Learning Objectives

This course is designed to assist you in improving your skills and confidence as an effective communicator in an organizational context. You will explore the issues faced by organizations in communicating internally with employees and externally with diverse stakeholders. This course will focus on both oral and written communication, in both formal and informal formats.

Supplementary Description:

Communication is a crucial element of business, every organization and in fact private life as well. This course will serve to demonstrate this importance and will give you conceptual and practical knowledge to this end, with a focus on practical application. You will:
- Explore ways that organizations use management communication to achieve their objectives, and critically evaluate these methods
- Develop an appreciation for the contribution that management communication makes toward organizational effectiveness
- Gain experience in written and oral communication, from proper use of email to formal written and oral presentations
- Strategically analyze and address issues that influence internal and external organizational communication and present challenges for communicators in organizations today
Prerequisites

This course has no prerequisites, but I recommend that you have completed ENGL 100 prior to taking this class. Also please note that if you already have credit for ADMN 205 or ADMN/BUS 265, you cannot receive credit for this course.

Text


If there is any student who in this course who, because of a disability, may have a need for accommodation, please come and discuss this with me, as well as contacting the Centre for Student Accessibility at 306-585-4631 or accessibility@uregina.ca.

Course Outline (subject to revision)

January 9
Introduction to Course
Module 1 - Introducing Business Communications

January 16
Module 2 - Adapting Your Messages to your Audience
Module 3 - Communicating Culturally

January 23
Module 4 - Planning, Writing and Revising
Module 5 - Designing Documents, Slides and Screens
Module 6 - Communicating Electronically

January 30
Module 7 - Composing Informative and Positive Messages
Module 8 - Composing Negative Messages

February 6
Module 9 - Composing Persuasive Messages
Module 10 - Communicating Audience Benefits
Discussion of Home Assignment #1

February 13
Group Member List Due (or Declaration of Individual Presentation)

February 20
NO CLASS – Reading Week

February 27
Midterm Examination
Module 11 - Communicating With Positive Emphasis
Module 12 – Communicating Using You-Attitude

Home Assignment #1 Due

Midterm Examination
Module 13 - Researching
Module 14 – Summarizing and Documenting Information
March 6
Module 14 continued
Module 15 – Writing Information Reports
Module 16 – Writing Proposals and Analytical Reports

March 13
Module 17 – Writing Formal Reports
Module 18 – Using Visuals to Tell Stories
Module 19 – Listening Actively

**Group/Individual Presentation Proposal Due**

March 20
Module 23 – Researching Jobs
Module 24 – Creating Persuasive Resumes
Module 25 – Creating Persuasive Application/Cover Letters

March 27
Module 20 – Working and Writing in Teams
Module 21 – Planning, Managing and Recording Meetings
Module 22 – Making Presentations

**Home Assignment #2 Due**

April 3
Presentations – Night 1

April 10
Presentations – Night 2

April 17 (Wednesday)
Final Examination – 7-10 pm

**Grading**

- Home Assignment #1 12.5%
- Home Assignment #2 12.5%
- Mini Assignments 5%
- Midterm Examination 20%
- Class Presentation 25%
- Final Examination 25%

**Assignments**

There are three assignment components of the course:
- Home Assignments (two). Note that late assignments will be accepted, but will be subject to a 10-percentage-point penalty per day that they are late, to a maximum of 50 percentage points. Late assignments will not be accepted past the last night of class (April 10).
  - Assignment #1 – due February 13. This assignment will involve writing a persuasive piece of communication. Details will be given in class February 6 but posted online early in the semester. This is worth 12.5% of your total grade.
Assignment #2 – due March 27. You will be writing a highly effective personal resumé for yourself as if you were applying for a job on the due date. You will also be writing a cover letter for the resumé. I recommend that you find an advertisement for a real job for which your skills and experience are relevant. Check the newspaper, the university’s student job service, and prospective employer websites and general job-search websites for such positions. (If you are unable to find such a job, speak to me and we can invent an advertisement for such a job.) Please note: personal information provided in this assignment will be kept confidential. If you have an objection to providing personal information to me in this assignment, please speak to me no later than February 13 about an alternate assignment. This is worth 12.5% of your total grade.

- Mini Assignments. During or at the end of several classes, I will give you short assignments that you will complete in class. For example, I may give you a piece of writing that could be better written or laid out, or may ask you to compose an email for a specific purpose. You will generally be given 15 minutes to complete these assignments. The lowest two grades you receive (including missed assignments) will be ignored in calculating your grade. The remaining graded and missed assignments will be averaged together and will count for 5% of your final grade. Note that there is a compulsory mini-assignment on URCourses that will open up on the first night of lectures (see URCourses for the due date).

Examinations

There are two examinations in the course:
- Midterm Examination – February 27, 7:00-8:15 pm – worth 20% of your total grade. Note that a lecture follows the exam session.
- Final Examination – April 17 (Wednesday), 7:00-10:00 pm – worth 25% of your total grade.

The exams will be communications assignments. You will be given a case and an assignment relating to that case. For example, you might be asked to compose a letter communicating bad news, or writing a publicity release. Choice of effective method of communication may also be part of the solution. These examinations will be open-book. The final examination will also include some writing examples that are substandard and will require your criticism or revisions.
Class Presentations

Class presentations will be held April 3 and 10 and will be worth 25% of your final grade. You have two choices:

- **Group Presentation.** You will form groups of 3-6 students (you must provide a list of students in your group by February 6). You will give the class a presentation on a topic of your own choosing. The presentation must be informative or persuasive (or otherwise, with prior permission from me). You must hand in a single-page proposal (single-spaced) about your presentation by March 13; sooner is better so that you have more time to react to my comments. The proposal is not graded (except that you are penalized if it is late); it is just to help me be sure you are on track. Your presentation will be 4 minutes long for every member of your group (based on how many members are on your February 6 list). For example, if you have six students on your list, you will have 24 minutes for your presentation.

- **Individual Presentation.** You must email me by February 6 to confirm that you will be doing an individual presentation. You will give a 4-minute persuasive presentation to the class. The topic is of your own choosing. You must hand in a single-page proposal (single-spaced) about your presentation by March 13; sooner is better, for the same reasons noted above.

NOTE PLEASE that a grade penalty will apply if your group list (or declaration that you’re doing an individual presentation) is late, or if your proposal is late. You will lose five percentage points from your presentation grade for each of these that is late to a maximum of 25 percentage points (so minus 50 percentage points if you fail to submit either within five days of each deadline). Ensure you get an email reply from me to be sure that you will not be penalized.

A marking rubric will be provided to you in advance of your presentation. The use of technology (Microsoft PowerPoint, OpenOffice/LibreOffice Impress, Prezi, or similar) is permitted and encouraged where appropriate. You may also provide student handouts or materials if you feel that they are helpful.

I will make a best effort to accommodate preferences and requirements in scheduling class presentations. However, please note that the presentation nights will typically be fully scheduled and there will be no flexibility for late changes in scheduling. We will simply have no spare time in the schedule to permit this.
Use of Technology

Communication and technology are unavoidably related. Therefore, I will permit the reasonable use of technology in this course.

Some in-class assignments might involve composing an email. The use of a computer, tablet, or smartphone to do this composition is permitted. (If you do not have such a device, handwritten assignments will also be accepted.)

Course Philosophies

You have taken university courses before but many of you will be new to the Faculty of Business Administration. Don’t forget the basics: read chapters in your textbook in advance of coming to class (that means owning a copy of the textbook – it really is important), attend class consistently, and prepare as you must to do well on the exams and in the assignments. I cannot stress enough how important it is to come to class and to do the reading in advance. Some chapters we will discuss as a class, rather than have a formal lecture, so you will miss out on important material if you don’t read the textbook. Assignments, both take-home and exam-based, may rely on textbook material that was not reviewed in class.

Unlike some of the 100-level courses at the university, business classes tend to be much smaller and invite much more student participation. I think that the best courses that I teach are ones where students play a role in their own education by interjecting their own experiences, opinions, and questions. It is important that you be willing to participate in this course. While we will have some lectures, some of our learning will be discussion-oriented. Your participation is not only welcome, it’s important! The material becomes a lot more meaningful and the discussions a lot richer if students are willing to openly participate. Don’t underestimate what you know; you have a lot of personal experiences that will help the other students and me relate to the course material.

Online Resources

I will make extensive use of URCourses during the course. The most recent version of this syllabus will be posted, along with any handouts that I am permitted to post. I will use the message areas to discuss class issues. The course calendar will also contain a basic class schedule along with due dates. Please check URCourses regularly. URCourses can be accessed at http://urcourses.uregina.ca...
I check my email quite regularly, whether at work, university or home, so feel free to email me. If I can’t answer quickly but I’ve read your mail, I’ll tell you so.

**Writing Resources**

I will post helpful websites on URCourses, but one local option that is undervalued is the Writing Clinic provided by the university (http://www.uregina.ca/sdc). It’s in UC230 and can be called at 306-585-4076. It’s suitable for students in all disciplines and at any point in their programs.

**Harassment Policies**

The University of Regina promotes a learning environment that is free of all forms of harassment and discrimination. The University will neither tolerate nor condone any inappropriate or irresponsible conduct, including any behaviour which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for work or study through the harassment of an individual or group on the basis of 1) race and all race-related grounds such as ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship and creed, or 2) sex, gender, or sexual orientation. Please refer to the University’s General Calendar for more information. Both the Racial and Sexual Harassment Prevention Offices are located in the Student Affairs area, University Centre 251.

**Academic Integrity**

I take professional standards of ethics and integrity very seriously, as do other instructors and professors, the Faculty and the University. The university must maintain high standards of academic excellence. Cheating, plagiarism, and academic misconduct will be documented and handled according to faculty and university policy, with punishments as severe as expulsion from the university. You are assured that any confirmed act of misconduct will be brought to the attention of the Dean’s office of your faculty. If you are at all in doubt about what is acceptable and what is not, ask me before you take a questionable action.

**Grading Appeals**

I often receive requests from students very late in the semester, or after the semester is over, requesting a higher grade than I have assigned. I can only give you marks that you earn. I cannot consider your need for a certain grade, only the work that you have done. If you need a certain grade in this course, the time to approach me is
early in the semester, not late – I will work with you to help you earn a higher grade.

Several times that I have taught this course, students have complained about their final grade when they had handed in assignments very late, missed many or all of the in-class reflections and not been present in class to learn the course expectations. This is very frustrating for me. If you expect a certain grade, you need to come to class every night you can. Missing any reflections, handing in late assignments, and not meeting my expectations for assignments, presentations and exams are all sure-fire ways to leave percentage points on the table that could form part of your grade. Work now to get the grade you mark, through attending and participating and working – not by emailing me at the end of the semester.
Feeling Stressed? Always worried?

Some stress is normal when you’re going to university but 1 in 5 students will suffer from enough distress that they would benefit from counselling.

What can I do?
The U of R offers several counselling services free of charge for students at the U of R. These sessions are confidential and easy to access for students – simply go to the second floor of Riddell, Room 251 to make an appointment.

When should you go?
Knowing when to schedule an appointment can be tough. Some common issues you might need help with include test anxiety, if you’ve experienced a trauma like losing a family member or a close friend, or if you’ve recently ended a relationship.

If the feelings you’re experiencing are more intense and severe counselling services can also provide urgent service within 3 days and referrals as needed.

What options are available for me?

**Personal Counselling** – This is a great option if you’d like one on one attention for things like anxiety and panic, relationship conflict, depression, grief and loss, academic issues, body image and substance abuse. Up to 5 sessions are free per semester. Try it – talking about your problems can be more helpful than you might think!

**Group Counselling** – Simply put, you’re not alone. Many students are experiencing the same things as you. The U of R offers a wide variety of group counselling opportunities that can help teach many skills for managing your mental health, including: Meditation and relaxation, Healthy relationships, Stress Management and Self-Care.

But I can’t afford counselling...
Seeking counselling doesn’t have to be cost prohibitive. Many students can benefit from the 5 free sessions offered by the University as a benefit of being a student.

If you need more sessions make sure you contact URSU and visit [www.iHaveAPlan.ca](http://www.iHaveAPlan.ca).
Many expenses that are related to mental health, including going to a psychologist, are partially covered by your Student Health and Dental Plan!

What else can I do?
Self-care - taking better care of yourself, can help you out. Eating better, working out, smoking and drinking less and balancing school with fun can all help with mental health!

Have a problem but don’t know how to fix it?
**URSU’s Student Advocate can help you free of charge!**

- Academic Appeals
- Disciplinary Appeals
- Student Loan Appeals
- E-mail advocate@ursu.ca to schedule an appointment today!
- Emergency Bursaries
- Notary Public
- Rentarlisman Appeals