

Communications Studies (COMS) 363 – Lecture 03
Professional and Technical Communication
Fall 2011
M 09:00-10:15 KNB 129; Lab: M 10:30-11:50 SS 020

Instructor: Lisa Stowe
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Web Page: Blackboard
Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

This class takes a rhetorical approach to understanding professional and technical communication. Emphasis is placed on how workplace communication is situated within distinct organizational or corporate cultures as well as broader socio-cultural contexts. Students will gain knowledge and skills in writing across genres and disciplines through inquiry-based learning strategies and collaborative research projects. This theory-driven class will teach students open-ended skills that can be applied to a variety of workplace situations.

Objectives of the Course

By the end of the course students will learn how to:

- Think critically and read critically
- Adapt to a given communication situation based on rhetorical analysis of audience, context, and purpose
- Communicate more effectively, both through oral presentations and written documents
- Research complex problems and situations individually and collaboratively
- Conceptualize and operationalize primary research; design and implement a usability study
- Refine composition, revision, and editing skills, including organization, document design, peer review, style, grammar, and diction
- Compose and design a professional report explaining the findings of the usability study.

Internet and Electronic Communication Device Information

Laptop computers may be used in lecture for the sole purpose of taking notes. Unacceptable use of laptops includes working on assignments for other courses, surfing the Internet, checking email, playing games, watching video, chatting, etc. Under no circumstances should a student use their laptop during a student presentation. If the instructor or any student should notice improper use of this device, privileges will be removed for the rest of the term.

Cell phones and all other forms of electronic communication must be turned off and put away during class. Violation of this policy may result in students being asked to leave the classroom. If you have an emergency situation in life that requires your phone be turned on, inform the instructor of this situation and sit at the back, near the door so you can get out quickly to take care of your emergency should the need arise.

Unless otherwise specified, lab time will be free for students to use in any way that they see fit. Therefore, the above regulations are significantly more relaxed in lab.

Textbooks and Readings:

Tebeaux, Elizabeth and Sam Dragga (2010) *The Essentials of Technical Communication*. New York, NY. Oxford University Press.

Other course related readings will be posted on Blackboard and will be indicated in the course schedule.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Due Date	Weight
Oral Presentation on Writing/Grammar	Ongoing	5%
Reading Response	September 26	10%
Group Proposal and Work Plan	October 24	20%
Memo	October 31	20%
Oral Presentation on Group Project	November 14 21 & 28	15%
	December 5,	
Group Recommendations Report	December 12	30%

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

Please note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will make every attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee

that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:
(Revised, effective September 2008)

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

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.

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. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:

<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Date	Topics/ Readings	Deadlines and Class Activities	Lab Activities
Week 1 September 12	Introduction to Course Thinking about Audience and Genre Tebeaux and Dragga Chs. 1 & 2		Locate reading for response assignment on the internet.
Week 2 September 19	Ethics in the workplace Achieving a readable style Tebeaux and Dragga Chs. 3 & 4	Sign up for Writing/Grammar presentations. (Individual Assignment)	Find your disciplines' code of ethics. Work on reading response.
Week 3 September 26	APA style guidelines: Why formatting matters. APA handouts online	Reading Response Due (Individual Assignment)	Visit OWL and review APA, MLA and other guidelines.
Week 4 October 3	Usability Testing and Proposal Writing Tebeaux and Dragga Ch 6 & 9 Graves and Graves (on blackboard)		Meet with groups and brainstorm project.
Week 5 October 10	No class: Thanksgiving		
Week 6 October 17	Working Collaboratively Video: Talking 9 to 5: women and men in the workplace		Meet with groups and review possible online collaborative programs.
Week 7 October 24	Memo Writing Tebeaux and Dragga Ch 7	Group Proposal and Work Plan Due (Group Assignment)	Work on memo.

Week 8 October 31	Understanding Visuals Tebeaux and Dragga Ch 5 & 6	Memo Due (Individual Assignment)	Start work on public presentation.
Week 9 November 7	Presenting Publically Tebeaux and Dragga Ch 11	Sign up for group presentations.	Finalize public presentation.
Week 10 November 14	No new reading	Group Presentations	Work on presentation/report
Week 11 November 21	No new reading	Group Presentations	Work on presentation/report
Week 12 November 28	No new reading	Group Presentations	Work on presentation/report
Week 13 December 5	No new reading	Group Presentations	Work on presentation/report
Week 14 December 12		Final Report Due (Group Assignment)	

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Oral Presentation on Writing/Grammar	5%	Ongoing
Reading Response	10%	September 26
Group Proposal and Work Plan	20%	October 24
Memo For Online collaboration recommend	20%	October 31
Oral Presentation on Group Project	15%	November 14 21 & 28, December 5,
Group Recommendations Report	30%	Monday, December 12