

Course: CMST 3050—Technical and Professional Communication
Semester: Fall, 2017; Sect. 1
Course Times: Wed. 4:30-7:00 p.m.
Course Room: Main 119
Instructor: Preston Parker, Ph.D.
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Teaching Assistant: Drew Bailey - drewbailey.usu@gmail.com

Prerequisites:

2.5 overall GPA and Permission of Instructor

Course Objectives:

This course is designed to give students experience in learning and applying the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for effective technical and professional communication. This includes areas like business writing, interviews, social media, presentations, proposals, and personal portfolio items. We will combine in-class discussions with readings and assignments. This is meant to be a very hands-on experience, as one of the main objectives is to be able to communicate yourself and your reputation effectively to the world.

“I have a spelling checker;
It came with my PC.
It plainly marks four my revue
Miss steaks eye can not sea.
I’ve run this poem threw it.
I’m shore your pleased too no
Its letter perfect inn it’s weigh.
My checker tolled me sew.”

Reading Materials:

Handouts: Selected readings handed out in class by the instructor.

Online: Selected readings chosen by the students.

Some suggested places to start are:

http://www.esf.edu/fnrm/documents/FNRM_Communications_Handbook2008.pdf

<http://writingcommons.org/open-text>

http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Professional_and_Technical_Writing/Table_of_Contents

http://libraryasp.tamu.edu/tds/int/Newsletters/Online_Newsletters/v18n2/Communications.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_communication

Expectations:

Readings:

It is expected that students will come to class prepared by having completed assigned readings. The fact that a student is or is not completing the readings will be evident in classroom participation and in the quality of assigned work.

Blogs:

Each student will establish a professional Blog. Students should post their Blog address in the Blog List location in the Facebook Group (see below) before the second day of class. If a new professional Blog needs to be established, it is recommended to use www.blogger.com or www.wordpress.com or www.tumblr.com (though you can use another format if you desire). If you have a blog already, you can use it, even if you are using it for other purposes (like for another class). It is preferable to use a name for a blog which is some amalgam or diminutive of your real name, first and last, (so something like: janedoe) not some code name (so, not something like: princessboy).

Nowadays, every professional needs a web presence and a Blog is a great place to start. Some students may even be “discovered” because of what is posted on their professional Blogs. Students should not mention they are making a post for a class. Instead they should simply post assignments as if they are any other professional post. In fact, students are welcome to make professional posts to their professional Blog, other than CMST 3050 assignments. And you might link from your online portfolio to your professional blog; or, perhaps, your professional Blog becomes your online portfolio.

It is recommended to type an assignment in a word processing program (saving regularly and often) and to copy and paste it into the Blog. A time and date stamp will then be automatically applied which will establish when it was posted. **The subject/title/slug of this Blog entry should be the assignment name (in bold on the calendar) to make it easier to find (ex: “Letter to Cousin”).**

Blog Comments:

Each student is expected to read at least two of their classmates’ assignments and post one comment to each Blog entry that was read. These comments are to be posted outside of class time. They are also required to be posted by 11:59 p.m. the day after the submission of the respective assignment. When posting a Blog comment, students should use their real names when possible, not a username or code name.

These comments can be about anything really, i.e. the quality of writing, a critique, corrections, additional ideas, comment on an earlier comment, links to other online articles, etc. Experience has shown that the more thoughtful comments made are, the more likely a student will learn and understand the course material (and, hence, earn a better grade in the course).

The idea in making Blog comments is to enable students to take advantage of Social Learning. Each student can learn from one another. This course encourages students to help each other learn. The instructor would be ecstatic if everyone were to individually earn high marks, especially if from learning together.

Facebook Group:

Class organization, including communication, assignments, and syllabus, will be handled in a Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CMST3050Fall2017/>). All students should request to join this group, then add their blog info to the Blog List doc. Remember, this group is public, so anyone can review anything.

Cheating:

Simply put, do not do it. You know what it is. The benefits do not out-weigh the costs.

Disabilities:

If you have a disability of any kind, please have it documented at the Disability Resource Center and the instructor will accommodate you as best possible.

Grading Expectations:

Each assignment will be graded on Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation (mechanics of communicating); Presentation (quality of communicating); and Reporting (how well course content is understood, how well information is gathered and relayed, proper length, and assignment requirements met). Each of these categories will be worth approximately 1/3 of the assignment grade.

Grade Records:

All grades will be posted under Grades in Canvas: <https://canvas.usu.edu>

Grading:

Blog Comments (BC)	70 points (14x5 points)
Letter to Cousin Assignment [BC]	30 points
Initial Business Letter Assignment	25 points
Response Business Letter Assignment	25 points
Resume Draft Assignment	35 points
Cover Letter Draft Assignment	35 points
Vanity Search Assignment	30 points
Online Reputation Assignment [BC]	50 points
Social Media Case [BC]	40 points
<u>Infographic</u> (Team) Assignment [BC]	60 points
LinkedIn Profile Assignment	60 points
Proposal (Team) [BC]	50 points
Press Release (Team) Assignment	30 points
Interview	60 points
Technology Assignment [BC]	40 points
Team Member Evaluations	100 points
Presentation (Team) [BC]	160 points
<u>Portfolio</u>	<u>100 points</u>
Total:	1000 points

Extra Credit:

Complete a second social media case study assignment	25 points possible
Other accepted assignments	? points possible

Grade Breakdown:

A	925-1000 points	C	735-764 points
A-	895-924 points	C-	695-734 points
B+	865-894 points	D+	665-694 points
B	835-864 points	D	635-664 points
B-	795-834 points	D-	595-634 points
C+	765-794 points	F	Below 595 points

Semester Calendar (Subject to Change):

Day, Date, Class Plans, Readings and Assignment Deadlines

Wed., Aug. 30:

Intros, Syllabus, Blog List, Facebook Group, Writing Style, Letter to Cousin Assignment Description, Business Letters, Business Letter Assignment Description

Wed., Sept. 6:

Writing Style, Business Letters, Blog Address Posted Due, Letter to Cousin Assignment Due, Initial Business Letter Assignment Due

Wed., Sept. 13:

Legal Discussion, Intellectual Property, Invited Guests: USU Career Services, LinkedIn Assignment Description, Response Business Letter Assignment Due

Wed., Sept. 20:

Reputation Management (Including Online), Cover Letters, Resumes, Memos

Wed., Sept. 27:

Electronic Media, Social Media, Infographics, Legal Discussion and Intellectual Property

Wed., Oct. 4:

Proposals, Divide into teams to discuss clients, Social Media Case Due

Wed., Oct. 11:

Press Releases, LinkedIn Assignment Due

Wed., Oct. 18:

No Class (Instructor Attending Conference), Team Work Day

Wed., Oct. 25:

Presentations (course content, i.e. not doing presentations)

Wed., Nov. 1:

Paper-based Portfolios

Wed., Nov. 8:

Electronic Portfolios, Building Individual brand Across Multiple Platforms

Wed., Nov. 15:

Interviews and Surveys, Press Release Assignment Due, Set up Interview Schedule

Wed., Nov. 22:

No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Wed., Nov. 29:

Interviews with Instructor, Team Work Day

Wed., Dec. 6:

Team Presentations (in class) and Technology Discussion, Technology Assignment Due,
Team Member Evaluations Due (in class)

Mon., Dec. 11:

Final: by 5 p.m. handed into instructor: Portfolio Due, All Extra Credit Due