COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses the specific skills needed for strategic and organizational communication consulting.

Communication consulting is different from strategic or management consulting although communication consultants often work to support the implementation of the strategies of management consultants. Communication consulting often involves the actual writing of communication media, but it also includes such diverse elements as meeting design and facilitation, strategic messaging, large-scale communication event planning and execution, and training.

GOALS:

• To understand the consulting processes and skills for successful communication consulting.
• To understand and be able to use the basic communication consulting methodologies
• To be able to design and conduct a strategic facilitation intervention
• To understand how to assess the communication requirements for a specific engagement

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

• There are five required texts. Other literature will be available on Blackboard as needed. Some of these will be optional, others required.
• Required readings are to be prepared prior to class and may be the subject of in-class discussions and the final exam. Reading the optional readings is highly recommended as they round off the required readings and aid in the understanding of the broader context.
• Active participation in class is expected and will be included in the final grade. Students absent more than two times must make an appointment with and provide an explanation to the course instructor in case of any further absence.
GRADING:

There are four components to the final grade: one take-home final exam (30%), one team consulting project (35%), final project peer review evaluations (10%), short projects (15%), and class participation (10%). Class participation will involve participating in discussions on the readings, in-class projects, and lecture/discussions.

Group Projects
The Group Project will be a complete consulting project providing consulting services to an organization. You will pick your own teams. Teams will be made up of five or six people. The client can be a for-profit or a non-profit entity. The consulting engagement will encompass all of the steps of a consulting engagement: problem identification, proposal, statement of work, budgeting (although no fees will be collected), assessment and engagement, research (including academic literature), implementation plan, and final report. **Groups will turn in the proposal, statement of work and budget the 5th week of class; the assessment and research plan the 9th week of class; and present the final report as both an oral presentation and a written report at the end of the semester. All members of the project must participate in both the consulting project and the final oral presentation. Each of these segments will be graded as part of the final project deliverable.**

Group Project presentations will be due the last two weeks of the semester. Each group will produce a project binder and a 30 minute presentation. The binder will include proposal, statement of work, estimated and actual budget, assessment and research plan, time sheets, meeting notes, research materials, client communications, collateral materials, and an engagement summary not to exceed ten pages. Dates will be assigned in the order topics are approved: the first group will receive its first choice, etc. The binders are due on the day of the presentation.

Group Projects will be graded upon the proposal, problem analysis, engagement management, research, consulting skill application, final oral presentation, and presentation materials. Creativity is always a plus. Each member is expected to participate fully in all aspects of the project, including the final presentation.

If a group is having difficulty with a member who is not participating fully, you are expected to first attempt to work the problem yourselves. If this is not successful, you are expected to bring the issue to professor immediately. Waiting to bring this to the instructor's attention until the end of the semester will impact the grades of the entire team.

Final Examination
The Final Exam is due no later than 6:30 PM December 13. Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Peer reviews are due no later than 6:30 PM on December 10. These will be submitted electronically.
LITERATURE:

Author: Sue DeWine  
Title: The Consultant’s Craft: Improving Organizational Communication 2nd edition  

Author: Ingrid Bens  
Title: Facilitation at a Glance  
Publication info: GOAL/QPC, 1999

Author: Frank J. Barrett and Ronald E. Fry  
Title: Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Approach to Building Cooperative Capacity  

Author: William "E. Arnold and Lynne McClure  
Title: Communication Training and Development 2nd Edition  

Author: Peter Block  
Title: Flawless Consulting  

Schedule of classes:

♦ Week 1 August 30—Communication Consulting Basics: Getting the Work and Proposals

Required Readings:


♦ Week 2 September 6—Non-Profit Marketing  
Guest Lecturer: Gary Wexler

DeWine, Chapters 3, pp.36-48.

♦ Week 3 September 13—Prospective Client Pitches

**Required Readings:**

DeWine, Chapters 4 and 5, pp. 49-82.


♦ Week 4 September 20—Survey Writing and Research

**Required readings will be posted on Blackboard.**

**Literature Application Paper Assigned**

♦ Week 5 September 27—Facilitation: A Key Consulting Competency

**Final Group Project Proposals and Costing and Work Plans due**

**Required Readings:**

Bens, Ingrid, *Facilitation at a Glance*

Frank J. Barrett and Ronald E. Fry, *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Approach to Building Cooperative Capacity*

**Facilitation Projects Assigned**

♦ Week 6 October 4—Strategic Communication

Ackerman and Eden reading will be on Blackboard.

♦ Week 7 October 11—Facilitation Projects
♦ Weeks 8 October 18—**Training and Development**

**Required Readings:**

Arnold and McClure, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, pp. 1-107 and 10, 11, 12, pp. 135-166

Block, Chapter 19 pp. 327-342

**Training Projects Assigned**

**Literature Application Paper DUE**

♦ Week 9 October 25—**Change Management**

Required readings will be posted on Blackboard.

♦ Week 10 November 1—**Training Projects**

♦ Week 11 November 8—**Team Project Status Reports**

Each team will present a 15-minute status update of their consulting project.

♦ Week 12 November 15—**Writing as a Consulting Competency**

**Guest Lecturer: Anne Framroze**

**Required Readings:**
DeWine, Chapters 8 and 9, pp. 142-205, Chapter 14pp. 318-339, Chapter 18, pp. 402-416.
Block, Chapters 8-10, pp. 139-188, 14-17 pp. 227-306
♦ Week 13 November 22—Thanksgiving

NO CLASS

Group Project Presentations

♦ Week 14 November 27—HR & Other Communication Consulting Issues

♦ Final Exam Week December 3—Group Project Presentations

Final Exam Due December 13 6:30 PM (no email submissions accepted). Late exams penalized 5 points per day.

COURSE INSTRUCTOR:

Prof. Rebecca Weintraub Ph.D.
Office: ASCJ 324D
Office Hours: Thursday, 3:00 to 6:00 pm and by appointment
E-Mail: weintrau@usc.edu
Phone: (213) 821-0764
Class Time: Thursdays, 6:30-9:30 pm

Rebecca Weintraub has spent more than twenty-five years in the field of strategic communication, executive coaching, facilitation, change management, and organizational behavior. She began her career as an assistant professor at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona) where she was also the Director of Forensics. She then joined the Hughes Aircraft company, which became Hughes Electronics, where over a fifteen-year period she held a number of positions in communication and total quality in the satellite manufacturing division before becoming Director of Corporate Communications for the Corporation, a position she held for five years. In that position she was responsible for
communication strategy and tactics for the corporation as well as providing executive coaching for a variety of Hughes executives. She left Hughes Electronics to join the consulting firm of Towers Perrin where she focused on strategic organizational communication, health and welfare benefits communication strategy, and change management. Her clients included Northrop Grumman, MGM, Mazda, AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, WellPoint Health Systems, and the L.A. Times.

Dr. Weintraub is currently a Professor of Communication at USC in the Annenberg School for Communication where she is both the Director of the Communication Management Master's Degree Program and the Director of the Center for Corporate and Community Education. She teaches strategic organizational and corporate communication classes in that program. Her Strategic Corporate Communication course is Annenberg's only on-line course for which she was awarded the 2004 Best On-line Teaching award for higher education by the US Distance Learning Association. In addition to her teaching, she provides strategic communication planning, presentation, executive coaching, management training, and facilitation consulting services to organizations in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Her clients have included such organizations as Toyota Motor Sales, Fox Networks, the Dental Health Foundation, Mindjet, the County of Los Angeles, and the Redondo Beach Unified School District. In addition to her consulting work, she serves on the Board of Directors of The Wellness Community South Bay, a cancer support and education organization, the California Communication Council for the American Cancer Society and the Yellowstone Park Foundation Advisory Council.

Dr. Weintraub received her Bachelor's degree from UCLA and her Master's and Ph.D. degrees from USC. She roots for whoever is winning at halftime.

COURSE TA:

Allison Noyes, M.A.
Office: ASCJ G6 (Basement of West Lobby)
Office Hours: Thursday, 5:30 to 6:30 pm and by appointment
E-Mail: anoyes@usc.edu
Phone: (213) 973-8442

Allie Noyes is a doctoral candidate at Annenberg studying strategic organizational communication. Her specific research interests focus on collaboration, culture, and organizational change management. Since coming to Annenberg, Allie has worked on research and training projects with a variety of nonprofit organizations, the U.S. Navy, the World Bank, and the entertainment industry. She is currently conducting her dissertation research on culture change around a collaborative care model at an LA-based hospital.
Allie graduated from Mount Holyoke College with a major in politics, a minor in philosophy, and honors in international relations. She worked on both primary and general election campaigns during the 2004 presidential election. In addition to campaign work, her professional experience includes three years of public outreach at the National Archives where Allie conducted research for an educational publication, contributed to planning efforts for the electronic records transition, and managed an internship program.