

Syllabus

Business Communications

Course Description

a. Pre-requisites: General Management, Social psychology, Organization Theory

b. Course Type - elective

c. Abstract

This syllabus is developed to be used by course leaders and students of the 4th year of the bachelor programme “Public and Municipal Administration” (code of the field 38.04.04), studying this course as an elective course in English.

The syllabus is developed according to:

- NRU HSE Original educational Standard in the field 38.04.04 «Public and Municipal Administration», bachelor level, approved by the Academic Council of the National Research University "Higher School of Economics", Protocol No. 7 of October 31, 2014.

- Working plan of the bachelor level in the field 38.04.04 «Public and Municipal Administration», bachelor level, approved in January 24, 2018.

Communication is probably one of the most frequently cited sources of interpersonal conflict when it is poorly carried out. It is equally an important lifeline in every organization. Many of the problems that occur in organizations are the direct result of people failing to communicate.

The capacity to communicate effectively with constituents is a fundamental function of modern governance. Communications of a public sector organization with the public is essential to achieve organizational goals. Government produces a lot of information and distributes it through many different channels. Messages are aimed for different recipients – general publics, constituent groups, legislators, private sector etc. and are transmitted by press releases, reports, media interviews etc.

In the course we will define the main areas of responsibility in the professional communications in public sector organizations, identify the meaning of communications, define the objectives that communications are designed to achieve and analyze the communication technics.

The main provisions of the discipline form the communicative competence of the student and influence his successful development and presentation of his knowledge in all disciplines of the curriculum, as well as at the state examination and presentation of the final qualifying work.

1. The place of the Course in the Structure of the Educational Program

This course refers to the variable part of the professional cycle of the disciplines of the basic curriculum for the profile of special disciplines "Public and Municipal Administration".

The study of the course "Business Communications " is based on the following disciplines:

- General Psychology, General Management, Theory of Organizations.

The main provisions of the course form the communicative competence of the student and influence his successful development and presentation of his knowledge in all disciplines of the curriculum, as well as in the presentation of the final qualifying work.

2. Learning Objectives

The main objective of mastering the course "Communication in Public Administration" is to study the theory and practice of business communications, to master the skills of communication behavior in public sector organizations.

Overall course objectives:

1. Describe and explain the different components of communication (sender, receiver, medium, feedback, etc.)
2. Identify potential barriers to effective communication in the public sector and describe several strategies/techniques for avoiding or overcoming each barrier
5. Identify and describe standard media for communicating in and among organizations
7. Identify and discuss key elements of an organization's communication policy and strategy
8. Describe and apply basic knowledge of how communication units function, including communication planning, implementation, and evaluation.

3. Learning Outcomes

As a result of the discipline, students will receive:

- Knowledge of the nature of communications, the factors of effective communication, the specifics of communicative behavior, barriers that impede effective communication.
- Knowledge of the specifics and forms of business communication in public sector organizations, methods of effective listening, clear writing, problems in business communication and methods for overcoming them.
- Ability to analyze the audience and / or communication partner and apply adequate methods of attracting and maintaining attention, technology of self-presentation and public speaking, conducting business talks.
- Skills for applying these techniques and methods in practice.

4. Course plan

1. Theoretical basis of Communications. Specificity of Communications in Public Sector Organizations
2. Internal communications

3. Communication Strategy
4. Self-presentation in communication in public and business sectors
5. Leadership and communication. Emotional intellect and communication
6. Practice and feed back. Assignment

5. Reading List

a. Required

1. Griffin, E. A first look at communication theory / E. Griffin, A. Ledbetter, G. Sparks. – 9th ed. – New York: McGraw-Hill, 2015. – 482 c.

b. Optional

1. Communication accommodation theory: negotiating personal relationships and social identities across contexts / Ed. by H. Giles. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. – 2015 c.
2. Engaging organizational communication theory and research: multiple perspectives / Ed. by S. May, D. K. Mumby. – London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2005. – 308 c.
3. Guffey, M. E. Business communication: process & product / M. E. Guffey. – 5th ed. – Mason: Thomson, 2006. – 669 c.
4. Locker, K. O. Business and administrative communication / K. O. Locker, D. S. Kienzler. – 9th ed. – New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2010. – 720 c.
5. Murphy, H. A. Effective business communications / H. A. Murphy, H. W. Hildebrandt, J. P. Thomas. – 7th ed. – Boston; Toronto; London: McGraw-Hill, 1997. – 617 c.
6. Stallard, J. J. Business Communication: A strategic approach / J. J. Stallard, E. R. Smith, S. F. Price. – Homewood: Irwin, 1989.

6. Grading System

The final grade is formed on the basis of students' attendance of lectures (Wattend.), work at the seminar sessions and the performance of the homework (Wsemiv+hw) and the result the exam (Wexam) in the 10-point system as a rounded weighted average:

$$W_{attend.}=0,2, \quad W_{semin.+hw}=0,4, \quad W_{exam.}=0,4.$$

Calculation of the final (resulting) mark:

$$O_{average/weighted}=O_{activ}*W_{attend.}(0,2)+O_{semi+hw}*W_{semin.+hw}.(0,4)+O_{exam}*W_{exam}.(0,4)$$

Method of rounding of the accumulated evaluation of final control mark is arithmetic.

7. Example of a Home Assignment (Current Control)

Identify an initiative which is currently being used by a public sector organization to achieve an established strategic goal.

The initiative must be old enough and of sufficient priority to have generated a critical mass of related publically available communication materials (press releases, FAQ*s, speeches etc.).

Using these materials, try to identify and describe:

- Overall communication objective(s)
- Output objectives
- Outtake objectives
- Outcome objectives

*FAQs – frequently asked questions.

8. Example of the Final Control Assignment

1. Identify and describe what your organization uses to communicate with its different “publics.” (Use the organization where you are employed or other kind of organization (your school, social organization, etc. if you aren’t currently employed).
2. Describe your best and worst presentation. What do you think accounted for the difference?
3. List the communications technologies you use in your job or personal life. Reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of these technologies.
4. Review the roles downward, upward, and lateral communication play in organizations
5. Discuss barriers to effective organizational communication and techniques for avoiding or overcoming those barriers
6. Discuss common media and channels for intra-organizational communication
7. Identify barriers (sources of blockage or distortion) to sound organizational communication. Give examples of how these barriers have affected your organization
8. Describe tools/techniques for avoiding or minimizing blockage or distortion
9. List ways organizations can increase communication internally and compare with the ways your organization uses

9. Guidelines for Knowledge Assessment

The current control is carried out during the seminar sessions on the basis of assessing the activity of the students (reports and discussion), the performance of the control work and the pre-assignment task.

10. Methods of Instruction

During the module, several methods of teaching can be used: lectures and interactive seminars, presentations, self-presentations, mini-essays, group discussions.

11. Material and Technical Support of the Discipline

During lectures and seminars, when studying certain topics, a laptop and a projector are used.