



# #COMM2510

## business communication

**Jenna Jacobson**  
Winter 2013  
Wednesday  
2:10 - 5:00 p.m.  
61 Charles, DTA220

### Course Outline

The importance of business communication skills is undeniable, and young people can contribute to the changing dynamic of the business environment by acquiring the necessary business education, skills, and strategies. Business communication is changing with the widespread use and adoption of various new media and social media technologies. Students will gain valuable insights into how companies are using blogs, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and other digital technologies to build brands and engage consumers in a conversation. Students will be immersed in the exciting fundamentals of business communications.

Effective communication skills are an asset for non-profit to for-profit organization, in both the public to private sectors. This course takes an innovative approach to learn and apply successful business communication practices with rigour and depth. By analyzing successful business ventures through current case studies, we will learn about the importance of effective communication strategies at a macro- and micro-level.

We will interrogate the boundary of a personal and professional identity through the use of various communication technologies. This course will also provide students an opportunity to practice business writing and presentation skills working as a team and individually. There is an emphasis on intercultural collaborations to embrace the global workplace and large-scale partnerships. The primary objective is that students can effectively apply a management approach in their future careers and personal endeavours.

### Learning Outcomes

On the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Use social media to create a professional and marketable portfolio
- Apply knowledge of business communication theories and understand how they relate to a variety of business settings
- Develop a conceptual and practical understanding of communication skills associated with business and professional contexts
- Work productively by understanding the challenges, strengths, and nuances of intercultural business communication
- Confidently present in a group and as an individual by applying communication and organization skills
- Demonstrate creative strategies in solving organizational problems for advertising, marketing, and public relations companies
- Showcase your transferable knowledge and skills as a 21<sup>st</sup> century communicator

### Meet your instructor: Jenna Jacobson



Office Hours: Wednesday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
or by appointment  
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Email: [jenna.jacobson@uoit.ca](mailto:jenna.jacobson@uoit.ca)  
Twitter: @jacobsonjenna



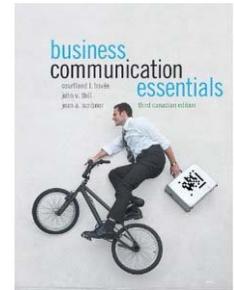
Faculty of Social Science  
and Humanities

# Course material

## Required Textbook

Bovee, C. L., Thil, J. H., & Scribner, J. A. (2012). *Business communication essentials: Third Canadian edition*. Don Mills, ON: Pearson Education Canada.

MyCanadianBusCommLab Pearson course ID: jacobson70567



\*Note: The textbook is available at the UOIT bookstore and comes with online access to MyCanadianBusCommLab. If you would prefer to save money and trees, feel free to purchase the eBook online, which also comes with access to MyCanadianBusCommLab, through the Pearson website. Reading an online text has strengths and weaknesses, so please choose whatever you think will allow you to study and learn effectively, as we will spend a lot of time with this text.

# Communication

If you have a question, chances are you are not alone and other people in the course may have the same question. Please post all questions to Blackboard so everyone can benefit from the collective knowledge. Every effort will be made to answer questions by the following business day. **I have an open door policy, so please come talk to me!**

Matters for the sole attention of the instructor should be done through Blackboard. Emails are a routine and fundamental part of business communication and, as such, all emails should be professionally written, including proper use of English, tone, and composition. Please include the course code in the subject line and sign your full name with student number. Emails without proper tone may not receive a response.

Most emails will be answered within 48 hours. I suggest that you do the following before contacting the instructor:

1. Ask your friends or classmates.
2. Post queries through the “discussion board” on Blackboard

# Grading

The three key areas of the course include:

1. Written communication
2. Oral communication
3. Professional development

*Official UOIT Grading Scheme*  
A+ 90-100; A 85-89; A- 80-84;  
B+ 77-79; B 73-76; B- 70-72;  
C+ 67-69; C 60-66;  
D 50-59; F 0-49

Assignment	Grade %
Professional Development Activities	20%
Video Résumé	20%
Tests	20%
Professional Conduct & Participation	10%
Group Report	20%
Group Presentation	10%

# Course Expectations

## Collaboration

In a fast-paced work environment, you will inevitably work in teams and rely on other people in your future careers. At the very least, others will assess your work, including both professors and employers. This class will incorporate peer review and collaborative learning. The peer review process allows you to interact with one another, and review alternative ways of approaching and writing about a topic. This will take place through reviewing your colleagues' professional development activities, collaborative evaluation of your YouTube video résumés, and working in teams to produce the Final Project. We can all learn from each other. Where individual work is assigned, please do not pursue unauthorized collaboration.

## Social Media

In an attempt to foster digital collaborative learning, we will be using Twitter in this course. Knowledge is power and to share this, you will be required to post at least one relevant tweet per week. Please use the hashtag **#COMM2510** to share information that you think your classmates might find interesting or to comment on the material we discuss in lectures or in the readings. This will allow us to keep a line of communication open so you can participate at any time. Keep a log of your tweets in a research journal by copying and pasting the text. Use Twitter as an opportunity to discuss key points, link to relevant articles, and concisely convey what you are thinking in 140 characters or less! Let's have fun with this.

## Attendance

This class is designed to mirror a business place experience, which means that you are to come prepared, on time, and ready to engage. Like a well-run meeting, class will start promptly at 2:10 p.m. every week. Formal attendance will be taken in lectures, which will be used towards your participation grade. There will be in-lecture activities that can only be accessed during lectures. There will be **NO MAKEUPS** for missed in-lecture activities. Please respect our time together by arriving on time for class. Students are responsible for obtaining course materials on days they are absent. Lecture notes are always posted on Blackboard, but speak to your classmates to find out what information was missed.

## Conduct

The online and offline classroom is an environment where diverse opinions can be openly shared. All members of this class should treat one another with respect. This includes during lecture hours and online. Talking during class is disruptive to your peers' learning, so please be respectful of everyone in the class. If you have any concerns about the course, then feel free to talk with me. Please do not use your mobile phone to talk, text, or otherwise message during class. We meet for only 3 hours a week, so please treat this time respectfully and refrain from using your mobile phone.

## Technology

Please bring your laptop, network cable, and laptop charger to every class. For the video résumé, you will need access to a video camera.

Your laptop is only to be used for note taking, research, activities, and completing the course assignments/assessments. It is strongly recommended that you have at least one flash drive to back up your assignments.

## Preparation

Students are expected to have read all of the assigned readings for each week before coming to class. Information covered in the readings may not be taught during the lecture; students are responsible for acquiring this information because it will be included in assessments.

PowerPoint's will be posted on Blackboard (BB) prior to each meeting to aid in your note taking. Because this is a university-level course, you are required to do a substantial amount of reading each week and complete several assignments.

# ASSESSMENTS

## Professional Development Activities = 20%

Throughout the term you will discover a variety of communication instruments and digital technologies that are utilized in a professional communication setting. These individual activities will embrace these tools to provide hands-on experience. The goal of these assignments is to provide a “best practice” approach to the basic communication tools that are likely to occur in a professional business setting.

There are two parts to this assignment. First, you will be given a small activity to complete in class. Once completed, you will post your assignment to the specific discussion board. Second, you will comment and peer-review 3 other students’ posts to provide constructive feedback, by replying to the thread on Blackboard. The peer-reviews are due the following day, Thursday at 11:00 p.m. There are **NO** substitute assignments. Your grade will be based on active participation, effectiveness, and completeness of the activity.

*Please show respect to your fellow students – try to work with each other to build knowledge and provide constructive criticism, rather than making comments to show people up.*

## Video Résumé = 20%

The first dynamic of Business Communication is in your ability to gain employment in your desired field. Presenting yourself - your skills and qualifications - in a professional, organized, and convincing manner is key to securing the organizational positions you desire. You will select an employment ad of a job you would like to apply for (now or in the future), and you will plan a 3 to 5 minute creative video presentation designed to explain why you are a qualified, ideal candidate for the position. This video will be posted on YouTube, and you will share the link on Blackboard.

You will also craft a cover letter to accompany your video résumé. Your cover letter should be formatted, customized, and expressive of your qualifications for the specific job that you are applying for.

The goal of this assignment is to begin working on your job-hunting skills. This assignment will provide you with a low-risk situation for presenting yourself to your peers. Students will peer-review 3 other students’ presentations and provide constructive feedback. This will also provide you with an opportunity to receive feedback from your instructor and peers to continue to improve.

## Tests (2) = 20%

There are two tests for this course that will comprise of multiple choice, true or false, and/or short answer questions. Tests will be completed through Blackboard during the time allotted in class. To ensure academic integrity, all assessments will be completed using Respondus Lockdown Browser.

## Group Final Report = 20%

In business settings we are often called upon to produce a written report for our supervisors and clients. Most businesses do this as a team effort with a short deadline to meet. In this class you will produce a formal report that addresses a specific problem faced by your client. As part of this assessment, groups of 4-5 people will present their reports to the instructor and the class. For this assignment, all group members will receive the same grade for the written document. You are expected to contribute and participate to the highest of your ability in your group project because group members must count upon one another for success.

## Group Presentation = 10%

Delivering professional presentations is key to business success. This is your time to shine. As a group, you will present your final report to the instructor and the class. Each member of the team will be required to have an active role in the presentation.

While your participation of collaborative assessments will not be monitored by your instructor, if allegations are raised and subsequent investigation reveals, that a member habitually missed meetings, arrived unprepared, and/or failed to complete work, then a penalty will be imposed.

**Assignment outlines and rubrics will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class.**

## Diversity of Learning Styles

All students learn in diverse ways, such as visual, auditory, tactile, etc.

Accordingly, a multimodal learning environment is utilized in lectures, which combine the online and offline interaction of lectures, discussions, social media, etc. Your success is the priority, so please do not hesitate to let your instructor know if there is anything further I can do to foster a more beneficial learning environment for you.

### Individual Needs and Accessibility

To ensure that accessibility concerns are properly addressed during this course, students with documented disabilities and who may require assistance to participate in this class are encouraged to speak with the instructor as soon as possible. Students who require alternative testing arrangements or other academic accommodations must contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities (B297) as early as possible to ensure needs are met.

For any disability-related support, you may contact the Student Experience Centre (SEC) Disability Services located on the 2nd floor, 61 Charles Street. Accommodation support is available for students with mental health, physical, mobility, sensory, medical, cognitive, or learning challenges. Office hours are 8:30am-4:30p.m., Monday-Friday. For more information on services provided, you can visit the website at

[http://uoit.ca/sites/csd/downtown\\_students/index.php](http://uoit.ca/sites/csd/downtown_students/index.php)

Students may contact the SEC Disability Services by calling 905-721-8668 x 5624, or email [downtowndisability@uoit.ca](mailto:downtowndisability@uoit.ca)

## Academic Integrity

**A** *Plagiarism* is an extremely serious academic offence and carries penalties varying from failure in an assignment to suspension from the University. Definitions, penalties, and procedures for dealing with plagiarism are set out in the UOIT's "Academic Conduct Policy" which is available in section 5.15 of the UOIT Calendar. It outlines what Academic Misconduct and Professional Unsuitability means and the penalties for violating this policy.

It is essential that you be able to document your creative process in producing assignments because assignments sometimes get lost, and because questions of authorship sometimes arise. You must keep your research notes and rough drafts for papers and assignments, even after the finished work has been graded and returned. When composing on a computer, preserve copies of work in progress at regular intervals so that you have a track record of how the assignment evolved. Print hard copies of the work at different stages, or use the 'save as' function on the computer to record successive drafts. The sequence of drafts should be carefully noted. An inability to provide these materials, if requested, will constitute grounds for failure on the assignment and will result in a report kept on file in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities.

### Turnitin.com

This class will use Turnitin.com for the group final project. Students will be expected to submit the written work prior to the assignment due date. All written work must include the Turnitin Originality Report to be considered complete.

**Note:** If you do **not** want your assignment submitted to Turnitin.com, you must submit the opt-out form and completed assignment in person and not submit electronically on Blackboard. *Your assignment must then be submitted with all research notes and rough drafts.* Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will not be tolerated in this course. Please see the university's policy on academic integrity and the note on Turnitin.com that follows and download the cover sheet from the UOIT website. The UOIT plagiarism policy is available on: <http://www.uoit.ca/EN/main/11258/12122/policies.html>.

**UOIT Note:** *The University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) is committed to the fundamental values of preserving academic integrity as defined in UOIT policies and contained in the UOIT Calendar. UOIT and faculty members reserve the right to use electronic means to detect and help prevent plagiarism. Students agree that by taking this course all assignments are subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com. Assignments submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents for five academic years. The faculty member may require students to submit their assignments electronically to Turnitin.com or the*

The syllabus outlines the instructor's intentions for this course. Changes in the schedule may be necessary during the term. Changes will be made through "Announcements" on Blackboard or emails to all students. Please stay up-to-date.

# Syllabus

Week	Date	Lecture Topics	Professional Development Activities & Deliverables
1	01/09	<b>Welcome to COMM2510</b>	LinkedIn: Build your professional network
2	01/16	<b>Digital &amp; social media</b> Chapter 1: Understanding business communication Chapter 6: Crafting messages for electronic media <i>Guest speaker: Caron Court</i>	Twitter: Information curating
3	01/23	<b>Employment portfolio</b> Chapter 13: Building careers & writing résumés <i>Guest speaker: Jeremy Greenberg</i>	Traditional résumé: Hire me <b>Due: Link to job posting</b>
4	01/30	<b>Putting your best face forward</b> Chapter 14: Applying & interviewing for employment <i>Guest speaker: Stuart Knight</i>	Personal branding: Professional logo
<b>02/06: UOIT Job Fair (11 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.)</b>			
5	02/06	<b>Business writing</b> Chapter 3: Planning business messages Chapter 4: Writing business messages	Email <b>Due: Video résumé &amp; cover letter</b>
6	02/13	<b>Collaborative communication &amp; technologies</b> Chapter 2: Mastering team skills & interpersonal communication <i>Guest speaker: Kiri Lutchman</i>	<b>Test #1</b>
<b>Reading week – no lectures</b>			
7	02/27	<b>Planning, proposals, &amp; promotional marketing</b> Chapter 9: Writing persuasive messages Chapter 10: Understanding & planning reports & proposals <i>Guest speaker: Stephanie Orfano</i>	The librarian in me: Research & citations
8	03/06	<b>Professional reports &amp; online writing</b> Chapter 5: Completing business messages Chapter 11: Writing & completing reports & proposals	Online writing
9	03/13	<b>Effective &amp; successful presentations</b> Chapter 12: Developing oral & online presentations	The art of PowerPoint: Engaging the audience
10	03/20	<b>Ups &amp; downs of brief business messages</b> Chapter 7: Writing routine & positive messages Chapter 8: Writing negative messages	Communicating directly: Social media press release
11	03/27	<b>Sealing the deal</b> No readings	<b>Test #2</b>
12	04/03	Group Presentations	<b>Group Presentations</b> Live tweeting <b>Due: Group Report</b>
13	04/10	Group Presentations	<b>Group Presentations</b> Live tweeting

Take advantage of every opportunity to practice your communication skills so that when important occasions arise, you will have the gift, the style, the sharpness, the clarity, and the emotions to affect other people.

-Jim Rohn

## Important Dates

What	Date
Submit job posting	Wednesday, January 23, 2013
Test #1	Wednesday, February 13, 2013
Submit video résumé link and cover letter	Wednesday, February 27, 2013
Test #2	Wednesday, March 27, 2013
Group Report	Wednesday, April 3, 2013
Group Presentation	Wednesday, April 3 / 10, 2013

**It's important to plan ahead.**

I've synthesized all of the important dates for you to put into your mobile phone calendar, agenda, or whatever else you use to manage your time.

### Tips for success

Check out the **Academic Success Centre**, which offers one-on-one support, workshops, courses, and peer-review sessions for writing and English as a second language.

<http://academicsuccess.uoit.ca/>

Also, get online support at **nool**

<http://nool.apa.uoit.ca/>

