

COMM 375 SYLLABUS

Section 20577R

Business and Professional Communication
Monday & Wednesday, 10:00 am to 11:50 am

Spring Semester 2018

Classroom: ASC 231

Instructor: Michael Wissot

Office: ASC 333

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Office E-Mail: mwissot@usc.edu

Office Hours: *Only by Appointment*, M & W, 9a-10am, 2-3pm

Course Description: This class will require an intensive examination and application of effective communication in the workforce. Students will be exposed to a wide range of professional communication strategies and tactics, and they will be expected to apply these approaches to their preferred industries. The class will cover a variety of contemporary business topics, allowing students to discover unique opportunities affecting organizations/industries of interest and to learn how to harness such knowledge.

Course Goals:

- To achieve excellence in constructing and delivering business presentations
- To acquire skills in managing the pace, content and outcome of professional interviews
- To strengthen skills in developing concise and substantive résumés and cover letters
- To refine your own personal brand and sell your value proposition to an organization
- To understand the strategic challenges facing an organization or industry of interest

Course Meaning: We will demonstrate the highest attainable work ethic and discover within us that which is superior to circumstance. We will persevere toward the most rewarding pursuit in higher education – the stimulation of thought, emotion, and soul. It is my duty to prepare you, as future leaders of the Free World, for the challenges and opportunities that await you. We will dare to be great, individually and collectively.

Required Textbook: Young, K.S. & Travis, H.P. *Business and Professional Communication: A Practical Guide to Workplace Effectiveness*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2012.

Additionally Required Materials: *Available via e-mail or the university's Blackboard course site*

Preparedness: Class will meet each Monday and Wednesday throughout the semester. You must complete ALL course requirements in order to earn a grade in this course. You are responsible for all reading assignments as pop quizzes may be given to determine your preparedness for class. You are responsible for giving presentations on the dates when you are scheduled. Since your attendance in this course – both as a speaker and listener – is vital, any absences from class will affect your final grade. You are, therefore, required to notify me BEFORE missing class and provide corresponding documentation AFTERWARD. In the event that both of these criteria are satisfied, you will receive “make up” assignments/projects to suffice for time missed from the classroom. Please note that I will record an unexcused absence if you miss any considerable portion of class (arriving late, leaving early) without my authorization. Late submissions on assignments will result in a 10% grade deduction for every day late. Classroom behavior will be predicated on an environment of mutual respect. We are here to learn from each other in a non-threatening environment. You are encouraged to formulate and share opinions with due discretion, as well as be comfortable in practicing communication techniques and delivering formal presentations in a safe environment. Any behavior that is deemed disrespectful by the instructor will affect your grade.

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Academic Integrity: The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's academic integrity code as detailed in the SCampus guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the academic integrity code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor. If you have any doubts about what is and is not an academic integrity violation, please check with me immediately. The University presumes that you are familiar with its standards and policies; should you be found to have committed a violation, ignorance of these standards and policies will not be accepted as an excuse.

Plagiarism is defined and interpreted as the act of presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words. It is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

Support Systems:

[Student Counseling Services](#) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24/7.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services](#) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

[Sexual Assault Resource Center](#)

Get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources

[Office of Equity and Diversity/Title IX Compliance](#) – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class.

[Bias Assessment Response and Support](#)

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response.

[Office of Disability Services and Programs](#) – (213) 740-0776

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations.

[Student Support and Advocacy](#) – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting success (personal, financial, academic).

[Diversity at USC](#)

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency Information](#)

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) – (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community.

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Use of Technology: Students may only use technology-based products with the expressed written consent of the professor. The use of laptops, mobile phones and all other computer devices during class time is not permitted. Accessing the Internet in any capacity during class time is not permitted. **Any violation of this class policy may result in the loss of ALL participation points for the entire semester, as well as other ramifications under university policy.**

Disability Services: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please have the letter delivered to me 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. DSP's phone number is (213) 740-0776.

Grading Procedures:

Introductory Presentation	25 points
Informative “Discovery” Presentation	50 points
Persuasive “Business Strategy” Presentation	100 points
Goals Essay	25 points
Job Package (Résumé, Cover Letters, Web Page, Blog Entries)	75 points
Op-Ed	75 points
Informational Interview Project (Formal I-view Extra Credit)	50 points
Participation: In-Class Activities / Attendance	25 points
Midterm Exam	75 points
Final Report (Exam)	100 points

TOTAL: 600 POINTS

I expect you to complete all assignments on time. Late work, if accepted, may be penalized substantially.

Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

94 - 100 percent = A	74 - 76.9 percent = C
90 - 93.9 percent = A-	70 - 73.9 percent = C-
87 - 89.9 percent = B+	67 - 69.9 percent = D+
84 - 86.9 percent = B	64 - 66.9 percent = D
80 - 83.9 percent = B-	60 - 63.9 percent = D-
77 - 79.9 percent = C+	BELOW 60 percent = F

COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week / Date	Topic / Activity	Assignment (Y&T, 2012)
#1 1/8 & 1/10	Overview of Course Professional Communication Boot Camp I Presentation , Presence, Message	Chapter 1 Chapter 9
#2 1/17 only	Professional Communication Boot Camp II Presentation, Presence , Message Assign Introductory Presentation on an organization/industry of interest, focusing on the specific attributes that provide value to its targeted stakeholders (and to you). Assign Goals Essay – due January 29	
#3 1/22 & 1/24	Deliver Introductory Presentations – January 22 (Outlines DUE) Informative Presentations Visual Aids	
#4 1/29 & 1/31	Working in Teams Goals Essay Due – Jan 29 Writing Résumés Writing Business Reports & Presentations	Chapter 7 Chapter 3 Chapter 6
	Assign Informative “Discovery” Presentation on a business trend, challenge or opportunity facing a company or industry of interest, focusing on why you consider it important. Assign Job Package – due March 28	
#5 2/5 & 2/7	Problematic Personalities in the Workplace Communication Solutions in the Workplace Intrapersonal Skills Listening in the Workplace Impression Management	“10 People” excerpts Chapters 8 & 10 Chapter 2 Chapter 5

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Course Schedule (cont.)

Week / Date	Topic / Activity	Assignment (Y&T, 2012)
#6 2/12 & 2/14	Deliver Informative “Discovery” Presentations (Outlines DUE) Review for Midterm Exam	
#7 2/21 only	Midterm Exam on Wednesday, February 21 Covers Chapters 1-3 & 5-11 in Y&T, plus all lectures and handouts BLUE BOOK REQUIRED (Loss of 10 points without Blue Book) Assign Draft of Résumé & Cover Letter DUE February 26 (<i>Bring 2 Copies of Each</i>)	
#8 2/26 & 2/28	Résumé & Cover Letter Workshop – Feb 26 Interviewing Workshop – Guest Speaker	Chapter 4
	Assign Persuasive “Business Strategy” Presentation for Weeks #13 & 14 on a strategic value proposition for a specific company, association or nonprofit organization to integrate into its business model.	
#9 3/5 & 3/7	Interviewing Workshop II – Guest Speaker Networking	Chapter 11, Handouts
	Assign Informational Interview where you will interview a business professional (with five years of experience or less) or formally interview for a job/internship, as well as answer a series of post-interview questions. Due April 25	
#10 – NO CLASSES on March 12 and March 14		
#11 3/19 & 3/21	Consultative Selling Techniques Persuasive Business Presentations Professional Communication Boot Camp III Presentation, Presence, Message Review Requirements for Persuasive Presentations	Lecture, Handouts
	Assign Op-Ed where you will write an opinion piece on an emerging business trend. Due April 16	

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Week / Date	Topic / Activity	Assignment (Y&T, 2012)
#12 3/26 & 3/28	Identifying Business Industry Trends Communicating Business Industry Trends Review Sample Op-Eds Job Package DUE – March 28	
#13 4/2 & 4/4	Deliver Persuasive “Business Strategy” Presentations (Outlines DUE)	
#14 4/9 & 4/11	Developing Your Personal Brand Assign Final Report – due May 4	Lecture, Handouts
#15 4/16 & 4/18	TBD Op-Ed DUE – April 16 Guest Speaker	
#16 4/23 & 4/25	Crisis Communication Activity Informational Interview DUE – April 25 <i>April 25 is the last day to submit any late assignments/projects for “excused” absences or deliver “make-up” excused absence presentations.</i>	
#17 5/7 (no class)	Final Report: Monday, May 7 by 5pm DUE	