

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Communication and Media Studies COMS 363 L02
Professional and Technical Communication

Spring 2019

Start & end dates (& dates excluded)

May 6 to June 17 (excluding May 20)

Lectures, days, and time; Tutorials, days, and time

Online Delivery

Instructor:	C. Remillard
Office:	SS 254
Office Phone:	N/A
E-Mail:	csremill@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L available through MyUofC portal (delete or edit as needed)
Office Hours:	Wednesday & Thursday 4-5pm or by appointment

Course Description

This class takes a rhetorical approach to understanding professional and technical communication. Emphasis is placed on how workplace communication is situated within distinct organizational or corporate cultures as well as broader socio-cultural contexts.

Students will gain knowledge and skills in writing across genres and disciplines through experiential learning strategies and collaborative research projects. This is a performance driven class intended to teach students skills that can be applied to a variety of workplace situations.

Additional Information

This course is offered entirely online. Students can expect to put in the same amount of work (in hours) as they would if the course met face to face.

Objectives of the Course

Students will learn about the process of planning, composing, and delivering professional and technical communication for various audiences. This course is designed to help you develop

- A rhetorical approach to crafting documents--one in which you critically consider your purpose in writing, the needs of your audience(s), and relevant features of the context in which you are writing.
- Writing strategies to keep your writing focused, coherent, and readable;
- Familiarity with the conventions and composing strategies for a range of written genres, including business correspondence, proposals, and reports.

- Familiarity with a range of resources for professional writers, including tools for online research, for online composing, and for collaborative writing;
- Document design strategies to ensure that your documents look professional, promote easy retrieval of information, and use visuals to communicate information effectively;
- Competence in the use of a standard style of documentation.
- Competence in preparing PowerPoint presentations.

Textbooks and Readings

Meyer, C. (2017). *Communicating for Results*. Fourth Edition. Don Mills: Oxford University Press

Internet and electronic communication device information

Internet access: Students must have frequent, regular access to the Internet and email. A high-speed Internet connection is highly recommended. The course will be held online via the U of C's Desire2Learn (D2L) learning management system at <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/>. I strongly recommend that you download a personal backup copy of this course outline and all online course materials (assignment descriptions and rubrics) in case you need them when Internet access is temporarily unavailable. A PDF reader is required.

Supported technologies: Course technologies usually work with all the major browsers (i.e. Firefox, Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari) and operating systems (Mac, Windows, etc). However, compatibility problems may occur with outdated browsers, plugins or apps, and usability issues may occur on mobile devices. Check your system's compatibility in Desire2Learn via My Tools > System Check. Students are responsible for ensuring they have personal computer systems that are compatible with course technologies, or they must use on-campus computers provided in libraries or labs.

Sending email: When initiating an email to your instructor from your own email program, send email to csremill@ucalgary.ca and put "COMS 363" anywhere in the subject line.

Email management: Students are responsible for ensuring they receive course email notifications and messages from the instructor, and receiving notifications they have subscribed to (i.e. email notifications of new messages from teammates in group discussion forums). Make sure course messages do not get filtered into spam or junk folders or get rejected by your mail server. By default, Desire2Learn will use the email address associated with your U of C ID. Configure your notification preferences in your D2L Settings, and then subscribe to desired discussion forums & threads.

Word processing software: The use of Microsoft Office software (ideally, 2010 or later) is highly recommended. Assignments require advanced features of Office programs (Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel) for professional formatting of tables, graphs, tables of contents, page numbering, headers, etc. MS Office is available to U of C Students through [Office 365](#).

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Labs	10 x .5% each = 5% total	See detailed schedule
Quizzes	15 x 1% each = 15% total	See detailed schedule
Short writing assignments	2x25% each = 50% total	May 21, June 3
Individual report	30%	June 17
All assignments are due by 11:59 pm the day they are due		

Labs (less than 500 words). There will be 2 lab assignments due weekly on Sunday by 11:59 pm. They will give you an opportunity to familiarize yourself course concepts. These assignments are pass/fail, so late submissions will not be accepted. Your marker will check these assignments weekly and will discount any submissions that fail to adhere to submission guidelines.

Quizzes. There will be 15 quizzes throughout the term. These are multiple choice and relate to the textbook readings. These quizzes will be administered on D2L. Quizzes are associated with chapters from the text book and will be due Fridays of the week that the readings are assigned. No late submissions of quizzes will be allowed. Note, Quiz 15 is not associated with a chapter. See schedule for details.

Short writing assignments (roughly 500 words each). These short writing assignments are designed to help you deliver different messages in a concise and coherent way. The styles and genres of your writing samples will vary by medium and message and should help improve your professional and technical writing.

Final Report (2000 words). The report is a full featured, substantive report. This assignment will require you to conduct both secondary and primary research and integrate the results into a report. You can choose to complete the report individually, but it is strongly recommended to be completed in self-forming pairs or of no more than four students. Groups must be formed by June 3, 2019.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

You do not need to complete all assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Submission of Assignments: Please hand in your essays directly to D2L under the appropriate dropbox folder. If it is not possible to do so, email your assignment to the instructor with "Coms 363 Temporary Submission" in the subject line. NOTE: As soon as Desire2Learn is accessible, resubmit your assignment normally AND leave the instructor a note in your file submission area about using this temporary submission method, to avoid late penalties.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments in SS 320. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/foip-hia>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. Labs will not be accepted after their given due date.

Student Accommodations and Deferrals

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or for another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, please see the following:

- Sec. N.1 of the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/n-1.html>
- FAQs for Students at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq>

Note that when accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to that of another assignment or test.

For information on deferrals, see the following sections in the *University Calendar*:

- Sec. G.7 Deferral of Term Work at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>
- Sec. G.6 Deferral of Final Exam at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the writing support services in the Student Success Centre (3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library). Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin.

Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. Research and citation resources are also available on the website of the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/> If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or visit the writing support services in the Student Success Centre (3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library, at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Final grades are reported as letter grades. In the course, percentages will be used for all assignments. The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations**
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

** These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (e.g., surveys, interviews, or observations) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds

<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</p> <p>If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.</p>
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Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

Week	Start Date	Textbook Chapters	Labs	Quizzes due Fridays at 11:59 pm	Assignment
Week 1	May 6	1, 2, 3	1	1, 2, 3	
Week 2	May 13	4, 5	2, 3	4, 5	
Week 3	May 20	7, 8, 9	4, 5	7, 8, 9	Assignment 1: May 21
Week 4	May 27	6, 13	6, 7	6, 13	
Week 5	June 3	12, 11	8	12, 11	Assignment 2: June 3
Week 6	June 10	10, 14	9, 10	10, 14, *15	
Week 7	June 17	No Readings	None		Individual Report: June 17

*Quiz 15 is the only quiz not associated with a chapter.