AEC 4031 The Communication Process in Agricultural and Life Sciences

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Effective communication is at the heart of a successful operation in every enterprise in agricultural and natural resource-based industries. This course is designed to teach communication concepts and the knowledge of how to apply those concepts in the workplace.

OBJECTIVES

This course will help you expand your writing experience, strengthen and refine your communication skills, and raise your level of professional performance.

Following the completion of this course, students will be able to:
• Write and edit promotional, persuasive, and news pieces for various audiences (mass media, internal, and external).
• Think critically about issues facing the agricultural industry.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND READINGS


GRADING

All assignments in this course are individual assignments. Written assignments must be typed. **Assignments must be submitted in the required format to receive full credit.** Assignment requirements are available in Canvas.

**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86-89.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-85.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76-79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>66-69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>59.9 and below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAIN ASSIGNMENTS</td>
<td>DEADLINE</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Article</td>
<td>1/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP Scavenger Hunt</td>
<td>1/18 (1/17 is a holiday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press Release*</td>
<td>1/31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Feature Topic*</td>
<td>2/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard News Story*</td>
<td>2/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank King</td>
<td>2/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headline and Lead*</td>
<td>2/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Review*</td>
<td>3/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Choice Edit*</td>
<td>3/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEO Article*</td>
<td>3/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature Story*</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia Writing*</td>
<td>4/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Plan</td>
<td>4/18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: An * next to assignment indicates a optional rewrite.

Quizzes and discussion posts have various due dates and point values.
UNIVERSITY GRADING POLICIES

For information about UF grades and grading policies, please visit https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Late work WILL NOT be accepted without proper documentation. A paper turned in 30 minutes past the assigned time is considered one day late. (If an assignment is due at 11:59 p.m., and it is turned in at 12:30 a.m., it is one day late and will receive a grade of zero.)

ATTENDANCE

Online activity will be monitored via Canvas analytics.

LINKED-IN LEARNING TUTORIALS

The University of Florida has an agreement with Linked-In Learning (formerly Lynda.com) to provide FREE online tutorials to students and faculty on many software programs. If you feel inexperienced with any program, after being introduced to it in an AEC course, it is highly recommended that you take it upon yourself to go through some of the Linked-In Learning tutorials available through UF e-Learning: https://elearning.ufl.edu/.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

In all courses in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication’s Communication and Leadership Development (CLD) specialization, the following writing standards are expected to be followed, unless otherwise specified for a particular writing assignment. Not following these writing standards will result in substantially lower grades on writing assignments.

- Proper grammar and punctuation are mandatory.
- Proper sentence structure is required. This means...
  - not using “tweet-talk” in your assignments,
  - making sure that your sentences have a subject, verb, and (when needed) an object,
  - not having sentence fragments,
  - and anything else that would pertain to “proper sentence structure.”
- No use of first person (I, me, my, mine, our) unless denoted within the assignment rubric.
- No use of contractions.
- Good thoughts/content throughout the writing assignment.
- For assignments that require citations, use American Psychological Association style. Proper APA citation and reference document is expected.
- For assignments that are more reporter-style articles (news stories, news releases, public relations writing), you are expected to follow Associated Press Style.
EXPECTATIONS FOR DESIGN

In all courses in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication’s Communication and Leadership Development (CLD) specialization, the following design standards are expected to be followed, unless otherwise specified for a particular writing assignment. Not following these design standards will result in substantially lower grades on design-related assignments.

- Proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure are mandatory. Although these are design assignments, writing has to be perfect so as not to detract from the design.
- For assignments that feature more reporter-style articles (news stories, news releases, public relations writing), you are expected to follow Associated Press Style.
- Use the proper photographic settings for the assignment. Pixilated photos will result in lower grades.
- Students should not use copyrighted materials for design assignments. For example you may not “borrow” a graphic or design. Commercial artwork that is purchased may be used for assignments. Similarly, you may use ideas for a graphic/design assignment, but the use of the actual graphic/design is not acceptable.
- The following minimal design skills are expected to be demonstrated on all design assignments. The ability to resize an image, create documents in multiple columns, insert a graphic on a page, insert text with a graphic, alter the color of text and/or graphics. Additionally, the student should have moderate ability with the following software in order to complete design assignments:
  - Microsoft PowerPoint
  - Microsoft Word
  - Adobe Photoshop (photographs)
  - Adobe Illustrator (graphics)
  - Adobe InDesign (print layout)
  - WordPress (Web)
  - Final Cut Pro X or Adobe Premiere (video)

ACADEMIC HONESTY

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/.
SOFTWARE USE

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

CAMPUS HELPING RESOURCES

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university’s counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit umatter.ufl.edu/ to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Visit counseling.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services. Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit shcc.ufl.edu/.
- **University Police Department:** Visit police.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care, call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.
- **Career Connections Center:** First Floor, Reitz Union, 392-1601, www.crc.ufl.edu/

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION PROCESS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

AEC-CLD STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
• We are an engaged community of diverse students and faculty.
• We learn to think critically and dialogue about agricultural and natural resources issues facing Florida and our world.
• We explore the varied perspectives, theories and science underlying these issues.
• We build our communication and leadership skills to address evolving agricultural and natural resources issues in a multicultural society.