

**COMM 205x: Communication Practicum**  
**Units: 1 or 2**  
**Summer 2016**  
**Online**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

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**Annenberg Virtual Commons:** <http://vc.uscannenberg.org/annenberg-it>

**Annenberg IT Help Desk:** ASC 234 | [asctech@usc.edu](mailto:asctech@usc.edu) | (213) 740-3901

**USC Information & Technology Services:** <http://itservices.usc.edu/>

**USC Libraries:** <http://www.usc.edu/libraries/> | Lynda.com

### 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 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:** Create a resume and cover letter. Get an internship. 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- and above.

### 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.

## Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Requirements

Technological proficiency requirement: Basic to moderate.

Hardware/software requirement: None.

## Required Readings

- Garner, Bryan A. (2013). *HBR Guide to Better Business Writing: Engage readers, tighten and brighten, make your case*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.
- Every article, video, and book chapter posted to Blackboard under "Readings" tab

## Optional but Highly Recommended Readings

- Harvard Business Review. (2010). *On Managing Yourself*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

## Assignment Submission Policy

### 1. Personal written work (e.g., resume, essays)

- a. Post to Blackboard via Turnitin link by 11:59 pm on the due date
- b. *If you experience difficulties with Blackboard, then email the assignment to the instructor by 11:59 pm on the due*

## Additional Policies

### 1. Late and unfinished assignments

- a. Any material turned in late will be reduced one letter grade per calendar day late.

### 2. 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.

## Grading Breakdown, Description and Assessment of Assignments

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	%	CRITERIA
Essay #1: Goals	150	15%	<b>1. Thoughtfulness, specificity, realism</b> <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> (e.g., grammar, spelling, etc) <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 1-2 pages; TIMELINESS: Due 5/23
Resume	200	200%	<b>1. Structural soundness</b> (e.g., name and address info at the top, educational experience, professional experience, skills, action verbs, specificity, autonomous tasks and achievements, results statements) <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> (e.g., grammar, spelling, etc) <b>3. Aesthetic value</b> (e.g., font size, font style, layout, line breaks and paragraph lengths, negative space, etc) → Consider “Will reading this hurt my eyes?” <b>4. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 1 page; TIMELINESS: Due 5/27
Essay #2: Industry Analysis  -OR-  Essay #3: Workplace Analysis	150	15%	<b>1. Analysis of industry-wide change(s), stability, prognostication</b> <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 1-2 pages; TIMELINESS: Due 6/6  <b>1. Politics, culture, communication</b> <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 1-2 pages; TIMELINESS: Due 6/6
Google Hangout	200	20%	<b>1. Respectful, active listening</b> (e.g., focusing only on the screen, nodding, responding verbally or non, etc) <b>2. Relevant, generous sharing</b> (e.g., giving internship update, participating in discussion) <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 50 minutes; TIMELINESS: log on at mutually agreed upon time [during week of 6/6]
Essay #4: Informational Interview	150	15%	<b>1. Discoveries, inspiration</b> <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 2 pages; TIMELINESS: Due 6/20
Essay #5: Career Planning	150	15%	<b>1. Thoughtfulness, specificity, realism</b> <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 1-2 pages; TIMELINESS: Due 6/27
TOTAL	1000	100%	<b>BE PROFESSIONAL</b>

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings Due</b>	<b>Deliverable Due</b>
<b>Week 1</b> 5/16	<b>Business Writing</b>	Garner, Bryan A. (2013). <i>HBR Guide to Better Business Writing</i> .  Bb: Advice from Liz Ryan of Forbes	
<b>Week 2</b> 5/23	<b>Resumes and Dragon-slaying Stories</b>		Essay #1 (5/23)  Resume (5/27)
<b>Week 3</b> 5/30	<b>Branding &amp; Strategic self-presentation</b>	Bb: LinkedIn Bb: Self-presentation	
<b>Week 4</b> 6/6	<b>Networking</b>	Bb: Talking to strangers	Essay #2 or Essay #3  Google Hangout
<b>Week 5</b> 6/13	<b>Informational Interviews</b>	Bb: Informational interviewing	(conduct your informational interview)
<b>Week 6</b> 6/20	<b>Ending your internship on a high note</b>	Bb: Elevator speech	Essay #4
<b>Week 7</b> 6/27	<b>Reflecting on lessons learned, Planning for the future</b>	Bb: Exploring yourself	Essay #5

# 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

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](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.