COMM 375: Business & Professional Communication
FALL 2020 - ONLINE

Instructor: Paula D. (Patnoe) Woodley
Day/Time: MW, 3:30-4:50 p.m.
Telephone: 323-683-4831 (cell)
Email: woodley@usc.edu

Office Hours: Mon. & Wed., 5:00-6:00 p.m.,
or by appointment on other days.
I look forward to meeting with all of you!
Section/Session numbers: 20579R-060

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to COMM 375! The overall goal of this upper division course is to enhance your ability to succeed in the workplace by developing your business-related written and oral communication skills. While we will cover communication theory as a foundation of business communication, the bulk of our time will be spent focused on gaining applied skills of effective interpersonal and workplace communication. This fast-paced course is designed for juniors and seniors but is open to all students. *Recommended Preparation:* COMM 204, or other public speaking course.

Even though we are in an online environment, I promise you an engaging, challenging and valuable course. I ask that each of you commit to meaningful participation this term.

This course will be held using Blackboard and Zoom. If you are unfamiliar or need assistance with either, please visit these links: Blackboard - https://studentblackboardhelp.usc.edu and Zoom https://keepteaching.usc.edu/tools/zoom/.

You will access our class sessions using the Zoom link available on Blackboard. It is important that you enter the class session through Blackboard with the USC Single Sign-on.

Synchronous Session Recording Notice
Live class sessions will be recorded and made available to students through Blackboard (including transcriptions). Please remember that USC policy prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. As a student, you are responsible for the appropriate use and handling of these recordings under existing SCampus policies regarding class notes (https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-c/). These rules will be strictly enforced, and violations will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction.

Going Back to Campus
Although we are starting the semester with online instruction only, conditions may improve. In such case, courses listed as hybrid will give opportunity to students to attend class in person. This will happen only by following the strictest health guidelines and safety protocols. These are listed in the Trojans Return page. Please take the time to read this ahead so that you are prepared in case it is possible to return to in-person instruction.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:
1. Construct and perform professional caliber individual, pair and group presentations
2. Complete a job package with a resume, cover letter and reference list
3. Demonstrate the ability to present yourself effectively and clearly in job and informational interviews

COURSE STANDARDS & NORMS

1. ***Bring paper and a pen to class.*** I have found that working offline is valuable while taking notes, during creative activities, and helping with Zoom fatigue.
2. You are expected to come to class *prepared* so that the discussions, activities and guest speakers will prove valuable and enrich your learning experience. Please note that I prefer to not lecture, and instead hope to facilitate activities that replicate real life scenarios in the workplace.
3. Many topics are addressed in a single class session only. It is *your* responsibility to stay up-to-date if you miss a live session.
4. **Attendance policy**
   a. Students are strongly encouraged to attend our twice weekly live Zoom sessions, as there is no better way to engage with your classmates, your instructor and the material. Students who must miss live sessions will be able to keep up by reviewing class recordings and engaging through asynchronous class activities and assignments. There is no penalty for missing a live session as long as you complete all asynchronous work.
   b. Per University guidelines, faculty must maintain normal attendance, participation, and assessment expectations for students when the class time falls within "reasonable learning hours" in the student's time zone. This is defined as 7:00am to 10:00pm local time for the student.
5. **Participation**
   a. Consistent attendance (synchronous or asynchronous), punctuality and active class participation are essential to your success. This is why participation is part of your grade. The current modality of teaching includes synchronous and asynchronous lessons, assignments, exercises, and evaluation processes, and each affords different types of participation. In a synchronous zoom environment, participation includes verbally answering and asking questions, contributing in breakout sessions, and using the chat, poll and hand raise function to generate or participate in discussions. Additionally, the student must complete asynchronous assignments including participating in forums and other activities.
   b. I expect contributions to the class discussions to be courteous and clearly demonstrate the student has *read the course materials*. The distant nature of these learning environments may prompt us to forget that we are a community and that each of us and our ideas deserve respect. For this reason, it is imperative that you remember to **respect the opinion of others**, regardless of how much you disagree.
   c. Lastly, please remember that we are not our ideas – please question the ideas presented and not the person presenting it.
6. **Technology and software required**
   a. All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple computer that will be used for class and for homework.
   b. COMM 375 assignments must be submitted using Microsoft Office applications. Microsoft Office is available for free to USC students. If you do not currently have this software, click here for assistance: https://software.usc.edu/microsoft-office/
   c. You may want to use Google docs for class group projects: https://software.usc.edu/google-drive/.
   d. Please visit USC's **Information Technology Services** website for assistance.
7. **Zoom Etiquette or "Netiquette"**
   a. Although you are not obligated to turn your camera on I highly recommend it and would greatly appreciate it. Please wear **appropriate clothing** and use **appropriate backgrounds**. Please keep your **microphone off** during zoom class, except when you're asked to unmute for discussion or questions. *If at all possible*, please sit at a desk or table with adequate lighting in a quiet area. I understand this is not always realistic. But please, and do not attend class *lying* on your bed.
   b. You will gain access to Zoom from Blackboard (link on the left panel).
8. You must *complete **all** assignments and forums* to pass the course.
9. Any student who misses more than *three class sessions (live or asynchronous)* will likely struggle to pass the course.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

1. You must use your USC.edu email address for this course.
2. We will work from a set of norms for our class session and forums that will ensure every one of us demonstrates respect and inclusion, offers only constructive comments, keeps an open mind, and remembers that kindness and a sense of humor makes the class more productive and fun. We will discuss and establish these class norms together early in the term.
3. **Blackboard**
    a. Please check Blackboard daily and complete the readings, assignments and forums listed in each **Module**.
    b. All assignments, handouts, slide decks and digital required readings will be posted on Blackboard. Check our class Blackboard site/USC email account frequently for class announcements. You are responsible for keeping up-to-date and aware of all course emails and announcements.
4. **Communication with your instructor.** The best way to communicate with me is through email, text and office hours. My cell phone number is on the first page of this document. You may also call me, but it is wise to text me first, so I know who is calling. I will make every effort to return all messages and emails within 24 hours, or sooner. I expect the same from you. (Weekend responses may take a little longer.)

REQUIRED COURSE TEXT

*   Adler, R. B., Maresh-Fuehrer, M., Elmhorst, J. M. & Lucas, K. (2019). *Communicating at Work (12th Ed.),* McGraw-Hill.
*   Numerous additional required readings and videos will be posted on Blackboard.

Optional Reading Materials

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

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment summaries are listed below; complete prompts and rubrics (when applicable) will be posted separately on Blackboard. There are several assignments in this course, please look ahead and make note of the due dates.

Introductory Presentation: This short presentation allows me to assess 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 activity and discussion.

Informational Interview: For this project, you will locate and interview an individual over Zoom that currently works in a position 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 present key points during class. *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: In this individual presentation, you will select a health, social or environmental issue, find a non-profit organization that supports the issue, and deliver a presentation that effectively persuades your audience to take an action to help in this cause.

Discussion Board: To keep our conversations open and fluid and to ensure engagement with the content, I have established multiple forums in our course discussion board. The reading facilitation forum will be the only one that will be graded.
1. Weekly student-facilitated discussion questions from the assigned readings
2. "Ask Paula" for questions or concerns that you have that you believe other students may also have.
3. Student community comment board so you can stay in touch, help one another and share any work-related experience that you believe will benefit your classmates. (I will monitor this board, but seldom comment.)

GRADING

Assignment Rubrics
Rubrics can be located on Blackboard.

Standards
Constructive feedback is critical to learn and grow. Therefore, I annotate written work quite extensively because your ideas are worth considering, and because your writing technique should be as polished as possible by the time you graduate. Please invest in your own learning and growth by taking the time to reflect on this feedback and incorporating the comments into future work.
1. 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.
2. Most exams and assignments will be graded within two weeks. Grading presentations and job packages is very detail-oriented and may require additional time. All scores will be posted in the Blackboard gradebook; my remarks will be found in the gradebook comments "bubble" or as an attached document.
3. You must notify me **within one (1) week** if you believe a score posting for any assignment, quiz or exam is inaccurate. I will be happy to review your questions with you. Please note, if you fail to notify me of any discrepancies during this time period, no changes will be considered.
4. Missing class for religious observances is always permitted. I ask that you notify me one week in advance so I may make accommodations.

Assignment Submissions Policy
1. **The deadline for any assignment**, reading, or presentation is at the beginning of the class that it is due. *These deadlines will come up often: do not fall behind or you will have difficulty catching up.*
2. **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.
   Please do not rely on my good nature. I insist on fairness for all students, so exceptions and extensions are rare. Should I offer you an extension, please take the new due date seriously.
3. **Missed Presentations:** The extension policy is the same as it is with late assignments. In most cases, 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 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 or exam.

Assignment Point/Percentage Breakdown

	Point Value	% of Final Grade
Formal Presentations		
Introductory	10	2%
Group Project	60	12%
Informative Presentation	75	15%
Persuasive Presentation	90	18%
Written Assignments		
Job Package	60	12%
Informational Interview	60	12%
Discussion Boards		
Reading Forum	120	24%
Course Participation	25	5%
TOTAL	**500**	**100%**

Grading Scale

94% to 100%: A	80% to 82.5%: B-	67% to 69.5%: D+
90% to 93.5%: A-	77% to 79.5%: C+	64% to 66.5%: D
86% to 89.5%: B+	73% to 76.5%: C	60% to 63.5%: D-
83% to 85.5%: B	70% to 72.5%: C-	0% to 59%: F

Grading Description

Letter Grade	Description
A	Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
B	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.

D	Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
F	Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.

SYLLABUS

Readings should be completed prior to class the day they are scheduled.
Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability. Check Blackboard (BB) frequently for newly assigned readings, recorded lectures, announcements, reading discussion forums and more.

	DATE	SESSION TOPIC(S)	ASSIGNMENTS DUE NOTES	READINGS (due by start of class on date listed)
1	Aug. 17	Course Introduction		• Check BB for syllabus and other handouts
	Aug. 19	Presentation Boot Camp I Organize your presentation	**BOOT CAMP** **MODULE 1**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 1, 9 • See Module 1 on BB for additional readings
2	Aug. 24	Presentation Boot Camp II Delivery with confidence	**MODULE 1** **Select partner for informative presentation**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 10, 11 • See Module 1 on BB for additional readings • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
	Aug. 26	Introductory Presentations	**Presentations**	• Discussion Board: Reading Forum
3	Aug. 30	Presentation Boot Camp III Informative presentations	**MODULE 1**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 12, plus 9, 10, 11 (review) • See Module 1 on BB for additional readings handouts • Discussion Board: Reading Forum

	Sept. 2	Resumes	**MODULE 2** **Topic proposal due for informative presentation**	• Adler, et al., pgs. 408-421 • See Module 2 on BB for additional readings • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
4	Sept. 7	**Labor Day**	**NO CLASS**	
	Sept. 9	Writing for Business (incl. cover letters)	**MODULE 2** **Writing exercises**	• Adler, et al., Appendix II, pgs. 400-423 • See Module 2 on BB for additional readings • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
5	Sept. 14	*Resume & Cover Letter Clinic*	**MODULE 2**	• See Module 2 on BB for activity materials
	Sept. 16	Meetings & Organizational Culture	**MODULE 3**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 8 • See Module 3 on BB for additional readings • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
6	Sept. 21	**Informative Presentations (1)**	**MODULE 1/** *informative* **Presentations**	
	Sept. 23	**Informative Presentations (2)** & review	**MODULE 1/** *informative* **Presentations**	
7	Sept. 28	*Special Guest: TBD*		
	Sept. 30	Interviewing	You're Hired **MODULE 3**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 5, 6, Appendix I, pgs. 390-399 • See Module 3 on BB for additional readings • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
8	Oct. 5	Working in Groups & Teams	**MODULE 3**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 7 • See Module 3 on BB for additional readings • Discussion Board: Reading Forum

	Oct. 7	Interpersonal Skills	**MODULE 3**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 5 • See Module 3 on BB for additional readings • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
9	**Oct. 12**	**Mock Interviews (1)**	**MODULE 3** **Job Package**	• Practice with the Interviewing worksheet; review handouts on interviewing • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
	Oct. 14	**Mock Interviews (2)** *Or TBD*	**MODULE 3**	• Practice with the Interviewing worksheet • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
10	**Oct. 19**	Networking	**MODULE 3**	• Articles on BB in Networking folder • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
	Oct. 21	Communication, Cultures and Work	**MODULE 4** **TEAM 1 Activity**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 2 • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
11	**Oct. 26**	Workplace Comm I: Listening	**MODULE 4** **TEAM 2 Activity**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 3 • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
	Oct. 28	Workplace Comm II: Verbal & Nonverbal Messages	**MODULE 4** **TEAM 3 Activity**	• Adler, et al., Ch. 4 • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
12	**Nov. 2**	Strategies for Effective Persuasive Presentations	**MODULE 1/** *persuasive*	• Revisit Adler, et al., Ch. 9 and 12 • Discussion Board: Reading Forum
	Nov. 4	*Special Guest:* **Michele Lando** **CEO** **Skilset Communications**		
13	**Nov. 9**	**Persuasive Presentations**	**MODULE 1/** *persuasive* **Presentations**	
	Nov. 11	**Persuasive Presentations**	**MODULE 1/** *persuasive* **Presentations**	

Nov. 14-16	Study Days		
Nov. 23	**FINAL EXAM DAY** <u>Informational Interview</u> 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	**Informational Interview** *Brief oral and written report*	Discussion Board: Reading Forum

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 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. 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.

ADA COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Any student   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.

ADD/DROP DATES FOR FALL 2020
13 weeks 8/17/20 – 11/13/20
See registration calendar at https://classes.usc.edu/term-20203/calendar/

STUDENT SAFETY & SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The University and I care about your physical health and emotional wellbeing. The list below provides contact information for services should you need them.

While you are in school online, you can still obtain healthcare at USC. Visit https://studenthealth.usc.edu/top get started.

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
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
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 Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call 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, 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.

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 Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710
campussupport.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.

Annenberg Student Success Fund
https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources
The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Paula Patnoe Woodley, a 17-year adjunct professor at the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism and the Keck School of Medicine, has an academic focus in social marketing, entertainment-education, and health communication. Paula is a recipient of the 2014 Steven B. Sample USC Teaching and Mentoring Award and an award-winning marketing communications professional. Paula provides nonprofit and for-profit organizations with consumer research, marketing strategy, creative production and entertainment-education outreach. Additionally, she is a communications coach and workshop leader helping individuals and organizations communicate with empathy and clarity.