, MD: Fire & Emergency Services Higher Education.

**Recommended:**
**Course Level:**

	First Year		Second Year	X	Third Year		Fourth Year
	Graduate		Other (describe):				

**Equivalent Course(s) within the JIBC:**
**Class Delivery Methods:**

Delivery Methods	Class Option A (Hours)	Class Option B (Hours)	Class Option C (Hours)	Class Option D (Hours)
Classroom/Lecture/Discussion				
Simulation/Lab				
Practicum/Fieldwork				
Online	42			
Correspondence				

<b>Total Class Hours</b>	42			
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**Comments on Delivery Methods:**
**Course Grading System:**

Letter Grades	X	Percentage	Pass/Fail
Complete/Incomplete		Attendance Only	

<b>Passing Grade:</b>	50%
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**Evaluation Activities and Weighting:**

Final Exam	%	Assignments	50%	Project	40%	Capstone Project	%
Midterm Exam	%	Portfolio	%	Participation	10%	Other	%
Quizzes/Test	%	Simulations	%	Practicum	%	TOTAL	100%

**Comments on Evaluation Activities and Weighting:**
**Other Course Guidelines, Procedures and Comments:**

View official versions of related JIBC academic regulations and student policies in the *JIBC Calendar* on the following pages of the JIBC website:

**Academic Regulations:**

<http://www.jibc.ca/programs-courses/jibc-calendar/academic-regulations>

Student Academic Integrity Policy  
 Academic Progression Policy  
 Admissions Policy  
 Academic Appeals Policy  
 Evaluation Policy  
 Grading Policy

**Student Policies:**

<http://www.jibc.ca/programs-courses/jibc-calendar/student-policies>

Access Policy  
 Harassment Policy – Students  
 Student Records Policy  
 Student Code of Conduct Policy

**JIBC Core Competencies**

The JIBC promotes the development of core and specialized competencies in its programs. Graduates of our programs will demonstrate high levels of competence in the following areas:

**Critical thinking**

Identify and examine issues and ideas; analyze and evaluate options in a variety of fields with differing assumptions, contents and methods.

**Communication, oral and written**

Demonstrate effective communication skills by selecting the appropriate style, language and form of communication suitable for different audiences and mediums.

**Leadership**

Inspire individuals and teams to reach their potential by embracing innovation through strategic thinking and shared responsibility.

**Independent learning**

Show initiative by acting independently in choosing effective, efficient and appropriate applied learning, research and problem solving strategies.

**Problem solving**

State problems clearly; effectively and efficiently evaluate alternative solutions; choose solutions that maximize positive and minimize negative outcomes.

**Interpersonal relations**

Know and manage oneself; recognize and acknowledge the needs and emotions of others including those with diverse backgrounds and capabilities.

**Inter-professional teamwork**

Understand and work productively within and between groups, respect others' perspectives and provide constructive feedback with special attention to inter-professional relationships.

**Information literacy**

Recognize and analyze the extent and nature of an information need; efficiently locate and retrieve information; evaluate it and its sources critically, and use information effectively and ethically.