

# BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

CIMBA Program, Paderno del Grappa, Italy – Fall 2014

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## Description of Course

This course is designed to introduce you to key concepts, theories, and skills in business and professional settings. The course is designed to help you in both your personal professional development, as well as communicating successfully within business teams. We will cover the primary communication scenarios and skills you will need to succeed professionally, including using communication to get the job you want, communicating in workplace settings, interviewing, formal presentations, persuasion, speeches, and team building.

## Objectives and Goals of the Course

1. Gain basic competence and skills in organizational communication processes, and interviewing processes, structure, and question construction.
2. Prepare to secure a job using effective skills in persuasion, self-presentation, and self-expression
3. Become competent in navigating an effective interview
4. Gain professional presentation skills and experience via simulated and real situations
5. Prepare for a lifetime as successful communicators in business settings.

## Texts

Excellence in Business Communication (6<sup>th</sup> edition and up). Thill and Bovée, Prentice Hall

## Grading System

97%-100%	A+	94%-96%	A	90-93%	A-
87%-89%	B+	84%-86%	B	80%-83%	B-
77%-79%	C+	74%-76%	C	70%-73%	C-
67%-69%	D+	64%-66%	D	60%-63%	D-
<60% - #EpicFail					

## Assignments and exams

Class Engagement	25 points
Quizzes (3 x 15)	45 points
Career Research Presentation	25 points
Strategic Writing Project	75 points
Employment Interview/Elevator Speech	100 points
Group Cultural Training Final Project	150 points
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>420 points</b>

**Class Engagement (25 points):** You should be prepared to participate in class discussions and interactive activities. You will get the most benefit out of this class (and the class experience will be the most rewarding) if you come to class ready to be involved.

**Career Research Presentation (25 points):** For this assignment, you will do research on the career field and position that you are interested in, which you will deliver as an informative presentation to the class. Your presentation should include a discussion of the current and future state of the profession, a possible place of employment, and your goals in pursuing this career. **For this assignment you will turn in an outline for your presentation, including at least 3 sources (10 points). You will then present your informative speech in 3-5 minutes (15 points).**

### **Strategic Writing Project: Feature Article/Blog Post: 75 points**

For this assignment, you will write a feature article blog post for an organization in (or around) Paderno. For this project you will interview a business professional in Paderno. For the interview, **you will write an email requesting an interview (5 points).** You will then submit a **questionnaire for your interview for approval from your professor (10 points).** The purpose of your interview is to find out as much about the organization as you can, with a special focus on something interesting about the organization (a problem/opportunity, history of the company, a human interest angle). **You will then write a feature article about the company you interviewed (50 points).** The topic of this article is open and flexible, but you must include quotes from your interview. You should find a strategic way to talk about the company in both a humanizing and promotional way. The easiest way to do this is to find an issue that you think the organization should represent or get involved with. The objective of this article is to do more than simply promote the company, but provide a personal perspective on the company that would be interesting enough for others to read as a blog post. Your write-up should be 500-750 words, and should use excellent written communication skills, as well as feature imagery and/or links appropriate for a blog post. After writing the article, you should send a **thank-you email to your interviewee with the finished article inviting her or him to suggest any revisions (10 points).** You will submit your final article to your professor (with changes made based on interviewee's revisions highlighted).

### **Organizational Culture Write-Up (25 points)**

During the semester, we will tour local organizations. During one company visit, you will ask questions and take notes about their organizational culture. While there, you will specifically identify 3 specific signs that point to core values deeply held by the organization. Following the visit, you will produce a 2-page write-up identifying the organizational culture and describing its values. Your write-up should include specific references to statements or other indicators you noticed on the company tour.

### **Employment Interview Preparation and Elevator Speech (100 points total)**

For this assignment, you will present yourself to the class as a candidate for the job you presented about in your informative presentation. Your presentation to the class will take the form of a **1-2 minute elevator speech that concisely and persuasively positions you as the right person for the job (50 points).** As part of this assignment, **you will also create a professional resume (25 points) and cover letter (25 points)** that are tailored to your specific

career and place of employment. **Once you have submitted your resume and cover letter, you will present a 1-2 elevator speech that concisely and persuasively positions you as the right person for the job (50 points).** You should do more than say why you want the job.

**Final Project: Group Cultural Training (150 points):** Working in teams, you will act as consultants and give a cultural training in a specific area of business communication in a culture other than your own. Examples could include how to conduct a business meeting, how to conduct a press conference or work with the media, how to conduct a dinner meeting, how to submit a business proposal, or other another interpersonal business communication topic. **Teams will submit their culture and area of business communication prior to moving forward on producing training.** Each presentation should take at least 20 minutes and should include visual aids and an interactive activity designed to provide the other groups with hands-on training relevant to the concepts covered. **You will also provide a training sheet for the class (50 points)** Following the formal presentation and activity, you should lead a Q&A session.

### **Course Policies**

**Attendance/Participation:** Attendance policy is per CIMBA guidelines: Attendance at all classes and CIMBA sanctioned activities is MANDATORY. All unexcused absences will have the following consequences:

- a. 1st absence will result in a loss of a 1/3 of a letter grade in that class
- b. 2nd (cumulative) absence will result in a loss of an entire letter grade in that class
- c. 3rd (cumulative) absence will result in a dismissal from the program

Absences due to illness require a note from the CIMBA Undergraduate Office Staff and/or the Instituti Filippin medical staff. If a student is sick and cannot attend class, he/she must inform the CIMBA Staff immediately. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. If you miss a class for excused reasons, follow CIMBA guidelines, keep to the course schedule, and understand that you will be responsible for that day's material.

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism is submitting someone else's idea or work as your own, intentionally or unintentionally, without proper acknowledgment of sources. All sources must be properly documented according to a standard style (e.g., MLA, APA, CM). Incorrect acknowledgment or failure to cite sources will result in a zero grade for that project with the option to redo. See also UI's policy below.

**Classroom Environment:** We learn best in a comfortable, collaborative environment with common courtesy and respect to everyone. Disrespect or harassment of any type will NOT be tolerated; see <http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching/policies.shtml> for UI's stated polices. Be professional and courteous during presentations and lectures. If you bring your laptop to take notes or use for a workshop, use it for coursework. In other words, while physically in class, be mentally in class as well. All accommodations for students with learning differences are made; please let me know what is needed.

### **Miscellaneous:**

**Class Interactivity:** It is my intention to make classes interactive and enjoyable. When you come to class, come prepared to get involved. The more involved you are, the more enjoyable the class will be.

**You are responsible for the assigned textbook readings** as well as any handouts. Do NOT assume you can produce quality work without the textbook, which helps you contextualize the writing situations and conventions for your assignments and details basic technical and format procedures not covered in class.

**Assignments and Tests.** All work is due at the beginning of class. No late work will be accepted. No exceptions. There will be no make-ups for tests, no exceptions. Please keep backup copies of assignments and save returned assignments through the end of the course.

All work for this class must be your original work. Plagiarism and academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism and academic misconduct is not an excuse. All cases of plagiarism will result in failure of the course and will be reported to CIMBA and the University of Iowa.

**Preparation and participation are essential** as this is not a lecture class – we learn from each other as we work on the various assignments. Please come prepared; do not hesitate to ask questions; and grant others the courtesy of your attention and feedback.

**Several classes will be devoted to experiential learning** which provide you an opportunity to learn while doing. Be prepared. These assignments may entail group work, peer reviews or instructor-led sessions. Actively engage and be a critical reviewer of peers' writing, in both content and presentation. Note: “critical” does not mean negative; rather, it is a careful, engaged analysis of the draft.

**Saturday Classes:** Due to the extensive amount of travel time incorporated into the CIMBA Undergraduate program, we may have a Saturday class or two (not during travel times) to ensure that we have the appropriate amount of class sessions (per UI regulations). If we meet on a Saturday, the date will be announced by the CIMBA office by the end of the first or second week.

**Technology & computers.** If you have a MAC, you should have a VGA connector for the overhead projector as many MAC's do not have a standard port. Also, team members should check for compatible software applications for sharing and sending documents. Saving documents as RTF (rich text format) or PDF usually ensures compatibility. Also, flash drives or USB's are very helpful for large files that may take some time to upload or download.

## **Calendar of Course Assignments and Exams**

*Detailed reading assignments, other assignments, and exams should be noted on a calendar of assignments. Calendar headings highlighting topics or ideas studied each week can be very helpful to students. It is also helpful for students to have an evaluated assignment before the third week of the class in order to provide explicit course expectations. Students are also encouraged to participate and attend a class when graded assignments occur throughout the semester on a regular basis.*

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The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Policies and Procedures

### **Administrative Home**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS [Academic Handbook](#).

[\[www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic\\_handbook/index.shtml\]](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml)

### **Electronic Communication**

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their standard University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Students should check their account frequently. (Operations Manual, III.II. [15.2](#). k.11.)

### **Academic Fraud**

Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud and are considered by the College to be a very serious matter. Academic fraud is reported by the instructor to the departmental DEO who enforces the departmental consequences. The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum is also informed. The Associate Dean enforces collegiate consequences which may include suspension or expulsion. See the [CLAS Academic Handbook](#).

### **Making a Suggestion or a Complaint**

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor and the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the [CLAS Academic Handbook](#).

### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

A student seeking academic accommodations should register with Student Disability Services and meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. For more information, visit this [site](#).

[\[www.uiowa.edu/~sds/\]](http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/)

### **Understanding Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI [Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment](#) at [www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html](http://www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html) for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

### **Reacting Safely to Severe Weather**

In severe weather, the class members should seek shelter in the innermost part of the building, if possible at the lowest level, staying clear of windows and free-standing expanses. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. (Operations Manual, IV. [16.14](#). Scroll down to sections e and i for severe weather information.)

\*The CLAS policy statements have been summarized from the web pages of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

# Course Schedule

\*Subject to change

Class	Topic	Reading	Assignment
1	Intros, What's in Store		
2	Successful Business Comm	Ch. 1	<b>Career Field Selection</b>
3	Global Business Comm	Ch. 3	<b>Outline, Career Presentation</b>
4	Effective Presentations	Ch. 14	
5	Presentations		<b>Career Information Presentation</b>
6	Intro to Business writing, the 3-step process	Ch. 4	<b>Strategic Writing Email: Send by COB</b>
7	Writing, Revising Business Messages	Ch.5-6	<b>Quiz 3 (Ch 1, 3, 4, 14) End of class. Strategic Writing: Questionnaire</b>
8	Writing Positive and Negative Messages	Ch. 8-9	
9	Persuasive Writing and Strat Comm	Ch. 10	
10	Writing for Digital Media	Ch. 7	<b>Strategic Writing: Article/Blog Post (COB)</b>
11	Building Your Career	Ch. 15	<b>Form Teams</b>
12	Job Applications, Interviews	Ch. 16	
13	Elevator Speech practice, Resume, Cover Letter Development		<b>Quiz 2 (Ch. 8, 9, 10, 7, 15, 16) (beginning of class)</b>
14	Elevator Speeches		<b>Elevator Speeches, Resume, Cover Letter</b>
15	Intro to working in Teams	Ch. 2	<b>Choose culture, area of business</b>
16	Planning Reports, Proposals	Ch. 11	
17	Writing Reports, Proposals	Ch. 12, 13	
18	Producing Reports, Proposals	Ch. 14	<b>Quiz 3 (Chs. 2, 11-14) (end of class)</b>
19	Make-up day, Org visit Day		
20	Team Work Day		
21	<b>Group Culture Training Presentations</b>		<b>Training Presentations, Report due</b>