COM 378 Public Relations Management: Corporate Communication

# *School of Communication*

*Illinois State University*

*Fall 2019
3:35-4:50*

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**Course Description**

You’ll learn what goes into and how to better effectively manage and lead public relations. Prerequisites: COM 111, 161,178, 268, 297.

**Additional Description**

This course is one of two capstone courses to the public relations major, and students will be challenged to do their very best work and will be held accountable for it. This course blends lecture, in-class discussion, and out-of-class work so that you can become a valuable and valued strategic public relations counselor for any organization. The major project in the course is a strategic plan for a real organizational client.

**Course Objectives**

I expect compelling, strategic and results-driven work from you and your teammates in this course. You are now seniors and will soon be released into the wilds of PR. Your colleagues and clients will expect great work throughout your career.

More specifically, upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Explain best practices in leading PR in the workplace;
2. Understand and know how to lead and manage a PR project;
3. Know how to represent and defend PR inside and outside of an organization;
4. Organize material and information for effective strategic planning.

**Continued Enrollment**

Your enrollment in this class constitutes agreement with all aspects of this syllabus and any additions or alterations that may be made to it during the course of the semester. Additions and alterations include announcements I post for the class in ReggieNet or make in class, and additions and alternations include e-mail sent to class members. Such additions and alterations include information about the course, assignments, and so on. These announcements and e-mail are equally important when it comes to evaluating your work, because announcements may contain clarifications or other help that fit within assignments’ requirements. It is your job to keep track of what is going on.

**My Expectations of You**

***Please speak up*.** If you have questions or need fuller explanations, I can be reached during office hours, by appointment, or e-mail. (Please note that it may take up to 48 hours for me to return your e-mail). If you have questions about the course that is covered by consulting the document posted on Reggienet about assignments in detail, evaluation procedures and course policies, I ask that you highlight the section of the document that’s unclear.

***Please be prepared***. This class relies on in-class discussion and exercises, so knowing the information from the readings is essential for classroom participation.

***Problems? Please let me know right away.*** If you get in touch with me towards the end of the semester, it will likely be too late to adjust or effect change. This is also why I’ll be holding several classroom feedback sessions, one in the first month, to help identify any issues that can be adjusted.

**Getting in Touch With Me**

Office hours are **your** time; it’s time set aside for your comments and questions regarding assignments, course content, and your progress in the course. Questions and comments mean that you’re engaging with the course, so please don’t be shy to drop by. If you can’t make my office hours but have questions or comments, please be in touch with e-mail or my office telephone. (If you need to get in touch with me about a personal emergency, please use my ilstu e-mail and/or the phone. Regular questions about course content should please use the Reggienet e-mail function). If I don’t answer the phone, please leave a message with your name and a number that I can reach you at. Please note that I’ll respond to you within 48 hours at the latest, and only during ‘regular’ business hours – so please plan accordingly. (For instance, I won’t respond on the weekend, or at 5am in the morning).

#### Texts & Readings

### Smudde, P. (2015) *Managing public relations: Methods and tools for achieving solid success.* This is available at the ISU bookstore. I’ve also placed a copy on reserve at Milner.

* Readings available through the course page on ReggieNet.

**Outside Preparation**

Plan on spending **between six (6) and nine (9) hours each week** outside of class on your work for this course. You will need this time to complete assigned readings, write papers, and develop team projects. *The load will be heavier at the beginning and middle of the semester so please plan accordingly.*

**Assignments & Learning Assessments**All assignments are expected to be to the highest level of collegiate writing, written in AP Style with APA style in-text citations and references (thus, the pre-reqs of 268 and 297), except when noted. **I reserve the right to turn back highly flawed work ungraded.**

* ***Strategic Plan Project:*** The major project in the class. This is a team-based series of assignments building into a strategic product that includes a detailed plan. You may submit your work in progress for ‘no-stakes’ feedback on your content and its quality as you develop the plan. The final product will be the ‘high-stakes’ graded work. A 75-point peer review component is also required.
* ***Weekly Time Sheets:*** To foster understanding about time management in professional settings, you’ll use a timesheet template on Reggienet to track and analyze your time use.
* ***Job Description Reflections:*** You’ll find and reflect on four high-level PR management/executive job advertisements in PR areas that you’re interested in.
* ***Portfolio:*** To present examples of your best work to potential employers, you’ll need a portfolio – to give you a leg up on getting started on this, this assignment asks you to assemble your best work from courses and jobs/internships.
* ***Participation and attendance:*** Participation is more than just showing up; it is being engaged in class discussions, contributing answers, being a good class citizen, not being on your phone/laptop, etc. To help ensure your own learning, participation will be graded at various times throughout the semester, at my discretion. **If you miss a class, you forfeit your participation points for that assessment**, unless you have an exceptional circumstance such as a medical emergency or death in the family (please see below in the syllabus for information on accepted reasons for missing class). Please also see below for my attendance and lateness policy. *There may be pop quizzes, if I get the impression that readings aren’t being done, or if there is a particularly bad attendance day.*

**NOTE: *A note on group conflict versus social loafing:***
Groups always experience conflict, and this course gives you the opportunity to deal with differing viewpoints, perspectives and disagreements in a constructive manner. Succeeding as a group in your career means learning how to effectively manage conflict. You will be given a chance to evaluate your teammates on the campaign at the end of the course.

However, sometimes certain group members don’t equally contribute. If the group experiences problems with social loafers that can’t be resolved within the group, please let me know asap. Group members will complete peer evaluation forms evaluating group members’ reliability, productivity and communication. If the whole group identifies a member who fails to do their fair share by the midway point in the SPP (September 26), that member’s grade may be penalized, and/or they might be ‘fired’ from the group. Being ‘fired’ means that they would have to do the assignment themselves, without the benefit of their group’s assistance. For more details, see the teamwork procedure posted on Reggienet.

**Grading**

Final grades are assigned on the basis of accumulation of points compared to the total possible points that may be earned for the semester (see the scale below). I do not “curve” grades on any assignment or exam, nor do I “curve” final course grades. I evaluate the end products of your work, not effort. To calculate your grade, keep track of your points and then divide by the number possible.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Assignments | **Available** **Points** | Earned Points |
| Strategic Plan Project (SPP) | 250 |  |
| Peer Contribution Assessment for SPP | 75 |  |
| In-class Participation | 40 |  |
| Weekly Time Sheets & Reflections (worst two dropped) | 70 |  |
| Job Description Reflections | 40 |  |
| In-class Strategy Case  | 100 |  |
| Portfolio Project | 100 |  |
| ***TOTAL***  | **675** |  |
| **Extra Credit Available:**  |  |  |
| Research Pool (see end of syllabus) | 20 |  |

Assignment grades will be posted on ReggieNet’s gradebook, please keep track of them there.

*Rounding*

I don’t round grades up. That means if you get an 89.5, you receive a B. **No** exceptions. Please don’t ask.

*Grading scale*

A=90%-100% B=80%-89% C=70%-79% D=60%-69% F=0-59%

**Course Schedule *(Subject to change)***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | **Topic & Assignments** | **Readings** *Note: The readings are expected to be completed BEFORE class on the day they are listed. Additional readings will be added as interesting industry publications, news articles, and blogs show up.* | **Assignments** |
| 8/20 | Course overview. Assign time sheets, workback schedule and strategic plan project.  | Visit ReggieNet site, read syllabus. |  |
| 8/22 | Workback schedule and timesheet review and tutorial. | The New CCO – p. 15-35. (See Resources file under Reggienet). |  |
| 8/27 | Leadership and Management in PR | Smudde, chapter 1 | Week 1 timesheet due |
| 8/29 | Leadership in PR & Effective Meetings | Smudde, chapter 1 | Job Description 1 due |
| 9/3 | Teams and team evaluations*Team meetings this week* | Smudde, chapter 9 | Week 2 timesheet dueSPP Teams Finalized |
| 9/5 | Corporate and agency PR | Smudde, chapter 2 | Job Description 2 due |
| 9/10 | Ethics and Professionalism | Smudde, chapter 3 (ethics portion) | Week 3 timesheet due |
| 9/12 | Law | Smudde, chapter 3 (law portion) | Job Description 3 due**Client approvals due** |
| 9/17 | Ops Tools 1: Plans, budgets, time management and billing | Smudde, chapter 4 + Appendix A and B | Week 4 timesheet dueClient Approvals due |
| 9/19 | Topic cont’d |  | Job Description 4 dueOrganizational Background no stakes feedback due |
| 9/24 | Ops Tools 2: Performance measurement, personnel revs and HR | Smudde, chapter 5 | Week 5 timesheet due |
| 9/26 | Topic cont’d | ConlinGreenhouse (see Resources folder) | Situational analysis no stakes feedback due |
| 10/1 | SPP Team Meetings |  | Week 6 timesheet due |
| 10/3 | SPP Team Meetings |  |  |
| 10/8 | Executive decision-making | Smudde Ch 6 | Week 7 timesheet due |
| 10/10 | Business Development | Smudde Ch 7 | Plan no stakes feedback due |
| 10/15 | Gantt charts, budget tables, org charts. Portfolio Assignment discussed |  | Week 8 timesheet due |
| 10/17 | RFPs and NegotiationIn-class Strategy Case announced and discussed | Smudde, ch. 8 | Executive summary no stakes feedback due |
| 10/22 | Client Communication | Smudde, ch. 10 | Week 9 timesheet due |
| 10/24 | Formative and Evaluative Research | TBD | ***Strategic Plan Project DUE*** |
| 10/29 | Business Writing | Business writing module in Reggienet |  |
| 10/31 | Business Writing and Writing Tests |  |  |
| 11/5 | Individual meetings by appointment re: Portfolio |  |  |
| 11/7 | Individual meetings by appointment re: Portfolio |  |  |
| 11/12 | Memos and Business Writing |  |  |
| 11/14 | In-class Strategy Case (2 hours) |  |  |
| 11/19 | Individual meetings by appointment re: Portfolio |  |  |
| 11/21 | Individual meetings by appointment re: Portfolio |  | Portfolio Drafts due |
| 11/26 | Thanksgiving – no class |  |  |
| 11/28 | Thanksgiving – no class |  |  |
| 12/3 | Career Planning | Smudde, Ch 11 | Peer evals due |
| 12/5 | Generations in the workplace | ‘Millenials not promoted…”Levine & DeanMeng & Berger | Portfolio due |

***NOTE:*** The content of this syllabus is subject to change as the course progresses. You are responsible for noting any such changes, which will be announced in class and/or posted on ReggieNet.

**Course Policies**

In this course I challenge you to strive for your best work. Why? The answer is that your bosses, peers and, especially, clients will expect that from you throughout your career. So this course, like the others you’ve taken, is designed to extend your knowledge, strengthen your analytical skills, and refine your work habits. This course, then, challenges you to think, work and produce discourse that would rival that of full-time professionals. To manage matters in this course, policies are listed below.

You also are expected to be familiar with [ISU’s Code of Student Conduct](http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conflict/conduct/code/).

**Cell Phones, Laptops, Voice Recorders, iPods, MP3 Players, Text Messaging, etc.**

I encourage you to bring and use a laptop or tablet but please use it only to help you in your learning this class’ content and not surf the Web or do any other nonclass-related stuff. If you find something useful, please share it with the class. Turn off the volume, and no ear phones are allowed. If I see you smiling/laughing at your screen, I know you are watching cat videos on YouTube.

Please turn **off** electronic devices while attending class, with the exception of laptops for notes and during group activities. See me before class if you must have your device on because of a legitimate need to do so. You may use a laptop in class, provided it is not distracting and you use it only to help you in your learning this class’ content and not watch YouTube cat videos or do any other nonclass-related stuff. Extensive texting and other use of your phone (if I notice, it’s extensive) will be noted, warned, and then penalized. Both laptop and phone abuse will incur a *5-point penalty for each occurrence.*

**Attendance**

I don’t take attendance, but I can usually tell when you aren’t in class. Since a big part of your grade is participation, and nearly 50% of our content is presented in-class only, attendance is really important. Please let me know if you have an interview or big event for your internship, missing for reasons like that is fine (but missing for normal internship activity is not). If an assignment is due, however, you are accountable to the due date and method of submission.

If you miss class or are late, you are responsible for obtaining all assignments, notes and any other information that is given in class. I will not “reteach” material for you, although I’d be glad to answer specific questions. Don’t send me an e-mail asking if anything important was covered. It was. Ask someone for their notes.

**Online Communication**

I use e-mail and Reggienet course announcements to communicate directly to you as an individual and as a class. Clean out and check your ISU e-mail account frequently for notes or announcements from me, your fellow students, the department, and the college. *Not checking your e-mail or ReggieNet is not grounds for any excuse for not doing or not doing well on any assignment.* *It’s your responsibility to (1) keep your e-mail accounts open and up-to-date and (2) monitor your e-mail and ReggieNet class news frequently.*

**Online Course Material**

I use ReggieNet extensively to organize the material for this course and make announcements about our class. If you have problems with ReggieNet, let me know *and* call the Help Desk at 309-438-4357.

The ReggieNet site for this class contains additional, required reading material for this course. This material used in connection with the course may be subject to copyright protection. Your viewing of the material posted on ReggieNet does not imply any right to reproduce, to retransmit or to redisplay it other than for your own personal or educational use. Links to other sites are provided for the convenience of the site user (staff or student) or visitor and do not imply any affiliation or endorsement of the other site owner nor a guarantee of the quality or veracity of information contained on the linked site.

Many files are PDFs and should open easily with Adobe Acrobat Reader to view and print them. If you don't have this free software, go to <http://www.adobe.com> to download that software.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism and any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Plagiarism (presenting someone else’s work as your own or without proper acknowledgment) or any other type of academic dishonesty will be considered justification for failure for that particular assignment or the entire course, depending on severity. (See the two documents on academic misconduct linked in ReggieNet.) Although you may discuss with each other any assignment and course material, bounce ideas off each other, and share the university's resources available to you (e.g., media guides), you cannot share actual work you do with others. All work must be that of the student (or students involved in a group assignment) and developed during the current semester for *this* course. Sources must receive credit using APA style. For information regarding academic integrity and procedures for academic misconduct, see ISU’s [Code of Student Conduct, Section V.B.1](http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conflict/conduct/code/). You will be reported for academic misconduct if you engage in it.

TL;DR: DO NOT REPURPOSE (i.e., copy and paste) other’s words as your own! Doing so will result in failure of the assignment, and maybe the class, depending on severity. When in doubt, quote per APA style (totally cool as long as there isn’t too much of it), reword and cite per APA style, or ask me, I’m always happy to help!

Anytime you use someone else’s exact words, without APA quote style, is plagiarism. Really the only reason to use exact words is when the person’s words/phrasing have significant impact, or there really is no way to effectively reword. Please see this:

Reminder, in-text citations look like this (Hayes, 2015), not “According to the article written by Hayes…”

In this spirit, I would like to acknowledge the following people whose work has inspired this syllabus and/or whose work I have adapted: Joshua Barbour, Anthony Dudo, Jeff Courtright, Becky Hayes, Lance Lippert, Katherine McComas, Aimee Miller-Ott, Jeff Neiderdeppe, Pete Smudde, Meghnaa Tallapragada, Lindsey Thomas.

**Assignment Feedback**

I give direct feedback and edits – the goal is to fix problems before they are bigger problems in your campaign or for you professionally. Please don’t take criticism personally, I am just trying to help you learn how to be the best PR person/writer.

On longer papers, I will give my focused comments on the first couple pages because after that the errors/problems are repetitive. I may note other things in later pages, but a lack of comments is not necessarily an indication of correctness or effectiveness. I also won’t find absolutely everything because I am trying to get work back to you quickly. Of course, if you want more detailed help, visit with me.

**Assignment Expectations**

You are seniors now, and you’ll be in the workforce soon, paid to figure stuff out without a lot of direction. Assignments in the “real world” (I hate that phrase) are rarely clear-cut. The assignments here are designed with ambiguity built in, which should inspire you to think analytically about what you know and what you’re learning and not just regurgitate a concept. So, please ask questions if something doesn’t make sense, but feel free to be creative on assignments (meeting the basic requirements, of course).

The writing assignments in this course are meant to (1) apply principles and concepts covered in this course to realistic problems and (2) build upon and challenge you to improve your current skill level—to be more consistent with “real world” demands. All written work is expected to fulfill assignments’ contexts, purposes and audiences just as they would if they were to be written to meet actual client needs. If the writing in any assignment does not meet this expectation, I reserve the right to withhold any or all points, and/or turn it back ungraded, depending on the severity of the writing’s inappropriateness/ineffectiveness.

Good writing is both strong in content and technically correct in its presentation (i.e., grammar, style, discourse conventions, layout, and printing). All written work must fulfill the content requirements given in the assignments, conform to American Psychological Association (APA) and (where applicable) Associated Press (AP) styles, and be free of grammar, spelling, style and English usage errors. **One point will be deducted from your final score for each APA and AP error. Yes, it is that important.**

Assignments will be posted on ReggieNet and discussed in class. See the course schedule for details about all coursework. Please visit with me if you have any questions about any assignment or if you’d like some feedback about your work in progress.

*Late work and missed work*
All assignments are due no later than the time stated on the assignment. If in class, that means within the first five minutes of class. Anything received after the due time will be penalized 30% for each 24 hours it is late, starting after submission (so 30% off for an hour late, 60% off for 25 hours late). Sometimes assignments will be collected electronically (via ReggieNet Assignments) and you will be given the specific due-time for those. You can totally turn work in early—especially if you are going to be absent the day something is due.

**Extra Credit Opportunities**There may be the occasional extra credit pop quiz in class. These cannot be made up if you are not present unless you have an excused absence.

**Research Participation - Extra Credit**

There will be a few extra credit opportunities for research participation. The extra credit points will be added to your final grade, and **will not appear in the gradebook immediately upon your completion of the opportunity** – I don’t get the lists until after a study ends. There are no guarantees for extra credit, and it is each student’s responsibility to be aware of and take advantage of such opportunities. You may receive extra credit for participating in any of the studies posted to the School of Communication’s Research Announcement Board. The Research Announcement Board is updated as research studies are opened/closed, and it is your responsibility to access the Board and be aware of available opportunities. The Research Announcement Board can be accessed via:

[**https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/**](https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/)

In general, each 30 minutes of participation in an extra credit study will earn you .5 Research Credits, which translates into 2.5 points in this class. You may earn a total of 10 points participating in research (so, that means roughly four online surveys, or two bigger things like in-person focus groups or experiments). Please see the call for participants for the Research Credits associated with each study. Each Research Each project listed on the Research Announcement Board will indicate the specific number of Research Credits associated with the project. The course instructor will get evidence of participation and the time of participation from the researcher(s) who administer the research studies at the conclusion of the semester; however, it is your responsibility to make sure that the researchers have the necessary evidence of your participation at the time of the study. Before participating in a study, please be sure to have your name, ULID (i.e., the part of your email before @ilstu.edu), instructor name, and course and section number ready, as you will need to provide these to receive credit. Research Credit can only be applied to one course for each study, unless specified otherwise on the Research Announcement Board. A maximum of 10 points can be earned from extra credit opportunities via the Research Announcement Board unless some special exception is given by Dr. Hayes. After the last day of class there will be no more opportunities for extra credit, don’t ask ;)

**Non-Research Extra Credit Opportunities (Instructor Determined)**

There may be some studies for which you are not eligible (e.g., recruiting based on gender or family structure) or in which you do not wish to take part. Reasonable alternatives are available for those not able or wanting to take part in specific studies, to ensure equitable non-research based opportunities.  Throughout the semester, the instructor will announce non-research opportunities for extra credit, which may include attending a colloquium, reading a recent article or research paper, or attending an on-campus event and writing a summary of the connection of the event to course content.  The instructor will make these opportunities and specific details available as they arise.

**Non-Research Extra Credit Opportunities (SoC Alternative)**

There may be some studies for which you are not eligible (e.g., recruiting based on gender or family structure) or in which you do not wish to take part. Reasonable alternatives are available for those not able or wanting to take part in specific studies, to ensure equitable non-research based opportunities.  For each available study in which you would like to complete an alternate assignment, please contact the instructor, who will assign a journal from which to identify and provide an annotated bibliography to the researcher consistent with the description on the Alternate Opportunities page (<https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/home/students/alternates>) of the Board. You must complete and submit the research report to the researcher before the date the study closes--late submissions are not accepted.  Alternate opportunities will be scaled by the course instructor to ensure commensurate time commitment and course credit with the research-based opportunity.

\*I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus after it is posted, but I will always tell you if something major has changed. If is something minor, like an extra reading or something, refer to the folder for that week.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

*I have a disability. What do I do?*

*What if I miss a class for a religious holiday or emergency?*

*When are assignments due? What if my work’s late?*

*Will you review my written work before I submit it?*

*How do I know what my grade is?*

*What’s your grading philosophy?*

*What if I have a technology problem with an assignment?*

*Can I get an incomplete?*

*I want to discuss my grade. How do I do that?*

*I want my grade re-evaluated. What do I do?*

*I’d like to discuss my overall grade and/or figure out what my grade currently is. How do I do that?*

*Can I earn extra credit?*

*Does school shut down if the weather’s bad?*

*I’m feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious or depressed. What can I do?*

*I’d like to learn how to take better notes or manage my time better. Where can I learn about ways to do that?*

*I’m a first-generation student. What can I do to help myself navigate university?*

*How do I use the library?*

*Do I need permission to record or share your course materials?*

**I have a disability. What do I do?**

Please let me know as soon as possible after contacting Student Access and Accommodation Services, so that I can discuss strategies to fit the course to your needs. Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall assists students with disabilities. You can also contact them at (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at [www.studentaccess.illinoissate.edu.](http://www.studentaccess.ilstu.edu/)

**What if I miss a class for a religious holiday or emergency?**

I excuse absences in accordance with University policy. This includes excusing absences for incapacitating illness, religious observance, service in the military, jury duty, participation in a university-sanctioned event, or the death of a family member (see University Policy and Procedures 2.1.27 Student Bereavement Policy).

These are the only circumstances I accept to reschedule an exam or assignment count as excused. If one of these situations occurs, I’ll need a letter signed by a authoritative person attesting to the issue (i.e.: a doctor in case of incapacitating illness, a university official such as a coach regarding campus activities).

It is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible about the absence, and within five days of the due date/exam date at the latest, or your grade will become a 0. In the case of absence due to religious observance, please notify me five days in advance. Please note: you must receive written or verbal confirmation from me that you’re excused, simply leaving me a message does not mean that you’re excused.

**Will you review my written work before I submit it?**

I’ll be reviewing the SPP for ‘no-stakes’ feedback throughout the project time-line. If you need one-on-one writing assistance for the other assignments, please contact the Julia N. Visor Academic Center, which offers one-on-one writing assistance by appointment. You can also attend drop-in writing assistance sessions at the library. You can find more information about these services here: <http://universitycollege.illinoisstate.edu/help/writing/>

**How do I know what my grade is?**

All grades will be posted on Reggienet throughout the semester. I’ll attempt to upload grades within a reasonable time after their submission. Assignment feedback will be delivered through Reggienet or in class. Please note that due to University regulations, I’m not allowed to communicate your grades to you over e-mail or the phone without your prior permission.

**What’s your grading philosophy?**

I grade assignments and exams based on the quality of the work, and assume that you start with 0 points. You don’t start with 100 points and ‘lose’ them for mistakes. Your final score for an assignment or exam represents what you earned, not the number of points ‘deducted’. I don’t curve grades. Simply following directions and fulfilling the assignment requirements does not guarantee you an A on the work.

Below is a general idea of my guidelines when grading written work:

**“A” Work**

Students must turn in exemplary work to earn an A. I reserve this grade for students who turn in excellent work, go beyond the minimal requirements, provide thoughtful answers and demonstrate advanced levels of thinking and writing. Your work needs to stand out as superior to the other students’ work to earn an A.

**“B” Work**

Students will earn a “B” if they submit above average work that is thoughtful and well-written. If I believe you could have pushed yourself more, you will earn at best a B.

**“C” Work**

Average work will earn a C. “C” work meets the minimal requirements for the assignment but does not show advanced levels of thinking or writing or go beyond what was asked of students to do.

**“D” Work**

D work is below average. The work meets some but not all of the minimal requirements and may demonstrate poor writing.

**“F” Work**

F work reflects poor quality or failure to submit an assignment.

**What if I have a technology problem with an assignment?**

You’re expected to keep computer files and/or photocopies of all assignments that you submit. This is good practice for your future career. When working on a computer, please frequently save your files, and always backup your work to somewhere besides the computer. I don’t accept late work due to technological issues.

**Can I get an incomplete?**

Incompletes are based on university policy, and are granted only *in extreme cases* when a documented emergency prevents you from completing the class, you have contacted the Dean of Students Office, and you have successfully completed approximately two-thirds (66%) of the course. **For graduating seniors, please note:** You must have any previous incompletes taken care of at least *six weeks prior to the semester you plan to graduate*. If a student takes this course with an incomplete, and plans to graduate, you’ll need to finish the incomplete grade by midterm so that you meet the graduation/completed credit-hours deadline.

**I want to discuss my grade. How do I do that?**

Please see me during office hours, make an appointment or send me an e-mail.

**I want my grade re-evaluated. What do I do?**

You can appeal your grade if you feel it doesn’t adequately reflect your performance on an exam or assignment. To do so, please submit a one-page written statement (a formal e-mail is fine) within one week after the assignment or exam was first returned to the class. The statement should include documentation about why you feel the grade doesn’t reflect your performance. This policy means that your concerns are addressed quickly. I’ll review the document and decide to move ahead with a regrade or not. Documentation such as ‘I worked really hard’ or “I need a better grade for my GPA’ aren’t adequate because I’m grading your output, not your effort. If I decide to regrade, the whole assignment or exam is regraded. This means that it’s possible for your mark to go down rather than up if mistakes in your favor are found when the assignment or exam is regraded.

Please note that the timeframe to send in written documentation starts when the exam or assignment is returned to class, not when you actually obtain it. If you miss the timeframe to submit a written statement, you forfeit your right to appeal the grade.

**I’d like to discuss my overall grade and/or figure out what my grade currently is. How do I do that?**

If you’re having trouble figuring out your grade, please schedule a meeting.

**Does school shut down if the weather’s bad?**

No, unless the university closes. If that happens, I’ll be in touch about making up the class.

**I’m feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious or depressed. What can I do?**

Life at college can get complicated. Don’t hesitate to call or visit [Student Counseling Services](https://counseling.illinoisstate.edu/) (SCS). These services are free and completely confidential. SCS is located at 320 Student Services Building, 309-438-3655.

**I’d like to learn how to take better notes or manage my time better. Where can I learn about ways to do that?**

The University offers workshops in areas such as study skills, writing, reading and time management. For more information see: <http://universitycollege.illinoisstate.edu/help/workshops/>

**I’m an under-represented student, like a first-generation student. What can I do to help myself navigate university?**TRiO/Student Support Services at ISU provides services to traditionally underrepresented students in post-secondary education. Services offered include advising, counselling and workshops. To see if you’re eligible and apply, please visit http://universitycollege.illinoisstate.edu/communities/trio/

**How do I use the library?**

Sharon Van Der Laan is the Communication subject librarian (that’s right, we have our very own subject librarian). You can contact Sharon to investigate what library resources might help you with an assignment, and figure out a research strategy. More information on Sharon and Communication Subject Resources are available here: <http://guides.library.illinoisstate.edu/COM>

**Do I need permission to record or share your course materials?**

You must obtain written permission from me if you wish either to photograph classroom lectures or discussions or to record them using audio or video devices. This restriction includes visual materials that accompany the lecture/discussion, such as lecture slides, whiteboard notes/equations, etc. Such recordings are to be used solely for the purposes of individual or group study with other students enrolled in the class in that semester.  They may not be reproduced, shared in any way (including electronically or posting in any web environment) with those not in the class in that semester.  Students with disabilities who need to record classroom lectures or discussions must contact Student Access and Accommodation Services to register, request and be approved for an accommodation.  Students who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University’s Code of Student Conduct.