

CMST 2061: Business and Professional Communication¹

Fall 2018 | MWF 8:30 – 9:20 / 12:30 – 1:20 | Charles E. Coates Hall 111 / 109²

Instructor Contact Information

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Office Hours: MW 9:30 – 11:30 a.m., or by appointment



Required Text

Waldek, Jennifer H., et al. *Strategic Communication at Work: Contemporary Perspectives on Business and Professional Communication*. Kendall Hunt, 2017.*

* This is an online textbook. You can purchase an access code in the book store or purchase access to the book directly at the following address: <https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/strategic-communication-work-contemporary-perspectives-business-and-professional>.

Required Material

Access to Moodle and computer-based testing.

¹ Special thanks to ReRe Pride Shaw, ABD, whose own syllabus was instrumental in the development of this one.

² I teach two separate sections of this course.

Course Description/Goals

Today's corporate employers demand a high level of communication competence, and you will be expected to communicate appropriately and effectively. To help you meet these expectations, this class explores the communication processes at work in organizations. In addition, the class teaches you how to organize clear, concise, and interesting presentations. By building upon speaking and delivery skills, as well as critical thinking and analytical skills that focus on how to examine and solve communication problems, you will be prepared for a bright professional future.

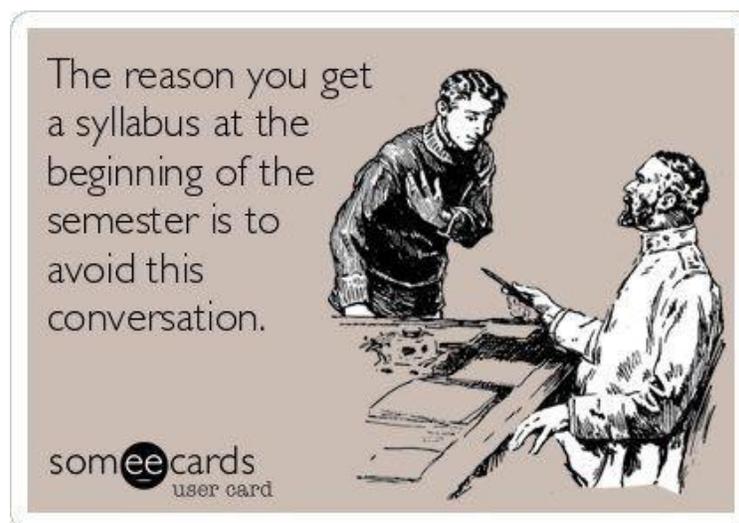
To increase your communication effectiveness in business and professional organizations, you will be asked to complete reading assignments, writing assignments, and oral presentations. We will spend a significant amount of time in class working on the oral presentations.

This is a certified Communication-Intensive (C-I) course which meets all of the requirements set forth by LSU's Communication across the Curriculum program, including the following:

- instruction and assignments emphasizing informal and formal [mode 1] and [mode 2] modes of communication;
- teaching of discipline-specific communication techniques;
- use of draft-feedback-revision process for learning;
- practice of ethical and professional work standards;
- 40% of the course grade rooted in communication-based work; and
- a student/faculty ratio no greater than 35:1.

Students interested in pursuing the LSU Distinguished Communicators certification may use this C-I course for credit. For more information about this student recognition program, visit www.cxc.lsu.edu.

Course Policies



Attendance

Your attendance at each class meeting is expected. You are expected to attend all classes just as you would be expected to go to work every day if this were any other job. Your class participation grade will be determined based upon assignments, exercises, or the like completed during class time. For example, we will spend a significant amount of time in class working on the oral presentations. It will be important for you to be in class both to work on the presentation and to earn credit for the activities we complete in class. If you are not in class, you will fall behind quickly, and your presentation and/or participation grades could suffer. Attending class is especially important when we work on the presentations in groups and pairs. (More details on class participation later in the syllabus.)

Please be advised that absences in this course are not given merit based on whether they are excused or unexcused. Rather, all students are allowed only three (3) absences (whether excused or unexcused). Upon the third absence, the student will be reported to LSU CARES. Upon the fourth absence, the student also will be penalized a letter grade sign for the absence and every absence thereafter. If you feel that you may have to miss several days of class, you should consider enrolling in another section of this course.

Additionally, habitual tardiness (3 or more late arrivals) will result in similar consequences. Please note that when you are late, it is your responsibility to ensure that your attendance is recorded. Failure to do so might negatively impact your grade, and this impact is rarely, if ever, negotiable.

Class Participation

While attendance and punctuality are required, they do not, in and of themselves, constitute class participation. Moreover, I understand that students are shy and have serious concerns about participating in class, and I will do my best to ensure the environment is one in which all students feel comfortable expressing themselves. However, please understand that no student will be excused from participating in class.

You are expected to attend class and actively participate in class discussions and evaluations – much like the corporate setting. This means you should show up to class prepared, having read the class assignments, and be ready and willing to share with the class. It also means I expect you to come to class on time and stay the entire class period. (Please be advised that we will do many activities during class. Often, at the end of each activity, you will be asked to complete a reflection evaluation as a quiz grade. If you are not present for the activity because you are late to class or have left early, you will not earn this quiz credit.)

Because it is impossible to learn how to speak in a professional setting without an audience, attendance is mandatory on all presentation days, even if you are not presenting. Following each presentation, you will complete a peer evaluation. If you miss that day, you will not earn the peer evaluation credit.

Please do not enter the classroom late on presentation days. Please wait outside until you hear applause. I will count you absent if you walk in on a presentation in progress.

Working in Groups/Pairs

Working with others is an important part of the business and corporate world. In class we will work in groups and pairs on three (3) of the four (4) presentations. For your groups/pairs, I expect you to be an active group member. This includes coming to class and attending group meetings outside of class. You will do most of your project work in class, so if you do not attend class, you are not helping your group. If you fail to attend any of the group meetings during class and outside of class, you will not be allowed to participate in the project nor benefit from the grade earned by your group. This is another reason why attending class is so important.

Technology Policy

The goal of all course policies is to help create a successful course experience for you as the student. This includes your ability to learn course material and to do so in an effective classroom environment. As such, use of technology is limited to devices that aid in student learning. As a rule, students are also not allowed to record the instructor or other students without their expressed (not just implied) permission. Also, please adhere to the following directives:

- Laptop computers and similar devices used for note-taking as a learning aid are permitted in class.
 - However, if one student is found using these devices inappropriately (e.g., social media, watching movies, texting, etc.), the privilege will be revoked from the entire class for the duration of the semester.
- All other technological devices (smart phones, etc.) are NOT permitted for use during class.
 - The first use during class will result in substantial reduction in overall course participation points (up to half) with an increasing reduction in points for each use thereafter.
- In case of emergencies requiring cell phone access during the class session, you should notify your professor before class begins and attempt to sit near the entrance to the classroom.

Email

All students must regularly check their University-issued email addresses, particularly because email is the best and quickest way to contact me outside of class time. Kindly allow up to 24 hours for a response. If you do not receive a response by the expiration of the 24-hour response period, please feel free to email me again. Also, please know that Moodle forwards all communication to your University-issued email address.

I will not, under any circumstances, communicate specific grade information via email or phone or any other communication technology.

Moodle

Please regularly and consistently check your Moodle (at least once per day) for updates to the class schedule, assignment guidelines, grade information, etc.

Plagiarism Policy

You are to assume that all assignments in this course are individual assignments unless explicit instructions are provided for a group project. Students found to have turned in material not their own (either downloaded from the Internet or written by another student) in part or in whole will

immediately be reported to the Dean of Students. The Internet has made plagiarism very easy and very tempting. Hundreds of sites offer papers, research, writing, and editing. The ease with which such material is available over the Internet does not lessen the seriousness of claiming material from the Internet as your own. See the LSU policies on plagiarism here: <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/instruction/plagiarism2.html>.

Your presentation will be considered plagiarized in part or entirely if you do any of the following:

- Submit a presentation that was prepared by someone other than yourself.
- Submit a presentation in which you use the ideas, metaphors or reasoning style of another, but do not cite that source and/or place that source in your list of references.
 - o Simply rewording a sentence does not make work your own.
- Submit a presentation in which you “cut and paste” or use the exact words of a source and you do not put the words within quotation marks, use footnotes or in-text citations, and/or place the source in your list of references.

Extra Credit

No extra credit assignments/opportunities will be provided.

Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 state the following:

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be arranged.

After you receive the accommodation(s) letter, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

Grades

Final grades will be determined based on scores earned on the following assignments. All work must be done during the semester.

Assignments	Percentage
Mock Interviews	15%
Meeting	15%
Training Seminar	15%
Sales Pitch	15%
Exams – Midterm & Final	30%
Participation and Other Assignments	10%
TOTAL COURSE POINTS	100.00%

Grading Scale

Final grades will be assigned based on the plus/minus scale:

Letter Grade	Percent/ Point Range	Letter Grade	Point Range
A+	97.0 – 100	C+	77.0 – 79.9
A	93.0 – 96.9	C	73.0 – 76.9
A-	90.0 – 92.9	C-	70.0 – 72.9
B+	87.0 – 89.9	D+	67.0 – 69.9
B	83.0 – 86.9	D	63.0 – 66.9
B-	80.0 – 82.9	D-	60.0 – 62.9
		F	< 60

Return of Graded Work

Please note that all grades will be posted to Moodle and that all assignments, except quizzes/examinations, will be returned in class. Students can generally expect graded work to be returned within a week of the assignment's due date. However, there may be times during which the grading process may take longer.

Presentations

You should expect this class to be different from other courses you have taken because, as we learn to give presentations in business settings, a large experimental element is imbedded. A significant amount of teaching in this course is done by you, as you present, observe, and evaluate in-class exercises and assignments. You will learn communication skills by doing. Each presentation will have several days of in class and out-of-class prep work that is part of the overall presentation grade. Please look at the detailed assignment documents on Moodle for more information on each assignment.

Group presentations will include a group/pair grade and several individual grades as part of the overall presentation grade. With this grading scale, it is possible for members of the same group to earn different presentation grades.

Interview for a Group

We will hold in-class mock interviews. The grade will be based on an individual interview evaluation, class activities, homework, and participation in all interview days. As an interviewer and interviewee, you will prepare for the in-class portion of the assignment and attend class all interview days. Once the in-class interviews are complete, you will have one (1) week to complete the interview evaluation online through on Moodle.

Meeting Facilitation

You and your group members will conduct a meeting in front of the class to solve a problem found in a case study. We will work in class and through homework to practice meeting facilitation before your group presents its meeting. As an individual, you will also prepare for the meeting by reading the assigned case study before class. Your group should not discuss or work on the case study prior to the meeting.

Your group grade will be based on both group and individual grades. The meeting group grade will evaluate how well the group facilitates the meeting in class. Each group must bring an instructor evaluation sheet in a manila folder on the day you present. Your individual grades will be earned through individual participation in class activities and homework assignments, as well as peer evaluations of other groups' presentations.

If you fail to attend class on the day your group presents, you will earn a zero (0) for the group grade portion of this assignment since makeups are not possible. If you do not attend the class activities prior to the presentation, you will put your group at a disadvantage and will not be allowed to present with your group or receive the group grade portion of this assignment.

Training Seminar

You and your group members will produce a PowerPoint training seminar. Your training seminar should include an activity to engage learning. Your group will present this training seminar to the class in a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation in class and post to Moodle.

This presentation grade has both group and individual grades. The training seminar group grade will be based on how effective the group is training the class. Each group must bring an instructor evaluation sheet on the day you present. Your individual grades will be earned through individual participation in class activities, homework assignments, as well as peer evaluations of the other groups' training seminars.

If you fail to attend class on the day your group presents, you will earn a zero (0) for the group grade portion of this assignment, as makeups are not possible for this assignment. If you do not attend the class activities held prior to the presentation, you will put your group at a disadvantage and will not be allowed to present with your group, nor receive the group grade portion of this assignment.

Sales Pitch

Class members will divide into pairs of two (2) to sell a product or service to the class. Your product may be real or imagined. Duos will need to work together to develop the presentation and practice. Your grade will be based on both individual and pair grades. The pair's grade will be based on how effective your duo is in pitching a product or service. Each duo must bring an instructor evaluation sheet in a manila folder on the day you present. Your individual grades will be earned through individual participation in class activities, homework assignments, as well as peer evaluations of your classmates' sales pitches.

If you fail to attend class on the day your group presents, you will earn a zero (0) because makeups are not possible for this assignment. If you do not attend the class activities held prior to the presentation, you will put your pair at a disadvantage and will not be allowed to present with your pair, nor receive the pair grade portion of this assignment.

Other Assignments

We will have a few other small assignments throughout the semester. Some will be completed in class and others will be small homework assignments you complete at home. They are very short and take only 5-15 minutes to complete at home.

Mission Statement

You and your group members will create a mission statement and “Bill of Rights” to use as a guide for your group work. You will be given class time to work on this and will submit a completed assignment with each group member’s signature on it. The grade is basically a pass/fail group grade and is worth five (5) times the homework assignments. Individually, you will lose 10 points for not attending a day in class when we work on the assignment and 10 points for not signing the completed document.

Grade Discussions and Appeals

Please be advised that I generally will not entertain questions or grade appeals in which the query or desired result is concerning/will result in a grade increase of five (5) points or less or a change in letter-grade symbol.

I also do not discuss specific grades over any communications device or in class. If you would like to speak with me about an exam, assignment, final grade, or any other graded material, you must come to my office and speak with me face-to-face. If you cannot come to my office hours, I will gladly schedule an appointment time that works with your schedule.

If you wish to appeal a grade on an assignment, you must submit a grade appeal in writing by the next class meeting, and you must follow these procedures:

- Wait at least 24 hours before setting an appointment and submitting your written grade appeal to ensure that you have time to carefully read and consider the feedback.
 - o Focus less on explaining that you deserve a certain grade and more on proving that you accomplished specific objectives for which you were not give the appropriate credit.
 - o Make sure to cite specific instances from your assignment to provide support for your claims.
- After reading my feedback, submit a typed appeal in business-letter format that identifies the specific issue in question (e.g., quiz item, etc.) and explains the specific and well-supported reasons you believe the grade should be changed.
 - o Please refer to any class materials that support your rationale for a change.
- The written appeal should be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the appointment.

- When you arrive to your scheduled appointment, bring in your graded copy of the item in question (e.g., quiz, exam, etc.) and any additional evidence to support your claims and be ready to present them.
- After meeting with you, I may wish to contemplate the matter and will render a decision within two days.
- I will provide you written justification of my decision.
- Grade appeals will not be considered if initiated after the grace period, i.e., the statute of limitations, has expired.

You may feel compelled to compare grades with others in the class. If you and others are fine doing this, there is nothing I can do to stop you. However, keep in mind that when you appeal a grade, you are appealing your grade and not how you were graded compared to others. I strive to make sure grades are individual, rather than comparative, evaluations.

LSU Commitment to Community

The LSU Commitment to Community provides a guiding ethos to the University community. Students are encouraged to exemplify the Commitment to Community in their daily lives.

Louisiana State University is an interactive community in which students, faculty, and staff together strive to pursue truth, advance learning, and uphold the highest standards of performance in an academic and social environment.

It is a community that fosters individual development and the creation of bonds that transcend the time spent within its gates.

To demonstrate my pride in LSU, as a member of its community, I will:

- accept responsibility for my actions;
- hold myself and others to the highest standards of academic, personal, and social integrity;
- practice justice, equality, and compassion in human relations;
- respect the dignity of all persons and accept individual differences;
- respect the environment and the rights and property of others and the University;
- contribute positively to the life of the campus and surrounding community; and
- use my LSU experience to be an active citizen in an international and interdependent world.

The continued success of LSU depends on the faithful commitment by each community member to these, our basic principles. (Adopted May 1995)

Title IX & Sexual Misconduct Policy

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination based on the gender of students and employees of educational institutions that receive federal financial assistance.

In accordance with Title IX and other applicable law, Louisiana State University (“LSU”) is committed to providing a learning, working, and living environment that promotes integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual misconduct which includes sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and retaliation. LSU prohibits sex discrimination and sexual misconduct. This policy applies to all persons without regard to sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression.

Sex discrimination and sexual misconduct violate an individual’s fundamental rights and personal dignity. LSU considers sex discrimination and sexual misconduct in all of its forms to be serious offenses. This policy has been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated. This policy establishes a mechanism for determining when rights have been violated in employment, student life, campus support services, LSU programs and/or an academic environment.

If you have concerns, you can contact:

University Contacts

Jennie Stewart

Campus Title IX Coordinator
jstewart@lsu.edu
LSU Office of Human Resource Management
110 Thomas Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
225-578-8200

Maria Fuentes Martin

Title IX Deputy Coordinator for Students
mari@lsu.edu
LSU Dean of Students
333 Student Union
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
225-578-9442

Departmental Contacts

Dr. Loretta Pecchioni, lpecch1@lsu.edu
Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication Studies

Dr. Bonny McDonald, bmcd021@lsu.edu
Director of Basic Courses, Department of Communication Studies

Rico Self, cself4@lsu.edu
Instructor of Record, CMST 2060 Section 26

HAVE YOU DECLARED YOUR MAJOR OR MINOR?

Business leaders and other professionals recognize the importance of developing communication skills and analysis. Alan Greenspan, for example, stated, “To succeed, you will soon learn, as I did, the importance of a solid foundation in the basics of education – literacy, both verbal and numerical, and communication skills.” We hope this course contributes to your success.

To learn more about communication, you may want to major or minor in the Department of Communication Studies. The program explores how people sustain and change, experience, and

make sense of the world through symbolic action. Students develop conceptual skills to analyze written, oral, and visual messages. Students gain practical experience in areas such as public speaking, group decision-making, performance, and film. Such skills are elemental to careers in business, government, law, social services, and the arts.

A major in Communication Studies requires 36 hours including 12 hours of core classes and 12 hours at the 3000 or 4000 level. A minor requires 15 hours with one core class and 6 hours at the 3000 level or above.

The Department of Communication Studies offers 6 Pathways of Study as guidance for students interested in taking CMST courses. These pathways include lists of courses that can be taken for students interested in the following areas within Communication Studies:

- Public Discourse
- Art and Culture
- Professional Communication
- Communication in Human Relationships
- Visual and Mediated Communication
- Create your Own Pathway

More information is available at www.lsu.edu/cmst or by contacting our undergraduate advisor Mr. Kent Filbel (kfilli@lsu.edu), whose hours are posted at his office, 135 Coates Hall.