

CMNS 1140

Introduction to Professional Communication

Kwantlen University College, Spring 2008

L12 Mondays and Wednesdays Noon-1:50pm Langley 2510

Instructor: **Jerry Horne**

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Course Website: <http://members.shaw.ca/horne/cmns/>

Bookmark this URL and check it frequently. Essential information will be posted on the Website.

Moodle online: <http://elearning.kwantlen.ca/courses>

Follow directions to logon or open new account:

Username: Your student number/library card number

Password: (choose your own password)

Enter course website with "enrolment key": _____

Office: Surrey D318 and Langley 2563

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Please telephone for appointment (604)594-4239

Official course description - Kwantlen University College

"Students will learn how to analyze context and audience, determine purpose, message, content, visual design, and media in order to create written workplace messages that can be received, understood, used, and retrieved with speed and accuracy."

Recommended Textbook:

Guffey, Mary Ellen, Rhodes, Kathleen, and Rogin, Patricia (2007). *Business Communication -- Process and Product, Brief Canadian Edition*. Toronto: Thomson Nelson.

Also, bring a red pen for editing.

General rules

1. Written assignments are due by the **beginning** of the class on the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted, but if you are able to supply an adequate explanation, an extension *may* be granted at the instructor's discretion and marks may be reduced at a rate of up to 10 percent per day. Your explanation must be in the form of a properly-written memo or E-mail received at least 24 hours prior to the assignment due date.
2. If you miss an assignment deadline because of a sudden illness, auto mishap, or family crisis, you may submit the assignment late, but you will be required to provide, at the soonest possible convenience, a well-written explanation in the form of a memo or E-mail message. Include the dates of the classes you missed and include your course section number (S12, L12, etc.). Phone messages and verbal requests are not acceptable. *Written form is standard business practice. It provides both sender and recipient with a record of the agreement.*
3. Electronic mail messages (E-mail messages), just like printed memos, have to comply with standard rules of format, grammar, and spelling. E-mail messages, like memos and business letters, must be written at the level of formality required in a professional setting. (See the memo format included with this document.) If you send me E-mail, be sure to include your full name and course section number. Label assignment files to be uploaded on Moodle with your name, followed by the name of the assignment, i.e.: *Sam Student, memo assignment*
4. Assignments must be properly word-processed and printed. If you are not familiar with word-processing (using *Microsoft Word*), please learn within the first two weeks of classes. In case you don't own a good printer, you can bring your work to campus and print it one of the many printers which are available on campus. Most assignments can be uploaded to Moodle rather than printed.
5. Obtain the phone numbers and E-mail addresses of at least two other students in this class so that you can get copies of notes and assignments from them if necessary. You can rely on your instructor to provide advice and clarification at any time, but he should not be expected to go over course material for a second time because you missed a class.
6. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated.** It is against the law to steal another person's work and ideas. Plagiarism involves duplication, modified quotation without due credit, or unacknowledged presentation of another person's ideas as your own. Any form of plagiarism will result in a mark of zero for the assignment involved; a second occurrence will result in expulsion from the course. All occurrences of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean's office and may appear on your permanent academic record.
7. The text is just one of several sources of information we'll be using in this class. You will receive handouts and other readings, and you will generate notes from lectures, class discussions, and group discussions. The final word on standards and expectations may be delivered verbally (in class) and may alter, update, or adjust what has been previously written down. Therefore, attend all classes.
8. **Classroom etiquette 1:** No food, cell phones, or message beepers.
9. **Classroom etiquette 2:** Talking with your neighbour is acceptable, but **not** while your instructor or one of your colleagues is speaking to the class.

CMNS - Assignment schedule (may be subject to revision)

	Dates	Topics/Assignments	Reading	Assignments Due
<u>1</u>	Jan 7-11	- Goals and objectives of the course - SMART communication strategy - Frontloading message	Guffey Chapter 1 (Foundations)	- In-class exams/exercises*
<u>2</u>	Jan 14-18	- Rhetorical structure(s) - Graphic highlighting	Guffey Chapter 8 (Memos and E-mail)	- First exam (2%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>3</u>	Jan 21-25	- Audience analysis	Guffey Chapter 5, 6, 7 (Writing Process)	- Challenge memo (2%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>4</u>	Jan 28- Feb 1	- Direct letters	Guffey Chapter 9 (Letters)	- Strategy exam (5%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>5</u>	Feb 4-8	- Use of secondary sources (citation form)	Guffey Chapter 12 (Report planning)	- Claim letter (2%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>6</u>	Feb 11-15	- Memo report style and format - Planning, and outlining documents - Using visuals in publications	Guffey Chapter 13 (Report types)	- Mid-term exam (20%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>7</u>	Feb 18-20	- Report planning and research <i>Reading break Thursday an Friday</i>		- In-class exams/exercises*
<u>8</u>	Feb 25-29	- Argumentation and presentation - Organizing principles for reports - Problem/purpose statement	Guffey Chapter 14 (Proposals)	- Organization report (10%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>9</u>	Mar 3-7	- Examination of proposal examples	On-line reading	- In-class exams/exercises*
<u>10</u>	Mar 10-14	- Employment communication - Persuasive employment letters/resumes	Guffey Chapter 16 (Employment)	- Proposal memo (5%) - Annotated references (2%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>11</u>	Mar 17-20 <i>Good Friday Mar 21</i>	- Persuasion theory (AIDA)	Guffey Chapter 10 (Persuasive Letters)	- In-class exams/exercises*
<u>12</u>	Mar 25-28 <i>Campus closed Monday March 24</i>	- Persuasion and diplomacy	Guffey Chapter 11 (Negative messages)	- Employment package (10%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>13</u>	Mar 31- Apr 4	- Oral presentation strategies - Review; exercises	Guffey Chapter 15 (Speaking skills)	- In-class exams/exercises*
<u>14</u>	Apr 7-11	- Review; exercises		- Formal proposal (25%) - In-class exams/exercises*
<u>15</u>	Apr 14	- Extra class (proposals reviewed)		- Self-assessment (2%)

*There will be exams and in-class writing exercises in almost every class. These are worth a total of **15 percent** for the term. Missing a class could mean missing up to 3 percent with no chance to make up the mark.

Why study organizational communication?

In CMNS 1140 we study *practical communication* – how to get things done in organizations of all kinds using words and visuals.

Whether or not you're going into business, it's highly likely you'll be working somewhere, and if you're studying at Kwantlen University College, it's highly likely you'll eventually find yourself in the role of a manager in a complex organization. Learning to communicate well is essential for a successful manager.

What the grades mean

Some students come out of high school with grades of A and A+ and expect they'll get the same grades in college.

But in college and university, things are different.

As you can see from the chart, a mark of about 70 percent is considered "good achievement". A student could probably expect to receive such a grade if (s)he follows instructions and guidelines, and thinks "inside the box" (using information presented in the class and in reading assignments).

Normally you should expect to put a minimum of four hours into a class per week (outside of class time) reading and working on assignments, so if you do everything right, your mark should be in the range of a B (68-79 percent).

If you are aiming for a higher mark, you'll have to do more. You'll have to think "outside of the box". You'll have to bring additional experiences to the assignment. You'll have to spend more time researching and thinking seriously and creatively about the subject.

Unfortunately, marks will be reduced for poor spelling and grammar, typographical errors, and sloppy visual presentation, so even if your work shows extensive research and creative analysis, your good mark could be sabotaged by substandard writing and presentation.

In college and university a mark of B+ and above means that you have produced work that would be judged by the professional and business community as being of a higher-than-average quality. It's a goal worth pursuing.

Grade	Percentage Equivalent	Definition (according to the Kwantlen general calendar)
A+	90-100	Exceptional achievement.
A	85-89	Outstanding achievement.
A-	80-84	Excellent achievement.
B+	76-79	Very good achievement.
B	72-75	Good achievement.
B-	68-71	Good achievement.
C+	64-67	Satisfactory achievement.
C	60-63	Satisfactory achievement.
C-	56-59	Minimal achievement.
D	50-55	Minimal achievement.

Criteria for written assignments

In CMNS 1140 we aim to produce strong, effective business documents that would be acceptable in any professional environment. The formats we teach are the most current and the most commonly-used across most North American business and professional organizations.

All CMNS 1140 assignments should be neatly word-processed on 8 1/2 x 11 inch white paper. Also:

- Use twelve-point *serif* type (such as *Times* or *Times New Roman*).
- Use **block format** for all assignments (memos, letters, and reports)
- Always page-number multi-page assignments
- Multi-page assignments must be stapled. (Please buy yourself a good stapler.)
- Do not use cover pages, slippery plastic covers, or binders.
- Assignments must be free of spelling and grammatical errors

The following page provides a model format for a memo or E-mail message.

Memo

Use "tab" function to create indentation

Date: September 12, 200x
To: Recipient's name, position
Cc: Secondary recipient(s) (Include your instructor's name here)
From: Your name and position
Subject: **Situation or request (eight words maximum)**

Bold face subject line

This format is used for both memos and E-mail, which are primarily internal correspondence. The *opening* section usually describes the purpose of the memo concisely (usually it's a request). The opening should be just one or two short sentences.

The middle section (called the *body* of the memo) explains your request or organizes information for readability. Use point form if it makes the message clearer. The following points are applicable to most kinds of memos and E-mail:

- First do a strategic **SMART** analysis (Situation, Message, Audience, Response, Tools).
- Frontload your request or main message in the subject line and opening.
- Discuss just one idea per paragraph; keep paragraphs short (5-7 lines – not sentences).
- Always focus on the benefits to the recipient (audience).
- Use graphic highlighting: use headings, bullet lists (point form), **bold face** and *italic* type, white space, and graphics, if they make your message more clear for the reader.
- Include only the information that is necessary. If you have a second message, use a second memo.

The *conclusion* section should be just one or two sentences: Ask for a response from the recipient, state deadline date and, as always, be courteous.

Sign your name here

Your name and position or CMNS course number (typed)
Phone number(s)
E-mail address

Enclosure

This indicates you have attached something to the memo for the reader's attention. You must also describe what you are attaching within the body of the memo.

Important dates

January 6	Last day to drop courses with 100% refund/reduction in fees, less \$250 registration deposit (varies for international students).
January 7	Spring session classes start.
January 13	Drop/change courses with 70 percent refund/reduction in fees owing, less \$250 registration deposit (varies for international students) Last day to drop without a "W" on transcript.
January 14-18	Add/change course with instructor approval.
January 18	Additional fee payment due date for registration activity between December 14 and January 18.
February 21-22	Reading break – no classes.
March 1	Last day to withdraw to receive a W grade.
March 21	Campus closed: Good Friday.
March 24	Campus closed: Easter Monday.
April 14	Last day of classes.
April 16-24	Final exam period (but not for CMNS 1140, as there is no final exam).

How to do well in CMNS 1140

Take this class first. You will be more successful in all your other classes. Don't leave it to your last year, or even your second year. Take CMNS 1140 in semester one of the first year if you can. In CMNS 1140 we study communication strategy and structure. We study a straightforward method for planning, organizing, and producing excellent written reports.

Plan your projects strategically. This is not class in which you can “drop in on” once in a while to learn a new tip. Most of the assignments lead up the major assignment for the course – a formal proposal worth 25 percent. Work SMART on the earlier assignments, and you will be able to use what you've learned to produce your major assignment.

Choose a proposal topic early – within the first six weeks if possible. Think about it, refine it, research it, and discuss it with your colleagues. By week six you'll be ready to start planning your major assignment. You'll be able to use all of the examples and exercises in every class to help you refine your skills and refine your major assignment.

Do good work and you'll end up with a document you can be proud of. You may even be able to use it to get the job you want. At the very least you'll have developed essential writing skills that will put you head and shoulders above the competition – including people with many years more education and job experience.