

COM 394 - Business and Professional Communication

Tuesdays, 4:30-7:30 in CAC room 237 & via D2L

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Office: Old Main 012A
Office Hours: as needed

Prerequisite: COMM 101, Junior Standing
GEP Area: Communication in the Major for Organizational Leadership majors

As you prepare for and complete work in this course, be aware of the target audience for each means of communication that we examine and employ. Determine, identify and define the appropriate/intended audience for messages. Think “outside the box” in your approach, analysis and recommendations. Stay aware of current events, contemporary work environments, and how external factors (economic, legal, political, sociocultural, technological issues) cause change.

General Expectations

During class time, please turn cell phones to vibrate or off. Do not use electronic devices in class for purposes other than approved “COM 394 learning”. Do your work the best you can. Attend class & participate!

As a student in this course (and at UWSP) you are expected to maintain a high degree of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this course, and integrity with your behavior in and out of the classroom. Each of us is responsible and accountable to Chapter 5 of the University Handbook: [Policies Pertaining to Classroom Activities](#), as well as other related UWSP and UW System guidelines about learning environments and academic behavior.

If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Disability and Assistive Technology Center](#) and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please talk with me before the end of the first workshop. It is the student’s responsibility to provide documentation of disability to Disability Services and meet with a Disability Services counselor to request special accommodation *before* classes start.

Course Learning Outcomes

- ✓ Develop workplace-oriented arguments that are persuasive, extemporaneous, impromptu, and meticulous
- ✓ Demonstrate professional preparation by analyzing the roles of culture, hierarchy, networking, and teams in workplace communications
- ✓ Support the presentation of data, information and ideas with visual aid preparation
- ✓ Develop recommendations for improving crisis communication and management through historical analysis
- ✓ Explain a complicated process by way of detailed directions
- ✓ Through creation of a conference packet and development of a role play, demonstrate effective meeting-management and communication techniques

You will meet the outcomes through a combination of individual and group activities.

Work Teams

Functioning well in teams is an important part of the working world, so I’ve assigned each of you to a Work Team for this course. Operating as a group in accelerated courses has some great benefits and advantages, too. To maximize your potential, be accountable and communicate often.

Each team will complete a “Charter”, and each member an “Evaluation”, to help assess responsibility and performance for Work Team efforts in this course. The Charter is a way of setting expectations and developing a plan of attack for group work. You’ll interact with team members to start this process during Workshop 1. The Evaluation will allow you to provide a confidential review/critique on how well your team followed its plans, as well as to alert me to any special circumstances.

Course Attendance, Participation

We will cover 16-weeks of course material in our 8 weeks together face-to-face and via D2L. We will discuss and/or work on 8 “chunks” of content during each week’s 3-hour workshop, but the learning continues on D2L during the rest of the week.

I expect to start discussing course topics promptly at 4:30 P.M. If you won’t arrive by that time, please tell me before then - so we (class members and me) know when to expect you. If you are absent more than 15 minutes from a workshop, you will not receive any participation points - unless you have notified me in advance and agreed to make-up work.

Hybrid Structure

This course will be delivered partially online through the course management system D2L. You will use your UWSP account to access course content from the [D2L Login Page](#). To ensure that you are using the recommended personal computer configurations, please refer to the [D2L settings link](#).

In D2L, you will access online lessons, course materials, and resources. At designated times throughout the semester, we will participate in a blend of self-paced and group-paced activities using D2L and/or alternative Internet-based technologies. Activities will consist of chat, blogs, discussion forums, email, journaling, wikis, and/or web posting.

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with D2L you can visit with a [Student Technology Tutor](#) or seek assistance from the [HELP Desk](#).

Netiquette Guidelines

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community.

The following tips can enhance the learning experience for everyone online and in-class:

- ✓ Do not dominate any discussion
- ✓ Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion
- ✓ Do not use offensive language; present ideas appropriately
- ✓ Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- ✓ Popular emoticons such as ☺ can be helpful to convey tone, but do not overdo or overuse them.

- ✓ Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- ✓ Never make fun of someone’s ability
- ✓ Share tips with other students
- ✓ Keep an “open-mind” and be willing to express even your minority opinion. Minority opinions have to be respected.
- ✓ Think and edit before you push the “Send” button
- ✓ Do not hesitate to ask for feedback
- ✓ Using humor is acceptable

Adapted from:

Mintu-Wimsatt, A., Kernek, C., & Lozada, H. R. (2010). *Netiquette: Make it part of your syllabus*. Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 6(1). Retrieved from http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/mintu-wimsatt_0310.htm

Shea, V. (1994). Netiquette. Albion.com. Retrieved from: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/book/>.

Assignments

Any assignment, electronic or on paper, is due before we end the corresponding workshop. Assignment directions on D2L identify whether to submit electronically or come to class with your work. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from instructor *before the due date*. Extensions will not be given beyond the next assignment except under extreme circumstances.

If you have trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let me know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing me when difficulties arise so that we can help you find a solution.

Scheduling course concepts can be controlled chaos, at times. We will follow this structure, but discussions and current events may cause us to shift gears. Therefore, the following list of dates and topics are subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to check D2L for corrections or updates to the syllabus:

WORKSHOP	DUE DATE	ASSIGNMENT	GRADE
1	3/28	Work Team Charter	5%
2	4/5	Extemporaneous Writing	5%
		Impromptu Speech	5%
3	4/12	WT - Email Round Robin	5%
		Video Speech	5%
4	4/19	Informational Interview	10%
5	4/26	WT - Persuasive Memo	5%
		Visual Communications	10%
6	5/3	WT - Crisis Communication	10%
7	5/10	Instructions	15%
8	5/17	WT - Meeting Management	15%
		Participation	5%
		Work Team Evaluation	5%

- ✓ For consistency, please use “Times New Roman” font, size 12, with 1-inch margins
- ✓ Page/slide counts should not include the cover pages or references

Grading

If you don't turn-in assignments when due, and have not made other arrangements with me, you will lose 10% for every workshop that passes. If you don't turn-in such work by the end of the course, you will receive 0%. If you need time beyond the end of this course to turn-in work, discuss an "Incomplete" with me before the end of the last workshop.

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to the D2L Grade Book. I will update grades of assignments turned-in on-time before the following workshop. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your D2L home page under the link to this course.

Final grades will be based on the percentage of total points earned as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	60-66%
F	0-59%

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider unenrolling from a course. Refer to the UWSP [Academic Calendar](#) for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student's family.