



ACC 261: Communications for Professional Accountants

Winter 2022 – *final syllabus on 01-03-22*
Wednesdays from 1:00 to 5:00 PM

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*Office Hours typically on Wednesdays from 12:00 to 1:00 or by Appointment
Please email me to schedule an appointment.*

Teaching Assistant:

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Required Texts and Preparation Materials

Please purchase the text and secure the software below prior to the first day of class

- Schramm, JD & Levy, Kara. *Communicate with Mastery: speak with conviction and write for impact*. Wiley 2020.
- GoReact software package; details to be provided on canvas regarding this purchase.

On Canvas and within this syllabus you will see hyperlinks guiding you to additional readings and videos. I've eliminated the traditional course-pack for this course, but fully expect you to come prepared for each class by having prepared the assigned materials contained here or posted on canvas. Page 2 of the syllabus synthesizes all of the expectations into a single page.

Course Overview and Learning Goals

A key component in any accounting professional's success lies in their ability to communicate effectively in a way that provides clarity and influences decision-making. In this course we look at communication as a strategic tool that will be vital for your future success. Moving beyond simply teaching public speaking or business writing, I am committed to help you achieve *resonance* with others. Quite literally being able to write and speak in a way that places you and your audience on the same frequency, enabling you to be effective and influential. Further, I aim to help you achieve *mastery* in your skills, getting better and better with each iteration.

Unexpected events might require elements of this syllabus to change. I will keep you informed of any changes via announcements in class and on canvas.

Course Architecture

To achieve the somewhat ambitious goals above just stated I've designed the course with two modules on each Wednesday. You can look at this like a "lecture" and a "lab" though you can expect the entire four-hour block to be interactive and engaging. To get the most benefit you will need to come prepared and ready to engage with the professor and your peers.

Session by Session Class Plan

| Date | Topic | Prep Work |
|-------------|--|---|
| 1/5 | Approaching communication with Mastery and AIM | Purchase text, read chapter 1 |
| | Benchmark talks | Prepare 2 to 3 minute talk from choices provided |
| 1/12 | Fundamentals of Oral Communication | Read chapter 2 Submit self-critique email |
| | Voice & movement lab | Wear comfortable clothing, be prepared to move |
| 1/19 | Creating compelling business documents | Read chapter 3 |
| | Peer review of Business Report | Bring 3 paper copies of assigned report with you |
| 1/26 | Strategic Storytelling | Read pp. 69 to 81 Submit final business report |
| | Storytelling Lab: origin stories | Prepare 2 to 3 minute origin story |
| 2/2 | Creating structure and visuals to support your AIM | View Duarte TEDx talk Submit Partner Presentation AIM |
| | Paired Presentations prep time w. coaching | |
| 2/9 | Paired Presentations on a firm of your choice | Prepare partner presentation |
| | Paired Presentations Continue | |
| 2/16 | Topic to be determined: perhaps pitching, executive presence for women, radical candor, etc. | Submit self-critique email Complete other prep as needed |
| | Lab session to accompany chosen topic | |
| 2/23 | Storytelling with Data | Read blogs posted on canvas |
| | Data conversion exercise | Prepare 3 slides based on data provided |
| 3/2 | Coaching sessions for final team presentations | Submit final 3 data slides for grading |
| | Coaching sessions for final team presentations | |
| 3/9 | Final Team Presentations on an accounting topic, firm, or controversy in the news | Prepare team presentation |
| | Final team presentations continue | |
| 3/16 | Final team closure and review exercise | Prepare peer feedback for teammates |
| | Course closure | |

Assignments and Weighting of Grades

| Area | Description | Due date | Weight |
|------------------|--|------------------------|----------|
| Oral (50%) | Benchmark Presentation (2 to 3 minutes, no questions or slides) | Wed. 1/5 | 10% |
| | Paired Company Performance Presentation (6 minutes) -Delivery 10 points (shared by both) -Visuals and handouts 5 points (shared) | Wed. 2/9 | 15% |
| | Final Team Presentation (15 minutes including questions) -Individual Performance 10 points -Team Performance 10 points (shared) -Visual Aids 5 points (shared) | Wed. 3/9 | 25% |
| Written (25%) | 2 written email critiques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Presentation • Paired Presentation | Wed. 1/12 Wed. 2/16 | 5% 5% |
| | 1 Business Report on material provided | Wed. 1/26 | 10 % |
| | 3 Data slides on storytelling | Wed. 3/2 | 5 % |
| APC (25%) | Attendance, Participation, and Contribution (see page four) | Throughout | 25% |

Attendance, Participation, and Contribution Factors (APC)

Without question this will be a highly interactive course. *In fact, it's designed to be more about your learning than my teaching.* To get the most out of it, you need to **attend** all of the class sessions. But attendance is only the first step, while here you must participate. I would hope that you not simply **participate** (i. e. speak in class) but that you truly **contribute** by helping further class discussions and contribute to the learning of others in the section. Anything I ask you to do which doesn't specifically have a grade associated with it is considered a portion of your participation grade. I will use a mix of cold calls, warm calls, and volunteers to aid discussion.

It is best to plan on **not missing class** whatsoever. But if you choose to miss class (or a portion of class), I urge you to do so with the least amount of impact on your learning experience. The further in advance you notify me and the TA of the need to be absent, the less impact any absence will have. One pre-notified absence (48 hours or more in advance) will have no impact your participation grade; a second absence will have a more pronounced impact.

Class begins promptly at 1:00 PM. If you must arrive late, do so with the least amount of interruption. If I am speaking, slip in quietly. If a guest speaker or a peer is presenting, wait outside the classroom until there is a logical break (e.g., applause) and enter class at that time. Laptops are rarely needed in this class. I will notify you in advance if they are necessary; otherwise **leave laptops closed during class**. Cell phones, pagers, iPhones, blackberries, buzz saws, and other distracting electronic devices fall into this same category. Please keep name placards visible during the first few classes and whenever we have guests.

Feedback and Grading in this Course

You will quickly begin to see that I love being able to provide you feedback on your communication but am less enthusiastic about having to place a numeric score on your efforts. (Shorthand: love feedback but hate grading!) Yet, I recognize that in a school of our caliber both components are needed. My philosophy is simple: I provide a clear rubric for what's expected on each graded assignment. I grade you on how well you meet the factors of the rubric not "how good of a speaker/writer you are" or "how much I liked what you delivered/wrote." When grades are assigned by the TA or grader, they are working on my instruction with the rubric provided. I'm always available to discuss these items with you during my office hours.

Video Use for Development

I will provide you with **feedback** on each of your assignments. If you ever have a question about your standing in the course, I'm happy to discuss this with you. We will extensively use digital video of all presentations; you are strictly prohibited from using any peer's course video in any manner without their and my express permission. We have asked each of you to secure a GoReact video subscription and we plan to use GoReact to provide you the chance to review your own presentations and this will also be where you will receive the professors' feedback.

Rights and Responsibilities

All participants in this course are expected to follow the UC Davis Principles of Community, which includes affirmation of the right of freedom of expression and rejection of discrimination. The right to express points-of-view without fear of retaliation or censorship is a cornerstone of academic freedom. A diversity of opinions with respectful disagreement and informed debate enriches learning. However, in this course, any expression or disagreement should adhere to the obligations we have toward each other to build and maintain a climate of mutual respect and caring. Students are expected to abide by the University of California-Davis Code of Conduct found at <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html> .

The Code of Conduct has explicit explanations of violations (e.g. plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration, etc.). Academic conduct violations will not be tolerated, and your instructor will not hesitate to turn violators over to Student Judicial Affairs. If you are uncertain about what constitutes an academic conduct violation, please refer to the code link or contact your instructor.

There may be times where I will allow you to re-purpose your own material for a presentation or written assignment in this course, but we must know about this in advance of the assignment being submitted. Regardless, all work you submit must be original for this course or clear in its origination. If you have a question about an honor code issue the time to raise it is while you are preparing an assignment, not after.

All material in the course that is not otherwise subject to copyright is the copyright of the course instructor and should be considered the instructor's intellectual property. Therefore, it is a violation of the Code of Conduct to post materials on other websites.

Accommodations

UC Davis is committed to educational equity in the academic setting, and in serving a diverse student body. If you are a student who requires academic accommodations, please contact the Student Disability Center (SDC) directly at sdc@ucdavis.edu or 530-752-3184. If you receive an SDC Letter of Accommodation, submit it to your instructor for each course as soon as possible, at least within the first two weeks of a course.

Safety and Emergency Preparedness

UC Davis has many resources to help in case of emergency or crisis. While reviewing campus Emergency Information, you may want to register for UC Davis Warn Me and Aggie Alert, which will give you timely information and instructions about emergencies and situations on campus that affect your safety. If there is an emergency in the classroom, please follow my instructions.

Student Wellness

You are encouraged to practice self-care so that you can remain focused and engaged, which might mean getting a drink of water or leaving to use the restroom. Please be respectful of others by minimizing distractions when practicing self-care. Graduate education can be overwhelming at times but know that you are not alone if you're feeling stressed. Please reach out for support if you need it. You can visit Virtual UC Davis to find resources related to health and well-being, academics, basic needs (food and housing) and more.