

**Communication Studies 260  
Professional Communication  
Tuesday/Thursday Spring 2006**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Scott Dickmeyer	<b>Office hours:</b>	Monday:	1:10-2:10
<b>Email:</b>	dickmeyer.scot@uwlax.edu		Tuesday:	8:15-9:15
<b>Office:</b>	Center for the Arts 311		Wednesday:	1:10-2:10
<b>Phone:</b>	785-8364 (office)		Thursday:	8:15-9:15
	788-5578 (home--before 9 pm.)		Friday:	by appointment

**Required Text:**

Hamilton, C. & Parker, C. (2001). Communicating for results: A guide for business and the professions (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (available at textbook rental)

**Course Description:** This course is designed to increase your awareness of the importance of effective communication in your organizational experiences. One cannot be effective in their career without an understanding of their personal strengths and weaknesses as a communicator. Therefore, this course has been designed to increase your awareness of your communication skills. Additionally, you will have ample opportunities to practice the organizational communication skills of researching, presenting and critiquing performances.

**Course Goals/Objectives:** Organizational theorists, researchers and recruiters have all concluded that communication is the means by which things get done in an organization. Therefore, this course is designed to develop the essential communication skills. By completing this course, you should be able to:

1. Analyze an audience and adjust your presentation to meet the needs of that individual or group.
2. Plan and implement interpersonal, small group, and public communication strategies to obtain desired results.
3. Design and execute a successful training session.
4. Demonstrate presentational and listening skills.

**Course Requirements & Departmental Policies:** I believe that teaching and learning are exciting activities. I also believe that learning is more effective when we work together in an enjoyable and highly participative environment. I will do my best to make it worth your while to come to class and to make this academic experience pleasant. I will respect your ideas and in return, I expect you to come to class prepared to be intellectually involved. Since this class is, in effect, an attempt to practice organizational skills, I expect you to treat this course like you would a job. As the manager of this class, I assume that the people I am working with are good, hard-working, and intelligent people who are capable of meeting the requirements of this job. Additionally, I have several expectations of the people who are working with me. Specifically I expect you to:

1. **Attend class**—it is imperative that you are here. This course is only effective if everyone participates—we need your involvement in discussions, activities, and performances.
  - **Sick and personal days policy**—A student may miss two classes without penalty. Consider these absences to be equal to an organization's sick and personal day policies. It is your obligation to contact the professor with information regarding your absence. Additional absences have harsh consequences.

1. A third absence (**excused and/or unexcused**) will result in a deduction of 15 points (2%) from your course total.
  2. If you have more than three absences for the semester (**excused and/or unexcused**) I will lower your final grade for the course one full increment (e.g., earned A/B becomes a B).
  3. If you miss more than five times (**excused and/or unexcused**), you should drop the course or be prepared to earn a failing grade.
  4. **YOU CANNOT MISS CLASS PERIODS WHEN YOU ARE SCHEDULED TO GIVE A PRESENTATION OR TAKE AN EXAM.** If you have an unexcused absence during the class period you are to give a presentation or take an exam, you must complete this assignment to pass this course, but will receive no points for the assignment.
  5. I will handle special attendance situations with students on an individual basis as necessary.
- **Procedure for an excused absence:** First, contact the professor **prior** to the class period you will miss. Second, document the reason for absence (note from Doctor, Funeral announcement, etc.). Third, make arrangements with a classmate or professor to get materials from the missed class period.
  - **Perfect attendance will be rewarded:** Most organizations will reward workers with compensation for unused sick and personal day. Therefore, students with perfect attendance will earn 5 extra credit points. Note: an excused absence is still considered an absence.

**2. Be prepared for every class period**—I expect you to read and be prepared to discuss the chapters in advance of the class period devoted to them.

**3. Meet deadlines**—You must submit assigned work for grading on the date it is due. Failure to do so will result in a reduction of half the original credit. This is the policy for ALL assignments—presentations, in class activities, exams, etc.

**4. Demonstrate academic integrity in all of your work**—If you are caught cheating in any form (on tests, plagiarism in a presentation, or handing in work you did not do) you will receive a failing grade on that assignment.

**5. Comply with the departmental policy on equipment and properties**—No equipment or properties endangering the health or safety of the speaker or class may be used. Such items may include, but are not limited to, firearms, sharp knives, dangerous chemicals, explosives, and animals. Alcoholic beverages and illegal substances are prohibited. If you have questions about this departmental policy, consult your instructor.

**6. Writing-in-the-Major Statement**—The Communication Studies Department in a Writing-in-the-Major Program. Courses in Communication Studies are designed to improve students' writing competencies in a developmental fashion, requiring assignments and criteria appropriate for each course. This course requires reaction and application papers and occasional writing exercises.

### **Additional Information:**

1. I will make accommodations for students with special needs due to physical disabilities, learning disabilities, or unusual circumstances. If you have special needs, please make an appointment to see me in the first week of class so that we can discuss how your needs can best be met.
2. Each student should bring \$1 to class during the first week. The money will be used as a donation for the nonprofit presentation.
3. All assignments must be completed in order to pass this course.
4. Students have access to syllabus information, class assignments, and their grades in this course through Desire2Learn.

### **Brief Description of Assignments:**

**Communication concept presentation:** An assignment designed to get students familiar with describing, analyzing, reporting, critiquing and offering potential solutions to communication problems in organizational settings. This 5-7 minutes presentation calls for students to expound on material from chapters 1-6 and to prepare a PowerPoint slide show. As part of the presentation assignment students will provide a full content preparation outline at the time they speak, critique classmate presentations, and complete a self-critique of their own performance. This presentation is worth 75 points—the outline/bibliography is worth 10 points.

**Non-profit presentation:** An individual persuasion presentation where you attempt to convince the audience to agree with your opinion on the importance of donating to a specific non-profit organization. Ultimately the class will vote for the most effective presentation and the winner will have the class donation given to their non-profit organization in their name. The time frame for this speech is 4-6 minutes. As part of the presentation assignment, students will provide a full content preparation outline at the time they speak. This presentation is worth 100 points—the outline/bibliography is worth 15 points.

**Group Training Sessions:** The class will be broken into eight separate groups. Groups will work on creating training sessions on several facets of organizational interviewing and group/teamwork. The goal of the session will be to help managers train employees to be effective interviewers, group members/team players, and group leaders. Each group facilitates a section of the training session (at a minimum, including teaching, training, activity, and debriefing). On days when your group does not present, you will role-play being managers attending the seminar or will be assigned as critics for the seminar. The time frame for this presentation will be 30-35 minutes. A major component of the training session is the creation of training packets for seminar facilitators and seminar participants. The presentation portion of this assignment is worth 100 points. Groups will also submit in-depth trainer and trainee packets, worth 100 points.

**Exams:** There are two exams in this course. The first exam follows a multiple choice and short answer format. The exam has approximately 50 multiple-choice questions relating to text material and class lecture and 3-5 short answer questions requiring students to briefly explain their understanding of material discussed in the text, lecture, or class activity. The first exam covers text chapters 1-6. The second exam is a comprehensive, applied exam demanding students to demonstrate an understanding of all course content including text, lecture, training materials, presentation, and evaluation of training and individual presentations from the semester. Each exam is worth 125 points.

**In Class Assignments and critiques:** I believe that activity and reflection are important parts of the learning process. Therefore, a series of in-class application assignments and reflection assignments are part of this class. The assignments are described in this syllabus and are available on Desire2Learn.

**Grading:**

Communication Concept Presentation	75
• Outline	10
Non-profit presentation	100
• Outline	15
Group Training Session	100
• Trainee & trainer packets	100
Folder Assignments	100
Exams (2 x 125)	<u>250</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>750</b>

**Grading Scale:**

I grade your work according to the following assumptions:

A = 94-100%	Exceptional comprehension of the course material and exceptional performance
A/B = 89-93.99%	
B = 84-88.99%	Above average capability and better than normal performance
B/C = 79-83.99%	
C = 70-78.99%	Adequate understanding of course material and acceptable performance
D = 60-69.99%	Marginal comprehension of material and below average performance
F = 0-59.99%	Inability to successfully deal with course material and inadequate performance

During this semester you have the opportunity to accumulate 750 points. Therefore, your final grade will be figured by using the following point breakdown.

A—705-750	A/B—667-704	B—630-666	B/C—592-629	C—525-591
		D—450-524	F—0-449	

## **CST 260 Professional Communication Folder Assignments**

Over the course of the semester I will ask you to complete the following assignments. You will show me the assignment the day it is due, but will hand in the assignments (in your assignment folder) twice during the course of the semester (as directed in the course schedule).

### **Frame of Reference Assignment—Chapter One**

**Purpose:** This assignment is an attempt to get you thinking about frames of reference and how they influence your communication with others.

**Assignment:** Address the following:

1. List 15 of the most important aspects of your frame of reference (gender, religious affiliation, etc)
2. Describe how these aspects of your frame of reference influence the ways you think and communicate
3. Identify a person whom you would really like to communicate effectively with, but know that you do not
4. List 15 of the most important aspects of that person's frame of reference (gender, religious affiliation, etc)
5. Describe how these aspects of that person's frame of reference influence the ways s/he thinks and communicates
6. Identify ways you could improve your communication with that person

**Grading:** I will grade this assignment based on the honesty and depth—this assignment is worth 15 points.

### **Communicator Style Assignment—Chapter Three**

**Purpose:** This assignment is an attempt to get you thinking about your communicator style and how it influences your life.

**Assignment:** Complete the Survey of Communicator Styles in the Hamilton and Parker text. Then read the "Communication Style and Business Relationships" section of chapter three. Considering what you have learned about your communicator style, other styles, and how these styles compliment or deter communication, answer the following questions.

1. According to the scoring of the survey, what communicator style are you?
2. Do you believe this style accurately reflects you? If so, explain why it does. If not, which style is more accurate, explain.
3. Now that you understand communicator style, how has yours influenced your choice in friends, romantic partners, etc.?
4. Provide an example (from your life) of a relationship where you feel that the communicator styles compliment each other and make for a more effective relationship.
5. Provide an example (from your own life) of a relationship in which the communicator styles are not complimentary. How did (or does) the non-complimentary styles of communication negatively influence the relationship?

**Grading:** I will grade this assignment based on the honesty, depth, and textbook understanding demonstrated in your answer. The assignment is worth 25 points.

### **Listening Assignment—Chapter Four**

**Purpose:** This assignment is an attempt to get you thinking about your personal listening habits. The first step in becoming an effective listener is to identify your weaknesses as a listener.

**Assignment:** Answer the following questions—be sure to provide backing from the text and your own life—please type your responses.

1. Provide an example of a time when you were a poor listener.
2. What were the negative ramifications of your poor listening?
3. According to Chapter four in Hamilton and Parker, which one(s) of the causes of poor listening contributed to your being a poor listener?
4. According to Hamilton and Parker, how could you go about improving your listening skills?

**Grading:** I will grade this assignment based on the honesty, depth, and text-book understanding demonstrated in your answer. The assignment is worth 10 points.

### **Nonverbal Assignment—Chapter Five**

**Purpose:** This assignment is an attempt to get you thinking about your personal nonverbal habits. A step in becoming an effective communicator is to identify your weaknesses as a nonverbal communicator.

**Assignment:** Answer the following questions—be sure to provide backing from the text and your own life—please type your responses.

1. Provide an example of a time when someone misinterpreted your nonverbal behavior.
2. What were the negative ramifications of this misinterpretation?
3. According to Hamilton and Parker, how could you go about improving your nonverbal communication skills?

**Grading:** I will grade this assignment based on the honesty, depth, and textbook understanding demonstrated in your answer. The assignment is worth 10 points.

**These assignments are to be presented in your Assignment folder and are due to the professor on February 16th**

**The following assignments will be due to the professor on May 4th**

## Self Evaluation of Communication Concept Presentation

**Purpose:** In an attempt to help students become more effective speakers by reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses as presenters and plan for ways to become more effective.

**Assignment:** Address the following:

1. Having completed the communication concept presentation, how do you feel about your speech?
2. List and describe three things that you feel you did well in your presentation
3. List and describe three things that you feel you need to improve in order to be a more effective presenter
4. List three things you can do to insure that your nonprofit presentation is more effective than this presentation

**Grading:** I will grade this assignment based on the honesty, depth, and textbook understanding demonstrated in your answer. The assignment is worth 15 points.

## Evaluation of roles played in training session presentations Assignment

**Purpose:** For students to become more aware of the learning involved in facilitating and training session, participating in a training session, and evaluating training presentations.

**Assignment:** The following questions direct you to reflect on your experience as a trainer, participant, and evaluator. Answer each question providing examples where appropriate.

Training:

1. What did your group do well in the training presentation?
2. What do you think your group could have done to present a more effective training session?
3. What was the most important lesson you learned from the process of preparing and presenting a training session?

Participating:

1. Identify the sessions where you played the role of participant. What activity engaged you most as a participant? Why was this activity effective in engaging you?
2. What activity was least effective? Why?
3. What do you consider the most important attribute of a successful trainer? Provide an example of when you experienced this positive attribute or describe a time when you wish the trainers would have demonstrated this attribute.

Evaluating:

1. Which presentation do you believe was the strongest in this class? Why was this presentation the best?
2. Identify two things that you consider really important in a training session—demonstrate when you saw each demonstrated in a training presentation and explain why each was effective.
3. Evaluate each of your group members for their involvement in planning, practicing, and presenting the training session. Rate each from 1-10 and provide reasons.

**Grading:** I will grade this assignment based on the honesty, depth, and understanding demonstrated in your answer. The assignment is worth 25 points.

**CST 260  
Fall 2003**

**Tentative Schedule  
Subject to Change**

Date	Meeting Content	Chapters	Assignment Due	Points
1/24	Introduction to the course			
1/26	Introduction to each other Communication process	1		
1/31	Communication process/ Organizational communication	2		
2/02	Improving interpersonal communication	3		
2/07	presentation skills	11-12		
2/09	Listening	4		
2/14	Listening/nonverbal communication	5		
2/16	Nonverbal/obstacles to comm.	6	Assignment folder due	60
2/21	<b>Communication Concepts Presentation</b>		Outline due Peer evaluation	85 5
2/23	<b>Communication Concepts Presentation</b>		Outline due Peer evaluation	85 5
2/28	<b>Communication Concepts Presentation</b>		Outline due Peer evaluation	85 5
3/02	Exam 1	1-6		125
3/07	Persuasive presentations	14		
3/09				
3/14	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>			
3/16	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>			
3/21	Training the trainers			
3/23	<b>Non profit Presentations</b>		Outline due	115
3/28	<b>Non profit Presentations</b>		Outline due	115
3/30	<b>Non profit Presentations</b>		Outline due	115
4/04	Training work day			
4/06	Training work day			
4/11	Training the Trainer			
4/13	Training the Trainer			
4/18	Training the Trainer			
4/20	<b>Training Seminar Presentations</b>		Packets due/peer eval	200/5
4/25	<b>Training Seminar Presentations</b>		Packets due/peer eval	200/5
4/27	<b>Training Seminar Presentations</b>		Packets due/peer eval	200/5
5/02	<b>Training Seminar Presentations</b>		Packets due/peer eval	200/5
5/04			Assignment folder due	40
	Final Exam Period 5/10 4:45-6:45 (9:25 section) 5/11 10:00-12:00 (11:00 section)			