



USC | **ANNENBERG**
School for Communication & Journalism

COMM 375: Business & Professional Communication FALL 2018

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 gaining 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 TEXT

- Adler, R. B., Maresh-Fuehrer, M., Elmhorst, J. M. & Lucas, K. (2019). *Communicating at Work (12th Ed.)*, McGraw-Hill.
- Additional required readings will be posted throughout the semester or provided in class.

OPTIONAL READING MATERIALS

- Toogood, G. N. (revised 2017). *The New Articulate Executive*, McGraw-Hill.
- Lenciono, P. (2012). *The Advantage*, Jossey-Bass (Wiley).

COURSE STANDARDS

1. Consistent attendance, punctuality and active class participation are essential to your success and will affect your grade. I expect contributions to the class discussion to be courteous and clearly demonstrate the student has read the course materials.
2. Missing class is no more acceptable than it would be to miss work. Excessive absences and tardiness will adversely affect your grade.
3. 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.
4. Many topics are addressed in a single class session. It is **your** responsibility to obtain materials from a missed class from Blackboard and a classmate. If you still have question, I will be happy to assist.
5. 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.
6. Questions about grades should be addressed in a timely manner, within two weeks of receiving the grade.
7. Student's attire should be appropriate for a business setting on speech days.
8. Typos, grammatical and punctuation errors, page layout inconsistencies, etc. count. *Proofread your work!*
9. **Important note:** Do not rely on class lectures to present the content that is found in the assigned readings. You are expected to come to class prepared so that the activities and guest speakers will prove valuable and enrich your learning experience.

COURSE POLICIES

1. The deadline for any assignment, reading, or presentation is at the very beginning of the class that it is due. *These deadlines will come up often: don't allow yourself to fall behind!*
2. **Electronic Devices:** In order to create the best possible learning environment, I ask you to please turn off your cell phones and put away your laptops/tablets when you enter our classroom. There may be specific class sessions in which laptops will be allowed.
3. **Late Assignment Consideration:** Extensions are never guaranteed nor should they be expected for any reason (even good ones). I will consider an extension only under the following conditions: the student requests an extension *before* the assignment is due, and the student has a *verifiable* emergency.
4. **Missed Presentations or Exams:** The extension policy is the same as it is with late assignments. We will not have time for make-up presentations during class time. The student must arrange out of class time to present individually to me or to take your exam during my office hour. Please note if you fail to attend class on the day you are scheduled to present (and have not made prior arrangements with me), you will receive an irrevocable failing grade on the presentation.
5. Participation points given for class activities cannot be made up if the student misses class.
6. Any student who misses more than *four class sessions* may fail the course.
7. You must complete **all** assignments to pass the course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The Annenberg School of Communication & Journalism is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and ethical support. Presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words is plagiarism; it is a serious academic offense met 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>. The policies, procedures, and guidelines protect your rights, as well as those of the faculty. It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone but yourself. If you have doubts about any of these practices, consult with a faculty member or the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

STUDENT SAFETY & SUPPORT

- If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide all updates. You may also register with <https://trojansalert.usc.edu/>.
- Discrimination, sexual assault, bullying 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* <https://dps.usc.edu/contact/>.
 - 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 <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.
- For students who need help with scholarly writing, USC Dornsife offers services for all students:
 - The Writing Center (at USC Dornsife), <http://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>
 - Students whose primary language is not English, the *American Language Institute* can help, <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>
- *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 accommodations.

ADA COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Any student requesting academic accommodation 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 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.

ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING

To achieve a “C” or better on written assignments, you must write at a level appropriate for a university student, i.e., with correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. I believe a “B” represents really good work. An “A” represents excellent work. If you are disappointed by a grade, I would be happy to discuss your work with you and help you improve for the next assignment. Remember, university professors grade based on achievement, not for effort.

	Point Value	% of Final Grade
Formal Presentations		
Introductory	10	2%
Group Project	50	10%
Informative Presentation	60	12%
Persuasive Presentation	80	16%
Written Assignments		
Job Package	50	10%
Informational Interview	50	10%
Exams & Pop Quizzes	150	30%
Participation Points	50	10%
TOTAL	500	100%

SYLLABUS

Readings should be completed prior to class the day they are scheduled.

This schedule is subject to change. Check Blackboard (BB) frequently for newly assigned readings, recorded lectures, PowerPoint decks, and announcements.

Week	Date	Session Topic(s)	Assignment Due	Readings
1	Aug. 20	Course Introduction		1) Handouts in class
	Aug. 22	Presentation Boot Camp I Organizing your presentation		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 1, 9 2) Handouts in class and BB
2	Aug. 27	<u>Introductory Presentations</u>	Presentations	

	Aug. 30	Presentation Boot Camp II Delivery with confidence		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 10, 11
3	Sept. 3	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS		
	Sept. 5	Resumes	Topic Proposal for Informative Presentation	1) Adler, et al., pgs. 408-421 2) Check BB for readings 3) Handouts in class
4	Sept. 10	Presentation Boot Camp III Informative presentations/review		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 12, plus 9, 10, 11 (review)
	Sept. 12	Writing for Business + Cover Letters	Online writing exercises After you complete the exercises, send PW an email (before the start of class) with the subject line: <i>Completed Writing Exercises</i>	1) Adler, et al., Appendix II, pgs. 400-423 2) OWL Business Writing handouts (BB)
5	Sept. 17	<u>Resume & Cover Letter Clinic</u>	Resume <i>Bring 2 printed copies of your resume and a pen with colored ink (not black).</i>	1) Handouts in class
	Sept. 19	<i>Job Talk or Activity</i> TBD		
6	Sept. 24	<u>Informative Presentations (1)</u>	Presentations <i>Business casual attire</i>	
	Sept. 26	<u>Informative Presentations (2)</u>	Presentations <i>Business casual attire</i>	
7	Oct. 1	Working in Groups & Teams		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 7

	Oct. 3	Interviewing		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 5, 6 2) Adler, et al., Appendix I, pgs. 390-399 3) Interview tips and articles (BB) 4) Interviewing worksheet (BB) 5) Handouts in class
8	Oct. 8	Interpersonal Skills		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 5
	Oct. 10	MIDTERM	<i>Exam on chapters 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 plus all class handouts and lectures</i>	
9	Oct. 15	<i>Job Talk or Activity TBD</i>		
	Oct. 17	Mock Interviews Guest Interviewers from ASCJ Career Development	Job Package <i>Post to Blackboard</i> <i>Bring your resume.</i> <i>Business attire required!</i>	1) Practice with the Interviewing worksheet and review materials from lecture and text
10	Oct. 22	Networking		1) Articles on BB
	Oct. 24	Communication, Cultures and Work	TEAM 1 Presentation	1) Adler, et al., Ch. 2
11	Oct. 29	Workplace Communication I: Listening	TEAM 2 Presentation	1) Adler, et al., Ch. 3
	Oct. 31	Workplace Communication II: Verbal & Nonverbal Messages	TEAM 3 Presentation	1) Adler, et al., Ch. 4
12	Nov. 5	Strategies for Effective Persuasive Presentations		1) Revisit Adler, et al., Ch. 9 and 12 (persuasive presentations)
	Nov. 7	Meetings		1) Adler, et al., Ch. 8

13	Nov. 12	<u>Persuasive Presentations</u>	Presentations <i>Business attire required</i>	
	Nov. 14	NO CLASS		
14	Nov. 19	<i>Your Personal Brand</i> Special Guest: Michele Lando Skilset Communications		
	Nov. 21	<i>Thanksgiving extra day off!</i>	<i>Have a great holiday!</i>	
15	Nov. 26	1-on-1 meetings w/ PW all day	Schedule/Location TBA	
	Nov. 28	<u>Informational Interview</u>	Informational Interview Brief oral and written report	
	Dec. 10	FINAL EXAM 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Final Exam	

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 presentation, given in teams of two, will consist of noteworthy current events or new trends. I will approve each topic, as only one team per topic is allowed. You may pick your own partner or I can select one for you.

Group Assignment

The class will be broken into three groups (that I select); each group will be provided with a different course topic. All members of the team will develop and prepare an engaging and informative presentation.

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 report of your experience and orally share key points with your classmates. This assignment is more time-consuming than 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 listing, develop a cover letter, resume and obtain references. Be prepared to edit multiple times!

Persuasive Presentation

You will individually prepare and deliver a presentation with PowerPoint (or similar) 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 any combination of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions taken from your readings, class lectures, discussions, and activities. Additionally, if I determine that students are not completing the assigned readings, you can expect unannounced quizzes.