

COM 227: ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC SPEAKING

Instructor:	Tracy Widergren		
Office Hours:	MOST Fridays 9-10:30 a.m. and by appointment (preferred)		
Office:	109B Alumni Center	Phone:	(309) 438-8719
Email:	tlwider@ilstu.edu	Section:	002
Classroom:	Fell 148	Meeting time:	T/Th 3:35-4:50 pm

TEXT

Quintanilla, K.M. & Wahl, S.T. (2019). *Business and Professional Communication: KEYS for Workplace Excellence, 4th edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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Access the Student Companion Site here: edge.sagepub.com/quintanilla4e

Available at Milner Library: Floor 2 Course Reserve Desk (building use only)

COURSE MATERIALS

Required:

- Access to a personal or public printer
- Access to our ReggieNet website (through My Illinois State or <http://reggienet.illinoisstate.edu>). I will communicate with you through ReggieNet/email.

Suggested:

- Note cards (4"x6" or smaller)
- A stapler

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to investigate the role of communication in professional life. Attention is given to interviewing, workplace culture, interpersonal and team communication, technology, professional presentations, leadership, and work-life balance. Students will learn practical skills via presentations, research, résumés, interviews, meetings, and professional writing grounded in communication and business theory.

After successfully completing COM 227, students should be able to:

1. Identify the key terms and major theories relevant to business and professional communication
2. Create a résumé to enhance individual career and/or educational marketability
3. Use effective interviewing skills and techniques
4. Integrate communication and research skills to create a professional presentation (informative and persuasive)
 - a. Employ appropriate presentation aids effectively to improve the impact of presentations.

5. Produce effective business and professional writing (reports and memos) samples
6. Apply theory to effectively communicate as both a team member and as a leader
7. Evaluate the performance of team members based on clearly defined objectives and present that assessment in an honest, yet constructive manner
8. Demonstrate openness, intellectual tolerance and civility in the exchange of ideas and the resolution of conflict in small group settings.
9. Demonstrate an awareness of and sensitivity to non-verbal communication.
10. Demonstrate appropriate behavior as listeners in class and in other groups and be able to distinguish between empathetic and critical listening skills.
11. Demonstrate an awareness, tolerance and appreciation of the cultural diversity of others.

ASSIGNMENTS: More information will be handed out on all assignments as they are discussed in class.

Apply for the Job!

Cover Letter and Resume: Students will prepare a cover letter and resume for a real job opening at a real organization. Students must submit a copy of the job posting/description along with the resume and cover letter. Length: estimated 2-3 pages.

You got an interview!

Informative Presentation: Students will prepare a 6-8 minute presentation for an interview for the job they applied to (see above). Students will craft their presentations to inform the audience why they would make a good candidate for this position, including using details from their up-to-date resume to build a case on why they are qualified to work at this organization. Students will need to include credible research into the organization and position for which they are applying. A PowerPoint or Prezi is required for this presentation. Students will be prepared to address questions from the interviewers (the class) for 2-3 minutes. The class will be expected to prepare questions to ask the interviewees (counts toward participation grade, see below).

You got the job!

30-60-90 Day Plan: Congratulations, you got the job you applied and interviewed for. Now it's time to plan your goals for the next 30, 60, and 90 days. Using relevant content from the chapters, your resume, and the organization and job information, write your personal 30-60-90 day plan. Length: minimum of 3 pages.

Persuasive Project Proposal: Building upon the 30-60-90 day plan, students will present a proposal for a new initiative, campaign, program, etc. for the organization where they were recently hired (hint, look at your 90-day goals). Students will incorporate relevant research into their presentation that supports their idea. Students will formally present their project to the class using a PowerPoint/Prezi and turn in a Proposal for Services (see page 222 for a template) and their PowerPoint/Prezi. Presentation length: 8-10 minutes which *includes* time for audience questions.

Team Presentation: Teams will choose an article provided by the instructor that relates to a textbook chapter and concept. Teams will prepare a lesson plan that includes a PowerPoint/Prezi, discussion questions, and an in-class activity to present to the class. Length: 25-30 minutes.

Please note some of these presentations will take place the final week of classes; some, during our scheduled time during finals week.

Final Reflection/Self-Evaluation. Students will complete a self-evaluation and reflect back on work completed over the course of the semester in a 3-page paper.

Quizzes. There will be one quiz for every textbook chapter, as well as quizzes for the additional assigned readings (no quizzes for Team Presentation articles). The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped.

Class Participation. This course addresses communication skills and development, which means that participation is essential. Participation is a function of attendance, discussion contribution (which will require completion of reading assignments), asking questions that further the understanding of all participants, and the demonstration of respect for all contributions of all class participants. Participation grade **will reflect class attendance**, in-class participation, and overall classroom respect.

Reading/Activities Throughout the semester, other activities will be assigned that will be designed to help you synthesize or practice the skills and concepts used in this course. Reading assignments will be synthesized and presented in class discussions and activities. All students should complete readings as they are assigned in order to fully process the information as well as to contribute to the class. At times, class activities will occur that will be worth points. These will be unannounced.

EVALUATION

The grading scale is a standard ten percentage point scale:

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

Apply for the job

Resume and cover letter 50

You got an interview

Informative presentation 100

You got the job

30-60-90 day plan 50

Persuasive project proposal 100

Team presentation

100

Papers

Final Reflection/Self-Evaluation 30

Quizzes

~75

Participation

100

Class Activities

TBA

TOTAL

TBA

Assessments and point values subject to change.

Grades and feedback on assignments will be provided in a timely manner in order to provide you with the tools needed to improve upon future assignments. Evaluation of presentations will not be returned until all students have completed the assignment (exceptions will be made in case of excused absences). Criteria for grades will be discussed thoroughly with students and every attempt will be made to assign grades objectively. **Students are encouraged to discuss the evaluation process as well as the evaluation criteria with the instructor** in order to gain understanding and facilitate improvements.

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH POOL WEBPAGE

Additionally, there will be a few extra credit opportunities for research participation. The extra credit points will be added to your final grade, and may not necessarily appear in the gradebook immediately upon your completion of the opportunity. 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 in the School of Communication's Research Pool. The Research Pool is updated as research studies are opened/closed, and it is your responsibility to access the Pool and be aware of available opportunities. The Research Pool can be accessed via:

<https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/>

On average, each research study you choose to participate in will earn you 2 points of extra credit for up to 10 points total for the semester. 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 in the Research Pool. A maximum of 5% of your final course grade can be earned from extra credit opportunities via the Research Pool. After the final projects are due there will be no further opportunities for extra credit or to otherwise improve your grade.

Please also be aware that federal guidelines indicate that instructors offering extra credit for research participation must offer a reasonable alternative (such as a research paper) for students who want to earn extra credit but do not want to participate in a study. If you are interested in an alternative extra credit option, please see the instructor.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance. Since participation is a function of attendance, regular attendance is expected. Being absent will deprive you of valuable class discussions and activities and will also cause you to lose participation points. If you are not in class, you cannot earn participation points and participation cannot be made up. **Also note any/all materials are handed out or emailed only once**. If you are not in class to receive them (or delete/lose them), you should obtain the information from a fellow student. Please note missing a class does not mean you are free from submitting required assignments on the date that you missed. You will lose those points if you do not submit the required assignment. **Missing a class, unexcused, on any individual/team presentation day – will result in a 10-point reduction per day from that the presentation grade.**

An absence can only be excused if you contact me in advance with a legitimate reason for being absent (i.e., religious holidays, family emergencies, University sanctioned events, extended illness) and sufficient documentation is provided (see below for specific information related to bereavement). I will not excuse absences if you do not get in touch with me within a week of the absence nor will I accept notes after one month from the absence or after the final exam period.

Tardiness. Attendance will be taken during each class session. Be on time. When individuals arrive late to class they disrupt learning and show disrespect to their classmates and the instructor. Your tardiness will be reflected in your final participation grade. If you are late on a presentation day please wait outside the classroom until you hear applause, signaling the end. The lesson here? Be on time, every time. Please note: arriving 10 or more minutes late will count as an absence for the day. Quizzes are also given at the start of class and cannot be made up if you are tardy.

Assignment Due Dates: All assignments must be completed on the due date. **No late work will be accepted.** If you are unprepared to turn in an assignment or deliver a presentation on your assigned day, you will receive a ZERO for that assignment unless an alternate due date has been previously approved or documentation has been provided for extreme circumstances. Further, technical problems such as power outages, erased/lost disks, downed systems, malfunctioning printers, or email glitches are not legitimate excuses for late or missing work. Always make a backup copy of your work (and carry it with you on the due date) and make use of University computer labs if necessary. You may want to consider purchasing a flash drive or using online storage. In emergencies, I will make other arrangements with individual students, but such cases are relatively rare. Also, give yourself ample time to complete assignments. **Please note: it is not my responsibility to track down your late or missing work.** You must take responsibility and ownership of your assignments.

Cheating/Plagiarism. Students are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct*. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration on projects and/or the presentation of someone else's work warrants plagiarism.

Students found to inadvertently commit acts of dishonesty will receive appropriate penalties specific to the assignment in question. Students found to commit intentional acts of dishonesty will receive a failing grade in the course and will be referred for appropriate disciplinary action through the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Office.

Permission required to record Students must obtain written permission from the instructor if they 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, 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.

Special Needs. Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu.

Mental Health Resources. Life at college can get very complicated. According to recent research, nearly 40% of college students are at-risk for developing generalized anxiety disorder and are less likely to seek help for it compared to other mental health issues. Students also sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience depression, and struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. Student Counseling Services is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at Counseling.IllinoisState.edu or by calling (309) 438-3655.

Illinois State University Bereavement Policy. If a student experiences a death of an immediate family member or relative as defined below, the student will be excused from class for funeral leave, subsequent bereavement, and/or travel considerations. The student will provide appropriate documentation and arrange to complete missed classroom work as soon as possible according to the process outlined below.

Upon notification of the absence and proper documentation, each faculty member shall excuse the student from class according to this policy and provide an opportunity to complete missed exams, quizzes, and other required work. Ultimately, the student is responsible for all material covered in class and must work with each individual professor as soon as they return to complete any required work. Details can be found at the following website:
<http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-27.shtml>

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS POLICIES

Professional Courtesy. Professional courtesy includes respecting others' opinions, not interrupting in class, being respectful to those who are speaking, and working together in a spirit of cooperation. I expect you to demonstrate these behaviors at all times in this class. With that in mind, sleeping, reading materials irrelevant to class purposes, texting, or disrupting the class will not be tolerated and will result in the student being considered absent for that particular class period.

Presentation Etiquette. On presentation days, you have dual responsibilities as a speaker and an audience member. When you are presenting, you will dress appropriately. When you are an audience member, you will be attentive and ask challenging but constructive questions when the presentation is finished. Because most people are nervous when they present, you will be supportive both verbally and nonverbally. You will never enter or leave the room while a presentation is in progress.

Behavioral Expectation Policy. Should any student violate the expectations of appropriate classroom behavior (as mentioned in the professional courtesy and presentation etiquette policies above), the instructor will schedule a meeting to discuss these expectations and develop a behavioral modification plan. If these behaviors persist, you will be at-risk for failing the course.

Email Policy. While I encourage you to email me with questions, don't let email replace good communication between us. I encourage you to arrange to meet with me in person. While a quick response is likely, please keep in mind that I am not always on email; therefore, I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. As a student of higher education, it is expected that all communication be of professional quality. When writing your emails, please identify yourself and the class for which you have an inquiry. Please be sure to address me in a professional manner.

Rough Drafts. While I am always willing to read through rough drafts of assignments for this class, any rough draft must be submitted no later than **one week before the assignment is due**. This allows me to provide you with constructive feedback on the assignment and gives you time to synthesize and incorporate my feedback as well. Any rough drafts submitted less than a week before the assignment is due will not be read unless previous arrangements have been made with the individual student. Students are always encouraged to seek assistance from the Visor Academic Center (012 Vrooman Hall, 309-438-7100).