

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

**Communications Studies COMS 363 L01**  
**Professional and Technical Communication**

**Spring 2015**

**May 14 - Jun 26, 2015**

**Instructor:** Aiden Buckland  
**Office:** SS 204  
**Office Phone:** 403-210-9471  
**E-Mail:** [abucklan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:abucklan@ucalgary.ca)  
**Web Page:** D2L available through MyUofC portal  
**Office Hours:** 10:30-12:30 Tuesdays and Thursdays

### **Course Description**

This class takes a rhetorical approach to understanding professional and technical communication. Emphasis is placed on how workplace communication is situated within distinct organizational or corporate cultures as well as broader socio-cultural contexts. Students will gain knowledge and skills in writing across genres and disciplines through experiential learning strategies and collaborative research projects. This is a performance driven class intended to teach students skills that can be applied to a variety of workplace situations.

### **Additional Information**

This course is offered entirely online. Interaction with the instructor and grading teams can be arranged during office hours or by appointment. Students can expect to put in the same amount of work (in hours) as they would if the course met face to face.

### **Objectives of the Course**

Students will learn about the process of planning, composing, and delivering professional and technical communication for various audiences. This course is designed to help you develop

- A rhetorical approach to crafting documents--one in which you critically consider your purpose in writing, the needs of your audience(s), and relevant features of the context in which you are writing.
- Writing strategies to keep your writing focused, coherent, and readable.
- Familiarity with the conventions and composing strategies for a range of written genres, including business correspondence, proposals, and reports.
- Familiarity with a range of resources for professional writers, including tools for online research, for online composing, and for collaborative writing.
- document design strategies to ensure that your documents look professional, promote easy retrieval of information, and use visuals to communicate information effectively.
- Competence in the use of a standard style of documentation.
- Competence in preparing PowerPoint presentations.

## Textbooks and Readings

Authors: GRAVES, Heather & GRAVES, Roger.

Title: STRATEGIC GUIDE TO TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION CANADIAN EDITION (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)

ISBN: 9781554810239

## Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Weight %	Due
1. Cover Letter	15	22-May
2. Proposal	15	29-May
3. Annotated Bibliography	15	05-June
4. Power Point	15	12-June
5. Editing	15	19-June
6. Final Group Project Report	25	26-June

**Short writing assignments (1-5 in the list above)** (roughly 500 words each). These assignments 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 prepare you for the final group assignment.

The **Final Report** will be completed in small groups. The report is a full featured, substantive report (1500-2000 words). This assignment will require you to conduct both secondary and primary research and integrate the results into a report.

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination:** No

**Submission of Assignments:** Please submit all assignments through dropbox found in D2L. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.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

Writing sample assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. Weekly lab assignments will not count if they are 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>

## Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using following grade scale percentage equivalents:

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. 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 <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> 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/resources/ethics>

### Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
<b>ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)</b>	SS 102 403-220-3580 <a href="mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca">artsads@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>CAMPUS SECURITY</b>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> <b>403-220-5333</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Calgary Police Service</b></li> <li>• <b>Emergency Text Messaging</b></li> <li>• <b>Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</b></li> <li>• <b>Safewalk Program</b></li> </ul>	<b>403-266-1234      Emergency: call 911</b> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</a> If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort ( <b>220-5333</b> ). For more information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk</a>

<b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT help line</li> </ul>	<a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a> 403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Support Services</li> <li>• Student Services Mobile App</li> </ul>	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>
<b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Arts Reps</li> <li>• Student Ombudsman</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/">https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds">http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</a>
<b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• Health Services</li> <li>• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</li> <li>• Online resources and tips</li> </ul>	<b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a> <b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a> 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.

### Schedule of Lectures and Readings

A detailed schedule of readings and assignments is available on D2L