

SUMMER 2014

MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION

MBCM-60440

*The Eugene D. Fanning Center for Business Communication
Mendoza College of Business
University of Notre Dame*

Management Communication will meet daily from Monday, June 2 through Friday, June 13, 2014. Class meetings are scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. Your instructor is James S. O'Rourke. Office: 234 Mendoza College of Business. Office telephone: 574.631.8397. Home telephone: 574.272.1773. Mobile: 574.339.1836. Instructor's e-mail address: jorourke@nd.edu.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

O'Rourke, J. S., *Management Communication: A Case Analysis Approach*, 5th edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson / Prentice Hall (2013). ISBN: 978-0-13-267140-9.

Alred, G. J.; Brusaw, C. T.; and Oliu, W. E., *The Business Writer's Companion*, 7th edition. Boston, MA: Bedford / St. Martin's (2014). ISBN: 978-1-4576-6303-1.

PURPOSES OF THE COURSE

- To give students an appreciation for the importance of effective communication in business and society;
- To help students understand how the elements of the communication process are directly related to successful public communication;
- To assist students in diagnosing their own skill levels in interpersonal, small group, and public communication;
- To help students improve their writing and speaking abilities in a variety of settings and business contexts;
- To provide students with an understanding of the ethical dimensions of professional communication;
- To give students an appreciation for the role of a free press in a democratic society and how the private sector is affected by it.

GRADING

This course involves two oral presentations and two case assignments. Each assignment will be valued at 20% of your final grade. The instructional team for Management Communication has three specific goals in mind as they read or listen to your work this summer:

- To diagnose your current writing and speaking abilities;
- To demonstrate clearly the standards of professional business writing and speaking expected in the North American workplace;
- To provide you with the skills and confidence you will need to improve.

You will be required to produce a business briefing and a persuasive speech that you have personally researched, written, and prepared specifically for this class. The briefings are scheduled for lessons 6 and 7: Monday, June 9, and Tuesday, June 10, 2014. The persuasive speeches are scheduled for lessons 8 and 9: Wednesday, June 11 and Thursday, June 12, 2014.

Grade weights will be distributed as follows:

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|---|-----|
| Case Assignment #1. | 20% |
| Due no later than 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 4, 2014 | |
| Case Assignment #2. | 20% |
| Due no later than 9:00 a.m., Monday, June 9, 2014 | |
| Business Briefing. | 20% |
| Delivered June 9 and 10, 2014 | |
| Persuasive Speech. | 20% |
| Delivered June 11 and 12, 2014 | |
| Classroom Participation. | 20% |
| During case analyses, discussion of readings, and speech critiques. Half of this total will be awarded by the course director and half by your speech/writing section instructor. | |

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

Management Communication, like certain other courses offered here at Notre Dame, is performance-oriented. Although you will receive substantial exposure through both reading and lecture to the theories that underlie effective communication, your grade will be heavily dependent on your ability to apply such information in frequent and practical writing and speaking exercises.

Your grade for any assignment in this course is a reflection of the instructional team's judgement of the quality of your work. We grade only on the basis of what you give us; we do not and cannot grade on the basis of the amount of time and effort you devote to an assignment, or on what you sincerely intended to do but didn't have time to finish.

While the University does impose 3.2-to-3.6 grade point average per section, you should keep in mind that you are attempting to meet our standards of quality work; you are not competing against each other. A grade of "A" is, essentially "ready for prime time" in a *Fortune 500*, mid-size business, or major professional services firm. In other words, with just a bit of tinkering, you could deliver that speech or use that document essentially as you've prepared it for class.

A "B" speech or document is basically sound but needs some attention before you think about presenting it to your employers, their customers or clients. The issues may be organizational or structural; they may be associated with the details of expression; or, you may not have the real needs of the audience in mind. In any event, that speech or document will work for you, but not before you work on it.

Anything in the "C" range is seriously flawed and will not meet the standards of the North American workplace without significant revision. A speech or document of this sort could damage your reputation as a competent business communicator if you were to use it without major improvements. Work of this sort is simply a non-starter in a *Fortune 500*, mid-size or major public accounting firm. You need to re-think your approach to the problem and try it again. To use such a speech or document would constitute a serious embarrassment to you, to your employer and, frankly, to those who educated you.

Once a grade has been assigned and recorded, it cannot and will not be changed unless evidence is provided that your instructor has made an error. A difference of opinion between you and your instructor about the quality of your work is not evidence of error.

We are sensitive to the differences among the instructors who will hear your speeches, and we work very hard as a team to look for and listen to the same evaluative issues in each assignment. Though complete elimination of inter-rater error is very difficult, our objective is to be as fair and helpful as we possibly can. We will apply the same measure of objectivity to your written assignments.

Speaking Dates. You will be assigned a breakout group and given a room assignment for your speech group. You *must be prepared* to speak on dates assigned to you for business briefings and persuasive speeches. To avoid speeches on consecutive dates, you will either speak on the first or second day of each speech assignment. Your breakout group instructor will specify who speaks on which day.

Listening. An important part of public communication is the willingness and ability of an audience member to listen. While your classmates are speaking, we will expect you to be a

thoughtful, considerate, attentive and courteous audience. Among other things, that means no laptops or cell phones. You will be asked, from time to time, to provide both an oral and a written critique for the speaker. This means you must listen carefully and reflectively to the speaker and try in some way to help your classmates improve. They, in turn, will try to help you.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Please seek help as soon and as often as you need it. Do not wait until the end of our very brief, two-week semester.

Deadlines. There are no automatic extensions, make-ups, or incompletes. You will be graded down for failing to meet deadlines. If you cannot meet your responsibilities in the course, see or call your instructor in advance of deadlines.

Absence. We will have just ten meeting sessions in this course. I regard your presence as especially important, even if I do not formally take roll at the beginning of each class. If you cannot be here, let me know about it in advance. I have found, over the years, a remarkable correlation: those who come to class faithfully seem to do better in the course. Your classmates and I will take it as a sign of professionalism that you are present for class and ready to begin by exactly 9:00 a.m. each day.

Incompletes. As a rule, I just do not award incompletes. They're genuinely a pain in the neck. You begin the autumn term with the obligations of the summer hanging over your head. Both instructor and student feel harried and unhappy about the situation. In unusual cases, though, such as hospitalization or genuine emergency, an incomplete "I" will be assigned. Unless the student completes all class assignments within one semester, an "F" will be assigned by the Registrar unless an extension is approved by both the instructor and the Dean, and the Registrar is notified.

Rewrites. There is no automatic option to rewrite an assignment if you've received a grade you don't like. Any student who receives a grade on a writing assignment of "C" or lower may petition the instructor for an opportunity to rewrite the assignment with no guarantee of a higher mark. If the rewritten work fails to meet basic instructional standards, the mark received may, in fact, be lower. In no cases will the final grade received be more than one letter higher than the original mark.

Problems. Please get in touch with me if you are in genuine distress. Authenticated illness or sufficiently sordid personal problems may persuade me to grant you some relief from a deadline. I'll do my very best to accommodate your needs, but I must know about them – the earlier the better. You may call me at home (574.272.1773) or in my office (574.631.8397) or on my cell phone (574.339.1836). I give much more coherent answers after 6:30 a.m. and before 11:30 p.m.

Plagiarism. Much of the educational process in the Mendoza College involves group discussion and collaborative activities. Neither the College nor I wish to hinder the learning that can and often does take place in that environment. Fairness, however, requires that certain limits be observed in the actual production of assignments.

In Management Communication, all writing and speaking tasks are to be accomplished by each student working independently. No student should copy another student's work or represent work done by someone else as if it were his or her own. No one may assist, review, or proofread your work in advance of the due date. Evidence of plagiarism may be cause for serious disciplinary action by the College. Please, do your own work. We strongly endorse and support the principles and process outlined in the *University of Notre Dame Graduate Business Honor Code*. Please read that document and use its precepts as a guide.

CASE ANALYSES

Background. Management Communication is a hybrid discipline that seeks to broaden your perspectives of the managerial profession while deepening your understanding of communication and its central role in the day-to-day lives of business managers. Often, the most useful and interesting approach to these goals is through a case study. These are simply descriptions of circumstances facing a manager and often present business students with choices, limitations, and ambiguity. Case studies are not usually written to demonstrate an effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation, but rather for the purpose of stimulating classroom discussion.

Your textbook includes a 6-page appendix, entitled "Analyzing a Case Study." Please read that section thoroughly before preparing a case study for discussion in class or on paper for a writing grade. That appendix contains a number of definitions, suggestions, and ideas that you will find useful as you read, shred, and produce a solution to the many case studies you will see as a student at Notre Dame. If you have specific questions, please speak to your instructor at the earliest possible moment.

Case Submission Dates. You may submit any of the case studies contained in the syllabus at any time *up to the date of classroom discussion*. Once a case has been discussed in class, you no longer have the option of submitting that case. You must submit your first case solution no later than 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 4, and your second case solution no later than 9:00 a.m., Monday, June 9. You may submit another case listed in the textbook *if and only if* you have oral permission from your instructor. If you have questions, please speak with your instructor.

Please note that marked and graded writing assignments (Case Assignment #1, in particular) will be embargoed until 9:00 a.m. on Monday, June 24. That is, you may not show your work to another student enrolled in this course until after that time.

THE BUSINESS BRIEFING

Background. The business briefing is among the more common forms of informative speaking that a manager or executive will experience. In the course of a business career, most managers will deliver hundreds, if not thousands, of brief informative talks, each focused in some way on their businesses. Their intention is to provide listeners with current, accurate, useful information that will shape their investment, purchase, employment, and other decisions.

Assignment. Your task is to research a *publicly-traded* firm, gathering as much relevant, useful information as possible from company publications, corporate web sites on the Internet, annual reports, industry summaries, and third-party sources, such as *Moody's*, *Standard and Poor's*, and others. You must decide which information would be most useful to a prospective investor, customer or employee; must then organize it in an easy-to-understand fashion, and trim it to fit a six-to-eight minute timeframe.

Context and Perspective. You must research and organize this briefing with a *specific perspective* in mind, which you will reveal as you begin your talk. You should focus on one of three viewpoints: that of a customer, an employee, or an investor. Your intent here is not to become an advocate on behalf of the company as an employer, a provider of goods and services, or an investment opportunity. Rather, you are answering a question for your classmates: “If I had money to invest, what would I want to know about this firm,” or “If I were seeking employment in this sector, what should I know about this company.” Your talk is to be entirely informative and will not include either a rhetorical (persuasive) perspective or an exhortation to action by the audience. Offer current, well organized information and let them make up their own minds.

Time Requirement. Your briefing must be no less than six minutes but no more than eight minutes in length. You will be penalized for delivering a talk that does not meet this requirement.

Outline. You must produce a one-page, keystroked outline of your remarks to the class. Please submit this document to your instructor as you rise to speak. It should include these elements:

- a two-level outline of your main points and key sub-points;
- proper documentation of all research sources cited in your briefing;
- the name and trading symbol (NASDAQ or NYSE) of the firm, your name, and the date of your briefing.

Speaking Dates and Times. You will receive a list of students and speaking sections during the first week of the course. That list will specify the room you will meet in and which instructor will hear your speeches.

How You Will Be Graded. As with the other speeches in this course, the business briefing will be evaluated for three basic ingredients: organization, expression, and support. In order to

receive a “B,” your briefing must have a clear explanation of the organization, structure, ownership, and purpose of the business you have chosen. It must also include such information as basic products and services (or product and service categories), business locations, distribution schemes, annual revenues, recent profit-and-loss figures, and other relevant financial information.

Your audience must be clear about what this company does, who their principal customers (or markets) are, against whom they compete, and what sort of value they add to the economy. Briefings that are clearly superior may receive a grade of “A.” Briefings that fail to achieve minimum standards in a majority of categories or which fail profoundly in at least one of the requisite categories may receive a lower grade.

Appropriate Dress. In presenting this briefing, we will expect you to appear in suitable, *corporate casual* business attire. You have considerable latitude in selecting the clothing that business colleagues would regard as appropriate. Clearly, though, you must present yourself in the way you would if you were addressing a gathering of modern business professionals, each of whom is dressed in casual yet tasteful attire.

Visual Support Requirement. Your speech must be supported by visual materials that are professionally prepared and appropriate for your topic and presentation. For this speech assignment, you may wish to consider computer graphics, such as *PowerPoint*, *Prezi*, or others. You will also find that other forms of visual communication will work in our classrooms, as well. Please keep room size in mind when designing font size and graphic displays.

THE PERSUASIVE SPEECH

Background. The persuasive speech is intended to provide an audience with a description of a business challenge, opportunity or problem, followed by an assessment of alternative courses of action available to the decision-makers. This speech is intended to be a review of the various decision options, leading to a recommendation from the speaker. Your task is to convince the audience of the correctness of a particular position or course of action. Unlike the Business Briefing, this speech advocates one decision or alternative as opposed to others. This speech should, and in fact must, inform to a great extent, but its purpose is to obtain a sense of conviction from the audience, channeling their concern and energy into a particular solution or action. In this assignment, you will become an advocate.

Assignment. You must research, organize, write and deliver an original persuasive speech on a topic of your own choosing, as long as it is related in some way to the general industry you selected for your business briefing. It need not be about the same company or any of its products and services. ***It must be business-related and may not be a simple sales pitch.*** Some form of visual support for your presentation is *required* for this assignment.

Time Requirement. The speech must be no less than seven minutes but no more than nine minutes in length. You will be penalized for delivering a speech that does not meet this requirement.

Outline. You must produce a summary of your remarks. Please submit this document to your instructor as you rise to speak. That will include:

- a one-page outline of your speech that includes main points and sub-points;
- proper documentation of research sources cited in the text of your speech;
- paper copies of all overhead transparencies or *PowerPoint* slides you use in your speech. Please print those six-per-page.

On the outline page, be sure to include your section number, name, speech title, your introductory remarks, main points, key sub-points, and your concluding remarks. You will be penalized if you fail to submit the outline as you rise to speak; the penalty will increase if the manuscript is missing by the close of business that day. If it's missing by the next regularly-scheduled class meeting, the speech will receive a significantly lower grade. You need **not** produce and distribute copies for all other members of the class.

No fancy binders, please. Please staple your outline, documentation, and supporting visual-aid copies together and hand them to your instructor as you rise to speak. Your instructor will not accept handwritten work.

How You Will Be Graded. As with the other presentations, this one will be evaluated for three basic ingredients: organization, expression, and support. Specifically, in order to receive a grade of "B," your presentation must have a clear focus of topic, a well-defined sense of purpose, an understandable introduction and overview of the problem or opportunity, an understandable summary or conclusion, and a clear, unambiguous recommendation. It must also be easy to follow. In addition, your presentation must be adequately expressed, both in diction and delivery. Further, the speech must be supported with credible, current and understandable information. The greater the variety and credibility of your support, the better. Presentations that are clearly superior may receive a grade of "A." Those that fail to achieve the minimum standards in a majority of categories or which fail profoundly in at least one of the requisite categories will receive a lower grade.

Speaking Dates. Your instructor will determine who speaks on which date. Please be prepared to speak on the first of the speech dates (Monday, June 9). The exact speaking order and the method for selecting speakers for each date are the prerogative of the instructor.

Appropriate Dress. In presenting this speech, we will expect you to appear in suitable professional, casual corporate attire. There is considerable latitude afforded to you in selecting the clothing that business colleagues would regard as appropriate. Clearly, though, you must present yourself in the way you would if you were addressing a gathering of modern business professionals. We know it's summer and will offer some slack, given the temperatures. Still, you should do your best to look professional.

Assignment Options. As with your informative speech, choosing a topic will not be easy. Your topic *must be related in some way to the industry (though not necessarily the same company) you chose for your Business Briefing.* Policy topics or topics dealing with government regulation of business are fine. ***This cannot be a sales pitch for a product, service, or stock.*** You should select something that will likely interest both you and your audience; information they can put to some good use is always welcome. If you are at all uncertain about topic selection, please speak directly with your instructor.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Management Communication – MBCM-60400 – Summer 2014

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| Monday, June 2 | THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION |
| 9:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. | Intro: Syllabus distribution and course overview. |
| 9:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. | Lecture: The Communication Process. The Roles and Functions of Management Communication. |
| 10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. | Break. |
| 10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. | Discussion: Case Study 1-2, <i>Great West Casualty v. Estate of G. Witherspoon (A)</i> . |
| | Readings: O'Rourke, Chapter 1, "Management Communication in Transition." O'Rourke, Appendix A, "Analyzing a Case Study." O'Rourke, Appendix E, "Documentation." |
| | PowerPoint: (1) "Management Communication," 17 slides. |
| Tuesday, June 3 | THE BASICS OF CORRESPONDENCE: MEMOS AND LETTERS |
| 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | Discussion: Case Study 11-2, <i>Dixie Industries, Inc.</i> |
| 10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. | Break. |
| 10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. | Lecture: Communication Strategy. |
| 11:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. | Discussion: North American Business Correspondence. |
| | Readings: Alred, Chapter 1, "The Writing Process." Alred, Chapter 6, "Correspondence." O'Rourke, Chapter 2, "Communication and Strategy." O'Rourke, Appendix C, "Sample Business Letter." O'Rourke, Appendix D, "Sample Business Memo." |
| | PowerPoint: "Communication Strategy," 29 slides. |
| Wednesday, June 4 | COMMUNICATION ETHICS AND THE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY |
| 9:00 a.m. - 9:30: a.m. | Discussion: Case Study 3-2, <i>A Collection Scandal at Sears, Roebuck & Company</i> . |
| 9:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. | Lecture: Communication Ethics: A Framework for Decision-Making. |
| 10:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. | Break. |
| 10:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. | Lecture: "E-Mail: Rights, Risks, and Responsibilities." |
| 11:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. | Discussion: Case Study 7-1, <i>Cerner Corporation: A Stinging Office Memo Boomerangs</i> . |
| | Readings: O'Rourke, Chapter 3, "Communication Ethics." O'Rourke, Chapter 7, "Technology." |
| | PowerPoint: "Communication Ethics for Managers," 19 slides. "E-Mail: Rights, Risks, and Responsibilities," 47 slides. |

Thursday, June 5

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

10:45 a.m. - 11:45 p.m.

THE PRINCIPLES OF PLAIN ENGLISH**Discussion:** Principles of Style and Tone.**Lecture:** Using Plain English to Solve Management Problems.**Break.****Discussion:** Case Study 5-1, *Cypress Semiconductor Corporation*.**Readings:** O'Rourke, Chapter 5, "Writing."

Alred, Chapter 9, "Style and Clarity."

PowerPoint: (1) "Community General Hospital," 13 slides. (2) "Writing," 25 slides.**Friday, June 6**

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

10:15 a.m. - 11:45 p.m.

PERSUASION AND PUBLIC SPEAKING**Discussion:** Case Study, *Target Corporation: Predictive Analytics and Customer Privacy*. Classroom Handout.**Break.****Lecture:** Preparing to Speak**Readings:** O'Rourke, Chapter 4, "Speaking."

O'Rourke, Chapter 6, "Persuasion."

PowerPoint: (1) "Preparing to Speak," 20 slides. (2) "Business Briefing," 18 slides.**Monday, June 9****BUSINESS BRIEFINGS****Room 162 Mendoza** Prof. J. S. O'Rourke**Room 160 Mendoza** Prof. Carolyn Langley**Room 159 Mendoza** Prof. Chad Harms**Room 158 Mendoza** Prof. Connie Mick**Tuesday, June 10****BUSINESS BRIEFINGS****Room 162 Mendoza** Prof. J. S. O'Rourke**Room 160 Mendoza** Prof. Carolyn Langley**Room 159 Mendoza** Prof. Chad Harms**Room 158 Mendoza** Prof. Connie Mick**Wednesday, June 11****PERSUASIVE SPEECHES****Room 162 Mendoza** Prof. J. S. O'Rourke**Room 160 Mendoza** Prof. Carolyn Langley**Room 159 Mendoza** Prof. Chad Harms**Room 158 Mendoza** Prof. Connie Mick**Thursday, June 12****PERSUASIVE SPEECHES****Room 162 Mendoza** Prof. J. S. O'Rourke**Room 160 Mendoza** Prof. Carolyn Langley**Room 159 Mendoza** Prof. Chad Harms**Room 158 Mendoza** Prof. Connie Mick

Friday, June 13

CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS

9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.

Discussion: Case Study 1-3, *Domino's "Special" Delivery: Going Viral Through Social Media.*

9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Break.

10:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Lecture: Corporate Communication, Media Relations, and Press Interviews.

11:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

Discussion: Course Summary.

PowerPoint: "Media Relations," 16 slides.

Readings: O'Rourke, Chapter 13, "Dealing with the News Media"
O'Rourke, Appendix G, "Media Relations for Business Professionals: How to Prepare for a Broadcast or Press Interview"