

Course Syllabus: FIS 401

Professional Forensic Communication

Spring 2015

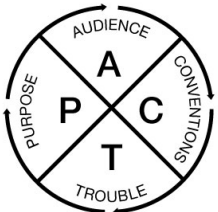
1.1 Lectures: Tuesday & Thursday: 4:00 pm – 5:15 pm, 220 Oglebay Hall

1.2 Instructor:
Name/e-mail
Phone
Office:

1.3 Office Hours
Teaching Schedule for Spring 2015:

2.0 Course Description:

The course covers forensic literature, oral presentations, laboratory notes and logs, reports, publications, standard operating procedures; writing research papers and presentations for forensic science publications and conferences; and writing on technical subject matter for non-technical audiences.

	<p>FIS 401 has been designated as a SpeakWrite course by the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences. As you will see in section 5.0, the course grade is based on successful spoken and/or written performance. For more information about the SpeakWrite program please visit SpeakWrite.wvu.edu.</p>
---	---

2.1 Specific outcomes: At the end of this class, students will be able to

- Construct and defend an argument
- Demonstrate information literacy by using library resources to locate and accurately report information sources
- Write clear documents using technical standards
- Present information in written, spoken, and visual formats
- Conform communication style to intended audience

3.0 Required Texts & Materials:

The Craft of Research, 3rd Ed. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. ISBN: 9780226065656. Available online through libraries.wvu.edu

Refworks Account – See <http://libguides.wvu.edu/RefWorks> for information.

4.0 Suggested Texts & Materials:

A Pocket Style Manual. Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers

Universal Principles of Design: 125 Ways to Enhance Usability, Influence Perception, Increase Appeal, Make Better Design Decisions, and Teach Through Design, 2nd Ed. William Lidwell, Kritina Holden, and Jill Butler. ISBN 9781592535873. Available online through libraries.wvu.edu

Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery, 2nd Ed. Garr Reynolds. ISBN 9780321811981. Available online through libraries.wvu.edu

Laptop computer, tablet, or smartphone Recommended, but NOT required

5.0 Grading:

Method of Evaluation for assignments

Assignment	Grade %	Description
Discussion	15	Response to and analysis of assigned written materials
Individual	35	Individually assigned projects
Project 1	10	A visually-oriented project
Project 2	20	An educational project
Project 3	20	A major project proposal

WVU Grading Scale

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

6.0 Attendance and Make-up policy:

As this is a team-oriented class, attendance is expected, not just by myself as lecturer but by other team members. Failure to attend class and assist in workload may result in a poor peer evaluation and a consequently lowered grade.

Discussion Grades: If you miss a paper discussion, you may turn in your questions for credit if credible documentation is produced that you were:

- Under a doctor's care (you do not need to produce medical details, merely documentation)
- Participating in official university activities
- Involved in legal matters such as court dates or traffic accidents
- Attending deathbeds or funerals for immediate family
- Serving in military activities.

These excuses are not applicable to the group projects, which are due on the assigned date without exception.

7.0 Academic Honesty:

The WVU Catalog states:

“Cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and projects, including but not limited to:

- a) *Obtaining help from another student during examinations.*
- b). *Knowingly giving help to another student during examinations, taking an examination or, providing one’s own work for another student to copy and submit as his/her own.*
- c). *The unauthorized use of notes, books, or other sources of information during examinations.*
- d) *Obtaining without authorization an examination or any part thereof.*

All policies regarding academic honesty will be strictly enforced.

8.0 Social Justice:

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the [Office of Accessibility Services](http://diversity.wvu.edu) (304-293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>

Course Schedule:

Reading

You will be provided with articles to read, analyze, and openly discuss in class. At least two of these articles, you will be expected to help lead and direct discussion. You are expected to participate in class discussions; your participation will be noted for grading purposes. Reading is an active skill; do not memorize the article and think this is what you need in class.

Writing

You will be required to provide written assignments that vary from one paragraph to several pages in length. Grammar and punctuation, as well as content, count. This is, after all, a communications class.

Graphics

There are two sides to graphics: accuracy and aesthetics. Presenting data visually is a critical but often botched method of communication, especially in science. You will be asked to evaluate, generate, re-plot, and expand data or graphics given to you. On the

aesthetic side, you will be asked to submit assignments and give presentations that are visually pleasant and pleasing.

Speaking

You will be required to present and speak to the class, either as an individual or as a group. Your presentation materials will range from none (just you in front of the class) to extemporaneous (given a few minutes to prepare) to written materials only (no visuals) to full visuals (either hard copy or projection). You will also be required to answer extemporaneous questions from myself, from your classmates, and from visitors.

Resources

I encourage you to make use of the resources on the **SpeakWrite website**. The link to Student Resources includes general help for presentations and drafting; the link to the Eberly Writing Studio includes a wide range of handouts that cover getting started through revising and editing. <http://speakwrite.wvu.edu/>

I hope you will also make use of the **Eberly Writing Studio in G02 Colson Hall**. All WVU students have the opportunity to work one-on-one with a trained peer consultant on everything from note-taking, pre-writing, and revision strategies to class or conference presentations or other visual or multimedia projects. To make an appointment, call 304.293.5788 or visit the link to the Eberly Writing Studio on the [SpeakWrite.wvu.edu](http://speakwrite.wvu.edu) page.

Course Schedule: This schedule is subject modifications.

Date	Topic	Reading
13 Jan	Introductory Material	
15 Jan	What's in an Argument? Part I	Ch. 7-9
20 Jan	Argument, Pt II, Reading #1	Ch. 9-11, Reading #1
22 Jan	Logical Fallacies	Ch. 3-4
27 Jan	Visual Aesthetics	
29 Jan	Visual Aesthetics,	
3 Feb	Finding Information – Library room 136	Ch. 1-2, 5
5 Feb	Visual Presentation of Data, Project #1*	Reading #2
10 Feb	Visualization Presentations	
12 Feb	Dr. Mohr Gone – No Class	
17 Feb	Work Day	Reading #3
19 Feb	Integrating Citations – Library room 136	Ch. 15
24 Feb	Work Day	Reading #4 Ch. 12-14
26 Feb	Project 2 Rough Draft*	
3 Mar	Work Day	Reading #5
5 Mar	Project #2 Presentations*	
10 Mar	Project #2 Presentations*	
12 Mar	Technical Writing Standards	Reading #6
17 Mar	Expert Reports	
19 Mar	Putting the Library to Work – Library room 2036	
23-25 Mar	No Class - Spring Break	
31 Mar	Proposals	Reading #7
2 Apr	Instructions	
7 Apr	Sops	
9 Apr	Executive Summaries	Reading #8
14 Apr	Work Day	
16 Apr	Project 3 Rough Draft*	
21 Apr	Work Day	Reading #9
23 Apr	Project #3 Presentations*	
28 Apr	Project #3 Presentations*	
30 Apr	SEIs	Reading #10

* Assignments marked with a bullet are Group Assignments.