



BCMU 301/2

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SYLLABUS Spring 2012

READINGS

- Coursepak
- *Woe Is I*, Patricia T. O'Conner. (PTO)
- *Thank You for Arguing*, Jay Heinrichs, (JH)
- *Presentation Zen*, Garr Reynolds, (GR)
- Recommended: *The Gregg Reference Manual*, 11th ed., William A. Sabin

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To provide diagnosis for bad writing habits and prescriptions for a cure
2. To encourage a methodical, strategic-thinking approach in solving communication problems
3. To teach fundamental rhetorical techniques to enable students to develop professional practical, real-world writing and oral communication skills
4. To provide opportunities to develop group communication and leadership skills

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Since an important dimension to this class is using and practicing with the tools you will be taught, I will be calling on each of you randomly to give you the opportunity to think on your feet--or in your seat, as the case may be. In order to participate effectively, you will have to integrate the information presented to you in the lectures, the packet, and the text as we go along. You will not do well in this class if you wait until the midterm to learn this material.

GRADING

Assignments are due by the end of your class or you will lose 5 points. You will also lose 5 points for each additional day I don't receive it. I will accept an email as proof of your meeting the deadline, but you must bring a hard copy to class or to my office as soon as you can.

Here's how your grade will be calculated:

- Four quizzes (10 points each) on the course readings and coursepak material.
- Three homework assignments: the first (15 points), the second (20 points), and the third (75 points).
- Midterm in two parts: an in-class short-answer test (100 points) & a take-home component (100 points)
- Group oral -- a business-plan pitch presentation to potential investors (150 points).
- Extra-credit opportunities
- My evaluation of your effort, class participation, and improvement could possibly bounce your final grade up or down a point

When you know all your scores, add them up and divide by 5 to render a number on a 100-point scale. That number translates into your grade according to the following table:

Grade Scale

98.5	4.0
97	3.9
95.5	3.8
94	3.7
92.5	3.6
91	3.5
89.5	3.4
88	3.3
86.5	3.2
85	3.1
83.5	3.0
82	2.9
80.5	2.8
79	2.7
77.5	2.6
76	2.5
74.5	2.4
73	2.3
71.5	2.2
70	2.1

COURSE SCHEDULE

1	3/27	Course Overview, Problem Solving and Rhetorical Technique	
<p>Introduction/Problem Solving</p> <p>This class will focus on the course objectives and the approach that I take toward teaching practical communications skills appropriate for the workplace. We'll introduce the Communication Loop and the four problem-solving steps appropriate for any problem solving challenge. We'll also talk about how to tell a joke.</p>			
2	2/29	Pronouns, Situation Analysis More on Basic Rhetorical Technique	
<p>PTO 1: Woe Is I.</p> <p>JH 1: Open Your Eyes—What is rhetorical technique? Concession, amplification, and the commonplace 2: Set Your Goals—Do you want to win or win over, fight or argue?</p> <p>Coursepak: Analysis: pp. 2-8.</p> <p>This class will take a look at O'Conner's discussion of common problems writers have with pronouns. We will examine Heinrich's distinction between fighting vs. arguing or the goal to 'win over' rather than simply to win. We'll then work with material in the coursepak to understand better what we mean by Situation Analysis: defining the problem, defining the goals, and defining the audience.</p>			
3	4/3	The Rhetorical Big Three More Analysis & Strategy Start Group Work	1st Assignment dist
<p>JH 3: Control the Tense—Forensic, Demonstrative, & Deliberative 4: Soften Them Up—Logos, Pathos, Ethos</p> <p>Coursepak: Strategy, pp. 9-14</p> <p>We'll quickly define what we mean by forensic, demonstrative, and deliberative rhetorical forms. And we'll lay out the preliminaries regarding Logos, Pathos, and Ethos. We'll finish up our discussion of Analysis and start discussing the basic elements that compose Strategy. We'll also form groups you'll be working in all Quarter long.</p>			

4	4/5	Punctuation Ethos More Analysis, Strategy	Quiz 1 Analysis & Outline due
PTO	8: Comma Sutra		
JH	5: Get Them to Like You—Ethos and Decorum 6: Make Them Listen: Ethos & Virtue 7: Show Leadership—Ethos & Practical Wisdom 8: Win Their Trust—Ethos & Good Will		
Coursepak: Strategy, pp. 9-14			
Everything you wanted to know about punctuation but were afraid to ask. We'll get a little deeper into the weeds regarding what we mean by "Ethos." We'll workshop the analysis and outline, and talk about document format issues.			
5	4/10	Pathos & Emotional Intelligence Team Charter	1st assignment final due 2nd Asgmt distributed
PTO	5: Verbal Abuse--Do a couple of pages every day.		
JH	9: Control the Mood—Pathos—Rhetoric & Mood Swings 10: Turn the Volume Down—When You Want to Keep It Cool		
Coursepak: Appendix Four: "Building the Emotional Intelligence of Groups."			
We'll go deeper into the role of pathos in rhetoric, and then get into some interesting issues in our groups regarding emotional intelligence.			
6	4/12	Sentences & Revision Techniques	Quiz 2 Asgmt 2 Rough #1
PTO :	9: The Compleat Dangler—Writing clearly, sentences require it. 10: Saying Is Believing: It's all about effective sentences		
Coursepak: Execution Evaluation, pp. 15-24.			
And we'll look at the last of the Content, Clarity, Correctness steps in the execution revision process. This last stage is about straightening the tie, polishing the shoes, and making sure everything is perfect. We'll workshop the second assignment in class with a particular look at your sentences.			

7	4/17	Informative Messages The Commonplace & Reframing Business Plan Project	Asgmt 2 Rough #2 Team Charter due
<p>JH 11: Gain the High Ground: Ethos & the Commonplace 12: Persuade on Your Terms: Reframing & Redefining Terms</p> <p>Coursepak: Informative Messages, pp. 27-36; Business Plans, 37-42.</p> <p>We'll look at O'Conner's Fifteen Rules to "say what you mean." Then we'll shift our focus to finish up with Informative messages, particularly bad-news messages, workshopping the assignment for organization and content. Then we will introduce the business plan project.</p>			
8	4/19	Request Messages & Sales Business Plan Structure Group Brainstorming	Quiz 3 2nd Asgmt final due 3rd Asgmt distributed
<p>JH 13-17 optional 18: Speak your Audience's Language—Ethos and Code Grooming 19: Make Them Identify with Your Choice—Ethos & Identity</p> <p>Coursepak: Request Messages—pp. 43-48.</p> <p>We'll develop our "ethos" theme further by taking a look at different uses of the "identity strategy." We'll then shift in this class from informational to request messages. We'll spend a little time talking about the direct request and move to sales letters and the problem/solution strategy. We'll also watch a business plan presentation entitled "The Old North Face" to give you a sense of what the end product should be (and not be).</p>			
9	4/24	Deliver More Verbal Impact Persuasive Requests Group Conflict/ Work Plan	3rd Asgmt Workshop
<p>JH 20: Get Instant Cleverness</p> <p>Coursepak: Persuasive Requests, pp. 49-54 Appendix 4: "An Overview of the Model"</p> <p>In this class we will discuss ways to make your content more compelling and memorable by the use of basic figures of speech. We will then build upon what we learned from sales-letter strategy to a broader category of persuasive messages in which your goal is to motivate a resistant audience to action. We'll also talk about conflict in groups.</p>			

10	4/26	Presentation Content Intro to Presentation Zen More Business Plans	3rd assignment due Work Plan due
JH:	21: Seize the Occasion 22: Use the Right Medium		
GR	1: Presenting in Today's World		
Coursepak: Preparing Content, pp. 56-58			
We'll focus on some introductory ideas about how to think about your goals when you are developing content for an oral presentation. We'll go into more detail about the strategies and objectives of a business plan. We'll talk about various investor types and how you have to shape your presentation to meet the investment objectives of each.			
11	5/1	Cicero's Big Five Sticky Ideas	3rd assignment due Work Plan due
JH	23: Give a Persuasive Talk		
GR	2: Creativity, Limitations, and Constraints		
We'll introduce the final, major writing project for the quarter the take-home midterm "Persuasive Talk". We'll also wrap up our discussion of developing compelling content with a discussion of 'sticky ideas'.			
12	5/3	More on Compelling Content Thinking Visually 1	Quiz 4
GR	3: Planning Analog 4: Crafting the Story		
Coursepak; Preparing Visual Aids, pp. 59-61.			
We'll focus on some practical compositional exercises and how to translate the raw material produced in them into something you can present to the public. And we'll start taking a look at the basic idea of "visual story" or "picture superiority effect."			

13	5/8	Thinking Visually 2	
GR		5: Simplicity—Why It Matters 6: Presentation Design—Principles and Techniques 7: Sample Slides—Images & Text	
We'll look in more detail at some of the particular design principles and show some previous student work to illustrate them. There are so many ways to go wrong here. You need to learn what they are and avoid them.			
14	5/10	Oral Presentations: Delivery	Persuasive Talk due Info Int. Memo due
GR		8: The Art of Being Completely Present	
Coursepak: How to Prepare Your Delivery, p. 62.			
This class will focus on delivery skills and rehearsal strategies. We'll watch a video of a student group and critique the delivery of its presentation, and then outline what goals you should be setting for yourself to achieve as a group when you get in front of the class.			
15	5/15	Mid-Term Pulling it All Together	
One-hour midterm covering coursepak concepts and skills and the Garr Reynolds readings			
16	5/17	Content Rehearsals	
17	5/22	Oral Reports –Group 1	
It's all you now. This will be your opportunity to show me that you've learned what persuasion really means so that by the end of your presentation I'll be salivating to invest with your new startup.			
18	5/24	Oral Reports—Groups 2 & 3	
19	5/29	Oral Reports—Groups 4 & 5	
20	5/31	Oral Reports—Group 6; Wrap up	
In the last class we'll do peer and course evaluations. I'll also be returning your Persuasive Talks and the grades for those groups who have made their presentations in the days preceding.			

