University of Calgary

Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 363 (L03): Professional and Technical Communication

Spring 2023: May 3 to June 15 (excluding May 22)

ONLINE Course (no lectures or labs; entirely asynchronous)

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ONLINE COURSE DELIVERY

Timed Online Quizzes/Tests: You will be allowed a minimum window of 24 hours to access online quizzes and exams, but there may be a time limit for completing a quiz once you open it. Read all instructions carefully.

Timed Final Exams: You will be allowed a minimum window of 24 hours to access online final exams, but there may be a time limit for completing the final exam once you open it. Read the description carefully. Timed final exams allow for an additional 50% extra time.

Instructor:	Dr. Monique Solomon
Email:	solomonm@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	M 12-2pm, please email to make an appointment (office or Zoom)

Course Description
COMS 363 is an introductory course in professional and technical communication. The course examines the rhetorical dimensions of workplace writing and communication. Students study and practice planning, researching, composing, and delivering professional and technical communications materials for various audiences.

Additional Information
Spring courses are condensed, and it is essential to stay up to date on readings and assignments. The schedule of readings and assignments will be available on the course D2L site. Students should check D2L and their '@ucalgary.ca' email regularly for updates. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

Objectives of the Course
This course will help students to develop
- a rhetorical approach to crafting documents, which involves critical consideration of purpose, audience, and relevant features of context.
- familiarity with conventions and composition strategies for a range of written genres, including presentations and reports.
- writing and editing strategies to keep writing focused, coherent, and readable.
- familiarity with search tools for online research, composition, and collaborative writing.
- competence using APA documentation style.

Textbooks and Readings
Meyer, C. (2020). *Communicating for Results: A Canadian Student's Guide*. Fifth Edition. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. (Students may use the Fourth Edition but should note that some material may vary (i.e., order of chapters.)

Email Policy

- **Include the course number in the subject line of email sent to your professor.** Include your name in the body of the email *as it appears* in your university registration.
- **Use emails for short, specific inquiries.** If you have detailed questions about the course material or assignments, please make an appointment during office hours.
- **Email will usually be answered M-F between 11am – 6pm.** You can usually expect an answer within 48 hours. Email will not be answered weekends or holidays. Check your @ucalgary.ca email to ensure messages are not in junk folders.
- Be courteous and professional communicating with your professor and fellow students.

Learning Technologies and Requirements

To complete courses University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled.
- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser
- A webcam (built-in or external), and a microphone and speaker (built-in or external) or headset with microphone (for online courses only).
- If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links.

If you have technical difficulties, contact IT support services. See https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html

Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices

Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones may be used in class for course-related purposes and only if their use is not distracting others or negatively impacting the learning environment. Close all electronics during presentations by your fellow students. Working on a laptop or device during student presentations may impact your participation grade.

No audio or video recording or photography in any class without the instructor's explicit permission. Please familiarize yourself with the University's policy on the recording of lectures, which is outlined at https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html, and carefully review the information in this outline.

Policy on AI Generated Answers and Material

Answers and responses to all assignments must be authored and produced by the student registered in the course. AI generated answers, responses and material are not acceptable in this course and attempts to pass them off as a student's own will be considered academic misconduct. Any answers, responses or material suspected to be AI generated will be referred to the appropriate University of Calgary authorities for investigation of academic misconduct.

Instructor Intellectual Copyright

All course materials created by the instructor (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. You may NOT reproduce, redistribute, or copy course materials without explicit consent of the instructor. Posting course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites is prohibited. Sharing extracts of course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have questions about sharing materials with classmates.

Students are not permitted to audio or video-record lectures and discussions or take pictures/screen shots during this class. All statements and interactions during class time are a matter of group privacy and cannot be publicized.

All students are required to read the *University of Calgary Policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright* at https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy and the requirements of the *Copyright Act* (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html). Students using material protected by copyright in violation of the policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Assignments and Evaluation
Detailed assignment instructions will be posted on D2L. If you have questions, please make an appointment with the professor and check D2L News for weekly updates.
Use APA style for all in-text citations, quotations, and referencing.

Assignments	Weight	Due
Online Quizzes (Individual) 3 x 10% = 30% Students complete three online quizzes covering chapters in the textbook. These open-book quizzes have 20-25 multiple-choice questions and students have 90-minutes to complete each quiz. This includes 50% additional writing time to accommodate for unforeseen technical difficulties. Quiz 1: Chapters 1-5, Quiz 2: Chapters 6-10, Quiz 3: Chapters 11-14. Quizzes will be available for 48-hours, during which time the professor will be closely monitoring email. Once closed, quizzes will not be reopened. All students are required to work on their own while completing the test. Additional information posted on D2L.	10% 10% 10%	Quiz 1 May 11-12 Quiz 2 May 25-26 Quiz 3 June 8-9
Memo (5%) (Individual assignment) Students write a 400-500-word memo. Details and topic information to be provided on D2L.	5%	May 19 (11:59 pm)
Writing Portfolio (25%) (Individual) Students work at their own pace to prepare a writing portfolio comprised of five (5) short textbook chapter exercises (of varied lengths between 125-500 words). With this assignment students practice writing skills (conciseness, clarity, style, attention to context), assess information, and prepare a portfolio. Detailed exercises and instructions will be posted on D2L.	25%	May 29 (11:59 pm)

Proposal (10%) (Group) Students working in self-formed groups of 3 or 4 write a proposal (750-1000 words) outlining their approach and ideas for the formal report. Detailed assignment instructions will be posted on D2L.	10%	June 2 (11:59 pm)
Formal Report (30%) (Group) Student groups (formed for the Proposal) will research and prepare a formal recommendation report (2000-2400 words) in the form and style set out in Chapter 12 of the textbook. The report will build upon the proposal. Detailed assignment instructions will be provided on D2L.	30%	June 15 (11:59 pm)

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Submission of Assignments
Students must complete all assignments, or a course grade of 'F' may be assigned at the discretion of the professor. Contact the professor asap if you miss a component.

Do not email your assignments unless directed to by your professor.

Follow all assignment instructions carefully. All assignments are due via upload to D2L (.doc, .docx, or .pdf) on the due date stated on the assignment, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Include your name and ID number on all assignments AND include your surname in the file name of assignments you upload to D2L. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the correct version.

Policy for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after due dates may be penalized with the loss of a partial letter grade for each day late (e.g.: A- to B+ to B).

Student Accommodations
Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. For the full policy on Student Accommodations, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-accommodation-policy

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors.

Expectations for Writing
Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department. of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, letter grades will be used for all assignments except quizzes, which will be graded numerically and converted to percentage.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Academic Misconduct
For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the *University of Calgary Calendar* at http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html

Plagiarism
Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. These requirements apply to all assignments

and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages, A.I. content generators, or visual media.

Students must adhere to the instructor's course policy regarding the use of A.I. generated content in course work. Unsanctioned use of A.I. generated content in course work may be reported as academic misconduct.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. **In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end, and other people's words and ideas begin**. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there.

For information on citation and documentation styles (APA) visit the Student Success Centre resource links at https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with writing or have questions about citing sources, see your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal

For university regulations and procedures related to deferral of term work, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html

For information about deferrals of final examinations, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html

For information about requesting a reappraisal of course work or of a final grade, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html

Student Support Services and Resources

Please see https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health

Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk. For resources on D2L, Zoom, Yuja, etc., see https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/resources-for-students/. (Find the topic menu under the icon to the left of the ELEARN banner.)

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings: A schedule of topics, readings and detailed assignment instructions will be available on D2L.