

UGRD_LKCSB_2620_COMM253_MARK CHONG



Singapore Management University

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Code & Title

COMM253 - Storytelling with AI

Effective Start Date

11/01/2027

Offering Unit / Department / School

LKCSB

Course Career

Undergraduate

Course Units

CU:

Grading Basis

GRD - Graded

1

Course Description

AI is rapidly changing the way in which narratives are told (by organizations, brands, and leaders) and received (by audiences). In this course, you will learn what drives narrative visibility and citations in AI-generated recommendations. In addition, you will acquire the skills to use agentic AI in narrative creation. You will also develop the judgment – the new bottleneck in the age of AI agents – to evaluate and refine narratives. Finally, you will have the opportunity to apply what you have learnt to a real-time, real-world client project. The outcome of this project will be a tangible deliverable that you can add to your professional portfolio.

Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Understand the strategic role of narrative in organizations.
2. Learn how Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) drives visibility in AI-generated recommendations.
3. Master the use of agentic AI to create narratives.
4. Develop the judgment to evaluate and refine narratives.
5. Apply AI-assisted storytelling to real organizational contexts.

SMU Graduate Learning Outcomes

Communication, Interdisciplinary knowledge, Self-directed learning

Competencies

Content Writing and Editing

Course Area(s)

AREA - Arts & Culture Mgmt Electives, AREA - Business Options, AREA - Business-Oriented Electives, AREA - Communication Management Electives, AREA - Econ Major Rel/Econ Options, AREA - Grad Req - Dig Tech/Data Ana (Intake 2024 onwards), AREA - Social Sciences/PLE Major-related, ENRL - SS Enrolment: 4 ISEP; 1 SUSEP, RQCX - COMM320, RQCX - COMM362, TRCK - COMM: Data, Design and Communication Track

CLASS SECTION INFORMATION

Instructor(s)

MARK CHONG CHONG (markchong@smu.edu.sg)

Instruction Mode

In Person

Consultations

Teaching Assistants

Professor Chong is available
for consultation upon request.

and

Office Location

LKCSB #4084

Assessment Components (New)

Category*

Projects/Assignments

Weightage*

30

Description

Group project

Category*

Projects/Assignments

Weightage*

30

Description

Individual assignment

Category*

Proctored Assessments

Weightage*

20

**Assessment/Submission
Period***

Week 10

Description

Midterm exam

Category*

Class Participation

Weightage*

20

Description

Participation

Instructional Methods and Expectations

This course will be conducted using a combination of short lectures, in-class exercises, discussions, guest talks and a major project. Learning success requires students to be diligently prepared and to read all the assigned reading material before the respective class sessions.

Policy on Absences

Participation in seminars is vital. To derive maximum benefit from the seminars, you are reminded to be present for all sessions of COMM 253. The following policy for absences in relation to the final grade is a statement of the cooperative enterprise that both instructors and students will commit to:

4 or more (F grade)

2-3 absences (C+ grade or lower)

Weekly Lesson Plan

WEEK	TOPIC	READINGS (IF ANY)
1	Foundations in Storytelling	
2	Film Storytelling Group Project Briefing	
3	Deriving Narrative Insights Individual Assignment Briefing	

WEEK	TOPIC	READINGS (IF ANY)
4	GenAI and Storytelling	Epstein, Z., Hertzmann, A., et al. (2023). Art and the science of generative AI. <i>Science</i> , 380(6650), p. 1110-1111.
5	GenAI Prompting	Phoenix, J., & Taylor, M. (2024). <i>Prompt engineering for Generative AI (chapter 1)</i> . O'Reilly Media. Note: Accessible through the SMU library portal.
6	The Strategic Narrative Ethical Implications	
7	AI Story Development Workshop	
8	Midterm Break	
9	Project Consultation with Clients	
10	Midterm Exam	
11	No Class: Students Work on Project	
12	No Class: Students Work on Project	
13	Group Project Presentations Course Evaluations	

Recommended Textbooks and Readings

Please refer to lesson plans for more details.

Other Information

CLASS TIMINGS

TBD

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 offence.

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>.

Responsible Use of AI

The University recognises the importance of equipping students with the skills to navigate an AI-driven world. While AI tools may support learning, they must be used judiciously and responsibly. Students must not present AI-generated output as their own work.

Each course may set specific guidelines on the use of AI in assessments. Students are required to follow these guidelines carefully and should seek clarification from the instructors if uncertain.

Misuse of AI constitutes a breach of academic integrity and will be subject to the same penalties as other acts of academic dishonesty.

Copyright Notice

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Accessibility

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. Students who anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability are encouraged to inform the course instructor as soon as possible. Students may also contact the university's disability services team if they have questions or concerns about academic provisions:

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.