



BCOM 4300: Managing Communications in Business

Course Information

<i>Course Number/Section</i>	BCOM 4300.007
<i>Course Title</i>	Managing Communications in Business
<i>Term</i>	Spring 2023
<i>Class Meeting Times</i>	Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 am to 11:15 am
<i>Room</i>	JSOM Room 2.802

Professor Contact Information

<i>Professor</i>	Jennifer Fry
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<i>Office Location</i>	JSOM Room 3.419
<i>Physical Office Hours</i>	By appointment – please do not hesitate to request an appointment anytime
<i>MS Teams Office Hours</i>	Tuesday 8:30 am to 9:30 am – see the link posted in eLearning

Course Description from 2021 UTD Catalog

This course focuses on communication as a management and leadership tool, and emphasizes communications with a variety of stakeholders within an organization: team members, superiors, direct reports, as well as management of external stakeholders such as clients. Topics include communication theories and communication strategies for leading based on communication skills and strengths, managing conflict, and addressing ethics and destructive leadership communication practices. Prerequisite: **BCOM 1300** or **BCOM 3300** or **BCOM 3310** (3-0) S

Background on JSOM BCOM Sequence

Students will complete two business communication courses:

- BCOM 1300 (freshman students) or BCOM 3300 (transfer students) focuses on skills needed for communicating as a college student, an intern, an employee or a campus leader.
- BCOM 4300 (junior or senior students) focuses on skills needed for communication as a business school graduate, a manager or a professional leader.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

1. Understand communication as a leadership skill that can be developed and be able to apply communication styles and strategies to a variety of scenarios
2. Evaluate the role of leadership communication in organizational culture, organizational change, and conflict resolution
3. Apply communication theories as part of being able to identify best practices in ethical communication, strengths development, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills, among other related topics

Required Textbooks and Materials

Introduction to Leadership: Concepts & Practice, 5th edition [communication science]. By Peter G. Northouse. This text includes Sage Vantage, an online learning environment with an ebook and learning activities. Vantage is used all semester. Purchase Vantage through the bookstore. **Purchase options (Pick one, most students pick #1):**

1. Vantage and Online Book: ISBN: 9781071803615 (hint: use course lookup or search for Northouse); or
2. Vantage and Loose-leaf Bundle: Northouse, Introduction to Leadership 5e (Vantage Shipped Access Card) + Northouse, Introduction to Leadership 5e (Loose-leaf). ISBN: 9781071850466.

Grammarly: Access at no additional cost through this link: <https://jindal.utdallas.edu/student-resources/grammarly-quinnia/>

Assignments & Grading Policy

Assignment	Assignment Value	Points
Class Activities	19%	190
Vantage Activities	17.3%	173
Vantage Self-Assessments / Skills Identifications	0.7%	7
Application Writing Activity	1%	10
Tests (3; 20% each)	60%	600
Group Case Study Project	21%	210
Team Check-In Materials	20%	20
Recommendation Report	7%	70
Presentation & Visual Aid	10%	100
Peer Review of Presentations	1%	10
Self and Group Member Evaluations	1%	10
Total	100%	1,000

Grading Policy and Scale

All work should demonstrate the same professional and ethical standards expected of you in the workplace, including proofreading and editing carefully all work you submit in this class. See rubrics for written assignments. I do round up mid-term and final numerical grades that are .5 or higher.

Grading Scale
100-98% = A+
97-94 = A
93-90 = A-
89-87 = B+
86-84 = B
83-80 = B-
79-77 = C+
76-74 = C
73-70 = C-
69-67 = D+
66-64 = D
63-60 = D-
59 and below = F

Tentative Course Schedule & Topics

Important: See eLearning homepage for a more detailed schedule with readings, participation activities, and assignments. Students will be informed of any changes via eLearning. Note: Each lecture class meeting includes case studies and roundtable discussion that depend on having completed the Vantage homework, self-assessments, and readings. **All assignments are due by 10:00 am by the due date.** Weeks run from Monday through Sunday.

Week	Agenda	Major Deadlines
1	<p>Class, Activity: Communication case study activity, syllabus review, and expectation setting</p> <p>SkillBoost: Group project conflict resolution practice</p> <p>Lecture 1: Advanced Communication & Influence</p> <p>SkillsBoost: Analyzing job ads (entry level vs. upper level)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential elements of communication leadership • Approaches and theories of communication • Communication leadership vs. Management 	<p>Sign up for Vantage now. See link on eLearning. Vantage homework is due by 10:00 am before each class meeting.</p> <p>See eLearning for the Vantage deadline schedule.</p>
2	<p>Lecture 2: Traits & Personal Communication – Self Analysis</p> <p>SkillBoost: Reviewing job applicants and tailoring your resume</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication traits • Traits of successful communicators • Identifying your communication traits • Case Application: Selecting a guest speaker (speaking skills) <p>Lecture 3: Choosing Your Communication Style</p> <p>SkillBoost: Introducing yourself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication in differ types of organizations • Styles of communicating with your boss and as the boss • Case Application: Analyzing communication leadership styles in company culture (e.g., Patagonia) 	<p>10:00 am, January 24 - Chapters 1 & 2 due</p> <p>Recommend working ahead on chapters. Late work is not accepted.</p> <p>10:00 am, January 26 – Chapter 3 due</p> <p>Book your test appointments now as no walk-ins are allowed and you must book your appointments at least 48 hours in advance.</p>
3	<p>Lecture 4: Getting Stuff Done & Balancing Task, Relationship, & Change Communication</p> <p>SkillBoost: Writing Messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task and relationship styles in communication practices • Research about demographic influences on communication • Change behavior and communication <p>Lecture 5: Communication Skills & Developing Your Brand</p> <p>SkillBoost: Improving Your Resume</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of communication and leadership skills • Differences between administrative, interpersonal, and conceptual skills • Shifts in communication skills at different hierarchical levels 	<p>10:00 am, January 31 – Chapter 4 due</p> <p>10:00 am, February 2 – Chapter 5 due</p>
4	<p>Communication Application Activity and Test 1 review</p> <p>Test 1 at UTD Testing Center (no class on Thursday, February 9 so you can take the test during class time)</p>	<p>10:00 am, February 7 - Application Activity due</p> <p>February 9, 10, & 11 – Test 1 - see Testing Center hours</p>
5	<p>Lecture 6: Discovering & Communicating Your Strengths</p> <p>SkillBoost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding strengths and traits 	<p>10:00 am, February 14 – Chapter 6 due</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicating to create a positive work environment <p>Lecture 7: Communicating a Strategic Plan & Persuading Others to Adopt Your Vision SkillBoost: Writing a Vision & Mission Statement (corporate or personal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing mission and vision statements and strategizing their communication and implementation Speaking and articulating a mission and a vision for a team or an organization 	<p>10:00 am, February 16 – Chapter 7 due</p>
6	<p>Lecture 8: Constructive Communication & Climate SkillBoost: Communicating Clearly, writing concisely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding climate, culture, and communication Providing well-communicated feedback Avoiding groupthink through the application of communication practices <p>Lecture 9: Inclusive Communication: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding communication’s relation to diversity, equity, and inclusion Communicating to promote inclusion 	<p>10:00 am, February 21 – Chapter 8 due</p> <p>10:00 am, February 23 – Chapter 9 due</p>
7	<p>Lecture 10: Listening to Outsiders & Encouraging Team Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding how groups form Communicating to create positive relationships with in groups and out groups <p>Test 2 review</p>	<p>10:00 am, February 28 – Chapter 10 due</p>
8	<p>Test 2 at UTD Testing Center (no class on Tuesday, March 7 so you can take the test during class time)</p> <p>Case Studies in Business and How to Analyze Them; LinkedIn Learning related to Group Communication & Meeting Management <i>Introduction of group assignment</i></p>	<p>March 6, 7, & 8 - Test 2 - see Testing Center hours</p> <p>Watch LinkedIn Learning Course: Communication within Teams by Daisy Lovelace (<i>testable material</i>); see eLearning for details</p>
9	Spring Break – No classes!	
10	<p>Lecture 11: Case Studies in Business and How to Analyze Them (note: no Vantage assignment for this lecture); LinkedIn Learning related to Group Communication & Meeting Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting effective communication by establishing roles in teams, understanding accountability, and creating rules for meetings and review Learning strategies for analyzing case studies <p>Understanding academic research in an upper-level course Lecture 13: Motivational Communication: Yourself, Your Team, & Goals SkillBoost: Speaking to motivate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding obstacles to communication Explaining motivation and obstacles to improve communication <p>Determining when to use different communication styles</p>	<p>10:00 am, March 21 – Chapter 11 due</p> <p>10:00 am, March 23 - submit Group Status Report and book check-in appointment (all students must submit the status report)</p> <p>10:00 am, March 23 – Chapter 13 due</p>

11	Class, Activity: students present research, discuss team conflict, and review status report with professor for project (includes Gannt chart, clarified deliverables, and action strategies)	
12	Communication Work Day: Students meet with Teams to finalize Recommendation Report and teams check in with professor	10:00 am, April 6 – Recommendaiton Report due - all groups
13	Students give communication consultancy presentations in class	10:00 am, April 10 - Visual aid (e.g., PowerPoint) due In class, April 11 & 13 - Group presentations
14	Students give communication consultancy presentations in class and perform self and team performance reviews	In class, April 18 – Group presentations 10:00 am, April 20 - Submit (1) Peer Review of Presentations and (2) Self & Group Member Evaluations
15	Lecture 12: Conflict Management & Communication + Negotiating Your Position SkillBoost: Writing an email to manage routine conflict using a standard negotiation technique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the aspects of conflict • Defining content, relational, and process conflict • Learning conflict resolution styles and communicating to diffuse conflict Lecture 14: Presentation & Report Expectations; Presenting as a Team (note: no Vantage assignment for this lecture) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing group writing and presentation strategies • Establishing norms and expectations for presentations and report writing to high-level, external audiences 	10:00 am, April 25 – Chapter 12 due 10:00 am, April 27 – Chapter 14 due
16	Test 3 Review Test 2 at UTD Testing Center (no class on May 4 so you can take the test during class time)	May 3, 4, & 5 – Test 2 – see Testing Center hours

Course Policies

1. General

- Announcements are made in eLearning or by UTD email.
- Office hours are student conference hours for clarification, seeking additional help, or getting advice on assignments or coursework. Assignments can be reviewed during the office hours or after class. Unlike class time student conference hours allow for privacy so things like grades can be discussed.
- When emailing, students must use UTD email and include a descriptive subject line such as “BCOM 4300.001 Tuesday/Thursday 2 pm Presentation Question.” Emails from non-utdallas.edu emails will not be answered.
- Assignments are not reviewed by email**, but as noted, assignments can e reviewed during office hours, before or after class, or in a scheduled conferece. Students can visit <https://jindal.utdallas.edu/student-resources/business-communication-center/> for writing help or bring assignments to office hours or conference times.
- All assignments, quizzes, and projects will be checked for scholastic dishonesty (TurnItIn or other methods). A finding of scholastic dishonesty results in a grade of zero.

- f. The instructor reserves the right to change the grading policy, the course schedule, and the assignments and change the published grades if there is a miscalculation or dishonesty situation.
- g. There is no extra credit in any BCOM course. This is a BCOM-wide policy.
- h. Grade Contesting: Email within one week of a grade being posted to request a meeting. Requests to contest a grade after the week are not accepted. Include in this email the concerns or questions. A challenge may result in grades being raised or lowered.

2. Assignments

- a. Submit early to avoid technical issues.
- b. Only submitted assignments in eLearning are graded. ("Turn In Assignments Here" folder) **An assignment emailed to the professor is not eligible for grading and will not receive a grade.**
- c. Review rubrics on assignment descriptions for how they are graded. ("Assignments" folder)
- d. **No late work is accepted.** Deadlines in the professional world are a serious matter. Missed deadlines mean lost contracts, delayed product releases, skyrocketing expenses, and, in some cases, the loss, quite literally, of millions of dollars in revenue. Missed deadlines also compromise professional reputations and careers. Work that does not meet the assignment's constraints is unprofessional and creates administrative headaches. "I had technical problems" is not a valid excuse for late work, so plan accordingly.
- e. **Late Work: Vantage, peer review, group evaluations, and discussion boards cannot be submitted late.**
- f. You are responsible for making sure TurnItIn assignments are submitted. You will receive a confirmation email immediately after a TurnItIn submission. If there is a technical issue where I do not see your assignment, I will ask for the confirmation email as proof of submission. Screenshots of document edit dates will not be accepted as proof.
- g. Assignment List:
 - i. Test 1: Communication Skills and Traits – leadership communication, applying communicating strategies to a variety of situations (SLO 1)
 - ii. Test 2: Communication Development – strengths, interpersonal skills, and more (SLO 1 & 2)
 - iii. Test 3: Communication Best Practices – ethics, culture, conflict, and change (SLOs 2 & 3)
 - iv. Sage Vantage (SLOs, 1, 2 & 3): interactive readings from the Northouse text with knowledge checks and test study material, pass/fail quizzes that predict workplace behavior and identify beliefs and strengths about leadership and communication, and pass/fail videos with short quizzes from current industry leaders and scholars
 - v. Application activity: individual written analysis of leadership communication concepts in a piece of media. Students will post on eLearning discussion board and post replies.
 - vi. Group status report/check-in: team-written document with project timeline, deliverables, and assessment of team function and communication. Written for a manager.
 - vii. Group case study analysis: team-written report from the point of view of a consultancy firm addressing a communication issue in a management situation
 - viii. Group presentation: team presentation to an imagined board of directors to suggest solutions to a communication issue
 - ix. Individual review of team presentations: feedback given to other teams on their presentations
 - x. Written performance evaluations: completion of a performance review for each team member and a self-evaluation to determine communication goals and strengths

3. Tests

- a. For Spring 2023, the tests are in the Testing Center. The Testing Center requires students to schedule their test time and does not accept walk-in test takers. <https://ets.utdallas.edu/testing-center>
- b. Students must schedule an appointment with the Testing Center at least 48 hours before the test. Students are encouraged to schedule both test appointments for the first week of classes. Failure to register for a test will result in an automatic 30 percent deduction. Failure to take the test will result in a grade of zero on the test. Students are responsible for ensuring confirmation of Testing Center registration; the Testing Center sends email confirmations, which should be retained.
- c. Tests are multiple choice and true/false, each 50-60 questions and each question weighted equally. Tests must be done individually. Collaboration, if proven, will result in a referral to Judicial Affairs.

- d. Each test is 90 minutes and is open note but limited to one sheet of 8 x 11.5 (front and back). The Testing Center will collect the note page when students finish the test. Notes can be typed or handwritten. Bringing in more than one page of notes will typically result in a referral for scholastic dishonesty and potentially a grade of 0 on the test.
- e. In case of medical emergencies, contact the instructor immediately. In this case, makeup tests may be essay and short answer instead of multiple choice and true/false.
- f. If the Testing Center is closed due to an online pivot, all test policies are subject to change to adapt to the modality.

4. Class Participation & Attendance

- a. Research has found that those who miss four or more classes tend to have decreased final grades ([source](#)).
- b. Professional communication is expected. Show up ready to learn and implement skills to reduce distractions, including putting your cellphone out of reach and using laptops only for note taking.
- c. Your professor reserves the right to restrict personal technology use as needed.
- d. **Class attendance is mandatory.** Attendance will be taken each class and you must attend the entire class to be counted as present as well as sign the attendance sheet. There are four free absences for the semester which can be used at any time and for any reason and you do not need to let me know when these are being used. The only exception to this is that you may not miss class and use a free absence on a day that your group is presenting or on a day of any graded in-class activity. Beyond that, for any absence beyond the four free absences, 10 points will be deducted from the final points earned in the course. **This policy is not negotiable.**
- e. Attendance is tracked in eLearning as a percentage, but it does not produce a grade.

5. Group Assignments

- a. Students will be placed into a group. The group is responsible for determining roles and a work schedule within the project deadlines.
- b. No additional team members will be added if someone drops or is removed or “fired” from the group.
- c. Groups cannot “fire” students without consulting their “supervisor” (the course professor). The professor reserves the right to remove or adjust the grade of a non-compliant team member. To request a review of a non-compliant team member, see the assignment sheet for the process.
- d. Students are encouraged to reach out to the instructor with concerns. The goal of teamwork is to improve team communication. Students must learn how to solve team-related problems.
- e. Group project deliverables are listed in section 2 of the syllabus.

Tips for Success

The business communication program helps students to succeed as a communicator now and later. The course has been designed to improve students’ communication skills. Students are encouraged to work on assignments sequentially (each assignment builds on the last one). Students also encouraged to:

1. Stay focused. Be proactive in academic studies and add deadlines on your calendar.
2. Be prepared. Read each assignment, follow the study guide, and focus on the class objectives.
3. Be professional. Treat everyone respectfully and fairly. Set high standards for reliability and ethics.
4. Ask for help. Be very active in class, participate in discussions and exercise communication skills.

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: *“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”*

Need additional coaching or advice? Use these JSOM-only resources

1. Document and Presentation Coaching? See Business Communication Center. <https://jindal.utdallas.edu/student-resources/business-communication-center/>
2. Internship and Job Searching? See JSOM Career Management Center (CMC) The CMC (JSOM 12.110 offers career coaching, resume and cover-letter critiques, mock interviews, etc. <http://jindal.utdallas.edu/career-management-center/>

Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the [Academic Support Resources](#) lists the University's academic support resources for all students. The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to [UT Dallas Syllabus Policies](#) webpage for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

List of Class Activities, Assignments, and Test Due Dates – BCOM 4300.007 and 4300.008

Assignment	Due Dates
Vantage Assignment Chapters 1 & 2	January 24, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 3	January 26, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 4	January 31, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 5	February 2, 2023
Application Activity	February 7, 2023
Test 1	February 9, 10, & 11, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 6	February 14, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 7	February 16, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 8	February 21, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 9	February 23, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 10	February 28, 2023
Test 2	March 6, 7, & 8, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 11	March 21, 2023
Team Check-In Status Report Document	March 23, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 13	March 23, 2023
Recommendation Report	April 6, 2023
Group presentations	April 11, 13, & 18, 2023
Peer review of group presentations and self and group evaluation	April 20, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 12	April 25, 2023
Vantage Assignment Chapter 14	April 27, 2023
Test 3	May 3, 4, & 5, 2023