

## **COMM 305: Professional Communication**

Fall 2011

**Tuesdays:** 4:20-7:00pm EST

**Instructor:** Prof. Alison McCrowell Lietzenmayer  
**Office:** BAL 3004  
**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday 1:00-2:30pm OR by appointment  
**E-mail:** [alietzen@odu.edu](mailto:alietzen@odu.edu) (preferred method of communication)  
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***\*\*I'll be testing Live-Tweeting during COMM 305 lectures— if you currently have Twitter please note that course-related tweets should @ me & include: #305***

**Instructor Assistant:** Prof. Sara Wood  
**Office:** BAL 3013  
**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12:30-1:30pm  
**E-mail:** [snwood@odu.edu](mailto:snwood@odu.edu) (preferred method of communication)

### **Course Required Text:**

Goodall, H.L., Goodall, S. and Schiefelbein, J. (2010). Business and Professional Communication in the Global Workplace. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Boston: Wadsworth. ISBN-13: 9780495567387

### **Course Description:**

COMM 305 is an examination of both the theory and practice of communication in the professional setting. Content includes communication theory, as well as the roles of interpersonal, small group, organizational, and mass media communication as related to the workplace. **BA COMM, BS COMM, and COMM Minor students should not be enrolled in COMM 305.**

**COMM 305 is intended for Pro Comm majors ONLY. Or students from other departments that can utilize this course as an Elective.**

### **Course Objectives:**

1. Increase students' understanding about the processes of human communication within organizations and for the professional.
2. Acquaint students with selected general theories and related research in the field of communication relevant in business and professional settings.
3. Provide opportunities for developing personal and social communication competence through structured written, verbal, and electronic assignments.

### **Communicating In COMM 305 Via Teletechnet/Video Streaming:**

Since this course is taught through TELETECHNET, we have the opportunity to utilize various resources to maximize our communication with one another. The opportunities, if used, should help all of us to better understand the content of this course and individual perspectives, as well as assist us in developing and maintaining interpersonal rapport; however, with technological opportunities come the need for guidelines. **Please consider the following as we try to maximize our communication with one another:**

**Students will be required to have and use an ODU email account.** The instructors and will only respond to ODU email accounts. The instructor and instructor assistant will make every effort to respond to individual emails in a timely fashion. The Blackboard feature will be used to send out announcements as well as offer other supporting materials throughout the semester.

**Students will be expected to regularly check the announcements provided on Blackboard. This means that students should plan to check Bb 3-4 times a week, in addition to at least once the day of class (before class time).** Another Blackboard feature we will utilize will Group Discussion Boards. Explanations on how to use this will be provided in class.

**Respect for Diversity:** Our aim in this class will be to offer regard for varied and diverse perspectives, all of which should add to and enhance our understanding of professional communication. We will hopefully have a desire to be participative in class, to offer praise and criticism in tactful fashions, and to foster class cohesion, celebrating our similarities and differences. Please examine the course schedule as soon as possible; should there be any specific circumstances that the instructor needs to be aware of, such as a need for special services or a religious holiday conflict, **please provide such information immediately via email.**

**ATTENDANCE:** Learning for this class requires **active participation in discussions** during class sessions. Students will need to be punctual and attend regularly for the full session in order to do well in the course. Missing more than two class meetings or missing an exam without prior communication with the Instructor can be extremely damaging to your Final Grade in COMM 305. Constant lateness is a distraction to all members of the class. **If you cannot arrive on time due to employment, transportation, or for any other personal reason, you should not be enrolled in this class.** Heavy traffic and other excuses are not acceptable for continued tardiness. Early departures will be treated the same as continued tardiness and may affect your Final grade.

**GENERAL ATTENDANCE COMMENTS:** While it may be easy for any student who is at a distance site to feel that his/her presence isn't necessary, please be aware that attendance and participation in this course is valued. Your in-class contributions will assist everyone in the course to understand and relate certain concepts we will discuss; your contributions escalate the learning of your peers. **It will be required that you Sign In & Sign Out at your various locations for each class period. It is your responsibility to sign-in & out each week, we do not add in names after the fact once they are received on campus.**

These attendance logs are filed on campus but the Instructor does not maintain a running log of absences, you do not need to check in with the Instructor if you are going to be absent—simply review the archived tape of lecture and let the Instructor Assistant know if you have any questions regarding course material from the missed session. **Do NOT email the Instructor or Instructor Assistant asking 'did I miss anything important'—e-mails of this nature will be ignored & deleted.** Prolonged absence due to illness or other personal matters will be handled with the help of Student Services. Please see 'Incompletes' for information on whom to contact.

**STUDENT CONDUCT- EXPECTATIONS DURING CLASS:**

- Make sure all cell phones and other communications devices are off.
- Refrain from cross talk during class discussions.
- Refrain from rifling through your bags.
- If the end of class is nearing, please refrain from packing up early.
- Refrain from doing other work.

The instructor comes to class on time, prepared with lecture materials, discussion questions, announcements, visual aids, and additional materials or information relevant to the course. It is expected that students will arrive on time and appropriately prepared to engage in an upper level Communication course that encourages participation and dialogue.

**This means the student should:**

- have read the assigned reading
- have any questions prepared to ask at the end of class or during discussion
- printed notes in front of them if provided by instructor (it is not beneficial to be writing every single word instead of listening)
- be aware of the course requirements and expectations outlined in this syllabus

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Your grade is based on the points you earn. There are 1000 points possible for the semester.**

Any changes to the syllabus, schedule, assignments or due dates will be made available to students via announcements in class, announcements on Blackboard, and e-mails from the Instructor. **Technical difficulties are not an acceptable excuse for why you did not ‘know’ about an assignment or an announcement made in class.** Tapes are available at your individual Sites (by request) as a way for you to catch up on a missed lecture. I recommend trading phone numbers and e-mail information with at least one other student in the class. *The student is advised to always keep a copy of assignments that are turned in via Blackboard. Emailing Writing Assignments to the Instructor Assistant is a last resort, but sometimes necessary—be diligent in your attempts to turn in writing assignments via Blackboard.*

**Topical Writing Assignments (TWA’s): (Points Possible: TWA 1= 150, TWA 2= 150, TWA 3= 200)**

*Students will complete **three** Topical Writing Assignments related to various lecture topics. Each Topical Writing Assignment will be turned in via Blackboard.* TWA’s will include an accompanying class discussion on the TWA due date. **The application of your class lecture notes & textbook will be required for successful completion of Topical Writing Assignments—in addition to the use external (scholarly) sources for the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> TWA.** All citations should be APA formatted internally and in an APA formatted Reference Page (see Online Resources for free APA formatting information). A coverpage & abstract is NOT necessary, though students should clearly indicate the Honor Code, their name, UIN & Site on each TWA. (Please see Class Schedule for due dates).

**Exam 1: (100 points)** Exam 1 will be administered via Blackboard and will be open-note/open-book. Exam 1 will cover material with an emphasis on lectures, assigned reading, and in-class discussions. Further details will be provided in class.

**Exam 2: (150 points)** Exam 2 is will be administered via Blackboard and will be open-note/open-book. Exam 2 will cover material with an emphasis on lectures, assigned reading, and in-class discussions from Exam 1 until the Exam 2 date. Further details will be provided in class.

**Exam 3: (200 points)** Exam 3 is cumulative and will be administered via Blackboard and will be open-note/open-book. Exam 3 will cover material with an emphasis on lectures, assigned reading, and in-class discussions. Further details will be provided in class.

**In Class Writings: (50 points)** 2 ‘surprise’ writing assignments worth 25 points each will be given during the semester. These will be brief (1-2 paragraphs) and will serve as a quiz re: assigned reading. There will be feedback on a ‘by request’ basis only for these short assignments, as they will be directly related to course materials and either correct/complete or incorrect/incomplete. A rubric will be made available at the start of the semester.

**All exams will be offered online; therefore it is your responsibility as the student to have a reliable Internet connection and a reasonably quiet place in which to take the exam.**

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** Unless otherwise stated during class or via Blackboard, assignments are due **via Blackboard as a Word document** according to the Class Schedule. *As many of you know, Blackboard is not compatible with certain systems—please verify that you are using a Word document for your written assignments and submitting them via Mozilla Firefox or an earlier version of Internet Explorer. At this time I am unaware of any compatibility problems with Safari for Mac users. The same technical requirement is necessary for taking online exams, and this will be covered in class prior to the first exam.*

**There will be penalties for any late work.** The penalties are as follows: **10% off** for each day a writing assignment is late; **nothing will be accepted after 3 days without formal documentation through Student Services (see ‘Incompletes’)**. Please note that “day” means “calendar day” (i.e. weekends count). **The instructor reserves the right to refuse to accept any assignments that are not handed in on time.**

**Suggestion:** provide “lead time” for yourself so that you are not pressed for time at the last minute. The circumstances leading to these choices indicate a lack of responsibility and/or poor judgment on the part of the student.

There will be NO make-up exams without formal documentation from a physician or Student Services. If the case arises that a make-up is necessary, the exam will be in essay-style format. **In the case of a legitimate conflict, students may make arrangements to take an alternative test early. The instructor reserves the right to request documentation to approve such a request.**

**HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR GRADE:** You will simply divide the points you earn by the total points possible. For example,  $500/1000 = 50\%$  or  $950/1000 = 95\%/A$ . This should allow for you to easily calculate where you stand throughout the semester. Please see below for the letter equivalent to your final numerical grade.

FINAL Numerical Grade	Letter Grade	Grade Points
93-100	A	4.00
90-92.9	A-	3.70
87-89.9	B+	3.30
83-86.9	B	3.00
80-82.9	B-	2.70
77-79.9	C+	2.30
73-76.9	C	2.00
70-72.9	C-	1.70
67-69.9	D+	1.30
63-66.9	D	1.00
60-62.9	D-	0.70
Below 60	F	0.00

**NOTE (Department Policy):**

**All COMMUNICATION Majors/Minors Must Earn a Grade of “C” or Better.**

**The Honor System:**

Please note that as a student of Old Dominion University, you have signed a pledge accepting responsibility to abide by the Honor Code. This is an institutional policy approved by the Board of Visitors and enforced in this class. Your work in this class is expected to be original, reflecting your own thought, research, and expression. You will have committed plagiarism if you reproduce someone else's work without acknowledging the source. In your speeches, you must verbally account for your research data; on your outline, you must include a bibliography. **All work submitted for academic credit must include "Honor Pledge" with your signature** (this means outlines, papers, and tests).

**LECTURE NOTES:** Will be made available at the discretion of the Instructor.

**SPECIAL NEEDS:** Please inform the instructor as soon as possible if you have any special needs or considerations for testing (ex. being registered with Disability Services or having a religious holiday celebration in conflict with a test day); every effort will be made in this class to respect our diversity. **Students required Disability Services exams are asked to contact the Instructor no later than the third week of class so that appropriate preparations can be made.**

**INCOMPLETES:** Evaluation periods and assignment deadlines are fixed. Documented illnesses, deaths in the family, car accidents, or other traumatic occurrences call for flexibility and good judgment on the part of the student and instructor. **These situations are rare and are handled on case-by-case bases.** If you are unable to take an exam, you must contact the Instructor **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** Contacting the instructor after the fact is not acceptable.

You are ultimately responsible for all lectures, readings, assignments, and in and out of class activities when you are absent. If you have a circumstance that will prevent you from completing assignments or taking tests for an extended amount of time, you will need to contact Stella Mims in Student Services at 757-683-3442. **Student Services will evaluate your situation and act on your behalf if necessary.**

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**OTHER STUDENT RESOURCES:**

**Technical Support:** 757- 683-3192 or Toll Free: 877-348-6503, [occhelp@odu.edu](mailto:occhelp@odu.edu)

**Counseling Services:** 757-683-4401; Webb Center <http://web.odu.edu/~counsel>

**Student Health Services:** 757-683-3132; 1007 Webb Center

**Career Management Center:** 757-683-4388; 2202 Webb Center [www.odu.edu/cmc](http://www.odu.edu/cmc)

**Women's Center:** Services are open to women & men- 757-683-4109

[www.odu.edu/womenscenter](http://www.odu.edu/womenscenter)

**Writing Tutorial Services:** 757-683-4013, BAL 1002, <http://al.odu.edu/wts/>

**DISCUSSING A GRADE:** You are encouraged to contact the Instructor and Instructor's Assistant throughout the semester as your work progresses so that we may provide guidance when possible. In the event that you would like to discuss a grade that you have earned, please follow the following procedures:

- Wait 24 hours after receiving an evaluation before contacting the Instructor or Instructor Assistant with a concern.
- If, after thoroughly reviewing the comments and the course/assignment criteria, you feel a discussion is warranted, schedule a meeting with the Instructor or Instructor Assistant

no later than one week after you receive that grade. (It is expected that these meetings would be conducted over the phone for any Distance student).

- At least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting, electronically submit a letter addressing 1) what you would like to discuss in the meeting and 2) the ways in which your work achieved all the assignment criteria.
- Arrive at the meeting ready to discuss your evaluation in a reasonable manner.

**NOTE: Any student taking this class for Grade Forgiveness (or a second time for any reason) is expected to produce new and relevant course material for this particular semester. You may not re-submit materials prepared for a different semester, regardless of the instructor.**

By attending the second class of this term I will understand that to mean you agree to put forth your best effort in this class and that you further understand the requirements of this course and expectations of the instructor.

*~ Alison McCrowell Lietzenmayer*

## About Plagiarism: A Guide for College of Arts and Letters Students<sup>1</sup>

### **What is plagiarism?**

The ODU *Catalog* defines plagiarism as follows: “A student will have committed plagiarism if he or she reproduces someone else’s work without acknowledging its source; or if a source is cited which the student has not cited or used. Examples of plagiarism include: submitting a research paper obtained from a commercial research service, the Internet, or from another student as if it were original work; making simple changes to borrowed materials while leaving the organization, content, or phraseology intact; or copying material from a source, supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotation marks. Plagiarism also occurs in a group project if one or more of the members of the group does none of the group’s work and participates in none of the group’s activities, but attempts to take credit for the work of the group.”

### **Hints for Avoiding Plagiarism:**

\* *More than three words copied in sequence is plagiarism.* This is ordinarily a good yardstick to use when wondering whether or not quotes are appropriate; they are, if you are copying more than three words in sequence that are not part of a common phrase (e.g. “up-to-date”).

\* *One source is not “common knowledge.”* Common knowledge does not require citation. But something is not common knowledge if you have found just one source for the information.

\* *When in doubt, cite!* If you have any doubt about whether or not to cite a source, err on the side of making the attribution.

\* *If your co-author sounds surprisingly eloquent, make sure the contribution is his/her own.* We often work in groups and co-author papers and projects. You should ask the question of your co-author if you doubt the work is his/her own. In group work, you are responsible for the project/paper in its entirety.

\* *Look away.* When you are writing, do not have open books or papers in front of you as you type. Read your sources, and then put what you have read into your own words.

\* *Writing is hard work.* Paraphrasing is relatively easy, writing is hard. Learning to be a good writer is part of what your college education is about. Staring at an empty screen does become less daunting over time!

\* *Just because it’s on the Internet, doesn’t mean it’s yours.* The Internet is a fantastic resource and search engines are terrific research tools. But what you find on the Internet was written by someone. You must cite Internet web sites, and if you use a quote, use appropriate quotation procedures.

\* *Paraphrasing is more than changing a verb tense or reordering a list.* Essentially, paraphrasing is used to summarize another author’s text. A paraphrased passage must be cited.

\* *Use a Style Guide.* Purchase a style guide and refer to it. Your instructor may suggest one that is specific to an academic discipline. You may also ask a reference librarian for recommendations.

### **The High Cost of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism can ruin your reputation and cost you your professional career, along with the respect of your peers and family. Plagiarism at Old Dominion University is an act of academic dishonesty that has serious consequences. Note that plagiarism is specifically covered in the ODU Honor Pledge. Refer to your course syllabus and the Student *Handbook* and the Office of Student Affairs for details about sanctions and penalties for this behavior.

07/16/08

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<sup>1</sup> This information is adapted from a guide developed by Old Dominion University’s College of Business and Public Administration.

### COMM 305: Professional Communication

*Tentative Schedule: Changes will be announced in class, Bb, Twitter & via e-mail*

Class Date	Activity, Assignments, Readings, etc.
August 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>No Class: Hurricane Irene</b>
September 6 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: Introductory Lecture (Read Ch 1 & 2) & Organizational Communication <b>TWA 1 Assigned</b>
September 13 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: Verbal & Nonverbal Communication (Read Ch 3) <b>TWA 1 Due by Class Time</b>
September 20 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: Listening (Read Chapter 4)
September 27 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: Interpersonal Communication (Read Chapter 5) <i>Exam Review</i> <b>TWA 2 Assigned</b>
October 4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Exam 1 Online via Bb (4:20-7:00pm EST)</b>
October 11 <sup>th</sup>	<b>No Class: Fall Break</b>
October 18 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: Mediated Communication (Read Chapter 8)
October 25 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: Group Communication (Read Chapter 9) <b>TWA 2 Due by Class Time, TWA 3 Assigned</b>
November 1 <sup>st</sup>	Exam Review (online via Bb chat-room)
November 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Exam 2 Online via Bb (4:20-7:00pm EST)</b>
November 15 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: Job Search & Professional Recruitment (Read Chapter 7)
November 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Lecture: Organizational Civility (Read Fritz article in Bb) <b>TWA 3 Due by Class Time</b>
November 29 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: Organizational Civility (Read Omdahl article in Bb) <i>Exam Review</i>
December 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Exam 3 Online via Bb (4:20-7:00pm EST)</b>
<b>**Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> 3:45-6:45pm**</b>	<i>Should we run into any delays due to extenuating circumstances we will utilize the University Exam Date for this class if necessary. Please note the date &amp; time.</i>



**COMM 305: Professional Communication**  
**TWA #1**

*75 points possible*

Minimum 3 pages, Maximum 5 pages (Reference Page does not count)  
*Due September 25, 2012 by class time as a Word document in Blackboard*

**Utilize your class notes & textbook to complete the following objectives:**

1. **Summary:** Briefly summarize the strengths & perceived weaknesses of the 4 approaches to power in an organization (p 40-42).
  1. Classical
  2. Human Relations
  3. Systems
  4. Cultural
2. **Critical Assessment:** Consider the career that you are currently pursuing (or most likely to pursue). Provide a brief assessment of one (1) approach to power that would be beneficial in that organizational context. Finally, critically assess how:
  1. Your personal work style (experience, communication style, work ethic, etc) would fit that approach to power in this particular context.
  2. What areas of improvement do you perceive are needed—on your part or the organizations (ie career path, discipline, etc—I realize not everyone has a particular company in mind that they want to work for) to improve organizational communication in your intended work environment?

**Grading Rubric for TWA #1**

Formatting & Writing	15 points
<i>*Name, UIN, Honor Code on first page</i>	
<i>*APA formatting required for <u>any</u> internal citations</i>	
<i>*APA formatted Reference Page required</i>	
<i>*Writing must be clear and without major errors</i>	
1. Summary	30 points
2. Critical Assessment	30 points

**COMM 305: Professional Communication**  
**TWA #2**

*75 points possible*

Minimum 3 pages, Maximum 5 pages (Reference Page does not count)

*Due November 6, 2012 by class time as a Word document in Blackboard*

**Utilize your class notes, textbook & the Santra and Giri article to complete the following objectives:**

- 1. Summary:** Read “*Analyzing Computer-Mediated Communication and Organizational Effectiveness*” by Santra & Giri. Highlight three key points made within the article, being sure to connect these key points to a concept from COMM 305.
- 2. Critical Assessment:** (Choose 1 of the 3 following assessment objectives):
  1. Offer an assessment of what was overlooked in this article.
  2. Offer an assessment of what has changed since the time the article was published.
  3. Offer an assessment of how you will alter the way you engage with mediated communication in a professional setting. Be sure to substantiate your assessment with course material, and if necessary, additional academic or professional sources (ie proof from other publications relevant to your professional or scholarly interests).

**Grading Rubric for TWA #2**

Formatting & Writing	15 points
<i>*Name, UIN, Honor Code on first page</i>	
<i>*APA formatting required for <u>any</u> internal citations</i>	
<i>*APA formatted Reference Page required</i>	
<i>*Writing must be clear and without major errors</i>	
1. Summary	30 points
2. Critical Assessment	30 points

### TWA #3

200 points possible (3-5 pages)

#### Conflict in Groups

*Scenario:* You are part of a group assigned with the task of presenting a new product (“Product SuperX”) to a focus group. “Product SuperX” is looking for feedback as to which marketing initiative receives the most enthusiastic response from focus group.

While meeting to brainstorm the presentation, Mark (the Public Relations Department supervisor) has aggressively disagreed with Lisa (your co-worker in the Marketing Department). Lisa responded by walking out of the room to disengage and prevent an argument. You believe this conflict is based on incompatible goals- Lisa suggests an Internet-only campaign, and Mark prefers a more traditional print media & television promotional campaign.

You are left with Mark, Jim (Mark’s Executive Assistant), and Daphne (an experienced Marketing Manager new to your company). Daphne wishes to continue the meeting without Lisa, while Mark leans back in his chair, crosses his arms, and disengages with the conversation. Jim is eager for PR & Marketing to work together and starts identifying solutions that might make both departments happy.

***Problem:*** The presentation to the focus group is a week away, so time is valuable. The CEO of your company is not interested in anything but results, so she is not an option for mediation. In other words, this group is responsible for the success of the presentation as well as managing the group’s conflict internally.

*Assignment:*

Using the 5 styles outlined by Killman & Thomas (1975):

1. Identify the conflict management styles of the parties involved. Use the scenario to support your application.
  - a. Provide a hypothetical response that Lisa could have used to professionally escalate the situation.
  - b. Provide a hypothetical response Mark could have used to professionally de-escalate the situation.
    - i. *Be sure to utilize concepts from Group Communication (Chapter 9) as you design these responses.*
2. How might the goals of the Public Relations Department and Marketing Department have been clarified to prevent a conflict?
3. How would you promote consensus using group communication & conflict management skills? (Be specific in your application from Chapter 5 & 9).
4. **Using your text & lecture notes:** support or refute the following claims:
  - a. All conflicts can be avoided and are evidence of poor management (or communication).
  - b. All conflicts can be resolved.

## Grading Rubric for TWA #2

Formatting	10 points
<i>*Name, UIN, Honor Code, and APA formatting for internal citations &amp; accompanying Reference Page</i>	
Style application	25 points
Escalation & De-escalation	25 points
Goal clarification & Preventing conflict application	50 points
Promoting consensus application	75 points
Claims Analysis (#4)	15 points