CMST 2061: Business and Professional Communication

Spring 2018

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**Office Hours**: M W F 7::45-8:25 am or happily by appointment ;-)

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**Class Meetings:** 2061-1 M W F 8:30 – 9:20 am Coates 111

**Textbook**: *Strategic Communication at Work: Contemporary Perspectives on Business and Professional Communication 2nd edition* by Waldeck, Kearney and Plax

\*\*\*You will need to have 12 half sheet SCANTRON forms for the semester\*\*\*

Other materials and articles via Moodle

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Today's corporate employers demand a high level of communication competence and you will be expected to communicate appropriately and effectively. To help you meet these expectations, this class explores the communication processes at work in organizations. In addition, the class teaches you how to organize clear, concise, and interesting presentations. By building on speaking and delivery skills, as well as critical thinking and analytical skills that focus on how to examine and solve communication problems, you will be prepared for a bright future.

This is a certified Communication-Intensive (C-I) course which meets all of the requirements set forth by LSU’s Communication across the Curriculum program, including

* instruction and assignments emphasizing informal and formal spoken and visual communication;
* teaching of discipline-specific communication techniques;
* use of draft-feedback-revision process for learning;
* practice of ethical and professional work standards;
* 40% of the course grade rooted in communication-based work; and
* a student/faculty ratio no greater than 35:1.

Students interested in pursuing the LSU Distinguished Communicators certification may use this C-I course for credit. For more information about this student recognition program, visit [*www.cxc.lsu.edu*](http://www.cxc.lsu.edu/).

**LSU COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY**

Louisiana State University is an interactive community in which students, faculty, and staff together strive to pursue truth, advance learning, and uphold the highest standards of performance in an academic and social environment. It is a community that fosters individual development and the creation of bonds that transcend the time spent within its gates. To demonstrate my pride in LSU, as a member of its community, I will:

* Accept responsibility for my actions;
* Hold myself and others to the highest standards of academic, personal, and social integrity;
* Practice justice, equality, and compassion in human relations;
* Respect the dignity of all persons and accept individual differences;
* Respect the environment and the rights and property of others and the University;
* Contribute positively to the life of the campus and surrounding community; and
* Use my LSU experience to be an active citizen in an international and interdependent world.

The continued success of LSU depends on the faithful commitment by each community member to these, our basic principles.

**Technology use**

Recording of any type within the classroom is strictly prohibited without the permission of the instructor. Cellular phones and electronic devices (ipads, tablets, laptops) should be silent and not be disruptive at any time during class. If you use technology inappropriately (for personal use during class unrelated to course), you will be asked to leave the class.

**Grades:** All grades will be posted to Moodle and all assignments will be returned in class. If you do not understand why you received a specific grade, you will have one week to ask for clarification. Grades will not be discussed the day they are returned, nor will they be discussed over the telephone or through email. If you would like to go over the assignment or have questions concerning the grade, please come by during my scheduled office hours or schedule an appointment.

**Extra Credit**: No extra credit will be offered for the course. If you want a good grade, focus on the completing the regularly assigned credit like a boss.

**Assigned Coursework**

To increase your communication effectiveness in business and professional organizations, you are asked to complete reading assignments, writing assignments, and oral presentations. Your final grade will be based on the following point breakdown using the Plus/Minus System.

**Final grades will NOT be rounded up.**

**Overview of Course Assignments and Percentage Values**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Mock Interviews | 15% |
| Meeting Facilitation | 15% |
| Training Seminar | 15% |
| Sales Pitch | 15% |
| Exams – Midterm & Final | 30% |
| Other Small Assignments | 10% |
| **TOTAL COURSE POINTS** | **100.00%** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A+** | 97-100 |
| **A** | 93-96.99 |
| **A-** | 90-92.99 |
| **B+** | 87-89.99 |
| **B** | 83-86.99 |
| **B-** | 80-82.99 |
| **C+** | 77-79.99 |
| **C** | 73-76.99 |
| **C-** | 70-72.99 |
| **D+** | 67-69.99 |
| **D** | 63-68.99 |
| **D-** | 60-62.99 |
| **F** | 59.99 and below |

**General Grading Standards**

A = Work is polished and represents exceptional achievement well above expectations.

B = Work contains noticeable flaws, but represents solid, praiseworthy achievement.

C = Work contains a distracting number of flaws, but represents adequate achievement.

D = Work is substantially marred by flaws and represents substandard achievement.

F = Work is fatally marred by flaws or is missing.

**Attendance:** Any absences from class will negatively affect your final grade, as you will miss information and in-class activities vital to the successful completion of your coursework. From PS-22: Class attendance is the responsibility of the student. The student is expected to attend all classes. A student who finds it necessary to miss class assumes responsibility for making up examinations, obtaining lecture notes, and otherwise compensating for what may have been missed. The course instructor will determine the validity of a student's reason(s) for absences and will assist those students who have valid reasons. Valid reasons for absences include:

1. Illness

2. Serious family emergency

3. Special curricular requirements such as judging trips or field trips

4. Court-imposed legal obligations such as subpoenas or jury duty

5. Military obligations

6. Serious weather conditions

7. Religious observances.

8. Participation in varsity athletic competitions or university musical events

The student is responsible for providing reasonable advance notification and appropriate documentation of the reason for the absence.

Attendance will be taken daily. ***It is YOUR responsibility to sign the roll sheet and I will not allow you to sign the roll AFTER class is over or give you credit for being in class or for completing the assignments we worked on in class.*** Much like the corporate setting, you are expected to attend class and actively participate in class discussions and evaluations. This means you should show up to class prepared, having read the class assignments and be ready and willing to share with the class. It also means I expect you to come to class ON TIME and stay the ENTIRE class period. I have a bad habit of giving an impromptu quiz when most of the class is absent or ill-prepared. In addition, we will do many activities during class. Often at the end of each activity, you will be asked to complete a reflection evaluation as a quiz grade. If you are not present for the activity because you are late to class or have left early, you will not earn this quiz credit.

Because it is impossible to learn how to speak in a professional setting without an audience, attendance is **mandatory on ALL presentation days, even if you are NOT presenting**. Each presentation, you will complete a peer evaluation and if you miss that day, you will NOT earn the peer evaluation credit.

**Please DO NOT ENTER the classroom on Presentation Days LATE!! Please wait outside until you hear applause. I WILL count you absent if you walk in on a presentation in progress!**

**CLASSROOM CIVILITY**

Because this is a Business Communication course, it shall be conducted in a **professional manner**. I demand the following from each of you:

* Respect the rights of other presenters and audience members.
* SILENCE ALL cell phone, pagers and other electronic devices BEFORE entering class. Turn off devices (aside from cellular phones) when notes are NOT being taken or the text being used, such as on presentation days.
* Come to class on time and prepared.
* Come to class prepared to listen and to participate in all activities and discussions.
* Pay attention to and show consideration for ALL speakers. This means no homework, reading, emailing, texting, etc.
* DO NOT enter the room during a presentation. Wait for the applause before you enter.

**If you don’t think you can follow these standards, please find another course.**

**Quizzes are frequently given at the beginning of class as to verify reading of course material and cannot be made up. If you arrive late you will not be given extra time to complete the quiz. It is your responsibility to arrive in class on time, despite the devious machinations of traffic, weather, and alarm clocks.**

**Assignments***:*  Assignments to be turned in must be typed. This includes papers, outlines, or any other material assigned to be completed outside of class. Handwritten work will NOT be accepted unless completed in class. If you do not own a printer or computer, utilize the computer labs located on campus to complete your work. All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late work **WILL NOT** be accepted.

If will not be able to attend class the day a written assignment or presentation is due, you will need to email me the assignment prior to the beginning of class as proof the assignment has been completed on time and provide a documented university approved excuse in order to turn in a paper copy and/or complete the presentation upon your return to class. See Attendance section (above) for university approved excuses. You will have one week to make up any assignments missed with an approved absence.

**Major Graded Assignment Overview:** The following is a general overview of major assignments. More detailed prompts will be provided on Moodle outlining specific details of each assignment.

**Working in Groups/Pairs**

Working with others is an important part of the business and corporate world. In class we will work in groups and pairs on 3 of the 4 presentations. For your groups/pairs, I expect you to be an active group member. This includes coming to class and attending group meetings outside of class. You will do MOST of your project work in class, so if you not in class, you are not helping your group. If you fail to attend any of the group meetings during class and outside of class, you will NOT be allowed to participate in the project nor benefit from the grade earned by your group. This is another reason why attending class is so important.

**Examinations**

Exams will cover material from the textbook, lectures, guest speakers, videos, and materials placed on Moodle. A Study Guide will be provided for each exam.

### Presentations

You should expect this class to be different from other courses you have taken because there is a large experimental element as we learn how to give business presentations. A significant amount of teaching in this course is done by **you**, as you present, observe, and evaluate in-class exercises and assignments. You will learn communication skills by doing. Each presentation will have several days of in class prep work that is part of the overall presentation grade.

In addition, you will work in groups/pairs for 3 of the 4 presentations. Each of these presentations will include a group/pair grade and several individual grades as part of the overall presentation grade. With this grading scale, it is possible for members of the same group to earn different presentation grades.

### Interview Assignment

We will hold in-class Mock Interviews. The grade will be based on an Individual Interview Evaluation, class activities, homework and participation in both Interview Days. As an interviewer and interviewee, you will prepare for the in-class portion of the assignment and attend class **both** interview days. Once the in-class interviews are complete, you will have 1 week to complete the Interview Evaluation.

**Meeting Facilitation**

You and your group members will conduct a meeting in front of the class to solve a problem found in a case study. We will work in class and through homework to practice meeting facilitation before your group presents its meeting. As an individual, you will also prepare for the meeting by reading the case study assigned BEFORE class. Your group should NOT discuss or work on the case prior to the meeting.

Your group grade will be based on both group and individual grades. The Meeting Group Grade will evaluate how well the group facilitates the meeting in class. Each group must bring an Instructor Evaluation Sheet on the day you present. Your Individual Grades will be earned through individual participation in class activities and homework assignments, as well as Peer Evaluations of other groups’ presentations.

If you fail to attend class on the day your group presents, you will earn a 0 for the Group Grade Portion of this assignment, as makeups are NOT possible for this assignment. If you do not attend the class activities help prior to the presentation, you will put your group at a disadvantage and will not be allowed to present with your group, nor receive the Group Grade portion of this assignment.

**Training Seminar**

You and your group members will produce a PowerPoint training seminar. Your training seminar should include an activity to engage learning. Your group will present this training seminar to the class in a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation in class and post to Moodle.

This presentation grade has both group and individual grades. The Training Seminar Group grade will be based on how effective the group is training the class. Each group must bring an Instructor Evaluation Sheet on the day you present. Your Individual Grades will be earned through individual participation in class activities, homework assignments, as well as Peer Evaluations of the other groups’ training seminars.

If you fail to attend class on the day your group presents, you will earn a 0 for the Group Grade Portion of this assignment, as makeups are NOT possible for this assignment. If you do not attend the class activities help prior to the presentation, you will put your group at a disadvantage and will not be allowed to present with your group, nor receive the Group Grade portion of this assignment.

**Sales Pitch**

Class members will divide into pairs of 2 to sell a product or service to the class. Your product may be real or imagined. Duos will need to work together to develop the presentation and practice. Your grade will be based on both Individual and Pair grades. The Pair’s grade will be based on how effective your duo is in pitching a product or service. Each duo must bring an Instructor Evaluation Sheet on the day you present. Your Individual Grades will be earned through individual participation in class activities, homework assignments, as well as Peer Evaluations of the Sales Pitches from your classmates.

**If you fail to attend class on the day your group presents, you will earn a 0, as makeups are NOT possible for this assignment. If you do not attend the class activities help prior to the presentation, you will put your pair at a disadvantage and will not be allowed to present with your pair, nor receive the Pair Grade portion of this assignment**

### Other Small Assignments

We will have a few other small assignments throughout the semester. Some will be completed in class and others will be small homework assignments you complete at home. They are very short and take only 5-15 minutes to complete at home.

**Schedule Changes**

Your instructor will work to minimize schedule changes and will announce such changes as far as in advance as possible. By the same token, it is your responsibility to keep informed of these changes and resolve with your instructor any complications that may arise. Check MOODLE and your email daily, as I will update and send messages when needed.

**Plagiarism:** Please see the Student Code of Conduct (an excerpt of which appears below)

6. Plagiarism is defined as the lack of citation or the unacknowledged inclusion of someone else's words, structure, ideas, or data. When a Student submits work as his/her own that includes the words, structure, ideas, or data of others, the source of this information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks as well. Failure to identify any source (including interviews, surveys, etc.), published in any medium (including on the internet) or unpublished, from which words, structure, ideas, or data have been taken, constitutes plagiarism; Plagiarism also includes:

6a. Falsifying or fabricating any information or citation in any academic exercise, work, speech, thesis, dissertation, test, or examination.

6b. Submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructors; (from the [Student Code of Conduct](http://saa.lsu.edu/Code%20of%20Student%20Conduct%20August%2009.pdf) section 8.1.6)

**The “I Hate to Work in Teams” Kind Confrontation Policy**: I think this goes without saying, but please be aware that the grades I assign to your group’s project components and your presentation may be the same for everyone in the group. Since each team member could be graded equally, regardless of her/his contributions to the project, I expect you to engage in “kind confrontation” with any member that the team perceives as not fulfilling commitments, missing team meetings, leaving early/arriving late, and not coming prepared. What is kind confrontation? It is the ability to deal with each other directly, assertively, tactfully and effectively to insure that everyone does her/his share of the work and fulfills commitments to the team. If it is determined by members of the team that another member is not fulfilling her/his commitments, then I expect you to kindly confront that member, either one-on-one or as a team, to discuss this, prior to bringing the issue to my attention. If this kind confrontation is not effective, then I expect you to let me know immediately if someone is not responding constructively to your group’s efforts to integrate, motivate and support her/him. Please be advised that once the issue is brought to my attention, then I will kindly confront that team member. I reserve the right to privately counsel and, if necessary, remove and discipline (with a failing grade for this assignment) any member who is unwilling or unable to meet her/his obligations to the group. If you choose not to engage in kind confrontation and choose to carry that member along, you have nobody to blame but yourself.

**The American with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitations Act of 1973 states: “If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be arranged. After you receive the accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations within the first 2 weeks of class.

\*\*\*This syllabus included extensive information from the course design of ReRe Shaw as well as information from the syllabus of Dr. Amy Fannin and Wade Walker. \*\*\*