

CMST 2061: Business & Professional Communication¹

Department of Communication Studies

Louisiana State University

“You’ll never listen yourself out of a job” –Dr. Benjamin Allen

Instructor:	Evan Mitchell Schares	Location	Allen 46
Email	eschar4@lsu.edu	Times:	MTWTF 9:50 – 10:50 AM
Office	Coates 319	Section	A, 1
Hours	MTWT 9:20 – 9:50 AM		

Required Texts:

Waldeck, Kearner, Plax. (2013). Business & Professional Communication in a Digital Age. Wadsworth: Boston, MA.

Additional readings posted on Moodle.

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.

Assignments & Grading Scale

Mock Interview	10 points	A	93.0 – 100.00
Meeting	15 points	A-	90.0 – 92.9
Training Seminar	15 points	B +	87.0 – 82.9
Sales Pitch	20 points	B	83.0 – 86.9
Midterm	15 points	B -	80.0 – 82.9
Final	15 points	C +	77.0 – 79.9
Elevator Speech	5 points	C	73.0 – 76.9
Discussion	5 points	C -	70.0 – 72.9
		D +	67.0 – 69.9
		D	63.0 – 66.9
		D -	60.0 – 62.9
		F	0 – 59.9

Assignments are worth a total of 100 points. However, for each assignment you are able to earn fractions of points. So, if it makes you feel any better, think of the semester out of 1,000 or 10,000 points. If you need to figure out your grade, divide the number of points you earned out of the total number possible. Detailed descriptions of all the assignments are available on Moodle. No extra credit will be granted.

¹ This course is taught by a number of different faculty within the Department of Communication Studies. Similarities between this syllabus and others in the Department exist so that consistency in the course, despite different instructors, is maintained.

Attendance

Attendance in class, much like corporate settings, is expected. Attendance will be taken daily. It is your responsibility to sign the roll sheet at the beginning of class. Once class has begun you will not be able to sign in and will be counted absent. You are allowed 4 absences/late arrivals with no questions asked. After you have reached 3, each additional absence/tardy will result in a 1/3 reduction of your grade. For example, if you are absent 5 times your final grade will go from an A- to a B.

Further, your attendance is expected daily but attendance does not constitute presence. Students who are constantly late, on their cell phones, or who are falling asleep are not engaged and, as a result, not able to earn discussion points. Discussion is worth 5% of your grade. There is no other way to earn discussion points except through in-class discussion of the material.

Even if students have a reasonable cause to miss class, they are still responsible for demonstrating achievement of the learning goals and other course content.

Presentation of Work

Scheduled class time for presentations and other course activities ought to be considered sacrosanct. If a student is absent the day s/he is scheduled to speak and has not made prior arrangements with the instructor, a 10% grade reduction will be recorded each day for the presentation portion of the assignment (this includes making it up later the same day). If time permits on remaining days of presentations for the assignment, the speech/activity may be made up but, of course, the decision is made at my discretion.

In the same sense, if you arrive late to class on the day of your speech, your assignment will be reduced by one letter grade, even if you are “on time” for your own presentation. Showing respect for your classmates by arriving on time to class on the day of presentations is of great importance.

There is zero tolerance for disruptions during speeches. A disruption is any action that distracts the audience’s attention or interferes with the delivery of a speech. Examples include: entering the room after a speech has begun, cell phone ringing, whispering, etc. The penalty for disrupting someone speech will result in a zero for you on that particular assignment.

Grade Appeals

Students are welcome to discuss grade appeals with me on any assignment or test if it is believed to be graded incorrectly. However, you must submit your appeal in writing during the class period immediately following the return of the graded assignment. In the appeal, you must

1. Identify which assignment or test question you are appealing.
2. Justify why your answer or performance was correct or worthy of a higher grade and quantify the amount sought. To make your case compelling, you must cite course readings or lecture notes.
3. If applicable, include the original test or assignment.

Technology Policy

The goal of all course policies is to help create a successful course experience for you as the student; this includes your ability to learn course material and to do so in an effective classroom environment. Generally, cell phones and other electronics are not to be used. Students who use these inappropriately will be considered absent. However, there will be times throughout the course

where computers and other electronics may be used when explicitly stated such as for in-class workshops and other activities. Please see me if you have any questions or concerns.

LSU Code of Student Conduct & Plagiarism

To demonstrate my pride in LSU, as a member of its community, I will: (1) accept responsibility for my actions; (2) hold myself and others to the highest standards of academic, personal, and social integrity; (3) practice justice, equality, and compassion in human relations; (4) respect the dignity of all persons and accept individual differences; (5) respect the environment and the rights and property of others and the University; (6) contribute positively to the life of the campus and surrounding community; and (7) use my LSU experience to be an active citizen in an international and interdependent world.

Any student found to have turned in material not their own (either downloaded from the internet or written by another student) in part or in whole will immediately be reported to the Dean of Students.

Disability Accommodation

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states: "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 can be arranged." After you receive the accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to provide any sort of documentation as soon as is possible. Waiting until the last weeks of the semester to address an issue which happened months ago is likely not able to be accommodated as completely as if it were addressed in a more timely manner.

TITLE IX & Sexual Misconduct Policy

In accordance with Title IX and other applicable law, Louisiana State University ("LSU") is committed to providing a learning, working, and living environment that promotes integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual misconduct which includes sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and retaliation. LSU prohibits sex discrimination and sexual misconduct. This policy applies to all persons without regard to sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.

Sex discrimination and sexual misconduct violate an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity. LSU considers sex discrimination and sexual misconduct in all of its forms to be serious offenses. This policy has been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated.

Tentative Course Schedule

Changes will be posted to Moodle and/or announced in class though I highly doubt substantial changes will be made to the course.

Week 1: June 6 – June 10
Introductions & First Impressions

Day's Content	Activities or Assignments
M: Syllabus & Introductions	
T: Chapter 1 & PRPSA Report	
W Chapter 2 & Elevator Speech Handout	
TH	Elevator Speech Work Day
F	Elevator Speeches

Week 2: June 13 – June 17
The Job Interview & Workplace Communication

M: Chapter 4	
T: Chapter 3	
W Anderson (2014) & Wolk (2012)	
TH	Interview Work Day
F	Interviews

Week 3: June 20 – June 24
Workplace Relations & Making Things Matter

M: Chapter 5	
T: Chapter 11	
W Logan (2011)	
TH	Meeting Presentation Work Day
F	Meeting Presentations

Week 4: June 27 – July 1
New Media & The Visual

M: Chapter 6	
T: Chapter 10	
W Um (2014)s	
TH	Midterm Review & Work Day
F	Midterm

Week 5: July 4 – July 8
Sell It Like You're Broke & the Rent is Due Tomorrow

M:	No Class - Holiday
T: Chapter 9	
W	Sale Pitch Work Day
TH	Sale Pitches
F	Sales Pitches

Week 6: July 11 – 15
Pulling It Together

M: Chapter 15	
T: Chapter 12	
W Chapter 13	
TH TBD: Extra day for discussion	
F	Training Seminar Work Day

Week 7: July 18 – July 22
Training Seminars & Review

M:	Training Seminar Work Day
T:	Training Seminar Work Day
W	Training Seminars
TH	Training Seminars
F	Final Exam Review & Work Day

Week 8: July 25
Good Luck!

M:	Final Exam
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Additional Readings

- Anderson, R.C., Klostad, C.A., Mayew, W. J., Venkatachalam, M. (2014), Vocal fry may undermine the success of young women in the labor market. *PlosOne*, 9(5), 1-8.
- Logan, N. (2011). The white leader prototype: A critical analysis of race in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 23(4), 442-457.
- Um, Nam-Hyun. (2014). Does gay-themed advertising haunt your brand? *International Journal of Advertising*, 33(4), 811-832.
- Wolk, L., Abdelli-Beruh, N. B., & Slavin, D. (2012). Habitual use of vocal fry in young adult female speakers. *Journal of Voice*, 26(3), 111-116.