Syllabus for SMGT 240 Business Communications for Sustainable Management

Course Description

In today's business climate, a world where 90% of transactions involve writing, good communication skills are essential. As Mike Markel puts it in an earlier edition of the course text, "The facts of corporate life today are simple: if you can communicate well, you are valuable, if you cannot, you are much less so." These are the Eight Values of Effective Technical Communication that you should strive to demonstrate over the course of this semester:

- Honesty, Clarity, Accuracy, Correctness, Professional Appearance
- Comprehensiveness (completeness), Accessibility (audience-friendly), Conciseness (economy of language)

This course is an interdisciplinary professional and technical communication course that applies knowledge of sustainability principles and develops rhetorical skills for a variety of audiences in social, economic, and environmental contexts.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Quantify and demonstrate the benefits of sustainability to stakeholders of the organization.
- Employ rhetorical awareness of audience, purpose, context, and genre in a variety of professional documents.
- Research, evaluate, and reference data from a variety of professional and academic sources.
- Develop rhetorical strategies for generating content that is appropriate to workplace scenarios.
- Identify and communicate sustainability principles within social, economic, and environmental contexts.
- Design and distribute texts and presentations that are accessible disseminating knowledge in a professional and ethical manner.
- Understand and navigate intercultural factors to promote sustainability principles for a global economy.

Course Materials
Information on course materials can be found in the textbook section of the SMGT website.

Course Requirements

Attendance Policy

You are accountable for all work missed because of absence, and instructors have no obligation to make special arrangements for missed work, although they are free to do so. It is your responsibility to report reasons for absence to the instructor and to submit your work on time. Final grades may be affected by class attendance and participation and meeting deadlines.

Email & Canvas

You should be checking your email and the course (Canvas) frequently—this means once a day at minimum. If you email me or post a question, you can generally expect a response from me within 24 hours during the week, and 48 hours over the weekend (that means don't email me the night an assignment is due and expect a response!).

Skype for Business

I do expect you to be familiar with Skype for Business. This tool is available to you via Office 365. Your username and password are the same as that of your Stout email account. We may use Skype for Business—both chat and audio/video—throughout the semester for brief meetings, conferences, and group collaboration.

Late Work

Time management and deadlines are a part of the professional world. Assignment descriptions and deadlines are clearly posted in the course. Late work will not be accepted. You are encouraged to work ahead if you foresee a conflict with any of the due dates. Be proactive about your education—if something comes up during the semester, let me know right away. It is a lot easier for me to help you if you keep me in the loop rather than waiting for things to spiral out of control and telling me after the fact.

Academic Dishonesty

You are responsible for the honest completion and representation of your work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

The Effect of Social Networks on Your Professional Identity

Your intern, co-op, and job search begins today! Protecting your professional identity now will pay off for years to come. Thinking and acting as a professional includes many things such as acquiring work experience, getting good grades and joining professional organizations, but it also includes making behavioral choices today that will enhance rather than limit your future options. Posting evidence of illegal or unprofessional

behavior on social networking sites may have a long-term impact on your professional opportunities. Friends may be amused, but it's a sure bet that prospective employers will not. A 2009 CareerBuilder survey of over 2,500 employers found that forty-five percent admitted routinely screening applicants by accessing social networks that the prospective employees think are "private." What many students seem not to realize is that those party pictures will follow them well beyond the college years. The identity that you are building today will follow you for the rest of your life. Begin now to assure that you are building a record that you can be proud of and one that will assist you fulfill your professional and personal dreams.

Assignment Expectations

You will be assessed in a variety of ways. The assignments in this course include writing memos, completing peer reviews, participating in discussions, and a longer project that will include a proposal, a cost analysis, a project plan/implementation schedule, and an "elevator pitch."

Presentation and Correctness of Work

Because this course involves the composition and presentation of professional documents, it is essential that all completed pieces are carefully revised and proofread. As it would be in a business setting, misspellings, punctuation errors, and incomplete documents are unacceptable. Grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors will depreciate your overall score for each writing activity, so remain diligent in your editing and proofreading efforts throughout the semester.

General Guidelines for Formal Project Assignments

Each project assignment will require you to apply what you have learned in class up to that point.

- You will follow formatting guidelines from the text, as well as grammar and usage guidelines for Standard Written English (SWE).
- All project documents must be 100% original from a creativity standpoint; research may be used to augment your projects, but you may not recycle a project idea already in existence.
- All project documents must be submitted by the due date and time stated on the course calendar.

Grading Policy

Memo Assignment 1	75
Memo Assignment 2	75
Sustainability Project	
Proposal	150
Cost-Benefit Analysis	100
Elevator Pitch	100
Project Implementation Plan	100
Peer Reviews (2 @ 80 points each)	160
Discussions (12 @ 20 points each)	240

Grading Scale

Percent	Letter Grade
93–100%	A
90–92%	A-
89%	B+
83–88%	B
80–82%	B-
79%	C+
73–78%	C
70–72%	C-
69%	D+
63–68%	D
60–62%	D-
<59%	F