

CO210: Business Communication
Fall 2015
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Illinois College

TEXTBOOK:

Quintanilla, K. M., & Wahl, S. T. (2014). *Business and professional communication: Keys for workplace excellence* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The purpose of this course is to enhance students' understanding of the skills, principles, and challenges associated with business communication. Oral presentations and written assignments are utilized to evaluate competencies in verbal and nonverbal communication efforts. A framework of strategic communication is introduced for implementing various interpersonal and presentational practices. Lastly, an overview of organizational communication theories is also given to prepare students for future professional opportunities. Likewise, upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the role of communication for building business and professional relationships
2. Use appropriate communication behaviors in the workplace to accomplish career-related goals
3. Implement communication strategies in oral and written forms to effectively transmit messages
4. Recognize and promote characteristics associated with effective workplace teams; and
5. Incorporate course material/communication research to successfully conduct a business meeting

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Classroom Participation and Attendance. Class participation is a *minimum* condition necessary for success in this course. Regular attendance and participation (e.g., contributing to discussion, asking questions, offering examples) are expected. Opportunities that are missed during unexcused absences cannot be made up. Participation and attendance will be assessed after each class. *Worth 30 points.*

2. Quizzes. To assess your preparation for class, I will give five unannounced quizzes throughout the semester. The answers to these quizzes will be quite obvious to those who have read the material. Quizzes will consist primarily of multiple choice questions and a few short answers. *Worth 50 points.*

3. In-Class Activities. Throughout the semester you will also have the opportunity to participate in several in-class activities which will count towards your final grade. These activities will be assigned at my discretion and will focus primarily on application of the course material. *Worth 20 points.*

4. Exams. There will be two examinations in this course (i.e., a Midterm Exam and a Final Exam). The examinations will cover all assigned readings, lecture material, and classroom discussions. On exam days, it is essential that you are not late so you have time to complete the exam. *Worth 200 points.*

5. Business Writing Assignment. Successful writing skills are essential to workplace success. Thus, as part of this class, you will complete one of three professional writing assignments (your choice): (a) recommendation letter, (b) thank you letter, or (c) a proposal/organizational report. *Worth 50 points.*

6. Career Hiring Process. A significant portion of this class entails developing the skills needed to acquire a position within one's desired field of employment. This process will involve three steps:

- a) **Job Search.** Using professional search engines, you will be asked to locate a job ad for a position that you would legitimately be interested in acquiring. The position itself can vary, and may include a diverse range of professions. After locating a job ad, students will write a brief summary of the position and explain why they desire the position. *Worth 15 points.*
- b) **Professional Résumé and Cover Letter.** As part of the course's requirements, you will develop and refine your own résumé and cover letter. Ideally, these documents should be of high quality, but they are also meant to be "works-in-progress" – meaning you will continue to modify them as you encounter various educational and professional opportunities. The resume and cover letter should be tailored to the job you are applying for. *Worth 60 points.*
- c) **Interviews.** Working with other students in the class, you will participate in mock interviews. As an interviewee, you will use the concepts from class to help you acquire the position in which you identified in the job search. As an interviewer, you will learn how to develop and ask challenging (but fair) questions for future employees who may one day work for you. Combined, these responsibilities will be *worth 75 points.*

7. Leading a Professional Meeting. Working with a group of peers, you will develop and lead a business meeting with clearly defined objectives and purpose. This meeting will be evaluated on (a) its professional quality and (b) its effectiveness. Meeting quality will also be determined by the extent to which you exude the communication practices discussed throughout the course and the success in which you are able to reach and interact with other members of the meeting. *Worth 100 points.*

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Week	Topic	Course Reading	Assignment Due
1	Course Introduction and Communication Models		

2	Business Communication: Excellence in the Workplace	Q&W Chapter 1	
	Verbal & NV Communication	Q&W Chapter 2	
3	Listening	Q&W Chapter 3	Job Ads. Due
	Job-Seeking and Résumés	Q&W Chapter 4 Pages 68-87	
4	Interviews and Negotiations (w/ Résumés Workshop)	Q&W Chapter 4 Pages 88-102	Copies of Résumé & Cover Letter to Class
	Diverse Workplaces	Q&W Chapter 5	
5	Workplace Relationships Part I	Q&W Chapter 6 Pages 124-134	
	Workplace Relationships Part II and Interview Workshops	Q&W Chapter 6 Pages 135-146	Final Résumés and Cover Letter Due
6	Interview Presentations		
	Interview Presentations		
7	Follow-Up Techniques and Midterm Review		
	<i>Midterm Exam (Chapters 1 – 6)</i>		
8	Understanding Groups & Teams	Q&W Chapter 7 146-149; 156-168	
	Conducting Meetings	Q&W Chapter 7 149-155; 169-175	
9	Technology in the Workplace	Q&W Chapter 8	
	Business & Professional Writing	Q&W Chapter 9	
10	Leadership and Hiring	Q&W Chapter 10 Pages 233-247	
	Research Day: Meeting Topics, Agendas, and Supporting Info		

11	Conflict Management and Difficult People	Q&W Chapter 10 Pages 248-263	Professional Writing Assign. Due
	Informing and Persuading: Reasons for Presenting	Q&W Chapter 11	
12	Designing Professional Speeches	Q&W Chapter 12	
13	Group Meeting Workshop Day		Office Consultations
	Effective Presentation Practices	Q&W Chapter 13	
14	Work-Life Balance	Q&W Chapter 14	
	Group Meeting Presentations		
15	Group Meeting Presentations		
	Feedback & Review Day		
16	<i>Final Exam (Chapters 7 – 14)</i>		

* Schedule is tentative and subject to change. Any changes will be given to students at least one week in advance.