

Vesalius College

Course description

Course title: Introduction to Organizational Communication

Course code: CMM 104E

Teacher responsible: Kate Connelly

Course description:

Since ancient times, people have formed groups - for hunting, work, celebration, safety... many reasons. All of these groups have similar features. They have goals, structure, rules, expectations, and some form of leadership - and all these elements are connected through the use of human communication. Without human communication, organizations would cease to exist.

Beyond the hunting groups of cave dwellers, organizations in the modern sense are also involved in events such as hostile takeovers, lay-offs, mergers, innovation periods, and social campaigns - events which force us to further examine the relationship between communication and organizing processes.

Course objectives:

Students in CMM 104 develop awareness and understanding of the relationship between communication and organizational effectiveness. The course is designed to familiarize students with the dynamics of interpersonal communication within groups and will introduce, often through the use of case studies, the theory and practice used by organizations to plan, develop, implement and evaluate a variety of communication strategies. In addition, a good portion of the semester will be devoted to writing skills specific to organizations such as technical writing, the preparation of reports and executive summaries, and the development of manuals and instructions. Students will also be made aware of and learn how to avoid the negative aspects of organizational communication, such as sexual harassment, discrimination and unethical.

In addition, the Vesalius Communications Curriculum Committee has created a list of specific skills for Communication majors that must be developed in 100-level required courses. All of those skills have been implemented into the course structure of CMM 104:

- *presentation skills*
- *writing skills - structure, content PLUS proper English and professionalism*
- *critical thinking*
- *meeting deadlines/ time management*
- *gaining familiarity with CMM literature/authors/work*
- *computer skills relating to CMM - such as document design, formatting and computer-assisted presentations*
- *ability to assess various communications models for effectiveness while factoring in the increasingly global perspective.*

Grade weighting scheme:

Participation	5%
Discussion of reading assignments	5%
Written assignments (2 at 20% each)	40%
Presentation of research paper	10%
Mid-term examination	20%
Final examination	20%

Participation means attending class, actively contributing to class discussions and turning assignments in on time. More than three unexcused absences will lead to an incremental drop in your grade for the class (i.e., an "A" will become an "A-", an "A-" will become a "B+", etc.) Students who are absent are responsible for finding out what was covered in class, *and are still expected to get any assignments in on time.* Assignments are due at the start of the class period on the due date. ***Because the ability to meet deadlines is a crucial skill for all communications professionals, late assignments will not be accepted! I do not accept assignments by e-mail or in my mailbox.*** Only serious medical emergencies are 'excused' absences. Medical appointments, work commitments or travelling are not excused absences. Our class time is a fixed appointment. Fulfil your other commitments outside of class time.

All **written assignments** not done during class time must be *typed, double-spaced, font size 12 and carefully proofread.* The numbers of grammatical and syntactical errors that are acceptable will run in inverse order to the summer term. Assignments riddled with errors will receive a D, and require a rewrite.

Used course material (handbooks, readers, readings, newspapers, magazines) and references:

- Harris, Thomas E. *Applied Organizational Communication: Principles and Pragmatics for Future Practice.* 2nd edition. Erlbaum and Associates. ISBN: 0805826025
- Course reader (Case Studies)
- You should always have A4 - size writing paper available in class.