AEC 4035

Communication Practices for Agricultural and Life Sciences

UF | IFAS CALS
UNIVERSITY *of* FLORIDA

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides students the opportunity to master a variety of writing styles used in corporate and mass media settings. Emphasis is placed on mastery of writing skills.

OBJECTIVES

After this course, the student should be able to:

- Write effectively in business, promotional, and informational contexts
- Effectively edit written material
- Communicate information tailored to the needs and expectations of target audiences
- Layout and design print and digital materials based on the principles of design
- Use industry-standard software to create print and digital materials

Students will contribute to print and digital versions of a newsletter/magazine through writing and design assignments. The final product will be published at the conclusion of the course.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND READINGS

Successful students will read assigned materials before class and be prepared for discussion with the instructor and fellow students.

- White Space Is Not Your Enemy: A Beginner's Guide to Communicating Visually Through Graphic, Web & Multimedia Design (3rd Edition)
- Agricultural and Natural Resources Communications ([https://anrcommunications.org/Links to an external site.](https://anrcommunications.org/)) This is a free online publication.
- Other course readings are posted on Canvas.

TECHNOLOGY AND AEC MAC LAB

High-capacity SD cards will be provided to each student to record video/photos onto. Video camera equipment and still photography cameras are available for reservation. You MUST reserve the video or photography equipment in advance. Students are required to use the Online Reservation System (CHEQROOM) to reserve video equipment. User accounts will be created at the beginning of the semester. Students will be assigned to a particular Mac computer for the duration of the semester. **Adobe InDesign and Adobe Illustrator are required for this course.** Both apps are available for use in the AEC Mac Lab with an Adobe account (free). Both apps are also available as part of the Adobe Creative Cloud subscription (discounted for students). Any additional apps or services will be provided.

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 details and requirements are available in Canvas.

Grading Scale

A	930-1000	B-	800-829	D+	660-699
A-	900-929	C+	760-799	D	630-659
B+	860-899	C	730-759	D-	600-629
B	830-859	C-	700-729	E	599 and below

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

- **Topic Research (25 points)**
  Students will research their potential topic to pitch prior to contacting any sources.
- **Topic Selection and Contacts (25 points)**
  Students will finalize their story pitch and begin contacting potential sources for interviews, quotes, and assets.
- **Interview Question Guide (50 points)**
  Students will develop interview questions for the story and individuals they are planning to interview.
- **Story Interviews (50 points)**
  Students will conduct interviews and provide transcripts, audio files, or documentation of their interview.
- **Story Draft (75 points)**
  Students will draft, proofread, and submit for peer and instructor reviews. In addition to

copy, students will also submit potential assets (photo, audio, etc.) to be included in the layout of each story.

- **Story Assets (50 points)**
  Students will gather or produce assets to accompany their story in print and digital layouts. Assets can include photos, videos, audio, and other forms of media. Students are encouraged to develop the assets used (i.e. take photos, etc.).
- **Peer and Source Review (50 points)**
  Students will review two stories and provide constructive feedback and potential ideas for layout. Students will submit drafts to their sources for additional review. A source review form must be completed and submitted to receive credit.
- **Final Story (100 points)**
  Students will submit a final version of their story along with approved assets for layout.
- **Print Layout (150 points)**
  Students design a magazine/newsletter layout using their copy and assets.
- **Digital Layout (150 points)**
  Students will design a digital layout using their copy and assets.
- **Social Media Post (75 points)**
  Students will design an accompanying social media post and graphic for their story.
- **Quiz x2 (50 points each)**
- **Attendance, participation, and professionalism (100 points)**

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

A 10-percent per day deduction will be assessed for assignments turned in late. Work more than a week late will not be accepted. This policy will be strictly enforced.

ATTENDANCE

Given the importance of class discussion and participation in laboratory demonstrations and exercises, it is not possible for a student to perform satisfactorily in the course without regular attendance. Students are required to attend class and to be in class on time. Only documented doctor's excuses or UF-approved activities will be excused. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink are ABSOLUTELY NOT permitted in the computer lab.

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…
  - 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 Pro(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/.

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FEE

A materials and supplies fee is collected for this course to pay for costs associated with assignments in this course.

IN-CLASS RECORDING

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

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.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	TOPIC	Welcome and Introduction to Design
	READINGS	Chapter 1 – What is Design?

WEEK 2	TOPIC	News and Feature Writing
	READINGS	AEC 530 - Grammar and Punctuation AEC 528 - News Media Writing AEC 529 - News Writing for Print How To Write a Feature Story
	DUE	Topic Research

WEEK 3	TOPIC	Storytelling and Conducting Interviews
	READINGS	AEC 532 - Conducting Interviews for News Stories
	DUE	Topic Selection and Contacts

WEEK 4	TOPIC	Adobe InDesign I
	DUE	Interview Question Guide

WEEK 5	TOPIC	Adobe InDesign II
	DUE	Conduct Interviews

WEEK 6	TOPIC	Adobe InDesign III
	DUE	Conduct Interviews

WEEK 7	TOPIC	Design Fundamentals
	READINGS	Chapter 7 - Type Chapter 8 - Color Basics
	DUE	Story Draft

WEEK 8	TOPIC	Print Layout I
	READINGS	Chapter 6 - Layout Chapter 4 - Layout Sins
	DUE	Peer Reviews Quiz 1 – Weeks 1-8

WEEK 9	TOPIC	**Print Layout II**
	READINGS	Chapter 14 - Fit to Print
	DUE	Story Assets

WEEK 10	**Spring Break**	

WEEK 11	TOPIC	**Digital Layout**
	READINGS	Chapter 13 - Designing for the Web
	DUE	Final Story

WEEK 12	TOPIC	**Adobe Illustrator**
	READINGS	Chapter 5 - Mini Art School
	DUE	Print Layout

WEEK 13	TOPIC	**Adobe Illustrator**
	READINGS	Chapter 9 - Adding Visual Appeal
	DUE	Print Layout Edits

WEEK 14	TOPIC	**Social Media Graphics**
	READINGS	Chapter 12 – Design for Social Media…But Not Really
	DUE	Digital Layout

WEEK 15	TOPIC	**Infographics**
	READINGS	Chapter 10 - Infographics
	DUE	Social Media Post

WEEK 16	TOPIC	**Reflection**
	DUE	Quiz 2 - Weeks 9-15