

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
Department of Communication and Culture

Communications 363 L06
Professional and Technical Communication
TR 18:00-20:45
Thurs., May 15-Thurs., June 26

Instructor: Dr. Richard Brock
Office: SS307
E-Mail: rkbrock@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: TR 16:45-17:45

Calendar 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.

Description and Objectives

In this class you'll learn about the professional and rhetorical expectations for communication in a variety of contexts. We'll begin by considering how audience and purpose shape our approach to communication, and our first assignment will relate to the proper composition of a professional workplace email. Later assignments will cover instructional documents, research plans and reports, with an emphasis on appropriate register and diction throughout.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Cellphones and other communication devices should be turned off at all times. Laptops are not normally permitted in class for note-taking purposes, though you are permitted to bring your laptop as an aid to oral presentations and for workshopping sessions. If there are reasons why you believe you should be exempt from these rules (for example, a learning disability), please contact me before the term starts or at the first class to discuss these reasons with me.

Textbooks and Readings:

Heather and Roger Graves, *A Strategic Guide to Technical Communication* (2nd edn., Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2012) is our sole text and is available in the bookstore.

Assignments and Evaluation

Note on assignments and the group project: The proposal, oral presentation and final written report assignments are based on a group project activity, which will be completed in collaboration with group members studying in similar fields and/or with similar areas of interest.

The project may be an undertaking that you and your group complete in its entirety (for example if it coincides with work being done in another class or even in the workplace), or it may be a hypothetical project that might commonly be undertaken in your line of work. Either way, it will allow you to understand how the production of technical documents complements each stage of a practical project, and to appreciate the crucial role such documents play in facilitating group collaboration.

Professional email writing assignment, approx. 1 page, due May 22 (15%)

Introductory assignment to establish basic conventions of professional communication.

Instructional manual, approx. 4 pages, due May 29 (25%)

A procedural manual that outlines summary and detailed steps for accomplishing a task of your choice, within a field of expertise or interest.

Proposal for group project, approx. 4 pages, due June 12 (25%)

Will detail your own role within your group's proposed project, as well as an overview of your group's aims, and will test your ability to meet formal proposal writing criteria.

Group project oral presentation, on either June 24 or June 26 (10%)

Each group member will detail his/her role in the group project, and evaluate successes and areas for improvement in a formal report presentation format.

Individual report on group project, approx. 10 pages (including title page, table of contents, executive summary, etc.), due June 26 (25%)

Final assignment, adhering to a professional report format. This report will expand on your individual component of the group presentation, and will balance an overview of the group's activities (including successes and areas for improvement) as well as giving a detailed account of your own role within the project.

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

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

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 (3rd 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 Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) 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/ethics/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

May 15: Introduction; audience and purpose; ethics (Graves & Graves ch. 1-2)

May 20: Professional emailing (G&G, ch. 7)

May 22: Instructional documents (G&G ch. 10-11)

May 27: Technical prose (G&G ch. 4)

May 29: Document design (G&G ch. 5-6)

June 3: Researching technical subjects (G&G ch. 3)

June 5: Proposal writing (G&G ch. 8)

June 10: Reporting information (G&G ch. 9)

June 12: Presenting information (G&G ch. 13)

June 17 & 19: Group project workshopping

June 24 & 26: Group presentations