



Syllabus
Professional Communication for Business, Science and Industry
661.110.88
Summer 2017 Online Only
(3 credits, W)

Introduction

The world in which we live is one where a growing number of people find themselves wanting or needing to start a business. The reasons vary, but the goal is always the same: to generate a paying audience for what one has to offer. Launching a business is easier than ever before: with today's technology seemingly anyone can start a business. Many, many do -- and most fail, often for the same reasons, some of which we will uncover and address.

For this course, we are going to focus on building a business as the foundation of the course content we will write about. Each of you will determine a business (real or fictional) that you want to start. (I recommend you give it some thought, as you are going to be married to this idea for much of the course.) Every lesson and each assignment will address specific aspects of creating the foundation for that business, with an executive summary, business plan, "Shark Tank" presentation and investor proposal about your business among the key deliverables.

While you are learning about the best approaches to communicating effectively, you also will become more familiar with the many aspects of starting a business. Who knows? Maybe one or more of you will actually launch a business that starts in this class.

Description

This course teaches students to communicate effectively with a wide variety of specialized and non-specialized audiences. Projects include production of resumes, cover letters, proposals, instructions, reports, and other relevant documents. Class emphasizes writing clearly and persuasively, creating appropriate visuals, developing oral presentation skills, working in collaborative groups, giving and receiving feedback, and simulating the real world environment in which most communication occurs.

Instructor

Professor Bob Graham, bgraham@jhu.edu
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Office hours: Online, Mondays, 9 AM to Noon, or by appointment, by phone or on Skype at bgwriter@gmail.com.

Meetings

Online only.

Textbooks

Required: *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* by Joseph Williams, ISBN 978-0205830763

Required: *Presentation Zen* by Garr Reynolds, ISBN 978-0-321-52565-9

Required: *The New Business Road Test* by John Mullins, ISBN 978-1-292-00374-0

Other materials will be posted to Blackboard throughout the semester.

Online Resources

Please log in to Blackboard for additional materials related to this course.

Course Outcomes

Over the course of this semester, you will learn:

- To design a system, component, or process to meet desired needs (c).
- To function on multidisciplinary teams (d).
- To understand professional and ethical responsibility (f).
- To communicate effectively (g).
- To understand the impact of engineering solutions in a global and societal context (h).
- To recognize the need for and an ability to engage in life-long learning (i).
- To obtain knowledge of contemporary issues (j).
- To identify, analyze and understand your target audience
- To understand the impact of your words on the macro and micro levels
- To communicate clear, usable directions and instructions
- To create targeted and persuasive job application documents
- To understand the relationship between visual design and the written word
- To persuade your audience of the value of your ideas
- To create clear and concise language to support your arguments and ideas

Course Topics

- What a business is
- Successful communication
- Executive summaries
- Presentation skills
- Cover letters, resumes and job search strategies
- The best language to use in specific situations
- Business plans
- Proposals
- Presenting information effectively
- Self-evaluation
- Copyright and fair use issues
- New communications
- Entrepreneurship

Course Expectations & Grading

College classrooms provide students with the unique opportunity to discover and try new things. This class operates like a laboratory, with our focus on words, images and the power they afford those who consider them carefully. As with any lab experience, discoveries only occur from strategic testing and observation. Because everyone is trying new things, we must have an environment where we afford one another mutual respect, which is demonstrated in our preparation, engagement, participation and enthusiasm for class.

So we can be clear, allow me to spell out my expectations for each of us:

- We will demonstrate the ideals of collaboration. Your work on behalf of any group in which you belong will be as thoughtful as work you do on behalf of yourself.
- You will not gossip or comment about other students in a negative manner. Positivity pays off in every aspect of life.
- We will respect others' opinions and ideas. Some of the greatest ideas have come from what many would consider outlandish.
- We will express our opinions. A vigorous classroom discussion benefits everyone, including me. No two people see the world the same way. The shades of color our ideas and opinions can bring to one another can greatly advance any idea or vision.

Graded Assignments

Flash Presentation	20 points
Executive Summary of Business Project	20 points
Business Plan (Version 1)	25 points
Resume/Cover Letter	20 points
Oral Presentation on Business Plan	20 points
Final Business Plan	40 points
Proposal Letter on Business Plan	
With Detailed Report On Changes and Why	30 points
Class Participation, Online Discussion	25 points
TOTAL	200 points

Final Grade Scale

A	94%-100%	C	73%-76%
A-	90%-93%	C-	70%-72%
B+	87%-89%	D+	67%-69%
B	83%-86%	D	63%-66%
B-	80%-82%	D-	60%-62%
C+	77%-79%	F	59% and below

Assignment Guidelines

All assignments are expected to be in publishable form, meaning they have been carefully crafted, revised, edited, checked for grammar and spelling mistakes, and proofread. Each assignment also is expected to demonstrate improved knowledge and understanding of the concepts it addresses. Therefore, the same problems that appear in one paper should not appear again in a subsequent paper.

All papers should be submitted name, date and page number at the top of every page. All papers should be submitted through Blackboard.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY 11:59 PM EDT ON THE DATE NOTED. If it arrives at 12:00 AM, then points will be deducted as noted below.

Late Assignment Policy

All assignments are due at the time noted on the syllabus or Blackboard (if changes are necessary). Paper turned in late will have 10% of the grade per day late deducted from the actual grade. (Example: A paper that was turned in two days late that earned a 10 will lose 20%, meaning a grade of 80%.)

Key Dates

Review this syllabus, with any necessary updates appearing on Blackboard. The material covering each of the following topics will be posted by the date noted.

Ethics

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. [In addition, the specific ethics guidelines for this course are:

Report any violations you witness to the instructor.

You can find more information about university misconduct policies on the web at these sites:

- For undergraduates: <http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/undergrad-students/student-life-policies/>

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class must obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu .

Date	Lecture Topics	Assignment Prep and What's Due
Week 1	<p>Introduction: What's This Course? Syllabus explained. What is Successful Communication? What is a Business?</p> <p>What is a Flash Presentation?</p>	<p>PREP: Read: Crafting a Powerful Executive Summary, Harvard Business Review (http://hbswk.hbs.edu/archive/3660.html)</p> <p>Read: The Perfect Executive Summary, Venture Fund. (http://venturefund.wordpress.com/the-perfect-executive-summary-still-looking-for-it/)</p>
Week 2	What's an Executive Summary?	<p>PREP: Read: <i>The New Business Road Test</i>, Chapters 1, 2</p> <p>PREP: Read <i>Presentation Zen</i>, Chapters 8, 9, 10</p> <p>DUE JUNE 14: Your Business Plan Idea for Approval</p>
Week 3	<p>What Language Are You Speaking?</p> <p>The Power of Persuasion</p>	<p>PREP: Read: <i>Style</i>, Chapters 1,2, 3</p> <p>PREP: Read: <i>The New Business Road Test</i>, Chapters 5, 6</p> <p>DUE JUNE 21: Flash Video Presentation on Your Business Plan Idea</p>
Week 4	<p>Statistics, Data and How to Present Them</p> <p>The Power of Visuals</p> <p>Creating a Powerful Presentation</p>	<p>PREP: <i>Style</i>, Chapters 4, 5,6</p> <p>PREP: Read: <i>The New Business Road Test</i>, Chapter 15</p> <p>PREP: <i>Presentation Zen</i>, Chapter 5, 6</p> <p>DUE June 28: Executive Summary of Business Plan</p>
Week 5	<p>Effective Cover Letters</p> <p>Effective Resumes</p>	<p>PREP: Find and save a job listing to which you might apply.</p> <p>PREP: Read: <i>The New Business Road Test</i>, Chapter 7, 8, 9</p> <p>DUE July 5: Business Plan (Version 1)</p>
Week 6	<p>The Power of the Spoken Word</p> <p>The Power of Revision</p>	<p>DUE July 12: Cover letter and resume for job posting you found. You must include job posting.</p> <p>PREP: Read: <i>The New Business Road Test</i>, Chapter 10</p>
Week 7	<p>Connecting with Your Audience</p> <p>What's a Proposal Letter?</p>	<p>Prep: Read <i>Style</i>, Chapters 8, 9</p> <p>DUE July 19: Final Business Plan</p> <p>DUE July 21: 5-7 Minute Video Presentation on Plan</p>
Week 8	Steering Clear of Legal Trouble	<p>Prep: Read Finding Non-Copyrighted Images for Your Presentation, Vanderbilt University.</p> <p>DUE July 26: Proposal Letter and 2-3 Page Explanation of Editorial Decisions</p>

