

**University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film**

**Communications Studies COMS 591-S01
Senior Seminar in Communication:
Issues and Topics in Professional Communication**

Winter 2015

**Mon., Jan. 12 to Mon., Apr. 13 (excluding Reading Week)
Monday 12:00 - 2:45**

Instructor: Dr. Mark Wolfe
Office: SS 305
Office Phone: 403-850-5770
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Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Mondays 12:30-1:45

Course Description

This senior undergraduate course uses a seminar format based on close reading of course materials to critically examine current issues and topics in professional communication. Drawing on elements of complexity science relevant to communications in both theory and practice, topics will include contemporary approaches to communications education, the evolving role of communication in leadership and professional environments, and executive and strategic communication in the European context. Lectures and short student presentations dominate the first half of the course leading into Reading Week, with weekly individual reading response assignments, and a final paper project, comprising the second half.

Objectives of the Course

To provide students with theoretical, critical and practical perspectives on the growing strategic importance of professional communication; to underscore the value of a purely academic education in this field; to help prepare students to articulate that value in both workplaces and the world.

Textbooks and Readings

Articles TBA will be downloaded from U of C library. Other readings supplied via D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops are allowed but students camped behind them and never/rarely contributing to class discussion can expect to perform poorly in the course overall.

Assignments and Evaluation

- February 9th in-class group assignment 20%
- Weekly article reading responses (5, worth 10% each) 50%
- Final project paper 30%

Assignments to be submitted via email or D2L in WORD or Pages format only – **(no PDFs)** – before midnight on the scheduled due dates, unless otherwise indicated (see for example In-class group assignment, below). You do not need to complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in this course.

NAMING CONVENTION: All submissions must use the following naming convention: yourlastnameAssign.doc. Example: wolfeResponse.doc. If submitting a group assignment, one student submits with their last name **but the submission includes the names of all group members.**

In-class group assignment (20%) – On February 9th, students will spend the entire class time working in small groups on an assignment that will require them to leverage the learning from course readings and lectures in January. Assignment questions and directions for completing the assignment will be released at the beginning of the class on February 9th and will be due by the end of the class on February 9th. Students will be able to bring notes, readings and will be encouraged to access regular online resources to complete the assignment that will be submitted via D2L Drop Box.

Article reading responses (50%) -- Working solo or with another student, students will complete weekly reading assignments between February 23 and March 23. These responses will comprise critical assessment of scholarly articles that treat course themes, usually in the context of case studies. Student responses to the articles will typically use a format where the first half of essay-style response comprises a brief article summary, with specific attention to where the article connects to course themes, followed in the second half with a critique of the article's strengths/weaknesses and how it might be improved in further research, case study, etc.

Final group project (30%) – Students will work individually or possibly in small groups (3 maximum) to complete a final research paper project due without exception on the last day of classes. Final projects comprise a significant research effort on a trend, technology, or some issue having an impact on how communications is perceived, practiced and valued in today's world and/or workplaces. A final paper research and preparation tutorial will be held during the March 30 class.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Submission of Assignments: Please submit assignments as described above. Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and **follow the naming convention** for all files submitted electronically. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ualgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading System & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using [choose one] letter grades, percentage grades, GPA values (using any value on the 0 to 4.0 scale, including, e.g., 3.2 or 2.8). The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department grade scale equivalents	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good--clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%

2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	00 - 49.99%	0%

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. The University of Calgary stipulates that **more than four words of your own (previous essays in other courses) or someone else’s work that is used in direct or in-direct quotation without attribution** constitutes plagiarism. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people’s words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/node/208> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/research/research-ethics>

This course does allow students to conduct (or act as participants in) primary research involving surveys, interviews, or observations, as per the course-based ethics approval awarded by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. More information and detailed procedures will be provided at the beginning of term in January, 2015.

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (PIC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 picarts@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds

<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</p> <p>If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.</p>
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Schedule of Lectures and Readings

To be posted to D2L.