

Course Description

A course designed to give students the fundamentals of professional business communications: parliamentary procedure, interviews, group discussions, presentations, and advanced public speaking.

In this section, strongest attention will be given to communicating in the professional arenas of the corporate and non-profit sectors. Particular time will be spent on students' development of professional identity and materials as well as the types of communications activities most commonly faced in the contemporary business world.

Course Goals

Students will refine their skills in written and spoken communication, document design, and information presentation. Specifically, students will:

- Think of themselves as professionals and give consideration to their future career paths;
- Identify and research problems, identify and propose solutions, and make recommendations in writing and speech;
- Communicate information effectively in letters, memoranda, and email;
- Present their professional identity in standard documents (resumes, letters, etc.);
- Showcase their professional experience and abilities in a portfolio of work;
- Present information clearly and attractively in print publications;
- Work effectively with clients in information/design projects.

Each of these goals will be addressed by one or more major course projects, as well as smaller homework/activity-type projects throughout the semester.

Required Course Texts & Materials

Cunningham, Donald H., Elizabeth O. Smith, and Thomas E. Pearsell. *How to Write for the World of Work*. 7th ed. Boston: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005.

Appropriate computer media for backing up course work.
Other materials (paper, binders) for projects (resume, portfolio), as appropriate and needed.

Course Requirements

In order to earn a passing grade in this course, students must:

- Complete seven (7) major course projects over the course of the semester;
- Illustrate understanding of course materials and meet course goals in completing the projects.

Additionally, students should know that their course grade will also depend upon:

- Attendance at and active participation in class sessions;
- Completion of various homework assignments and/or in-class activities.

The relationship of these components to the final grade in the course will be made clear under "Grading," below.

Major Projects

As stated above, there are seven (7) major projects in this course; five (5) of these will be completed individually, and two (2) will be completed in groups. The group projects are designated with an asterisk (*) in the list below. Students must complete all major projects in order to pass the course.

- *Future Autobiography*. In this somewhat creative assignment, students are asked to imagine their career from a vantage point several years in the future; students should, in this assignment, begin (or continue) to realistically imagine their career path and to view themselves as professionals in their field. 10% of final grade in course.
- *Recommendation Report*.* In this project, students will identify a problem or area for improvement on the campus of Lees-McRae College, identify the group(s) this problem impacts, and identify a potential solution to the problem. The report will be addressed to those actual persons on campus who can address the concern and will be delivered to those persons when complete. 20% of final grade in course.
- *Recommendation Presentation*.* This is a continuation of the *Recommendation Report*, in which the groups will make a 15-20 minute oral presentations of their findings and recommendations to their audience for the report. 10% of final grade in course.

- *Employment Documents.* Students will work to understand and refine their professional identity by completing resumes, job application letters, and other relevant employment documents in this project. Form and function of documents will be considered. 10% of final grade in course.
- *Brochure.* Students will work with a client (one of the Humanities Division's programs, that program's coordinator/faculty) to create a brochure to be sent to prospective students interested in that program's major, minor, or coursework. The brochure should fit a standardized "Humanities Division" design, should be informative about the program in question, and should meet with the approval of the client. Students will gain experience merging their own ideas with a client's expectations. 10% of final grade in course.
- *Professional Portfolio.* Building on the *Employment Documents* project, students will continue to represent their professional identity in this project, which is a showcase of their work in their chosen field. The portfolio may take any appropriate format, and should show off the student's work to its best advantage. 20% of final grade in course.
- *Email Project.* This project serves the dual purpose of demonstrating the student's proficiency in the writing of formal, businesslike emails and helping the instructor to see how the course is progressing near midterm. It is the least involved of all of the projects. 5% of final grade in course.

Further details on these course projects will be forthcoming throughout the term: assignment guides with more specific requirements and instructions, as well as due dates, draft deadlines, and conference scheduling.

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation. Attendance, as such, is not a formal part of assessment of students' work in this course. Of course, attendance is a crucial part of the learning process, and students enrolled in an upper-division (400-level) course are expected to be well aware of that fact. Attendance is expected, but it is ultimately each student's decision whether or not to attend. Note, however, that active participation in the course (discussions, workshops, and activities) is a component of the course grade (5% of the final grade), and it is difficult to participate if one is not present. Please make every effort to attend regularly and participate actively.

Students with Additional Needs. Lees-McRae College makes every attempt to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Therefore, reasonable arrangements will be made for any student with a documented disability. If you have a documented disability, you can make confidential arrangements through Tami Tressler-Blewitt, the Coordinator of Disability Services at Lees-McRae, to accommodate your disability. If a student with a documented disability wishes to request accommodation, they must inform their instructor of that disability and must meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services at Lees-McRae prior to receiving any assistance or accommodations. Students with disabilities should make an appointment to meet with Ms. Tressler-Blewitt as soon as possible to complete the necessary paperwork and to develop an Individual Accommodation Plan. Ms. Tressler-Blewitt's office is in the Burton Center for Student Success and she can be contacted at ext. 2561 or via e-mail at: tressler-blewitt@lmc.edu.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity. As stated in the *Lees-McRae Student Handbook* (2007-2008), "Lees-McRae College fosters a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. All students are expected to act in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights and responsibilities of others, including the right to learn and prosper in a campus community free from fraudulence and dishonesty; every student has the responsibility to help maintain such a campus community. The attempt of any student to present as his/her work that which they have not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to severe consequences and possible suspension" (7).

Students are encouraged to be familiar with the definitions of cheating, collusion, lying, and plagiarism presented in the *Student Handbook*, pages 7 and following, as well as with the consequences for violations of academic integrity specified there. Students found to have knowingly and willfully breached academic integrity in this course will receive the grade of "XF" for the course, and will be referred to the Academic Affairs office for potential further action.

Computers. This course meets in a computer classroom, and each student will, therefore, have a computer available for use during class time. Do not abuse this privilege. Using network access for research to augment class discussion, working on course projects, and communicating with others in the course are appropriate uses of the facilities; Facebook, instant messenger, random Web surfing, and checking email are not.

Late Work. The *Course Calendar*, below, details when major projects, drafts of projects, and homework assignments are due, and how they are to be handed in. Major projects will be docked one full letter grade (e.g., from A- to B-) for each class day they are late. Workshop drafts must be presented on time for the workshop; failure to do so will cost the student in terms of participation in the workshop. Conference drafts may not receive my fullest or most careful consideration if they are submitted late. Homework is not accepted late, except by prior arrangement. The final examination period (used as a portfolio showcase) is the absolute deadline for the *Professional Portfolio* project (and all other late projects); no work will be accepted after the end of the final examination period. No work is considered submitted until it has been submitted as required below.

Submission of Work. Various types of work will be submitted in various ways in this course. Homework should be typed, printed, and brought to class in hard copy to be handed in. Workshop drafts should be typed, printed, and brought to class in hard copy for your peers' evaluation and/or brought to class on computer media for evaluation/commentary on the classroom computer hardware. Conference drafts should be typed and emailed to the student work submission account (studentwork@michaelkapper.com) by the appropriate deadline and in an appropriate file format. Final drafts of projects should be typed, printed, and submitted in hard copy in class on the date due (other formats may be acceptable for final drafts by prior arrangement).

Electronic File Formats. Please note that while this course takes place in a computer classroom which has the most up to date Microsoft Office package installed, Office 2007 has not yet become a standard in the corporate and non-profit sectors, and the .docx format is not (and other -x appended Office file formats are not) yet a "standard." Please submit Office files in the older formats (.doc, .ppt, .xls) or create rich-text (.rtf) or .pdf format documents, when submitting electronic versions. If I can't open it with Office 2004 for Mac, it has not been submitted.

Communication in and with the Class. For general correspondence (questions and the like), please use my LMC email address to contact me (kapperm@lmc.edu); I will use your LMC email address to contact you. I will also add each student's LMC email address (and one additional address, if you like) to a course mailing list that we can all use to post messages to the class: com401spr2008@michaelkapper.com.

The Syllabus Itself. This document represents a contract between me, the professor, and you, the student. The policies will be enforced as stated here, though exceptions may be made for good cause. If you believe you have good cause, please discuss your situation with me. Any exception made will be on a case-by-case basis and will always be in the student's favor. The calendar is, of course, subject to change with circumstances. Your continued enrollment in the course signifies your understanding and acceptance of the goals and policies stated in this syllabus.

Grades

Your grade in this course will be determined by your performance of the work as measured against the standards you will be informed of for each assignment. I make every attempt to reward accomplishment, not to punish failure, in assigning grades: a grade lower than 'A' doesn't mean you "did something wrong"; rather, a grade higher than 'F' designates "doing things right."

Your final grade in this course will be calculated like a grade point average, using these percentages like the "credit hours" in the calculation:

Future Autobiography	10%
Recommendation Report	20%
Recommendation Presentation	10%
Employment Documents	10%
Brochure	10%
Professional Portfolio	20%
Email Project	5%
Participation	5%
Homework	10%
Total	100%

Your final grade will be reported in these "GPA" ranges:

3.65 - 4.00	A
3.45 - 3.64	A-
3.15 - 3.44	B+
2.80 - 3.14	B
2.50 - 2.79	B-
2.20 - 2.49	C+
1.80 - 2.19	C
1.50 - 1.79	C-
1.20 - 1.49	D+
0.70 - 1.19	D
0.00 - 0.69	F

Note: Consistent 'A-' work will earn an 'A' in the course.

Course Calendar

Please note that this course calendar is the best roadmap I can provide for the semester when planning at the beginning of the term. Remember that it is subject to change, with appropriate notice to you. Assignments will never be "moved up," though they may be moved back. Unless you hear differently, all workshops and discussions will take place on the day they are listed in this calendar, and all assignments will be due as listed here. If you miss class or arrive late on a given day, it is your responsibility to check with classmates for lecture and/or discussion notes that you missed and to check with me for any assignment sheets or other handouts you may not have received. Please ask me about classroom content only for clarification after you have discussed what you may have missed with a classmate. Reading and homework assignments will be made in class.

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1 16-18 Jan		Introduce Course, Policies, and Materials	*Read: 3-34 *Hwk: Case Analysis (p. 32) Introduce <i>Future Autobiography</i>
Week 2 21-25 Jan	Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday No Class	*Read: 36-44, 53-58 Draft of <i>Future Autobiography</i> due in class ^o Workshop <i>Future Autobiography</i> drafts	Conferences <i>Future Autobiography</i> [†]
Week 3 28 Jan - 1 Feb	*Read: 44-53 <i>Future Autobiography</i> Due [§] Introduce <i>Recommendation Report</i>	*Read: 359-388 *Hwk: p. 58, #2	*Read: 391-413 <i>Recommendation Report</i> preliminary work due in class ^o
Week 4 4-8 Feb	*Read: 60-72 *Hwk: p. 72, #2 (adapted)	*Read: 74-92 *Hwk: pp. 92-93, #1, 3, & 5	*Read: 415-442 <i>Recommendation Report</i> research due in class ^o
Week 5 11-15 Feb	*Read: 97-119 *Hwk: p. 128, ind. act.	*Read: 119-127, 131-144 *Hwk: p. 148, #1	*Read: 144-148 Draft of <i>Recommendation Report</i> due in class ^o Workshop <i>Recommendation Report</i> drafts
Week 6 18-22 Feb	*Read: 151-185 *Hwk: pp. 185-186, #4 Introduce <i>Recommendation Presentation</i>	Conferences <i>Recommendation Report</i> [†]	*Read: 331-354 *Hwk: p. 354, IA #1
Week 7 25-29 Feb	*Read: Tufte (distributed) *Hwk: p. 354, CA #1 <i>Recommendation Report</i> due to Dr. Kapper [§]	<i>Recommendation Presentation</i> draft due in class ^o Workshop <i>Recommendation Presentation</i> drafts	Conferences <i>Recommendation Presentation</i> [†]
Spring Break	As much "Spring" as there is in this Break (March 1-9), enjoy the fact that there is No Class		
Week 8 10-14 March	*Read: 522-542 *Hwk: p. 542, #1 Introduce <i>Email Project</i>	*Read: 188-208 *Hwk: p. 230, #4	*Read: 208-227 Deliver <i>Recommendation Report</i> and <i>Recommendation Presentation</i> to appropriate audience by 5 pm today
Week 9 17-21 March	*Read: 233-282 *Hwk: p. 282, #1 Complete <i>Email Project</i> by 2 pm today Introduce <i>Employment Documents</i>	Workday <i>Employment documents worksheet; Dr. Kapper will be out of town attending an academic conference.</i>	Easter Break No Class

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 10 24-28 March	Easter Break No Class	*Read: 544-561 <i>Employment Documents</i> draft due in class ^o Workshop <i>Employment Documents</i> drafts	Conferences <i>Employment Documents</i> [†]
Week 11 31 Mar - 4 Apr	*Read: 564-583 <i>Employment Documents</i> due [§] Introduce <i>Brochure Project</i>	*Read: 309-322 *Hwk: p. 330, IA #1	*Read: 322-329 *Hwk: p 330, CA #2
Week 12 7-11 Apr	<i>Brochure</i> Draft due in class ^o Workshop <i>Brochure</i> Introduce <i>Professional Portfolio</i>	*Read: 286-296 *Hwk: Portfolio Planning Worksheet Portfolio Planning Workshop	*Read: 296-306 *Hwk: p. 307, #2
Week 13 14-18 Apr	<i>Brochure Project</i> client meetings should be finished by 5pm today (use class time to meet with clients?)	<i>Portfolio</i> Workshop #1	Conferences <i>Brochures</i> [†]
Week 14 21-25 Apr	<i>Portfolio</i> Workshop #2	<i>Portfolio</i> Work Day	<i>Brochures</i> Due [§] <i>Portfolio</i> Workshop #3
Week 15 28 Apr - 2 May	<i>Portfolio</i> Work Day	Conferences <i>Portfolios</i>	<i>Portfolio</i> Work Day
Final Exams	<i>Portfolio</i> Due [§] <i>Portfolio</i> Showcase	<i>Probably</i> Monday, May 5, 2008, 1-3 pm	

* Assignments marked with this symbol (before the listing) are to be completed, printed, and with you at the beginning of class time (complete the reading and homework assignments before class on the day for which they are listed; these assignments, unless specifically noted otherwise, are not accepted via email.

† Assignments (listed for conference days) marked with this symbol are due by 5pm the day before they are listed (via email to studentwork@michaelkapper.com); a conference document for which the conferences are on Friday is due at 5 pm on Thursday. The final conference on the *Professional Portfolio* project (30 April 2008) is the exception: you will bring your portfolio in progress with you to your conference on that day.

^o Assignments noted as "due" and marked with this symbol must be completed, printed, and with you on the date for which they are listed, as we will be workshopping these documents in class on those days. Should you be unprepared for workshop, you will not earn your participation points for that day. I will not collect these assignments, so emailing them to me serves little purpose.

[§] Assignments noted as "due" and marked with this symbol must be completed, ready to hand in, and with you at the beginning of class on the date due. If your assignment is not ready to hand in at the beginning of class, it will be considered late. The end of the final examination period (presumably 3 pm on May 5) will be the absolute deadline for handing in the *Professional Portfolio* assignment.