BCOM 4300.017: Advanced Professional Communication

Course Information

Course Number/Section	BCOM 4300.017
Course Title	Advanced Professional Communication
Term	Spring 2024
Class Meeting Times	Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30 pm to 3:45 pm
Room	JSOM Room 2.904

Professor Contact Information

Professor	Jennifer Fry
Office Phone	469-995-5771
Email Address	jennifer.fry@utdallas.edu
Office Location	JSOM Room 3.419
Physical Office Hours	By appointment - I am usually in my office from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday

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 (<u>Pick one</u>, most students pick #1):**

1. <u>Vantage and Online Book:</u> ISBN: 9781071803615 (Make sure you purchase the Vantage version; it should line up with this ISBN); or
2. <u>Vantage and Loose-leaf Bundle</u>: Northouse, Introduction to Leadership 5e (Vantage Shipped Access Card) + Northouse, Introduction to Leadership 5e (Loose-leaf). ISBN: 9781071850466.

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

Assignments & Grading Policy

Assignment	Assignment Value	Points
Class Activities	**21%**	**210**
Vantage Activities	17.3%	173
Vantage Self-Assessments / Skills Identifications	0.7%	7
AI ATS Resume & Interview (Quinncia.io)	3%	30
Tests (3; 18% each)	**54%**	**540**
Group Case Study Project	**25%**	**250**
Team Check-In Materials	2%	20
Case Study Report	10%	100
Presentation & Visual Aid	10%	100
Peer Review of Presentations	1.5%	15
Self and Group Member Evaluations	1.5%	15
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

<mark>**Important:** See the eLearning homepage for a more detailed schedule with readings, participation activities, and assignments</mark>. 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. <mark>**All assignments are due by 10:00 am by the due date.**</mark> Weeks run from Monday through Sunday.

Week	Agenda	Major Deadlines
1	**January 16:** Course Introduction, syllabus review, and expectation setting. Preview job search, review 1300/3300 content on getting a job, and explain how to find a career and apply this course to the job search. SkillBoost: Team collaboration and communication, interpersonal skills, and dealing with difficult people **January 18:** Lecture 1: Advanced Communication Skills & Influence – Chapter 1 SkillBoost: Understanding the post-graduation job search process by analyzing job ads (entry level vs. upper level)	**Sign up for Vantage now, which is due before lectures**. See the link in eLearning. Vantage homework is due by 10:00 am before each class meeting. See eLearning for the Vantage deadline schedule. Late work is not accepted.
2	**January 23:** Lecture 2: Traits & Personal Communication + Self Analysis – Chapter 2 SkillBoost: Polishing your resume, Part 1 **January 25:** Lecture 3: Choosing Your Communication Style – Chapter 3 SkillBoost: Considering Careers & Company Culture	**10:00 am, January 23– Chapter 1 due** **10:00 am, January 25– Chapter 2 due** **Book your test appointments now, as no walk-ins are allowed, and you must book your appointments at least 48 hours in advance.**
3	**January 30:** Lecture 4: Getting Stuff Done & Balancing Task, Relationship, & Change Communication – Chapter 4 SkillBoost: Writing Messages (email, summary, proposals) - How to tell your boss good/bad/average news **February 1:** Lecture 5: Communication Skills & Developing Your Brand – Chapter 5 SkillBoost: Polishing Your Resume Part 2: Continuously developing your skills? Then you're continuously updating your resume	**10:00 am, January 30 – Chapter 3 due** **10:00 am, February 1 - Chapter 4 due**
4	**February 6:** Navigating AI ATS in job searching; Quinncia Resume & Interview work – (tentative guest speaker) **February 8:** Test 1 review	**10:00 am, February 6 – Chapter 5 due** **10:00 am, February 7 – AI ATS - Quinncia Activity due**

5	**Test 1 at UTD Testing Center** See eLearning for study guide for what's on the test; a Kahoot review; and a sample test from a past semester **February 13:** NO CLASS so you can take the test during class time **February 15:** Lecture 6: Discovering & Communicating Your Strengths – Chapter 6 SkillBoost: Analyzing strengths on your resume and LinkedIn Profile	**February 12, 13, & 14 – Test 1 - see Testing Center hours** **10:00 am, February 15 – Chapter 6 due**
6	**February 20:** Lecture 7: Communicating a Strategic Plan & Persuading Others to Adopt Your Vision – Chapter 7 SkillBoost: Writing a Vision & Mission Statement (team or personal vision and mission for the post-graduate job search process) **February 22:** Lecture 8: Constructive Communication & Climate – Chapter 8 SkillBoost: Communicating clearly, writing concisely	**10:00 am, February 20 – Chapter 7 due** **10:00 am, February 22 – Chapter 8 due**
7	**February 27:** Lecture 9: Inclusive Communication: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) – Chapter 9 SkillBoost: Writing a typical business communications email message with bad news **February 29:** Lecture 10: Listening to Out-group members & Encouraging Team Communication – Chapter 10 SkillBoost: Developing Interpersonal Skills: Dealing With Difficult People	**10:00 am, February 27 – Chapter 9 due** **10:00 am, February 29 – Chapter 10 due**
8	**Test 2 at UTD Testing Center** See eLearning for study guide for what's on the test; a Kahoot review; and a sample test from a past semester **March 5:** Test 2 review **March 7:** NO CLASS so you can take the test during class time	**March 7, 8, & 9 – Test 2 – see Testing Center hours**
9	==**SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES**==	
10	**March 19:** Group check ins with professor – all group members must be present for the check in; students present research, discuss any applicable team conflict, and review status report with professor for project (includes Gantt chart, clarified deliverables, and action strategies) **March 21:** 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 SkillBoost: Running a meeting and tracking results	**March 19 – Group check-in with professor at assigned times** Watch LinkedIn Learning Course: Communication within Teams by Daisy Lovelace (*testable material*); see eLearning for details.

11	**March 26:** Lecture 12: Conflict Management & Communication + Negotiating Your Position – Chapter 11 SkillBoost: Writing an email to manage routine conflict using a standard negotiation technique **March 28:** Lecture 13: Motivational Communication: Yourself, Your Team, & Goals – Chapter 13 SkillBoost: Speaking to motivate and improve team participation	**10:00 am, March 21 – Chapter 11 due** **10:00 am, March 26 – Chapter 13 due**
12	**April 2:** Lecture 14: Presentation & Report Expectations; Presenting as a Team (note: no Vantage assignment for this lecture) Communication Work Day: Students meet with group to prepare for the group presentations **April 4:** Communication Workday: Students meet with group to prepare for the group presentations	**10:00 am, April 6 - Case Study and Teaching Note due**
13	**April 9:** Students give case study presentations live in class and perform peer review, and self and team performance review **April 11:** Students give case study presentations live in class and perform peer review, and self and team performance review	**10:00 am, April 8 - visual aid (e.g., PowerPoint due)** **In class, April 9 & 11 – Group presentations**
14	**April 16:** Students give case study presentations live in class and perform peer review, and self and team performance review **April 18:** Lecture 15: Ethical Communication at Work – Chapter 12 SkillBoost: Networking practice	**In class, April 16 – Group presentations** **10:00 am, April 18 – Chapter 12 due** **10:00 am, April 18 – Submit: (1) peer review of group presentations and (2) self and group evaluation due**
15	**April 23:** Lecture 16: Destructive Communication – Chapter 14 SkillBoost: Writing a Reply Email to a Coworker's Inappropriate Message SkillBoost: Goal Setting for Your Communication & Career **April 25:** Lectures 17/18: Applying Everything from the Course with a Personal Branding Refresh; BCOM 4300 Course Conclusion	**10:00 am, April 23 – Chapter 14 due**
16	**Test 3 at UTD Testing Center** See eLearning for study guide for what's on the test; a Kahoot review; and a sample test from a past semester **April 30:** Test 3 review **May 2:** NO CLASS so you can take the test during class time	**May 1, 2, & 3 - Test 3 – see Testing Center hours**

Course Policies

1. **General**
   a. Announcements are made in eLearning or by UTD email. Most announcements are also posted in Microsoft Teams.
   b. Office hours are student conference hours for clarification, seeking additional help, or getting advice on assignments or coursework. Unlike class time, student conference hours allow for privacy so things like grades can be discussed. Assignments can be reviewed during a scheduled appointment or before or after class.
   c. When emailing, students must use UTD email and include a descriptive subject line such as "BCOM 4300 Tuesday/Thursday 2:00 pm Presentation Question." Emails from non-utdallas.edu emails will not be answered.
   d. **Assignments are only reviewed in person and are not reviewed by email**, but as noted, assignments can be reviewed during a scheduled conference. You can visit https://jindal.utdallas.edu/student-resources/business-communication-center/ for writing help or bring assignments to office hours or scheduled conference times.
   e. All assignments, quizzes, and projects will be checked for scholastic dishonesty. This includes using Turnitin (or other methods) for papers. 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.
   i. School-wide Policies: 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.
   j. If you are receiving academic accommodations from the UTD AccessAbility Resource Center, you are required to provide your instructors with a copy of the letter that contains the accommodations. Be sure to provide this at the beginning of the semester, as I will make sure I am following and effectuating the items in the letter.
   k. At the end of the semester, do not ask me to change or "bump" your grade. That would be unfair to every student who has earned their given grade without a "bump".

2. **Assignments**
   a. Submit assignments early to avoid technical issues.
   b. Only submitted assignments in eLearning are graded. These are contained in the "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. These are contained in the "Assignments" folder.
   d. **Late work:** Late submission of the case study report or presentation file will be docked 1% per hour late based on when it is submitted to Turnitin via eLearning. 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, and group evaluations cannot be submitted late**.
   f. You are responsible for making sure Turnitin assignments are submitted. You must check to make sure that your submission was received and processed by Turnitin. 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. AI-Generated Writing: Cheating includes using unauthorized materials to attempt or complete an assignment. See the UTD Student Code of Conduct - https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003. In general, AI-generated writing should not be represented as your own writing. AI-generated content, including tables, code, analysis, or images, cannot be presented as your own writing.

   i. On writing assignments, AI can be used to brainstorm ideas, to create a template, or to edit your work. For example, Grammarly is an AI writing assistant, and we encourage the use of Grammarly to improve your grammar, tone, etc. GrammarlyGO is generative AI, and we encourage the use of GrammarlyGO with prompts like "improve" this paragraph structure or tone for class assignments. For non-graded emails sent to your professor or team, feel free to use GrammarlyGO to write those emails.

   ii. Some assignments are expected to be "AI Free." For this course, those assignments include the Team Check-in Status Report, the Case Study and Teaching Note, the Peer Review of Group Presentations, and the Self and Group Evaluations. As a writing-intensive course, your ability to write is being assessed. In this course, assignments might also ask you to use and assess AI-generated writing. See the individual assignment instructions.

   iii. Turnitin or other methods will be used to detect the use of generative AI, and under rules about due process, referrals may be made in compliance with university policy to the Office of Community Standards and Conduct. Detection of inappropriate use of AI may result in penalties, including a 0 on an assignment.

   iv. Show your work. Use Google Drive products and sign in to track edits to your work for all classes.

Assignment List:
- Test 1: Communication Skills and Traits – leadership communication, applying communicating strategies to a variety of situations (SLO 1).
- Test 2: Communication Development – strengths, interpersonal skills, and more (SLO 1 & 2).
- Test 3: Communication Best Practices – ethics, culture, conflict, and change (SLOs 2 & 3).
- 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
- Resume and Interview Update (Quinncia Activity) – individually written resume and AI interview showcasing skills and experience
- Group status report/check-in: team-written document with project timeline, deliverables, and assessment of team function and communication. Written for a manager.
- Group case study analysis: team-written case study and teaching note addressing a communication issue in a management situation
- Group presentation: team presentation to a case/consulting competition to suggest solutions to a communication issue
- Individual review of team presentations: feedback given to other teams on their presentations
- 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 2024, 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 all three test appointments 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 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.

g. There is no final cumulative final examination in this course.

4. **Class Participation & Attendance**
   a. <mark>**Attendance in this class is mandatory and is taken at each class.**</mark> Research has found that those who miss four or more classes tend to have decreased final grades (source).
   b. Our classes are live and in person on the UTD campus; there is no online option for this course. Professional communication is expected. Show up ready to learn.
   c. Students get four (4) free absences for the semester. Each absence after that equals 10 points off your overall final point total. You do not need to inform me when you are using any free absences. **The only limitation is that you may not use a free absence on a day you are scheduled to participate in the group check-in, give a presentation in class, or on a test day.** If you need to miss class for a UT Dallas competitive event or a religious holiday, you must notify the professor **before** the scheduled class. Read more about missing class for religious holidays here: https://coursebook.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/. For competitive events, please follow UTD policy and have the proper documentation provided in advance. It is your responsibility to make sure you are counted as present in each class by signing the attendance sheet at the beginning of class. Be honest and do not sign in for others. Signing in for others (or having someone sign in for you) is also considered an academic dishonesty violation when attendance is part of your class grade, so there can be very serious consequences. **You must attend the entire class to be counted as present.**
   d. Your professor reserves the right to restrict personal technology use as needed.

1. **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 are also encouraged to:
1. Stay focused. Be proactive in academic studies and add deadlines to your calendar at the start of the semester.
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 good 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 the Business Communication Center (BCC) in JSOM Room 12.106 or online at 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 professor's discretion.

List of Class Activities, Assignments, and Test Due Dates – BCOM 4300.017

Assignment	Due Dates
Vantage Assignment Chapter 1	January 23, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 2	January 25, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 3	January 30, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 4	February 1, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 5	February 6, 2024
AI Quinncia Resume and Interview Activity	February 7, 2024
Test 1	**February 12, 13, & 14, 2024**
Vantage Assignment Chapter 6	February 15, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 7	February 20, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 8	February 22, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 9	February 27, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 10	February 29, 2024
Test 2	**March 7, 8, & 9, 2024**
Team Check-In Status Report Document	March 19, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 11	March 21, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 13	March 26, 2024
Case Study and Teaching Note	April 6, 2024
Visual aid due (e.g., PowerPoint/Google slides)	April 8, 2024
Group presentations	April 9, 11, & 16, 2024
Peer review of group presentations and self and group evaluation	April 18, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 12	April 18, 2024
Vantage Assignment Chapter 14	April 23, 2024
Test 3	**May 1, 2, & 3, 2024**