

Communications Studies (COMS) 363 – Lecture 26  
Professional and Technical Communication  
Spring 2013  
TR 15:00 – 17:45

**Instructor:** Yuri Yerastov, Ph.D.  
**Office Location:** SS 307  
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**Office Hours:** TR 13:00 – 15:00

**Course Description**

An introduction to professional and technical communication, both written and oral. Students will learn the rhetorical dimensions of workplace settings as well as the process of planning, composing, and delivering professional and technical communication for various audiences.

Prerequisites: Completion of 4 or more full-course equivalents.

**Objectives of the Course**

1. To develop a rhetorical approach to crafting documents;
2. To understand current theories of genre, and apply them to technical and professional communication;
3. To perfect your command of style;
4. To learn document design strategies;
5. To become competent in preparing powerpoint presentations.

**Electronic Devices**

You are allowed to use laptops in class but only for purposes related to this course. Please turn your cell phones off.

**Textbooks and Readings**

Graves, H. & Graves, R. (2007). A strategic guide to technical communication. Peterborough ON: Broadview Press.

Additional required readings will be posted on Blackboard.

**Assignments and Evaluation**

Quizzes (6 \* 2%)

Quiz 1: Chapter 1	due May 16	2%
Quiz 2: Editing	due May 21	2%
Quiz 3: Editing	due May 23	2%
Quiz 4: APA style	due May 28	2%
Quiz 5: Style & Coherence	due May 30	2%

Quiz 6: Chapters 5 & 6	June 4	2%
Posting on Blackboard	due May 21	8%
Project proposal	due May 23	15%
Writing in the workplace assignment	due May 30	20%
Powerpoint presentation	due June 13	10%
Final report with letter of transmittal	due June 25	30%
Participation		5%

*Project proposal, powerpoint presentation, and final report*

All of these assignments are components of a research project in which you will study the usability of a website of your choice. Because the pedagogy in this course is based on the process approach, all these assignments are linked. The proposal sets out the research that you will do in the final assignment, and the powerpoint assignment requires you to present an overview of that research to a hypothetical audience. It is recommended that your proposal be 2-4 pages, and the final project 11-16 pages; your powerpoint should contain about 10 slides. You should read all three parts of the assignment before completing the proposal. Please consult Blackboard for further instructions on the assignments.

*Writing in the workplace assignment*

You will write a 800-1200 word memo to a hypothetical boss about the use of wikis as a collaborative writing tool. Please consult Blackboard for further instructions on this assignment.

*Posting on Blackboard*

You will be asked to post your 2-3 paragraph response to a selected course reading on Blackboard. Your response should engage other relevant literature you may have read and your relevant life experiences.

*Quizzes*

You will be quizzed on the content of course readings. Quizzes are to be taken out of class on Blackboard by the midnight of the due date.

*Participation*

You will be graded both on the quality and quantity of your contributions to classroom dialogue.

*Submission of assignments*

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. All assignments are to be submitted electronically via Blackboard; the allowable file formats for your submissions are .rtf, .doc, .docx, and .pages. No hard copies/ email attachments will be accepted. If you require an extension in exceptional circumstances, please let me know.

All assignments must be completed or a grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination:** No

### **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://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: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

### **Grading System**

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

	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 (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) 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.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

### **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/cfreh>

### **Schedule of Lectures and Readings**

Please consult Blackboard for weekly schedules of class activities and homework assignments.