COURSE SYLLABUS FOR COM 2950
ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION
FALL 2010, WEB-HYBRID COURSE, 3 CREDIT HOURS

Instructor: Denise Gilmer-Knudson
Office: 230 Prince Frederick Campus
Office Hours: Tuesdays - 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Wednesdays –11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., and available by appointment
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Meeting Times: Section 84190 is a Web-Hybrid Course – This means part of the class will be conducted online using WebCt, and part of the course will be conducted in the classroom from 5:45 – 8:25 p.m. on the following Tuesdays: 9/7, 9/21, 10/5, 10/19, 11/02, 11/16, 11/30 and 12/14. Please make arrangements to attend all classes.

Semester Dates: 09/7/10 – 12/14/10
Course Credits: Three
Prerequisites: COM 1010, ENG 1010, ENG 1030, SOC 2010; plus one additional COM course or ENG 2030.

Required Materials: Access to a computer with an ISP that allows for streaming video/audio.

Course Description: In this capstone course, students explore and analyze contemporary communication issues in the areas of mass, interpersonal, intercultural, organizational, public and group communication. Using information from this course and others, students work independently to develop a project and portfolio in their area of specialization in the field.

Course Objectives: Throughout the course the students will:
1. Read about and report on scholarship and issues in the field of communication.
2. Explore issues of contemporary communication through a service learning project.
3. Explore careers in communication and develop their resumes.
4. Gain experience that will be applicable in their prospective careers
5. Deliver a group presentation and individual oral presentations
I. Course Requirements:

A. Service Learning Project and Group Presentation:

As a requirement of this course, students will be developing a service-learning project. In groups, you will participate in online discussions about service learning, design a proposal (10 Pts.) and project plan (10 Pts.), implement the project (20 Pts.), deliver a presentation that tells about the project (50 Pts.) and write a reflection paper (10 Pts.). This project is worth a total of 100 points.

B. Contemporary Communication Issues Assignment and Presentation:

Individually, students will explore a contemporary issue in the communication field and prepare an outline, works cited page, presentation, and online discussion about the issue. More information will follow on this project. The postings/presentation is worth 80 points. Your responses to fellow students’ presentations will be worth an additional 20 Points for a total of 100 Points.

C. Career Exploration and Presentation (Final Project):

Students will explore the career they plan to enter by conducting an interview with a professional in the field, investigating potential job opportunities and requirements, and completing a portfolio of work including a resume of his/her skills, abilities and qualifications. Students will present their findings in an oral presentation. More information will follow on this project. This final project will be worth 100 points.

D. Assigned On-line Essays and Responses:

Eight reading discussions will be assigned over the course of the semester to include mass, interpersonal, intercultural, organizational, public and group communication, as well as a Service Learning Preparation, and Preparing for your Presentations discussion. Discussion questions will accompany the readings and must be answered in essay form. Each essay must be no less than 250 words in length. Each essay is worth 6 points. In addition, each student must read thoroughly and then respond to two other students’ essays. Each response must be no less than 50 words in length and be substantive in nature. Each posted response is worth 1 point. Short responses such as “I agree,” “Good comment,” etc. will not be given credit. There are a total of 8 Essays/16 Responses. Each is worth 8 Points (6 pts. for essay, 1 pt. for each response) for a total of 64 points toward the final grade. Additional posting assignments will include the Introduction Assignment (5 Pts.), and the Interview assignment (6 Pts.) for a total of 75 Points for Discussion for the semester.

See item #13 below for more instructions regarding web postings.
E. Class Participation
In a class such as COM 2950, online and in-class participation is crucial to a successful semester. Not only does your participation affect your own performance, but others’ ability to provide feedback and to work in group activities. Mandatory attendance is required on certain days – see calendar.

II. Grading
A. Grades will be averaged at the end of the semester using the formula below. Elements making up total grade include:

1. Service Learning Project and Group Presentation = 100 Points
2. Comm. Issues Assignment and Presentation = 100 Points
3. Career Exploration and Presentation = 100 Points
4. On-line Essays and Responses = 75 Points

B. Grades will be averaged at the end of the semester using this formula:
There are a total of 375 points possible for this course. Your total earned points will be added together and divided by 3.75 to determine your final semester grade which is based on the 10-Point Scale indicated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100 %</td>
<td>A (Excellent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89 %</td>
<td>B (Good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79 %</td>
<td>C (Average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69 %</td>
<td>D (Passing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-59 %</td>
<td>F (Failing)</td>
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C. FX Grade – A grade of FX is given at midterm and at the end of the semester if a student has not been attending the class for an extended length of time, determined by the instructor’s attendance policy. The grade appears on the transcript and equates to an “F” in the grade point calculation.

III. Important Dates
9/7/10 – Classes Begin for Semester
11/08/10 – Last Day to Withdraw w/out Grade or to Change Credit/Audit Status
11/24/10 – 11/28/10 – Thanksgiving Break – No Classes
12/20/10 – Last Day of Classes for Semester

IV. Disabled Student Services
Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disabled Student Services in the Learning Assistance Department (301-934-7614) during the first week of class to ensure that needs are met in a timely manner.
V. General Class Policies

1. **Attendance** is mandatory, except for ONE allotted sick day. The SECOND absence will result in the loss of one letter grade toward your final semester grade. Two incidences of leaving class early or arriving late more than 15 minutes will equal 1 absence. Missing more than ½ of the class period will count as an absence. If you are late, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor after class to correct the attendance sheet. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a fellow classmate. In-class assignments may not be made up.

2. **Absences** resulting from emergencies caused by serious illness requiring a doctor’s visit or hospitalization, court appearance or jury duty, or a death in your immediate family will be excused only with written documentation. Conflicting work schedules, child care problems, car trouble, transportation issues etc. do not constitute an emergency and will not be excused.

3. Attendance requires active, informed participation. Please come to class prepared (having completed all readings and assignments) and ready to share your ideas and experiences with the class.

4. All assignments must be turned in and/or posted on the day that they are due. Late assignments with a written, valid excuse will receive one letter grade lower than the assigned grade each day it is late. Assignments left in my mailbox will not be given credit unless prior arrangements have been made.

5. **Make-ups** for the communication issues presentation will be allowed only if you have a valid, written excuse (see #2 above). If you are granted a make-up, you must give the presentation within one week. The group presentation and final presentation may not be made up under any circumstances.

6. Please keep a folder of all graded tests, evaluation/feedback forms, and handouts. You may be requested to turn this folder in at the end of the semester in the event of a missing grade. Keep a Xerox copy or computer disk copy of all assignments. Please be responsible for your own work!

7. Please do not bring unauthorized persons to class. If childcare responsibilities prevent you from attending class, you will have to comply with the general absenteeism policy.

8. Students who are auditing the class must inform me during the first week of class and must complete at least 70% of course requirements to earn the audit designation. Students deciding to change from credit to audit, from audit to credit, or to withdraw from the course must do so by **November 8**.
9. Each student is expected to perform his/her own academic work. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are considered an extremely serious offense. Students are personally responsible for understanding the various forms of academic dishonesty as they are explained in the “Student Code of Conduct” in the Student Handbook. Any incidences will result at minimum in the student failing the test, speech or assignment, and will be reported to the administration.

10. Classroom behavior policies:

   a. Students are expected to behave as respectful adults in the classroom. This means showing respect for your instructor and your fellow students.

   b. Students engaging in side conversation during lecture will be asked to leave for the day.

   c. Turn off and put away all pagers, cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices before entering class.

   d. Anyone IMing, texting, e-mailing, gaming, etc. during class will be asked to leave.

   e. No laptop computers are allowed in the classroom unless specified by the instructor.

   f. Personal business should be attended to before class begins (i.e. bathroom visits, phone calls, talking with friends, etc.).

   g. Please do not eat in the classroom.

   h. Disruptive behavior of any kind will result in your being asked to leave the class for the day and possible disciplinary action from the college.

VI. Web-Based Course Information

   A. This course is considered a Web-hybrid course, which means that some readings and postings will be done online, but the three major assignments will require you to attend class in order to plan, prepare and present.

   B. Please note that this does not mean that you will be spending less time on the course than you would in a traditional face-to-face course. You will be spending the same if not more time on the class. To be successful in this class, you must be self-motivated and a good reader.

   C. Web Posting Instructions for Web and Web-Hybrid Courses: Online discussions allow students to build an understanding of the significant points from each reading, and to participate in interpersonal communication and constructive discussion.
1. There are 8 reading assignments in the Discussions area with questions to be answered. After you have completed the readings, go to the Discussion board and post your essay response.

2. You also will be required to post responses to your colleagues’ Communication Issues projects.

3. Finally, there will be a few other posting assignments throughout the semester. Please see the calendar for due dates and point values.

The discussions should respond to the questions, and reflect an understanding of the concepts in the reading. Use specific examples whenever required.

When commenting on another person’s essay, add something new to the discussion. Do not repeat a response or example that has already been posted. The purpose of the assignment is to contribute new ideas and to build a dialogue. Students will all benefit from a diversity of ideas and points of view. Read the question carefully and be certain your response addresses all points asked. Postings will be evaluated on the basis of the fullness of each response as well as the accuracy of the information.

When posting a comment to someone else’s discussion, make certain that each response is a clearly and fully stated idea. To simply say, “I agree” or “good job” does not tell the class why or how you agree. Our comments must add something new to the discourse. Finally, discussion question responses posted after the due date will not be graded because they will not contribute to the class discussion.
## COM 2950 COURSE CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignments/Postings/Presentations Due</th>
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| 9/7/10    | Class Meeting –  
Discussion of major assignments:  
- Communication Issue Presentation  
- Portfolio Assignment/Oral Presentation  
- Service Learning Project/Presentation  
  o Teams announced for Service Learning Project Proposal  
  o Communicate with your team members to determine Service Learning Proposal (due next class)   |
| 9/10/10   | Complete “Getting Started,” Read “Online Orientation,” Read Syllabus (all located on course home page)  
Introduction Assignment Due (2.5 Points)  
Service Learning Discussion Due (2.5 Points)   |
| 9/17/10   | “Small Group” Communication Discussion Due (6 Points)   |
| 9/20/10   | “Small Group” Discussion Responses Due (2 Points)   |
| 9/21/10   | Class Meeting –  
Service Learning Project Proposals Due from Teams (10 Pts.)  
- Each team presents proposal to class  
- Class votes to decide which project to proceed with for SLP  
- Task Groups Assigned  
- Service Learning Project Plan Due from Teams Next Class   |
| 9/24/10   | Intercultural Communication Discussion Due (6 Points)  
*Develop Comm. Issue Presentation Idea w/ 5 Sources (Due 10/5)   |
| 9/27/10   | “Intercultural Communication” Responses Due (2 Points)   |
| 10/1/10   | Interpersonal Communication Discussion Due (6 Points)   |
| 10/4/10   | “Interpersonal Communication” Responses Due (2 Points)   |
| 10/5/10   | Class Meeting –  
- Communication Issue Idea Due (3 paragraphs/5 sources)  
- Service Learning Project Plans Due from Teams (10 Pts.)  
- Work on Service Learning Project  
- Discuss Communication Issues Presentation (due next class)   |
10/8/10  Service Learning Preparation Discussion, Quiz, & Student Liability Form Due (online) (6 Points)

10/11/10  “Service Learning Preparation” Responses Due (2 Points)
Work on Issue Presentation

10/15/10  “Organizational Communication” Discussion Due (6 Points)
Read Parts 1, 2, and 3 in Pocket Keys for Speakers (pp. 3-46)
Work on Issue Presentation
Work on Service Learning Project Plan (Due next class)

10/18/10  “Organizational Communication” Responses Due (2 Points)

10/19/10  Class Meeting – Attendance Mandatory
- Comm. Issues Oral Presentations (80 Points)

10/22/10  Responses to Comm. Issues Questions Due (20 Points)
Public Communication Discussion Due (6 Points)
Work on Service Learning Project

10/25/10  “Public Communication” Responses Due (2 Points)
Work on Service Learning Project

10/29/10  “Mass Communication” Discussion Due (6 Points)
Work on Service Learning Project

11/1/10  “Mass Communication” Responses Due (2 Points)

11/2/10  Class Meeting –
- Teams Finalize Service Learning Projects
- Begin Work on Portfolio Assignment/Presentation
- Informational Interview Details

11/5/10  Preparing for your Presentations Discussion (6 Points)

11/8/10  “Preparing for your Presentations” Responses (2 Points)
Conduct Informational Interview
Work on SLP and Final Projects

11/16/10  Class Meeting –
- Complete all Required Materials for SLP
- Rehearse Service Learning Presentations with Group
- Portfolio Questions?
11/19/10  Interviews Discussion Due (6 Points)
Outlines due for SLP Presentations (Email to me)
Work on Final Projects

11/30/10  Class Meeting – Attendance Mandatory
- Service Learning Projects/Presentations Due (70 Points)

12/3/10  Service Learning Reflection Due (10 Points)
Work on Portfolio
Practice Final Presentation

12/14/10  Final Class Meeting – Attendance Mandatory
- Final Projects and Presentations Due (100 Points)

Congratulations - You Did It! Have a wonderful Semester Break.