



**Instructor:** Paula D. (Patnoe) Woodley  
**Office:** ASC 333  
**Office Hours:** Monday & Wednesday only  
Directly after class or by appointment

**Section:** MW, 3:30 -- 4:50 p.m., ANN 409ABC  
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### COURSE GOALS

The overall goal of this course is to develop your professional communication skills and knowledge. While we will cover some theory to enhance your understanding of the business world, the bulk of our time will be spent focused on your applied skills in the communication field. I would like you to walk out of this class confident that you can deliver excellent presentations; be comfortable and successful in interviews; write first---rate cover letters and resumes; and have a basic understanding of important communication and business---related issues that you will encounter in the work force.

### REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- Adler, R. B., Elmhorst, J. M. & Lucas, K. (2013). *Communicating at work (11<sup>th</sup> Ed.)*, McGraw---Hill.
- Additional readings assigned throughout the semester will be posted on Blackboard (BB) or provided in class.

### COURSE STANDARDS

1. This course will be as action---packed as you should expect your professional life to be.
2. The requirements of consistent attendance, punctuality and active participation are essential to your success and will affect your grade.
3. Missing class is no more acceptable than it would be to miss important workdays at any company. Excessive absences and tardiness can adversely affect your grade up to 1/3 of your total grade.
4. The deadline for any assignment, reading, or presentation is at the very beginning of class that it is due. *These deadlines will come up often: don't allow yourself to fall behind!*
5. Missing a presentation, assignment or exam will result in a failing grade on that assignment unless you have physical proof of some serious emergency that prohibited your presence (e.g., a bill from the paramedics).
6. All assignments missed due to an excused absence must be made up within one week of returning to class.
7. Students who are instant messaging, web surfing, or involved in other similar activities during class will be marked as absent. Cell phones are to be turned OFF, *not* on "vibrate."
8. Presentations and papers must be the original work of the student and not used for any other course. Violation of this policy is an Academic Integrity Violation.
9. Questions about grades should be addressed in a timely manner. There is a 24---hour "wait period" after receiving a grade, but then you should address questions within the next 10 days.
10. You must complete all assignments to pass the course.

*Note: While it is not a prerequisite, it is strongly recommended that you take COMM 204 or an equivalent public speaking class before enrolling in this class.*

### **Here's the fine print. Know it.**

- Check our class Blackboard site every day for class announcements. I post announcements frequently throughout the semester. You are responsible for keeping up to date.
- Any student who misses more than *four classes* may fail the course.

- It is **your** responsibility to obtain it materials from a missed class or activity from Blackboard, a classmate or your instructor.
- Unless you make arrangements *in advance* with your instructor, all late assignments will be downgraded by a full letter grade for every day it is late.
  - All elements required of every assignment must be turned in on the due date, or the paper will be considered late.
- Student's attire should be appropriate for a business setting on speech days. Unprofessional dress can negatively affect perceptions of credibility as well as your grade.
- Typos, grammatical and punctuation errors, page layout inconsistencies, etc. count. *Proofread your work!*
- In class, your computer or tablet must be used for note taking only – nothing else. You will lose your computer privileges for the semester if you do not comply. *Turn your phones off.* Sorry, but it is what it is.

### **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](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

#### **Support Systems**

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. 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. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. 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.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

	<b>Point Value</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>
<b>Formal Presentations</b>		
Introductory	10	1%
Group Project	50	10%
Informative Presentation	65	12%
Persuasive Presentation	85	15%
<b>Written Assignments</b>		
Job Package	60	11%
Informational Interview	60	11%
<b>Exams</b>		
Midterm	75	13%
Final	95	17%
<b>Misc. Points</b>	50	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	550	100%

Miscellaneous Points can be earned when you prepare for and participate in class, as well as completing suggested writing exercises and pop quizzes. Please note these points must be earned and are not a “given.”

Participation (including attendance, promptness, being prepared for class discussions, participation in classroom activities, courtesy and professionalism) will significantly affect your grade.

Your personal improvement is highly valued in this class. Even if you already possess superior skills, you should incorporate feedback and make improvements from one assignment to the next. Such demonstrations of improvement are necessary and will be reflected in your grade.

## SYLLABUS

*Readings should be completed prior to class the day they are scheduled. CAW=Communicating at Work textbook. BB=find readings on Blackboard. This schedule is subject to change – and likely will. Please be sure you are looking at the most current schedule.*

<u>Week</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Session Topic(s)</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>	<u>Readings</u>
1	Aug. 24	Course Introduction		1) Handouts in class
	Aug. 26	Presentation Boot Camp I Organizing your presentation		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 9 2) Handouts in class and BB
2	Aug. 31	Presentation Boot Camp II Delivery with confidence		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 11 2) Adler, et al., Ch. 10
	Sept. 2	<u>Introductory Presentations</u>	<b>Presentations</b>	
3	Sept. 7	LABOR DAY – <i>No class</i>		
	Sept. 9	<i>Resumes</i> Special Guest: <b>Suzanne Alcantara</b> <b>Director, ASCJ Career Development</b>		1) Adler, et al., Appendix III, 2) Check BB for other readings 2) Handouts in class

4	Sept. 14	<p>Presentation Boot Camp III Informative presentations and review</p> <p>PowerPoint Design Basics (Time permitting; see PowerPoint deck on BB)</p>	<b>Topic Proposal for Informative Presentation</b>	<p>1) Adler, et al., Ch. 12</p> <p>2) Adler, et al., Ch. 9 (review)</p> <p>3) Adler, et al., Ch. 10 (review)</p>
	Sept. 16	Resume & Cover Letter Clinic	<p><b>Resume draft</b></p> <p><i>Bring 2 copies of your resume and a pen with other than black ink</i></p>	
5	Sept. 21	<p><i>Job Talk</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: <b>TBA</b></p>		
	Sept. 23	<p><i>Interviewing Skills</i></p> <p>Special Guest: <b>Linda "Tish" Tisherman</b> <b>Staff Support/Talk2Tish</b></p>		<p>1) Adler, et al., Ch. 6, pgs. 152---177</p> <p>2) Adler, et al., Appendix I, pgs. 378---390</p> <p>3) Handouts in class</p> <p>4) Interview tips and articles (BB)</p> <p>5) Interviewing worksheet (BB)</p>
6	Sept. 28	<u>Informative Presentations (1)</u>	<b>Presentations</b> <i>business casual attire</i>	
	Sept. 30	<u>Informative Presentations (2)</u>	<b>Presentations</b> <i>business casual attire</i>	
7	Oct. 5	Writing for Business	<b>Online writing exercises</b>	<p>1) Adler, et al., Appendix III, pgs. 402---409</p> <p>2) <i>OWL Business Writing handouts</i> (BB)</p>
	Oct. 7	<p><i>Job Talk</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: <b>TBA</b></p>		
8	Oct. 12	<b>MIDTERM</b>	<b>Exam</b>	

	<b>Oct. 14</b>	Working in Groups & Teams		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 7
9	<b>Oct. 19</b>	Interpersonal Skills		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 5
	<b>Oct. 21</b>	<b>Mock Interviews</b> Guest Interviewers: <b>Megan Hutaff and</b> <b>Suzanne Alcantara</b> <b>ASCJ Career Development</b>	<i>Bring your resume.</i> <i>Business attire required!</i> <i>Location TBA</i>  <b>Job Package</b>	1) Practice with the Interviewing worksheet
10	<b>Oct. 26</b>	Networking		1) Articles on BB
	<b>Oct. 28</b>	<i>Diverse Cultures at Work</i>	<b>TEAM 1 Presentation</b>	1) Adler, et al., Ch. 2
11	<b>Nov. 2</b>	<i>Workplace Communication I:</i> <i>Listening</i>	<b>TEAM 2 Presentation</b>	1) Adler, et al., Ch. 3
	<b>Nov. 4</b>	<i>Job Talk</i> Guest Speaker: <b>TBA</b>		
12	<b>Nov. 9</b>	Workplace Communication II: Verbal & Nonverbal Messages	<b>TEAM 3 Presentation</b>	1) Adler, et al., Ch. 4
	<b>Nov. 11</b>	Strategies for Effective Persuasive Presentations		1) Revisit Adler, et al., Ch. 12 and Ch. 9 --- persuasive presentations
13	<b>Nov. 16</b>	<i>Working in Teams II</i> <i>or Job Talk</i>	In---class group activity	
	<b>Nov. 18</b>	<u>Persuasive Presentations</u>	<b>Presentations</b> <i>Business attire required</i>	
14	<b>Nov. 24</b>	Persuasive Presentations	<b>Presentations</b> <i>Business attire required</i>	

	<b>Nov. 25</b>	<i>Thanksgiving extra day off!</i>	<i>Have a great holiday!</i>	
15	<b>Nov. 30</b>	<i>Job Talk or 1---on---1 meetings w/ PW all day</i>		
	<b>Dec. 2</b>	<i>Your Personal Brand Special Guest: <b>Michele Lando, Skilset Communications</b></i>		
	<b>Dec. 14</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b> 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	<b>Exam</b>	

**BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF ASSIGNMENTS** *(See Blackboard for the complete assignments)*

**Introductory Presentation:** This short presentation allows me to see your current public speaking skills. Topic and format will be announced in class.

**Informative Presentation:** This is a presentation (with visual aids) on noteworthy current events, “hot topics,” or new trends that will require extensive research, analysis of the situation and more. The instructor must approve each topic, as only one person per topic is allowed.

**Group Assignment:** The class will be broken into three groups. Each group will be provided with a different course topic (from a text book chapter) from which they will present required key issues. All members of the team will participate in a presentation consisting of PowerPoint slides (or similar), a class---participation activity, and possibly a handout you prepare for your classmates.

**Informational Interview:** For this project, you will interview an individual that currently holds a job that you are considering. The interviewee must hold a position that you would be qualified for within three years after graduation (i.e. no management positions). You will write a 1---2 page executive summary as well as give a brief oral presentation on your experience. This assignment is more time---consuming then it looks. *Start early!*

**Job Package:** Your completed job package is the key to a successful job search. For this assignment, you will locate a job you are interested in, develop a cover letter, resume and obtain references. Hint: an effective resume requires numerous revisions. Plan your time accordingly.

**Persuasive Presentation:** You will individually prepare and deliver a presentation with PowerPoint to a foundation with the intent of persuading them to fund your charity. As with any business---related presentation – particularly those requesting donated funds in support of a cause – careful research, preparation and practice are critical to make this a successful presentation.

**Exams & Quizzes:** There will be a midterm and final exam that will consist of a combination of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions taken from your readings, class lectures, discussions, and activities. Additionally, if I find that students are not completing the assigned readings, you can expect unannounced quizzes.