

## **COMM 205x: Communication Practicum**

**Units: 2**

**Spring 2020—Thursday—5-6:20 pm**

**ANN 309**

**Instructor:** Laurel Felt, PhD

**Office:** ASC 333

**Office Hours:** Thursdays by appointment

**Contact Info:** [felt@usc.edu](mailto:felt@usc.edu) | 847.528.1350

**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

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

### 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

This class requires a moderate level of technological proficiency. The instructor believes in all students' capacity to learn and grow, and values the resources that USC provides so that students may enrich their technological proficiency. Some of these resources include: Annenberg Virtual Commons, Annenberg IT Help Desk, USC Information & Technology Services (<http://itservices.usc.edu/>), USC Libraries (<http://www.usc.edu/libraries/>), Lynda.com.

Peers' assistance is priceless. The instructor will happily meet with you one-on-one. Regardless of one's technological proficiency pre-COMM 205, all students can succeed.

In terms of hardware/software, none is required. Everything can be done via web browser.

## 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

## Recommended Readings

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

## Assignment Submission Policy

1. **Written work – personal (e.g., reflection papers, resume, cover letter, memo)**
  - 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 date*
2. **Spoken work (e.g., interview simulations, elevator speech, discussions)**
  - a. Share in class on the due date



## **Additional Policies**

### **1. Late and unfinished assignments**

- a. Any material turned in late will be reduced one letter grade per calendar day late.
- b. Students must complete all assignments in order to receive credit in the course.

### **2. Late arrival to and early departure from class**

- a. Class meetings are precious! Don't miss class. DON'T.MISS.CLASS.
- b. Due to extenuating circumstances, for a period of up to but not exceeding 15 minutes, you may ONCE arrive late or ONCE depart early from class without penalty. You cannot arrive late once AND leave early once. No no no.
- c. If you arrive late more than once, depart early more than once, or the amount of time by which you are late or leave early exceeds 15 minutes, then I will record an unexcused absence. One unexcused absence confers a participation penalty.

### **3. Absent from class**

- a. Class meetings are precious! Don't miss class. DON'T.MISS.CLASS.
- b. With a doctor's note, you may miss class once without penalty. Missing 2 or more classes is problematic and will be evaluated by the instructor.
- c. One unexcused absence confers a participation penalty. Two or more unexcused absences will result in failure to pass the class.

### **4. Use of technology in the classroom**

- a. Cell phone use is prohibited.
- b. When your peers are speaking, your laptop and/or tablet should be closed. The instructor vehemently expects students to practice respectful, active listening. Why? Because doing so helps speakers to feel safe, and safety is non-negotiable. The instructor will not tolerate anyone hurting anyone. This also helps everyone to develop the capacity to focus, engage, connect, and collaborate. Such skills are imperative for 21<sup>st</sup> century workplaces. If your peers' ideas demand documentation, then you may take notes via paper and/or follow up later and ask them to repeat.

### **5. 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	PTS	%	CRITERIA
#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: 2 pages
#2: Independent project proposal	150	15	<b>1. Proposal of win-win project</b> (i.e., something to keep you busy, growing, and leading AND bridge an organizational gap) <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 1-2 pages
Resume	150	15	<b>1. Structural soundness</b> (e.g., name and address info at the top, educational experience, professional experience, skills, statements that begin with action verbs, RESULTS) <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
#3: Informational Interview	150	15	<b>1. Discoveries, inspiration</b> <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 2 pages
#4: Dragon-slaying story	150	15	<b>1. Unique contribution</b> <b>2. Professional, conversational style</b> <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 1-2 minutes
#5: Career Planning OR Follow-up Strategies	150	15	<b>1. Thoughtfulness, specificity, realism</b> <b>2. Technical writing merit</b> <b>3. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 2 pages
Workshop Participation	50	5	<b>1. Respectful, active listening</b> (e.g., making eye contact, leaning forward, nodding, responding verbally or non, etc) <b>2. Proper use of technology</b> (e.g., stowing cell phone, writing/typing solely to note-take) <b>3. Relevant, generous sharing</b> (e.g., giving internship updates, brainstorming, answering/asking questions, etc) <b>4. Logistical requirements</b> ATTENDANCE: Perfect OR one absence with a doctor’s note OR one late arrival/early departure of no more than 15 minutes
Supervisor Evaluation	50	5	<b>1. Quality skills and behaviors</b> (e.g., average to outstanding) <b>2. Logistical requirements</b> LENGTH: 1 page (see form)
TOTAL	1000	100	

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings Due</b>	<b>Deliverable Due</b>
<b>Week 1</b> 1/16	NO CLASS	Bb: Exploring Yourself	
<b>Week 2</b> 1/23	NO CLASS	Bb: Communication theory for workplace success	
<b>Week 3</b> 1/30	NO CLASS	Garner. (2013). <i>HBR Guide to Better Business Writing</i> .	
<b>Week 4</b> 2/6	<b>Workshop: Overview, Goals</b>	<b>Read about your industry</b>	
<b>Week 5</b> 2/13	NO CLASS	Garner. (2013). <i>HBR Guide to Better Business Writing</i> .	#1: Goals
<b>Week 6</b> 2/20	<b>Workshop: Troubleshooting</b>	Garner. (2013). <i>HBR Guide to Better Business Writing</i> .	
<b>Week 7</b> 2/27	NO CLASS	Bb: Advice from Liz Ryan of Forbes	#2: Independent project(s) proposal
<b>Week 8</b> 3/5	NO CLASS	Bb: Resume exemplars	
<b>Week 9</b> 3/12	<b>Workshop: Resumes</b>	Bb: Informational interviewing	
<b>Week 10</b> 3/19	NO CLASS [Spring Break]		
<b>Week 11</b> 3/26	NO CLASS	<b>Read about your industry</b>	Resume
<b>Week 12</b> 4/2	<b>Workshop: Informational interviews</b>	Bb: Talking to strangers	
<b>Week 13</b> 4/9	NO CLASS	Bb: Email etiquette	#3: Informational interview
<b>Week 14</b> 4/16	NO CLASS	Bb: LinkedIn	
<b>Week 15</b> 4/23	<b>Workshop: Telling the story of your internship</b>	Bb: Elevator speech	
<b>Week 16</b> 4/30	NO CLASS	Bb: Job interviewing	#4: Dragon-slaying story
<b>FINAL</b> 5/7	NO EXAM		#5: Career Planning OR Follow-up Strategies  Submit supervisor's evaluation of your performance

## 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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://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](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

- Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call [studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

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 – 24/7 on call [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call [studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

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

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298 [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298 usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776 dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710 uscsa.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101 diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information