COMM 3320.B02  
Business & Professional Communication  
Spring 2015 – EN 107  
Thursday 2 - 3:15 p.m.

OFFICIAL COURSE SYLLABUS & SCHEDULE WILL BE DISTRIBUTED ON FIRST DAY OF CLASS SPRING 2015

Professor Kellie Smith  
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Email is preferred contact method

Office & Phone: Bay Hall 223-C, 825-5750  
Office Hours: Tue, Thu 10-11a.m. & 2-4 p.m.  
Thurs 10-11 a.m. & by appointment

THIS IS A BLENDED COURSE. 50-84% of the content will be presented online.  
Students must manage time and work independently outside of class to succeed in this course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the basic skills, principles, and contexts of communication in business and professional settings. The content of the course synthesizes public speaking with aspects of communication ethics, organizational, small group, and interpersonal communication. You will learn practical skills via presentations, research, resumes, interviews, meetings, and professional writing grounded in communication theory. In addition to the content presented and discussed in class, you will present outside research to enhance the course.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: At the end of this course, students will be able to
  • Identify key terms and major communication theories relevant to the study of business and professional communication;
  • Create resumes (one print, one visume) to enhance individual career and/or educational marketability;
  • Employ effective interviewing skills and techniques used in both F2F and electronic mediums;
  • Apply theory in order to effectively communicate as both a team member and as a leader;
  • Assess the performance of team members based on clearly defined objectives and present that assessment in an honest, yet constructive manner;
  • Successfully integrate communication and research skills to create a professional presentation; and
  • Produce an effective corporate profile.

REQUIRED TEXT: Quintanilla, K. & Wahl, S. (2013). Business and professional communication: KEYS for workplace excellence. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. This text will provide the beginning of our in-class discussions and will be supplemented with other materials the instructor will present. Students are required to read the text assignments prior to class (see schedule).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Reading Quizzes (100 points): Due Thursdays before class (see schedule) Reading quizzes will be online and due before class starts. You are encouraged to actively read all assigned chapters before coming to class, as most class time is devoted to exercises and group activities. Reading quizzes will become open online at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays prior to Thursday’s class.

**Job Posting, Resume & Cover Letter (100 points):** Early in the semester, you will bring an available job posting to class and tailor your resume, cover letter, and interviewing strategy to align appropriately with the posting objectives. Your resume and cover letter must clearly state your qualifications, background, and current career objectives. The job posting, resume draft, and cover letter draft will be due before the interview. Your final resume and cover letter will be due at the time of your mock interview. These assignments will absolutely not be accepted late and your interview grade will also suffer for not being a well-prepared job candidate!

**Visume (100 points):** Employers are increasingly conducting interviews via telephone and Skype. An electronic account of your qualifications and objectives is also becoming increasingly desired so that employers may screen candidates’ communication skills, appearances, and mannerisms. Your visume will be approximately 3 minutes, organized, structured, and thoroughly practiced and prepared! Visumes are due on the Visume Discussion board on designated date. You must view and post comments on at least three other students by 11:59 p.m. of that same day. Execute this assignment with professionalism, so that you can use the final product to market yourself!
**Interview (200 points):** Mock interviews will be conducted in pairs at an assigned time during the semester. You are expected to dress professionally (i.e. wear a suit!), provide the final draft of your resume and cover letter when you walk in, and to conduct yourself formally and professionally.

*Note to students: The above assignments are simulations of the actual interview process. Be on time, professional, and demonstrate high-caliber work. Dress professionally for the interview and practice your answers thoroughly. Take these assignments very seriously, as they comprise 40% of your semester grade!*

**Team Presentation (200 points):** You will be randomly assigned to a team consisting of 4-5 members. As a team you will develop a procedure for recording policies, including division of labor and attendance. Your team will present on a topic related to communication excellence in the business and professional context. During the planning phase your team will assess the problem/situation, select a topic, develop a plan of action, and take any needed steps in preparation for the implementation phase. The implementation phase will include giving an oral presentation (approximately 15-20 minutes) based on your research.

**Exams (300 points):** Students will be graded on 3 examinations during the semester. The exams will be objective (true/false and multiple choice) and subjective (short essay and list).

**GRADE CALCULATION:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>POINT VALUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job Posting, Resume &amp; Cover Letter</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visume</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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**Grade Calculation:**
- A 90% of the total points
- B 80% of the total points
- C 70% of the total points
- D 60% of the total points
- F Lower than 60% of points

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** According to the TAMUCC Undergraduate Catalog, “Students are held responsible for attending class.” There will be no make-ups on any assignments (including exams, presentations and interviews) except for students with university-approved absences and medical excuses from a doctor. These students will have opportunities to make-up missed work, but it is the student’s responsibility to see the instructor.

**STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED THREE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WITHOUT PENALTY.** Students with more than three unexcused absences will lose one percentage point off their final grade average for every unexcused absence beyond the third. For example, at the end of the course, Pat has earned 910 points, or a 91% average in the class. However, Pat had six unexcused absences during the semester which is three beyond the allowed. Pat will lose 3 percentage points off the final grade, resulting in an 88%. Unexcused absences will affect your grade!

**DROPPING A COURSE:** I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.
ACADEMIC HONESTY: Students unaware of the university's statement on academic honesty should review it in the Undergraduate Catalog or Student Handbook. Examples of academic dishonesty and plagiarism are using someone else's ideas and not giving them credit; presenting a paper or speech that is not originally yours; handing in assignments that are not originally yours; presenting "facts" or lifting ideas from sources without crediting the source; presenting falsified opinions and figures; cheating on an exam; or not participating in group activities, but taking credit for the product. If you are uncertain as to what actions constitute plagiarism or dishonesty, please ask your professor. Students who violate the code of honesty in this class will receive a "0" on that assignment. Any student receiving more than one "0" for academic dishonesty or plagiarism will fail the course. Note: All violations of the academic honesty are reported to the dean and Office of Students Affairs who maintain documentation of such offenses for at least 5 years.

GRADE APPEALS: Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean's Office.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: As professors and students, we all want to treat each other with respect. Examples of being disrespectful are talking on a cell phone or text messaging during class; playing games on a computer or answering email; reading assignments for other courses; interrupting students or the professor; talking when someone else is talking (student or professor); walking into the room and disrupting a student when they are speaking; being overly argumentative in class with another student or professor; and using inappropriate language in class. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. If you arrive late for class and we are hearing student presentations, please remain outside and enter when the student/s have finished.

BLACKBOARD ACCESS: Some class items will be posted on Blackboard and students should know how to use it. If you have difficulty, call the university's Help Desk at 825-2825 or long distance 866-353-2491.

EQUITY STATEMENT: All persons, regardless of gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, religion, physical disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, nationality, etc., shall have equal opportunity without harassment in this class. Any problems with or questions about harassment can be discussed confidentially with your professor or department chair.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in CCH 116.

RETURNING VETERAN: If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services Office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

ACADEMIC ADVISING: TAMUCC colleges require that students meet with an academic advisor as soon as they declare a major in the college. The advisor will work with the student to set-up a degree plan and in the College of Liberal Arts must be signed by the student, major department faculty mentor, and department chair. CLA's Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E and can be reached at 825-3466.