BCOM 4300: Advanced Professional Communication

Course Information
Course Number/Section   BCOM 4300
Course Title   Advanced Professional Communication
Term   Spring 2025, January 21 – May 9
Class Meeting Times   Section .006: Monday & Wednesday 9:00-10:15 am; JSOM 2.102

Professor Contact Information
Professor David Olshansky, M.A.
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Office Hours As Needed

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, 6e [communication science]. By Peter G. Northouse. **ISBN: 9781071914182 (Make sure you purchase the Vantage version, it should line up with this ISBN).** 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.

Grammarly and Quinncia: 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	**58%**	**580**
Vantage	16.3%	163
Vantage Self-Assessments / Skills Identifications (ch 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, & 13)	0.7%	7
Professional Online Portfolio (POP) Project	5%	50
Class Attendance and Participation	11%	110
Assessment 1- Professional Communication Skills Quiz	15%	150
Assessment 2 - Workplace Communication Skills Quiz	15%	150
Quinncia Activity	3%	30
Group Case Study Project	**42%**	**420**
Background and Situation Draft & Feedback	2%	20
Brainstorming / Planning Activities	2%	20
Final Group Project Report	15%	150
Presentation & Visual Aid	15%	150
Review of Presentations	0%	0
Self and Group Member Evaluations	0%	0
Total	**100%**	**1000**
Grading Policy and Scale		
All work should demonstrate the same professional and ethical standards expected of you in the workplace, including proofreading/editing carefully all work you submit in this class. See rubrics for written assignments.		

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- (and so on)

Note: **Class attendance and active participation is required to earn at least an A- or higher in the course**.

Course Policies
1. **General**
   a. Announcements are made in eLearning or by UTD email.
   b. 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.
   c. When emailing, students must use UTD email and include a descriptive subject line such as "BCOM 4300.006 Monday/Wednesday 9am Presentation Question." Emails from non-utdallas.edu emails will not be answered.
   d. Assignments are not reviewed by email. Students can visit bcc.utdallas.edu for writing help or bring assignments to office hours or conference times.
   e. 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)
   c. Review rubrics on assignment descriptions for how they are graded. ("Assignments" folder)
   d. Late Work: Late submission of the team materials, group report, or group presentation visual aid will be docked 1% per hour late based on when it's submitted to the dropbox.
   e. Late Work: Individual work (i.e., Vantage, Quinncia, peer review, group evaluations, discussion boards, etc.) 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. AI-Generated Writing. Cheating includes using unauthorized materials to attempt or complete an assignment (UTD Student Code of Conduct - source). In general, AI-generated writing should not be represented 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 using 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 help write those emails.
       ii. Some assignments are expected to be "AI Free." For this course, those assignments include (Vantage, quizzes, presentation reviews, and self/group member evaluations, discussion boards). Other assignments have AI policies; see individual assignments for instructions. 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.
       iii. TurnItIn or other methods may 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, signed in, to track edits to your work for all classes.

3. **Quizzes**
   a. For this semester, the quizzes are in the Testing Center. The Testing Center requires students to schedule their quiz time and does not accept walk-ins. https://ets.utdallas.edu/testing-center
   b. Students must schedule an appointment with the Testing Center at least 48 hours before the quiz. Students are encouraged to schedule both appointments the first week of classes. Failure to register for aQuizwill result in an automatic 30 percent deduction. Failure to take the quiz will result in a grade of zero on the quiz. Students are responsible for ensuring confirmation of Testing Center registration; the Testing Center sends email confirmations, which should be retained.
   c. Quizzes are multiple choice and true/false, each 50-70 questions and each question weighted equally. Quizzes must be done individually. Collaboration, if proven, will result in a referral to Judicial Affairs.
   d. Each quiz 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. 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 quiz.

e. In case of medical emergencies, contact the instructor immediately. In this case, a makeup quiz 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 quiz 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 cell phone out of reach and using laptops only for note-taking.
    c. Your professor reserves the right to restrict personal technology use as needed.

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, is removed, or is "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.

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/

Need food or personal care items? The Comet Cupboard is an on-campus food pantry dedicated to alleviating food insecurity by providing necessary food and personal care items to members of the UT Dallas community. It is located on the first floor of the McDermott Library, room MC 1.608. Refer to the Instagram page @CometCupboard or email cupboard@utdallas.edu for the most recent information.

Academic Support Resources. The information in the [Academic Support Resources](#) lists the University's academic support resources for all students. The information 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 in this syllabus are subject to change at the professor's discretion.***