**COMS 363 (L04): Professional and Technical Communication**
**FALL 2019: September 5 to Dec. 6 (excluding Oct. 14 and Nov. 10-16)**
**Lecture: Web-based**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Instructor:** | Dr. Remillard |
| **Office:** | SS254 |
| **Office Phone:** | N/A |
| **Email:** | csremill@ucalgary.ca |
| **Office Hours:** | Tuesdays 3-5pm or by appointment |

### Course Description

An introduction to professional and technical communication in diverse media. Examines the rhetorical dimensions of workplace settings as well as the process of planning, composing and delivering professional and technical communication for various audiences

### Additional Information

The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline or on D2L. Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline.

### Objectives of the Course

Students who successfully complete the course should know how to

- approach workplace communication rhetorically, focusing not only on their purpose in writing but also on the needs and expectations of their audience and considering the ethical dimensions and other relevant features of the writing context.

- format basic workplace genres, including formal and informal reports, proposals, letters, memos, emails, and, optionally, résumés, instructions, technical descriptions, and websites.

- write and design effective print and online documents, using headings, lists, well-crafted paragraphs, and white space.

- effectively use, design, and present figures and tables.

- conduct secondary research (locating relevant sources using the U of C library search tools online). Depending on the focus of the recommendation report assignment, students may also be expected to know how to construct and interpret and present results from a simple empirical study (e.g., a small-scale usability study involving testing, interviews, or surveys).

- effectively use and correctly cite information from sources using a citation style appropriate to the course audience, ideally APA and/or IEEE style.

- edit documents to eliminate common writing errors.

**Textbooks and Readings**

Meyer, C. (2017). *Communicating for Results.* Fourth Edition. Don Mills: Oxford University Press

**Internet and electronic communication device information**

Students must have frequent, regular access to the Internet and email. A high-speed Internet connection is highly recommended. The course will be held online via the U of C's Desire2Learn (D2L) learning management system at https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/. I strongly recommend that you download a personal backup copy of this course outline and all online course materials (assignment descriptions and rubrics) in case you need them when Internet access is temporarily unavailable. A PDF reader is required.

**Supported technologies**: Course technologies usually work with all the major browsers (i.e. Firefox, Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari) and operating systems (Mac, Windows, etc). However, compatibility problems may occur with outdated browsers, plugins or apps, and usability issues may occur on mobile devices. Check your system's compatibility in Desire2Learn via My Tools > System Check. Students are responsible for ensuring they have personal computer systems that are compatible with course technologies, or they must use on-campus computers provided in libraries or labs.

**Sending email**: When initiating an email to your instructor from your own email program, send email to csremill@ucalgary.ca and put "COMS 363" anywhere in the subject line.

**Email management**: Students are responsible for ensuring they receive course email notifications and messages from the instructor, and receiving notifications they have subscribed to (i.e. email notifications of new messages from teammates in group discussion forums). Make sure course messages do not get filtered into spam or junk folders or get rejected by your mail server. By default, Desire2Learn will use the email address associated with your U of C ID. Configure your notification preferences in your D2L Settings, and then subscribe to desired discussion forums & threads.

**Word processing software**: The use of Microsoft Office software (ideally, 2007 or later) is highly recommended. Assignments require advanced features of Office programs (Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel) for professional formatting of tables, graphs, tables of contents, page numbering, headers, etc. MS Office is available to U of C Students through Office 365.

**Assignments and Evaluation**

| Weight | Assessed Components | Due |
|--------|---------------------|-----|
| 7.5% | **Labs**. There will be a lab assignment for each chapter covered in the textbook. They will give you an opportunity to familiarize yourself course concepts. These assignments are pass/fail, so late submissions will not be accepted. Your marker will check these assignments weekly and will discount any submissions that fail to adhere to submission guidelines. Lab 15 is not associated with a chapter | Weekly, due Fridays at 1159pm |
| 7.5% | **Quizzes**. There will be 15 quizzes throughout the term. These are | Weekly, |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | multiple choice, open book, and relate to the textbook readings. These quizzes will be administered on D2L. Quizzes are associated with chapters from the text book and will be due Fridays of the week that the readings are assigned. No late submissions of quizzes will be allowed. Note, Quiz 15 is not associated with a chapter. See schedule for details. You will have 90 minutes to complete each quiz. | due Fridays at 1159pm |
| 30% | **Short written assignments**. These three short writing assignments (roughly 300-500 words each) are designed to help you deliver different messages in a concise and coherent way. The styles and genres of your writing samples will vary by medium and message and should help improve your professional and technical writing. | Sep 20, Oct 18, Nov 8 |
| 10% | **Report proposal.** You will write a proposal outlining what you aim to achieve in your formal report. | Oct 25 |
| 35% | **Formal recommendation report**. You will compose a formal recommendation report, which typically might take the form of an evaluation report (social media audit). The body of the report (*including the introduction, methods, findings, conclusions, and recommendations*) must be 2000-2500 words and include a minimum of one effectively formatted table or graph. The report must also include the usual front matter (*title page, executive summary, table of contents, list of figures and tables*) as well as a reference list and appendices if needed. | Nov 22 |
| 10% | **Report presentation.** You will produce a formal presentation of the major findings and recommendations from your formal report. You will not deliver the presentation, rather you will create a presentation outline, design the presentation slides, and write a presentation script for the presentation. | Dec 6 |

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination:**  No

**Note:** You do not have to complete all the assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

If you miss a required course component, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

**Submission of Assignments**
Please include your name and ID number on all assignments and hand in your essays directly to your instructor or tutor. Please hand in your essays directly to D2L under the appropriate dropbox folder. If it is not possible to do so, email your assignment to the instructor with " Coms 363 Temporary Submission" in the subject line. NOTE: As soon as Desire2Learn is accessible, resubmit your assignment normally AND leave the instructor and marker a note in your file submission area about using this temporary submission method, to avoid late penalties.

Be prepared to provide photo ID to pick up assignments in SS 320. Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act***. Please note that instructors may use audio or video

recorded for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

**Policy for Late Assignments**
Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of 5% or a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

**Student Accommodations**
Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, see Section M.1 of the *University Calendar*: https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html. Also see FAQs for Students: https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq

**Expectations for Writing**
Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html

**Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale**
The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department. of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, percentage grades will be used for all assignments.

| Grade Point Value | Description | Grade | Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents* | Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4.00** | Outstanding performance | **A+** | 96 - 100% | 98.0% |
| **4.00** | Excellent performance | **A** | 90 - 95.99% | 93.0% |
| **3.70** | Approaching excellent performance | **A -** | 85 - 89.99% | 87.5% |

| 3.30 | Exceeding good performance | B+ | 80 - 84.99% | 82.5% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.00 | Good performance | B | 75 - 79.99% | 77.5% |
| 2.70 | Approaching good performance | B- | 70 - 74.99% | 72.5% |
| 2.30 | Exceeding satisfactory performance | C+ | 65 - 69.99% | 67.5% |
| 2.00 | Satisfactory performance | C | 60 - 64.99% | 62.5% |
| 1.70 | Approaching satisfactory performance | C- | 55 - 59.99% | 57.5% |
| 1.30 | Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject | D+ | 53 - 54.99% | 54.0% |
| 1.00 | Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject | D | 50 - 52.99% | 51.5% |
| 0.00 | Failure. Did not meet course requirements. | F | 0 - 49.99% | 0% |

\*   Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

**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. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. 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.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect

**Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation**
Course materials created by the instructor (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property

of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

**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, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics

**Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal**
For university regulations and procedures related to deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the *University Calendar:* https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html

**Student Support Services and Resources**
Please visit https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk.

For resources on D2L, visit http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.

## Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

| 1 | Start Date | Textbook Chapters | Labs | Quizzes due Fridays at 11:59 pm | Assignment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Week 1 | Sept 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| Week 2 | Sept 9 | 2, 7 | 2, 7 | 2, 7 | |
| Week 3 | Sept 16 | 4, 5 | 4, 5 | 4, 5 | Short Written Assignment 1 Due Sep 20 |
| Week 4 | Sept 23 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| Week 5 | Sept 30 | 8 | 8 | 8 | |
| Week 6 | Oct 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | Short Written Assignment 2 Due Oct 18 |
| Week 7 | Oct 14 | 12 | 12 | 12 | |
| Week 8 | Oct 21 | 13 | 13 | 13 | Proposal Due Oct 25 |
| Week 9 | Oct 28 | 9 | 9 | 9 | |
| Week 10 | Nov 4 | 11 | 11 | 11 | Short Written Assignment 3 Due November 8 |
| Week 11 | Nov 11 | No Readings | None | None | Reading Week |
| Week 12 | Nov 18 | 10 | 10 | 10 | Formal Report Due Nov 22 |
| Week 13 | Nov 25 | 14 | 14 | 14 | |
| Week 14 | Dec 2 | No Readings | 15 | 15 | Presentation Due Dec 6 |