CMST 2061 –Fall 2016

**Business and Professional Communication**

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**Phone:**

**Office Hours:** MWF 11:30-12:30

**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.

**Required Course Materials**

*Business and Professional Communication in a Digital Age* by Waldeck, Kearney and Plax

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

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.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 |

**Grades**

All grades will be posted to **Moodle**. If you do not understand the reason you earned a specific grade, you have 2 weeks to ask for clarification. Grades will NOT be discussed the day returned, nor will they be discussed over the telephone or through email. If you would like to go over your assignment or have questions concerning the grade you earned, please come to office hours or schedule an appointment.

**Overview of Course Assignments and Percentage Values**

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

**Attendance**

Attendance will be taken daily. 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. You should 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. There are no make-ups for peer evaluation grades.

**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!**

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 most assignments. 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 a portion of your project work in class, so if you are 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.

**Absences and Tardies**

Late work and make-ups will be accepted in *extreme circumstances* and *require documentation*. I follow LSU PS-31 regarding excused absences. Should you miss class, it is YOUR responsibility to get in touch and provide the documentation on the day you return to class. **Make-up assignments will be due on the first day you are back in class**. Missed work without approved documentation cannot be made up. Excessive absences should be referred to the Dean of your college.

There are several assignments, such as Class Activities or Peer Evaluations that are challenging to make up because you needed to be present in class to complete this work. Some of these assignments can be made up with extra work, but others, like the Peer Evaluations cannot. I will handle these on a case by case basis.

It is important to be in class ON TIME! We will work strategically in class to prepare for presentations and to give presentations. If one person is tardy, the whole class has to stop and backtrack to catch the tardy person up! More importantly, if you are tardy on the day you present, your group can and will start without you so the class can finish on time! Please make every effort to be on time!

**Examinations**

Exams will cover material from the textbook, lectures, guest speakers, videos, and materials placed on Moodle. Your midterm exam will take place the week of March 6-10. Your final exam will take place the week of May 1-May 5. We will use computer-based testing. Please see below for details on testing.

**Computer Based Testing**

Exams will be offered through Computer Based Testing. You will use your PAWS ID to log onto the Computer Based Testing Center at www.oae.lsu.edu to schedule your exam times.

* You must schedule PRIOR to testing time with your PAWS ID. The first time you use the system, you will use the LSU ID number as your password. You will be forced to change this password, so please remember your new password. CBT asks you do NOT use the same password as your PAWS account.
* You will have a 3-day exam window (6 during Final Exam Week) to schedule and complete your exams, including the final exam. The Testing Labs normally open at 9am and allow exams to be scheduled up until around 4pm, Monday-Friday during the semester. Saturday exam times are available ONLY during Final Exam Week.
* Testing Labs are located in Himes Hall. You must present your LSU picture ID or another picture ID. ***Students without a picture ID, will NOT be allowed to take an exam and you will be required to reschedule your test time.***
* Once you schedule your exam time, you will be notified WHERE your exam will take place and WHICH ENTRANCE to use to access the Testing Room. Be sure you know which location you are going to and WHICH ENTRANCE to use. The basement room in 52 Himes has **3** entrances and you MUST enter at the one given, no exceptions!
* **NO personal belongings are allowed in the Testing Room**. There is a NON-SECURE area to leave personal belongings, however it is best not to bring them at all. Cell phones, calculators, pens, pencils, paper, PDAs, etc. will NOT be allowed in the Testing Room, as the use/possession of all electronic communication devices is prohibited in the Testing Lab. Please leave them at home! CBT is VERY serious about this and are VERY quick to report this as a cheating incident.
* Those requiring accommodations from Disability Services can work with this office to schedule their exams. Disability Services works with Computer Based Testing to give you the time and environment you need to complete your exam. So fill out the appropriate request forms as usual. **BE SURE to use the email on the syllabus for scheduling exams or I won’t receive it!**
* DO NOT WAIT to schedule your exam times. The schedule can fill up quickly, as many other courses at LSU are using this service. Once a time slot is filled, that means there are NO MORE computers available and additional spaces will NOT be added! The exam window will NOT be extended for any reason, so don’t wait until the last minute only to find there are no spaces left!

### Presentations

You should expect this class to be different from other courses you have taken because there is a large experiential element. In other words, you will learn by *doing.* A significant amount of teaching in this course is done by **you**, as you present, observe, and evaluate in-class exercises and assignments. 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 the 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**. See below for a description of each presentation assignment.

### Interview for a Group

We will hold in-class Mock Interviews. The grade will be based on your performance during the interview, a self-evaluation, a peer-evaluation, and preparatory materials. 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 ONLINE through Moodle.

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. The grade will be based on your performance during the meeting, a self-evaluation, a peer-evaluation, and preparatory materials. Once the meetings are complete, you will have 1 week to complete the self-evaluation found on Moodle.

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 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. The grade will be based on your performance during the presentation, a self-evaluation, a peer-evaluation, and preparatory materials. Once the seminars are complete, you will have 1 week to complete the self-evaluation found on Moodle.

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 held 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. You should practice your presentation *together*. The grade will be based on your performance during the presentation, a self-evaluation, a peer-evaluation, and preparatory materials. Once the sales pitches are complete, you will have 1 week to complete the self-evaluation found on Moodle.

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 held 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 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 Text Book daily, as I will update and post messages when needed.

**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.
* Turn off ALL cell phone, pagers and other electronic devices BEFORE entering class. This means, OFF and NOT vibrate on phone. It also refers to computers when notes are NOT being taken, 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.**

**Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, ideas, quotes, etc. without due credit. It is easy to plagiarize in a presentation. Just like a research paper, you must cite the source of your information when you talk about it in your presentation. The penalty for plagiarism or cheating may include failing the assignment, failing the course, or expulsion from LSU. Please see the University's Code of Student Conduct for information regarding this policy. Sometimes these standards are subtle. Feel free to ask if you have questions or concerns so we can keep you from overstepping this fine line.

CHEATING of any kind will not be tolerated and will be immediately passed along to the Dean of Students.

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

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 for Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranges. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations within the first 2 weeks of class.