COMM 205x: Communication Practicum
Units: 2
Spring 2015—Thursday—5-6:20 pm
ASC G34

Instructor: Laurel Felt, PhD; www.laurelfelt.org
Office: USC Joint Educational Project (“JEP House”), 801 W. 34th Street
Walking Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12-1 pm, track outside of ASCJ – let’s walk & talk!
Sitting Office Hours: By appointment
Contact Info: felt@usc.edu | 213.740.1814 (office)

Annenberg Virtual Commons: http://vc.uscannenberg.org/annenberg-it
Annenberg IT Help Desk: ASC 234 | asctech@usc.edu | (213) 740-3901

Course Description
This course is designed to provide insights and tools to help you evaluate your career field of interest by bridging your classroom learning with “real world” experiences. This will be an applied setting for students to examine the theories and practices of professional workplace environments from a communication perspective. Students will utilize a range of research methods to examine an ongoing internship. Both an internship supervisor and professor will review students’ performance.

Learning Objectives
• To provide students with an opportunity to receive credit through a series of independent academic and practical activities as they simultaneously negotiate a pre-professional internship experience.
• To support students’ deeper understanding of their particular professional arena by encouraging them to follow current events, contribute to relevant conversations, create a personal brand, and reflect broadly on their diverse experiences.
• To host a forum in which students can exchange internship information and advice, process experiences, solicit recommendations, and develop a learning community.

Prerequisites: Sophomore standing; completion of at least 1 core Communication course
Co-Requisites: Students must work a minimum of 8-10 hours per week at their internship site. An internship supervisor must agree to complete an end-of-semester evaluation of a student’s performance.
Recommended Preparation: Get an internship. Create a resume and cover letter. Consider your favorite skills, personal learning style, priorities, and purpose.
Course Notes

1. Grading
   a. This course is graded CR/NR. The passing grade for CR is a C-.

2. Blackboard
   a. Blackboard will function as this course’s “hub.”
   b. The instructor will post readings to Blackboard, post Announcements to Blackboard, and send those Announcements as emails via Blackboard.
   c. Students will submit assignments to Blackboard via Turnitin.

3. Social media
   a. Each student will create a public blog via a free blog site (e.g., blogger.com, wordpress.com, livejournal.com, etc).
   b. Students may create a professional Twitter or Tumblr feed for extra credit.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Requirements

This class requires a moderate level of technological proficiency. The instructor believes in all students’ capacity to learn and grow, and values the resources that USC provides so that students may enrich their technological proficiency. Some of these resources include: Annenberg Virtual Commons, Annenberg IT Help Desk, USC Information & Technology Services (http://itservices.usc.edu/), USC Libraries (http://www.usc.edu/libraries/), Lynda.com.

Peers’ assistance is priceless. The instructor will happily meet with you one-on-one. Regardless of one’s technological proficiency pre-COMM 205, all students can succeed.

In terms of hardware/software, none is required. Everything can be done via web browser.

Required Readings

• Every article, video, and book chapter posted to Blackboard under “Readings” tab

Optional but Highly Recommended Readings

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<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
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</table>
| Essay #1: Personal goals | 300 | 30% | 1. **Depth of reflection** (e.g., exploring the prompt, analyzing lived experience and other info sources, interrogating assumptions, considering multiple points of view, connecting “the personal” to current topic(s), etc)  
2. **Technical writing merit** (e.g., grammar, spelling, structure, evidence, etc)  
3. **Logistical requirements**  
LENGTH (not including title and header): Essay #1 = 2-3 pages of text; Essay #2 = 5-7 pages of text  
STYLE: Times New Roman, 12 point font size  
TITLE: Original, thematic (not “Essay”)  
TIMELINESS: Essay #1 = 1/29, 5 pm; Essay #2 = 5/7, 5 pm |
| Essay #2 – FINAL PAPER: Discovery, critique, and setting new goals | | | |
| Blog posts (4) | 150 | 15% | 1. **Relevance of post** (as demonstrated by reference(s) to recent trends, articles, quotes, etc)  
→ Think “Why this, why now?”  
2. **Technical writing merit** (e.g., grammar, spelling, structure, persuasiveness, linking to all sources, exclusive use of reputable sources, etc)  
→ Prove “Are you credible?”  
3. **Aesthetic value** (e.g., font size, font color, font style, layout, line breaks and paragraph lengths, images, embedded media, navigability, etc)  
→ Consider “Will reading this hurt my eyes?”  
4. **Logistical requirements**  
LENGTH: at least 3 paragraphs  
TITLE: Original, thematic (not “Blog Post #1)  
TIMELINESS: Submitted by 2/12, 2/26, 3/12, 4/16 |
| Blog Shift & Share | 50 | 5% | 1. **Structural soundness** (introduction, goal, show and tell, invite questions)  
2. **Workshop best practices** (e.g., openness, eye contact, curiosity, interactivity, participation, etc)  
3. **Logistical requirements**  
LENGTH: approximately 5 minutes  
TIMELINESS: Presented in class on 4/23 |
| Elevator speech | 100 | 10% | 1. **Structural soundness** (introduction, goal, why, qualifications, closing)  
2. **Speaking best practices** (e.g., eye contact, hand gestures, stance, facial expressions, non-verbal fillers, etc)  
3. **Logistical requirements**  
LENGTH: 30-60 seconds  
TIMELINESS: Presented in class on 3/26 |
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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| **Resume**                | 100    | 10%        | 1. **Structural soundness** (e.g., name and address info at the top, educational experience, professional experience, skills, statements that begin with action verbs, goals statements)  
2. **Technical writing merit** (e.g., grammar, spelling, etc)  
3. **Aesthetic value** (e.g., font size, font style, layout, line breaks and paragraph lengths, negative space, etc)  
→ Consider “Will reading this hurt my eyes?”  
4. **Logistical requirements**  
LENGTH: 1 page  
TIMELINESS: Submitted by 2/19 |
| **Cover letter**          | 50     | 5%         | 1. **Structural soundness** (e.g., address information, date, greeting, name of position, relevant experience, closing, etc)  
2. **Technical writing merit** (e.g., grammar, spelling, proper paragraph indenting and spacing, sentence variation, parallelism, etc)  
3. **Aesthetic value** (e.g., font size, font style, paragraph lengths, negative space, etc)  
4. **Logistical requirements**  
LENGTH: 1 page  
TIMELINESS: Submitted by 3/12 |
| **Informational interview memo** | 150    | 15%        | 1. **Structural soundness** (e.g., header info, stating problem, offering recommendations, etc)  
2. **Technical writing merit** (e.g., grammar, spelling, etc)  
3. **Logistical requirements**  
LENGTH: 2 pages  
TIMELINESS: Submitted by 4/30 |
| **Participation**         | 100    | 10%        | 1. **Respectful, active listening** (e.g., making eye contact, leaning forward, nodding, responding verbally or non, etc)  
2. **Proper use of technology** (e.g., stowing cell phone, closing email, writing/typing solely to note-take)  
3. **Relevant, generous sharing** (e.g., giving internship updates, making suggestions, brainstorming with peers, answering questions, asking questions, etc)  
4. **Logistical requirements**  
ATTENDANCE: Perfect OR one absence with a doctor’s note OR one late arrival/early departure of no more than 15 minutes |
| **EXTRA CREDIT: Professional Twitter and/or Tumblr feed(s)** | Up to 50 points | Up to 5% EXTRA CREDIT | 1. **Relevance of post for intended audience**  
2. **Sensitive timing** (e.g., models your particular industry’s norms – general rule of thumb: maximum 1-2 posts per day, posting several days per week) |
| **TOTAL**                 | 1000   | 100%       | **BE PROFESSIONAL**                                                     |
Assignment Submission Policy

1. **Written work – personal (e.g., reflection papers, resume, cover letter, memo)**
   - Post to Blackboard via Turnitin link by 4:59 pm on the due date
   - *If you experience difficulties with Blackboard, then email the assignment to the instructor by 4:59 pm on the due date* – NOTE: 4:59 pm is right before class.

2. **Written work – public (e.g., blog entries, Tweets, Tumblr posts)**
   - Post online by 4:59 pm on the due date
   - *If you experience difficulties with the site, then email the assignment to the instructor by 4:59 pm on the due date*

3. **Spoken work (e.g., blog shift & share, elevator speech, updates, in-class discussions)**
   - Share in class on the due date

Additional Policies

1. **Late and unfinished assignments**
   - Any material turned in late will be reduced one letter grade per calendar day late.
   - Students must complete all assignments in order to receive credit in the course.

2. **Late arrival to and early departure from class**
   - Class meetings are precious! Don’t miss class. DON’T.MISS.CLASS.
   - Due to extenuating circumstances, for a period of up to but not exceeding 15 minutes, you may ONCE arrive late or ONCE depart early from class without penalty. You cannot arrive late once AND leave early once. No no no.
   - If you arrive late more than once, depart early more than once, or the amount of time by which you are late or leave early exceeds 15 minutes, then I will record an unexcused absence. One unexcused absence confers a participation penalty.

3. **Absent from class**
   - Class meetings are precious! Don’t miss class. DON’T.MISS.CLASS.
   - With a doctor’s note, you may miss class once without penalty. Missing 2+ classes is problematic and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the instructor.
   - One unexcused absence confers a participation penalty. Two or more unexcused absences will result in failure to pass the class.

4. **Use of technology in the classroom**
   - In general, cell phone use is prohibited. There are a few exceptions, such as: using your timer/alarm for specific activities; photographing the white board; videotaping speeches; etc. The instructor will state aloud when cell phones are allowed. Otherwise, stash them. Turn them on silent and forget about them. Adios.
   - When the instructor is spouting pearls of wisdom aloud and/or scribbling gems on the white board, you may take notes via paper or electronic device. Document that genius if you feel so moved.
   - When your peers are speaking, your laptop and/or tablet should be closed. The instructor vehemently expects students to practice respectful, active listening. Why? Because doing so helps speakers to feel safe, and safety is non-negotiable. The instructor will not tolerate anyone hurting anyone. This also helps everyone to develop the capacity to focus, engage, connect, and collaborate. Such skills are imperative for 21st century workplaces. If your peers’ ideas demand documentation, then you may take notes via paper and/or follow up later and ask them to repeat.
5. Grading questions
   a. After receiving a grade, students must wait for 24 hours before addressing the instructor. Please use this time to think through the strength of your case.
   b. If you have determined that your grade merits further review, then submit your complaint/rationale in writing within the next week (7 days). Again, complaints or requests for reconsideration of a grade will not be considered unless they are submitted in written form and delivered after 1 day but before 8 days have elapsed.
   c. A complaint constitutes an argument, and will be evaluated by the standards of acceptable argumentation as presented in class readings and lectures.
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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings Due</th>
<th>Deliverable Due</th>
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<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<td>1/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Professionalism 101</td>
<td>Bb: Skim all WEEK 2 readings, closely read at least three items</td>
<td>Reflection Essay #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>Business Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Garner. (2013). <em>HBR Guide to Better Business Writing</em>.</td>
<td>Discover what your peers and superiors are reading (e.g., journals, websites) and who they are following to stay “in the know” industry-wise</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>Business Writing</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>“Nine Why’s” <a href="http://www.liberatingstructures.com/3-nine-whys/">http://www.liberatingstructures.com/3-nine-whys/</a></td>
<td>Blog post #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>Business Writing</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<td>2/12</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>Bb: Relevant comm. theory</td>
<td>Resume</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>--ARON HENDIN, RYAN KUPYN-- &amp; Comm Theory</td>
<td>Industry-related reading</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Bb: “Personal branding info”</td>
<td>Blog post #2</td>
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<td>2/26</td>
<td>Personal Branding</td>
<td>Industry-related reading</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Bb: “LinkedIn”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>Industry-related reading</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Bb: “Networking &amp; Relationship Management”</td>
<td>Cover letter</td>
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<td>3/12</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Industry-related reading</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Conversing</td>
<td>Bb: “Talking to Strangers”</td>
<td>Elevator speech</td>
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<td>3/26</td>
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<td>Bb: “Elevator speech”</td>
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<td>Bb: “Tips for meetings”</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Bb: “Informational interviewing &amp; wrapping up”</td>
<td>Blog post #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Interviewing</td>
<td>Industry-related reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Bb: “Mentorship”</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>Finding Mentors &amp; Communities of Practice</td>
<td>Bb: “Communities of practice”</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>McCandless &amp; Lipmanowicz. <a href="http://www.liberatingstructures.com">www.liberatingstructures.com</a></td>
<td>Blog post #4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/16</td>
<td>Liberating Structures</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unleashing Everyone</td>
<td>Blog Shift &amp; Share</td>
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<td>4/23</td>
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<td>Week 16</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Bb: “360 Feedback &amp; Performance Appraisals”</td>
<td>Informational interview memo</td>
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<td>4/30</td>
<td>Ending an Old Job, Starting a New Job</td>
<td>Bb: “Negotiation”</td>
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<tr>
<td>FINAL</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Essay #2: Discovery, critique, and setting new goals</td>
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<td>5/7</td>
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Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu/ or to the Department of Public Safety http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/ will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. NOTE: USC Dornsife Writing Center, http://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/, Taper Hall of the Humanities Room 216, is an excellent resource.

Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. NOTE: Please inform the instructor as soon as possible if English is not your primary language and you believe you may require special accommodations.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. NOTE: Any student requesting academic accommodation based on a disability is required to register with The Office of Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to your instructor (or TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.