

CMST 2061 – Fall 2018
Business and Professional Communication

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Office hours: MWF 8:30-9:20; MW 11:30-1:30 PM
Please let me know if you plan to stop by.

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

Strategic Communication at Work by Waldeck, Kearney and Plax

This is an ONLINE textbook. You can purchase an access code in the Book Store or purchase access to the book directly at:

<https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/strategic-communication-work-contemporary-perspectives-business-and-professional>

Access to Moodle and One Drive (for sharing assignments)

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Student Requirements:

Laptop policy: To help students avoid the temptation of checking Facebook, email, surfing the web, and all the many other distractions the web provides, students will not be allowed to take notes on laptops (with the exception of those students working as a note taker for a classmate with a letter from ODS). Except for specific days, laptops in class will not be necessary.

Additionally:

- *Refrain from* talking on the cell phone, checking email, text message, or other similar behaviors; if you do so, you will be asked to leave class for the day.
- *Refrain from* sleeping in class; if you do so, you will be asked to leave class for the day.
- *Refrain from* doing crossword, reading the newspaper, or other similar activities; if you do so, you will be asked to leave class for the day.

- Do observe general norms of common courtesy, including (but not limited to) listening to fellow students, respectfully discussing issues of disagreement, refraining from talking when others are talking, and coming to class when “impaired”. Failure to conduct yourself in a respectful manner will result in your being asked to leave class for the day.

Notes: Lectures will frequently include material that is not in the textbook. You will be expected to know this material for the exams and assignments.

Exams: Two exams will be given during the semester, a mid-term exam and a final exam. The date of the mid-term exam is listed on the course schedule and the final exam date is listed in the course schedule book.

You **must** take your exam on time unless you are traveling with a university-sanctioned organization or have a major health or family emergency. Major emergencies include severe illness, hospitalization, or death in the family. Medical conditions such as a cold or a headache are not sufficient reasons to postpone an exam. The common excuses of having airline reservations prior to or work scheduled during an exam time are *not* acceptable grounds for taking an exam early. Please make appropriate arrangements now, while you still have months to plan.

If you need to reschedule an exam due to illness, you must receive my approval **prior to** the time of the exam (unless, of course, you are medically incapacitated). Furthermore, for any rescheduled exam, you must provide written documentation of the authenticity of your excuse.

Student honesty: Plagiarism is a completely unethical and unacceptable practice that will not be tolerated on any level. It is an egregious offense to the owner of the material that has been plagiarized, as well as a dishonest form of communication to the audience of a plagiarized piece of work. The University’s Code of Student Conduct defines “academic misconduct” as including, but not limited to “cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student” (LSU’s Code of Student Conduct, section 5.1, found on Judicial Affairs webpage August 17, 2004).

The penalty for plagiarism or cheating may include failing the assignment, failing the course, or expulsion from the University. All acts of suspected plagiarism will be investigated and will be handled through the proper University channels.

Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act and 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 of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive the accommodations letters, **please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss the provisions of these accommodations.**

Assignments

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.

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. Please look at the Presentation Assignment documents on Moodle for more information on each assignment.

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 for a Group—50 points

Your groups will be sub-divided for this assignment. The grade will be based the questions your entire group develops in class, and how you as an individual conduct the interview as the interviewer and interviewee. You will be given class time to record your interviews and work out the logistical details; the recorded interviews must be shared with me on through One Drive. More specific information will be placed on Moodle closer to the assignment.

Meeting Facilitation—50 points

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—50 points

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—50 points

Your group will be required sell a product or service to the class. Your product may be real or imagined. Groups will need to work together to develop the presentation and practice. Your grade will be based on both Individual and group grades. The group's grade will be based on how effective your group is in pitching a product or service. Specific grading criteria will be posted on Moodle.

You must take an active role in preparing and delivering the sales pitch; your individual grade will be comprised of a group evaluation in which your group will evaluate your contribution to the presentation.

Attendance:

So much of success is just due to plain old hard work; this is true in school, business, and life. Showing up is part of that hard work. Showing up is 50% of the battle! For that reason, I take attendance seriously and it will be taken each class period, either through quizzes or signing in. For each unexcused absence, 1 point will be deducted from 25 points; the remaining points will comprise your attendance grade.

Make up and late policy: I understand that emergencies occur on days when assignments are due and in these situations you should contact me immediately. Either call my office or email me and include your phone number so I can contact you and we can discuss the situation. Be sure to do this immediately so we can make new arrangements for turning in an assignment at a later time.

Additionally, you must present valid documentation (doctor's note, etc.) the first day you return to class. If you are able to present a valid university excuse, your grade will not suffer. However, you will not be able to turn in an assignment late without a valid university excuse.

Late work not associated with an *excused* absence will only be accepted until the end of the next class period after the original assignment due date; additionally, the student's grade on the assignment **will be penalized 25% for tardiness**. Assignments will not be accepted after the next class period following the original due date; the student will receive a "zero" for the assignment grade.

Emailed assignments will not accepted.

Grading

A total of 500 points are available in this class. The following will explain the breakdown of the final grade:

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|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Interview | 50 points |
| 2. Sales Presentation | 50 points |
| 3. Meeting Facilitation | 50 points |
| 4. Training Seminar | 50 points |

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| 5. In-class Participation Activities
(quizzes, activities, etc) | 50 points |
| 6. Exam 1 | 100 points |
| 7. Exam 2 | 100 points |
| 8. Group evaluation | 25 points |
| 9. Attendance | 25 points (1 point is deducted for each unexcused absence.) |

I do not post grades on Moodle. You are adults and should be responsible enough to keep track of your own grades.

I do NOT round up grades.

Plus/Minus Grading scale (based on final percentages):

485-500—A+	(97-100%)
465-484—A	(93-96%)
450-464—A-	(90-92%)
435-449—B+	(87-89%)
415-434—B	(83-86%)
400-414—B-	(80-82%)
385-399—C+	(77-79%)
365-384—C	(73-76%)
350-364—C-	(70-72%)
335-349—D+	(67-69%)
315-334—D	(63-66%)
300-314—D-	(60-62%)
Below 299—F	(59% and below)

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!