

**Instructor**

Dr. Ronen Shay

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Phone: 585-385-7293

Office Location: William A. Fay Building, Room 209

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 10am - 11am, Fridays 2:30pm – 4:30pm, or by appointment

**Meetings**

COMM 253-01 meets on MWF 11:15am – 12:10pm:

Basil Hall, Room 209

**Website**

Check our Blackboard site via mySJFC regularly for course materials and announcements.

<https://cas.sjfc.edu/>

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to improve the effectiveness of students' business writing, with additional attention also given to presentation and visual summary skills. Students learn a systematic communication process that incorporates analyzing, composing, and evaluating their messages prior to communicating them. Through course work this process is applied to the creation of business documents including memos, emails, letters, social media messages, reports, and proposals. Students also learn to prepare and deliver effective, logically structured and convincing business presentations, designed to inform or persuade their audience. Attention is also given to extemporaneous (i.e., spontaneous) presentations, the use of presentation software, and how to appropriately deliver negative news messages.

**Required Texts**

Shwom & Snyder. *Business Communication: Polishing Your Profession Presence*; 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Pearson, 2015. ISBN: 0133863301

**Departmental Learning Goals for this Class:**

- Students will apply project management principles to a group project.
- Students will write clearly and accurately with particular attention to purpose and audience.
- Students will speak and present clearly and concisely, with attention to audience and presentation of self.

**Course Specific Learning Goals:**

- Students will develop the traditional and emerging communication skills necessary for future careers in the fields of business, sport management, media and communication.
- Students will demonstrate creative ability to communicate in ways that audiences will pay attention to, understand, believe, remember and act on.
- Students will display skill in presentation delivery, audience response, and follow-up.
- Students will develop effective strategies for composing and delivering negative news messages.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to write logically structured professional communications in both short-form (e.g., memo), and long-form (e.g., business proposal) formats.
- Students will display skill in incorporating visual elements like infographics, tables, and charts into written and speech communications, for the purpose of summarizing relevant information when it is contextually appropriate to do so.
- Students will understand how to apply the ACE (analyze-compose-evaluate) communication process.

**Grading Scheme:**

“Welcome Memo” - Writing Diagnostic (individual)	5%
“Extemporaneous Speech” - Presentation Diagnostic (individual)	5%
Negative News Messages + Presentation (team)	20%
Quiz 1	10%
Business Proposal + Presentation (team)	40%
- First Attempt at Sections 1-5	5%
- Final Document + Presentation	35%
Quiz 2	10%
Participation + Professionalism	10%

**Assignment Descriptions:**

Quizzes and assignments will be based on the material from lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. Below is an overview of what to expect from each assignment. A detailed description of each assignment will be distributed in class as the semester continues.

“Welcome Memo” - Writing Diagnostic: This assignment is an early opportunity to receive feedback on your professional writing, so you understand where you need to improve and what will be expected of you throughout the semester. The assignment will require you to write a 1 page informative memo that summarizes key information the reader would require in the following scenarios (choose one):

- 1) You are writing a message to welcome a new student to a St. John Fisher academic program of your choosing, and inform them about the different opportunities available to them.
- 2) You are a manager writing a message to welcome a new employee to a Rochester company of your choosing, and inform them about different points of interest regarding the firm and city.
- 3) You are a coach writing a message to welcome a new player to a St. John Fisher sports team of your choosing, and inform them about the different opportunities available to them.
- 4) Propose your own topic and have it approved by the instructor prior to proceeding.

“Extemporaneous Speech” - Presentation Diagnostic: This assignment is an early opportunity to receive feedback on your professional presentation skills, so you understand where you need to improve and what will be expected of you throughout the semester. The assignment will require you to give a 3 minute extemporaneous (i.e., spontaneous) speech on an unexpected topic that will be assigned to you at random in class. You will have 15 minutes to prepare and cannot use PowerPoint. The presentations will be spread across three class meetings, and no topics will be repeated. The order of presenters will be decided at random, unless there are volunteers who would like to go first. No topics will be repeated.

When a student is not presenting they are expected to be actively listening to the speeches being delivered in a professional and courteous manner. The behavior of individual students in the audience will be noted and taken into account when determining their participation + professionalism grade.

Negative News Messages + Presentation: Crisis! Your company has just suffered a public embarrassment and must strategically communicate negative news to key stakeholders. To do so, your business communication team will produce 4x documents and a presentation that will communicate the negative news in a professional manner. The deliverables for this assignment include:

- 1) An email to employees informing them about the situation.
- 2) A letter to a disgruntled customer who was affected by your negative news.
- 3) A social media message for your followers that demonstrates a positive proactive response.
- 4) A report to the board of directors summarizing the effect of the negative news and what is being done to rectify the situation (each report must have 1x table, 1x graph, and 1x infographic).
- 5) A 10-12 minute informative PowerPoint presentation that summarizes the key findings of your report (each presentation must include the table, graph, and infographic contained within the report).

The instructor reserves the right to not give all group members the same grade, should an individual's attendance, participation, professionalism, or assignment feedback forms demonstrate they did not make an equal contribution. When a team is not presenting they are expected to be actively listening to the presentations being delivered in a professional and courteous manner. The behavior of individual students in the audience will be noted and taken into account when determining their participation + professionalism grade.

Quizzes: There will be two quizzes administered in-class over the course of the semester. The content on the quizzes will be drawn from lecture and classroom activities, as well as reading assignments.

Business Proposal + Presentation: Show me the money! You are a team of entrepreneurs trying to launch a new business, however you need more startup capital. Accordingly, you have arranged a meeting with an angel investor to secure additional funding. The angel investor requires the submission of a formal business proposal, and the delivery of a persuasive presentation before they will be convinced to invest in your product. The proposal must contain the following sections:

- 1) Background
- 2) Summary
- 3) SWOT Analysis
- 4) Business Need/Justification
- 5) SMART Objectives
- 6) Assumptions
- 7) Constraints
- 8) Proposed Timeline/Schedule (w/ Milestones indicated)
- 9) Budget
- 10) Risk Response Plan
- 11) Executive Summary

\*2x tables, 2x graphs, and 2 infographics must be included in the proposal

Your team is also responsible for a 10-12 minute persuasive PowerPoint presentation that summarizes sections 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, & 9 in a fun and creative fashion, while still remaining professional (each presentation must include the tables, graphs, and infographics contained within the proposal).

The instructor reserves the right to not give all group members the same grade, should an individual's attendance, participation, professionalism, or assignment feedback forms demonstrate they did not make an equal contribution. When a team is not presenting they are expected to be actively listening to the presentations being delivered in a professional and

courteous manner. The behavior of individual students in the audience will be noted and taken into account when determining their participation + professionalism grade.

**Participation + Professionalism:** All members of this class are required to participate by taking part in discussions, asking/answering questions, and by responding to the lecture material. Participation will be assessed based on attendance, contribution to group assignments, in-class activities/use of in-class group time, and most importantly your involvement in class discussions that should arise during lectures. Being in attendance while withdrawn in your technology or while being disruptive to your peers and instructor, will not be graded the same as being in attendance and participating.

As this is a business oriented class the classroom should be viewed as a simulated work environment. Accordingly, students are required to demonstrate respect and professionalism in all course related activities. Professionalism will be assessed based on appropriate technology use, behavior as an audience member, respect towards your peers and instructor, and proper email/course communication etiquette in all verbal, written, and non-verbal sharing of ideas.

**Academic Integrity:** All students, regardless of level or school, are responsible for following the St. John Fisher College Academic Integrity Policy in addition to any other individual school's or program's academic expectations and/or professional standards. Every student is expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all academic pursuits at all times. If a student suspects that another student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy, he or she should contact the instructor for that course and provide support for that suspicion. Any finding of responsibility and associated sanctions for a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is retained per the College records policy.

All students are expected to be familiar with the details of the Academic Honesty Policy (available via <http://catalog.sjfc.edu/undergraduate/2016-2017/academic-information/integrity.dot>). The policy specifies a number of behaviors (including cheating and plagiarism), that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions (including failure of the entire course). Ultimately, you are responsible for completing your own course activities and ensuring you produce original work, both when working individually and as a team. It is your responsibility to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor of this class.

**Attendance:** Students should understand that class attendance will be taken into consideration in calculating your final grade. The content addressed in this class encompasses a lot of interactive concepts, and so much of what can be learned is a direct result of attending lecture, participating in group and sole authored assignments, and your involvement in any class discussion that should arise.



Should you accrue more than 4 absences at any point in the semester (i.e., 5 or more), you will receive an FA (failure due to excessive absence). Students should understand that absences 1-4 will still be taken into consideration in calculating your final grade. Having a legitimate reason for being absent does not permit you to exceed 4 absences.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up quizzes, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with the St. John Fisher College Attendance Policy that can be found at: <http://catalog.sjfc.edu/undergraduate/2016-2017/academic-information/courses/attendance.dot>

**College Policy Concerning Students with Disabilities:** In compliance with St. John Fisher College policy and applicable laws, appropriate academic accommodations are available to students with disabilities. All requests for accommodations must be supported by appropriate documentation/diagnosis and determined reasonable by St. John Fisher College. Students with documented disabilities (physical, learning, psychological) who may need academic accommodations are advised to refer to the Disability Services website <http://home.sjfc.edu/AcademicAffairs/Disabilities/DisabilityOverview.asp> Questions should be directed to the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services Office and Test Center, Kearny 300. Late notification will delay requested accommodations.

**College Policy toward Research of Human Subjects:** Learning about the research process includes learning about the protection of the rights of human subjects (participants). Students in courses which include the collection of data from human subjects must comply with Institutional Review Board policies and procedures which protect the rights of human subjects. This protection includes informed consent, as well as measures to promote the confidentiality of the data which is collected. Students involved with course related data collection should speak with course faculty to learn about Institutional Review Board policies relevant to the course project. Copies of the St. John Fisher Institutional Review Board Policies and Procedures are available in the Office of Academic Affairs, in the Kearney Building room 202, or on the IRB web page at <http://home.sjfc.edu/institutionalreviewboard>.

**Course Evaluations:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations as per the Online Course Evaluation Process located at <http://www.sjfc.edu/campus-services/ed-tech/online/evaluation.dot>. Evaluations are typically opened at the end of the term, and students will be made aware of the specific times in which they can be completed. Results will only be made available to faculty members, department chairs, the dean, and the provost after final grades have been submitted.

**Grading:**

A 93-100%	C 73-76.99
A- 90-92.99	C- 70-72.99
B+ 87-89.99	D+ 67-69.99
B 83-86.99	D 63-66.99
B- 80-82.99	D- 60-62.99
C+ 77-79.99	F Below 60

Grading in this course is consistent with the St. John Fisher College grading policies that can be found at: <http://catalog.sjfc.edu/undergraduate/2016-2017/academic-information/grading/>

**Health, Wellness, Safety and Security:** The Health and Wellness Center provides medical, mental health services, and wellness education to students.

Contact information for the Health and Wellness Center:

<http://www.sjfc.edu/campus-services/wellness/about/>

(585) 385-8280

[healthcenter@sjfc.edu](mailto:healthcenter@sjfc.edu)

The Safety and Security Department operates 24 hours a day and 365 days a year with the goal to provide a safe and secure environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors to live, work and study.

Contact information for the Safety and Security Department:

<http://www.sjfc.edu/campus-services/safety/>

Non-emergency number: (585) 385-8025

Emergency number: (585) 385-8111

**Late Assignments:** Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified on the syllabus. Late assignments will be accepted within 24 hours of the end of class period in which the assignment is due, with a 10% penalty for the individual student on a solo assignment, or for all group members on a group assignment. Assignments turned in after this 24-hour period will not be accepted. Requirements for class attendance and make-up quizzes, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with the St. John Fisher College Attendance Policy that can be found at: <http://catalog.sjfc.edu/undergraduate/2016-2017/academic-information/courses/attendance.dot>



**Lecture:** I will not repeat material missed by absent students. It is the responsibility of the students who fail to attend class to get notes from their classmates. Such second-hand exposure seldom provides a fully satisfactory substitute for class attendance. Missing class will not serve as an excuse for failing to submit assigned work on time.

**Quiz Schedule:** Quizzes must be taken on the assigned date. Failure to show up for a quiz will result in a zero. If an emergency arises and prior to commencing the quiz you realize you will not be in attendance on the date specified, you must get the instructor's permission for the absence to be authorized, and this must be discussed ahead of time with appropriate documentation provided. Should a student unexpectedly miss a quiz due to illness or a family emergency without making proper arrangements ahead of time, a makeup quiz will only be granted if the student provides official documentation. Requirements for class attendance and make-up quizzes, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with the St. John Fisher College Attendance Policy that can be found at: <http://catalog.sjfc.edu/undergraduate/2016-2017/academic-information/courses/attendance.dot>

**Syllabus Changes:** The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus or course schedule as the need arises.

**Tips for Getting Good Grades:**

- Review assignment requirements carefully
- Focus on quality, not just completion
- Ask questions
- Cite your work when appropriate
- Come to every class
- Complete the readings
- Participate

**COMM 253 Course Schedule**

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assigned Reading</b>	<b>Tentative Deadlines</b>
Week 1 Jan. 15-19  Fri. Sept. 19 @ Guest Lecture (no class)	- Course Introduction - Developing Your Professional Presence	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 1	
Week 2 Jan. 22-26	- Working with Others: Interpersonal, Intercultural, and Team Communication - Managing the Communication Process: Analyzing Composing, Evaluating	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 2-3	
Week 3 Jan. 29-Feb. 2	- Extemporaneous Speeches in Class	N/A	Welcome Memo due Wed. Jan 31 <sup>st</sup>  Extemporaneous Speeches in class throughout the week.
Week 4 Feb. 5-9	- Communicating Bad News - Quiz 1 Review	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 6	
Week 5 Feb. 12-16	- Preparing Business Reports - Quiz 1 in Class on Fri. Feb. 16th	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 10	Quiz 1 Fri. Feb. 16 <sup>th</sup>
Week 6 Feb. 19-23	- Using Social Media in Business	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 7	
Week 7 Feb. 26-Mar. 2	- Communicating Routine Messages and Building Goodwill	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 4	
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>			
Week 8 Mar. 12-16	- Communicating Persuasive Messages - SWOT Analysis - SMART Objectives - Negative News Message Presentations	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 5	Negative News Messages + Presentation due Fri. Mar. 16 <sup>th</sup>
Week 9 Mar. 19-23	- Finding and Evaluating Business Information - Communicating Background for a Project - Communicating a Project Summary - Communicating Business Need/Justification for a Project - Presentation Overflow	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 8	

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Week 10 Mar. 26-30  Fri. Mar. 30 is Good Friday (no class)	- Preparing Persuasive Business Proposals	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 9	
Week 11 Apr. 2-6	- Project Management Professional (PMP) Communication Tools - Quiz 2 Review	TBD	Sections 1-5 of Final Business Proposal due Fri. Apr. 6 <sup>th</sup>
Week 12 Apr. 9-13	- Quiz 2 in Class on Mon. Apr. 9 <sup>th</sup>	N/A	Quiz 2 Mon. Apr. 9 <sup>th</sup>
Week 13 Apr. 16-20	- Preparing and Delivering [Planned] Business Presentations	Shwom & Snyder Chapter 11	
Week 14 Apr. 23-27	- Branded Communications - Submission of Final Business Proposal	TBD	Final Business Proposal due Fri. Apr. 27 <sup>th</sup>
Exam Week  COMM253-01 Mon. April 30 <sup>th</sup> 12pm-2:30pm	- Business Proposal Presentations	N/A	Final Business Proposal Presentation due Mon. Apr. 30 <sup>th</sup>