

ORG536: Contemporary Business Writing and Communication

Credit Hours: 3

Contact Hours: This is a 3-credit course, offered in accelerated format. This means that 16 weeks of material is covered in 8 weeks. The exact number of hours per week that you can expect to spend on each course will vary based upon the weekly coursework, as well as your study style and preferences. You should plan to spend 14-20 hours per week in each course reading material, interacting on the discussion boards, writing papers, completing projects, and doing research.

Faculty Information



Faculty contact information and office hours can be found on the faculty profile page.

Course Description and Outcomes



Course Description:

This course is designed for the practicing professional and focuses on internal and external communications practices and strategies within and beyond organizational settings. Audience is considered and includes employees, executives, first-line supervisors, community, customers, and board members. Students consider communication styles, interpersonal skills, business and professional writing, reports, and presentations based on substantive and credible data, and various modes of communication, including virtual communication.

Course Overview:

As a graduate-level course covering business communication, the focus is to apply the essential components of good business writing and apply concepts and techniques for dealing with 21st-century business communication issues. The communication covered in the course includes traditional writing and verbal communication, non-verbal, social media and other web-based, digital communication methods that are currently used in the workplace. The student will also analyze communication as a means of enhancing organizational sustainability within a diverse and global business environment.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Outline the process of 21st-century business communications and their effective use(s).
2. Describe effective practices and technologies for planning and participating in face-to-face and virtual meetings.
3. Create business documents and reports that apply the components of the writing process.
4. Compare and contrast the role digital media plays in the world of business communication.
5. Describe and analyze the basic features of informal and formal business reports, plans, and proposals.
6. Explain and apply the major elements of organizing and presenting a business presentation.

Participation & Attendance



Prompt and consistent attendance in your online courses is essential for your success at CSU-Global Campus. Failure to verify your attendance within the first 7 days of this course may result in your withdrawal. If for some reason you would like to drop a course, please contact your advisor.

Online classes have deadlines, assignments, and participation requirements just like on-campus classes. Budget your time carefully and keep an open line of communication with your instructor. If you are having technical problems, problems with your assignments, or other problems that are impeding your progress, let your instructor know as soon as possible.

Course Materials



Inclusive Access

This term your course will be included in CSU-Global's Inclusive Access program, which allows day one access to one or more of your required course materials — at a reduced cost. Click the “Course eBook” link located at the top of each module to access your materials. You will have access to these materials at no charge until the add/drop date, at which point your student account will be charged. If you decide you do not want to participate, you can Opt-Out of the Inclusive Access program by navigating to your course book and clicking “OPT-OUT” before the add/drop deadline. If you opt-out by the add/drop deadline, your student account will not be charged.

Required:

Guffey, M., & Loewy, D. (2015). *Business communication: Process and product* (8th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning. ISBN-13: 978128509406

Suggested:

NOTE: All non-textbook required readings and materials necessary to complete assignments, discussions, and/or supplemental or required exercises are provided within the course itself. Please read through each course module carefully.

Course Schedule



Due Dates

The Academic Week at CSU-Global begins on Monday and ends the following Sunday.

- Discussion Boards: The original post must be completed by Thursday at 11:59 p.m. MT and Peer Responses posted by Sunday 11:59 p.m. MT. Late posts may not be awarded points.
- Critical Thinking: Assignments are due Sunday at 11:59 p.m. MT.

Week #	Readings	Assignments
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 1 & 2 in <i>Business Communication: Process and Product</i> • Mazzei, A. (2014). A multidisciplinary approach for a new understanding of corporate communication. <i>Corporate Communications</i>, 19(2), 216-230. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-12-2011-0073 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion (25 points) • Critical Thinking (75 points)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VanMeter, R., Grisaffe, D., Chonko, L., & Roberts, J. (2013). Generation Y's ethical ideology and its potential workplace implications. <i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>, 117(1), 93-109. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1505-1 	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 in <i>Business Communication: Process and Product</i> • Aritz, J., & Walker, R. C. (2014). Leadership styles in multicultural groups: Americans and East Asians working together. <i>International Journal of Business Communication</i>, 51(1), 72-92. doi:10.1177/2329488413516211 • Korovyakovskaya, I., & Hyonsong, C. (2015). An empirical study of the relationships between miscommunication and conflict in culturally diverse work groups. <i>Journal of International Business Research</i>, 14(3), 41-54. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion (25 points) • Critical Thinking (75 points)
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 4, 5, & 6 in <i>Business Communication: Process and Product</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion (25 points) • Critical Thinking (75 points) • Portfolio Milestone (25 points)
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 7 & 10 in <i>Business Communication: Process and Product</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion (25 points) • Critical Thinking (75 points)
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 8 & 9 in <i>Business Communication: Process and Product</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion (25 points) • Critical Thinking (75 points)
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 11 in <i>Business Communication: Process and Product</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion (25 points) • Critical Thinking (75 points)
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 12 & 14 in <i>Business Communication: Process and Product</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion (25 points)
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 15 & 16 in <i>Business Communication: Process and Product</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion (25 points) • Portfolio (325 points)

Assignment Details



This course includes the following assignments/projects:

Module 1

CRITICAL THINKING ASSIGNMENT (75 points)

Choose one of the following two assignments to complete this week. Do not do both assignments. Identify your assignment choice in the title of your submission.

Option #1: Communication between Generations

There are currently four generations of employees in today's workforce. These generations vary in their core values, personalities, work ethic, use of technology, views on authority, and of course, communication. It is difficult to work together and accomplish the organization's goals when employees are so diverse in these characteristics.

For this assignment, compare the different generations within the workforce today (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, Gen Y) in terms of their characteristics that affect the workplace (some of which are listed above), and then evaluate how this can affect communication within a work environment. Finally, determine ways to deal with the potential communication issues effectively to ensure that communication between everyone in the 21st century workforce is effective and moves the organization forward.

Keep in mind that this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Make sure to use outside sources to support your responses, and ensure that your paper is in a scholarly essay format. Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Option #2: Effective Team Communication

Many organizations today are structured so that multiple teams exist within one organization in order to help the organization achieve its strategic goals. Some individuals are part of more than one team within the organization, and these individuals may have different roles on each team. Regardless of the individual's role within the team, effective communication is essential.

For this assignment you will compare the communication strategies of two different teams – one that communicates well, and one that does not communicate well. These should be teams within an organization that you are familiar with.

Analyze the communication strategies of each team. What is effective and what is ineffective? How do the team leaders manage the communication between team members? How do team leaders prepare for the face-to-face meetings? What technologies are used within the teams to communicate? What could be done to improve communication if it is ineffective?

Keep in mind that this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories. Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Module 2

CRITICAL THINKING ASSIGNMENT (75 points)

Choose one of the following two assignments to complete this week. Do not do both assignments. Identify your assignment choice in the title of your submission.

Option #1: Why does workplace discrimination still exist?

For this Critical Thinking Assignment, you will conduct research on diversity in organizations. Begin by reading the articles below regarding stereotyping and discrimination in the workplace and then conduct your own research on workplace discrimination.

Overt stereotype biases and discrimination in the workplace: Why haven't we fixed this by now?

Stuck in a Mad Men era; in part two of strategy's diversity series, we examine why agencies struggle to get women and visible minorities up the ranks.

Based on your research, write an essay that answers the four questions listed below.

1. What are the leading minority-friendly companies doing?
2. What strategies are companies using to become more diverse?
3. Are workplace changes due to mandatory changes in recruiting or company culture practices, or are they occurring based on other forces?
4. How can the workplace truly foster diversity?

Keep in mind that this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported; in-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Reference:

Malos, S. (2015). Overt stereotype biases and discrimination in the workplace: Why haven't we fixed this by now? *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 27(4), 271-280. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10672-015-9264-7>

Haynes, M. (2013). Stuck in a Mad Men era; in part two of strategy's diversity series, we examine why agencies struggle to get women and visible minorities up the ranks. *Strategy*, 21.

Option #2: Negotiation Traps

Businesspeople often have difficulty reaching agreement on the terms of contracts, proposals, and anything that involves negotiation. They have even more difficulty when the negotiators are from different cultures.

Based on the outside research and readings from the week, analyze the potential implications of the following common mistakes made by North Americans in their negotiations with international business partners. What could happen with the negotiations if one were to make these mistakes during international negotiations?

- Assuming that a final agreement is set in stone.
- Lacking patience and insisting that matters progress more quickly than the pace preferred by the locals.

- Thinking that an interpreter is always completely accurate.
- Believing that individuals who speak English understand every nuance of their meaning.
- Ignoring or misunderstanding the significance of rank.

Keep in mind that this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

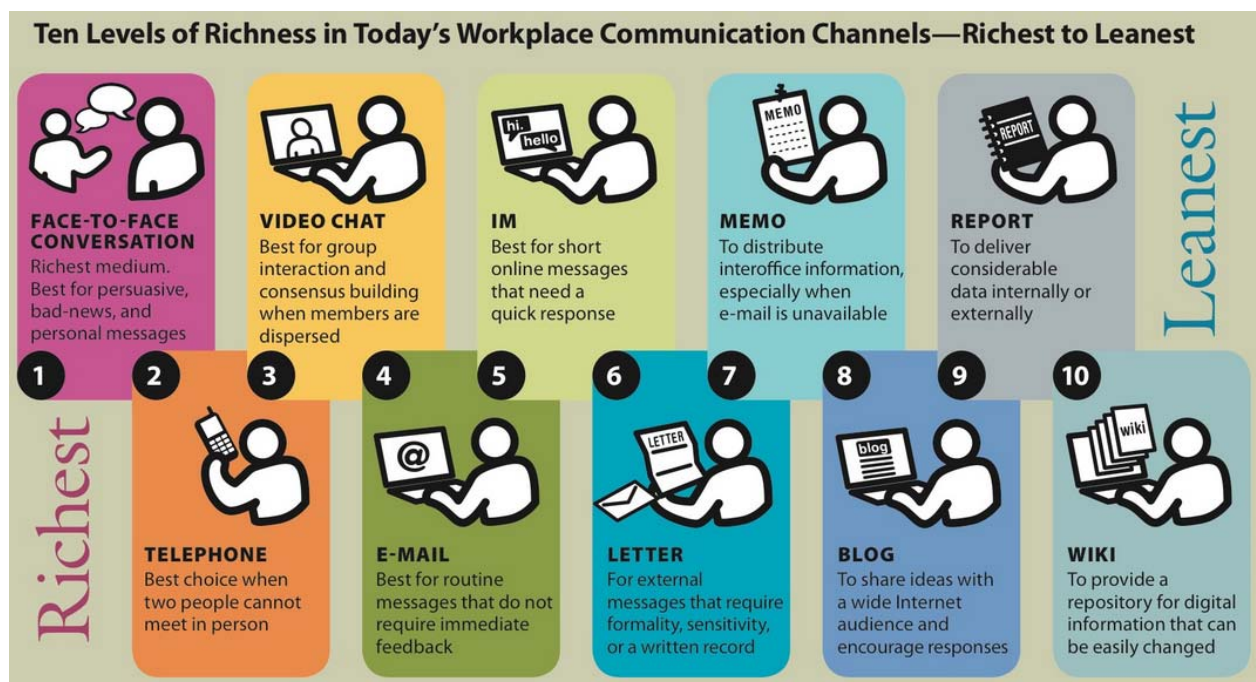
Module 3

CRITICAL THINKING ASSIGNMENT (75 points)

Choose one of the following two assignments to complete this week. Do not do both assignments. Identify your assignment choice in the title of your submission.

Option #1: Selecting the Best Channel

After identifying the purpose of your message, you need to select the most appropriate communication channel.



Caption: Ten levels of richness in today's workplace communication channels – richest to leanest. (Guffey, M., & Loewy, D., 2015, Figure 4.5)

Utilizing Figure 4.5 in Chapter 4, "Ten Levels of Richness in Today's Workplace Communication Channels – Richest to Leanest," as seen above, determine the best communication channels for the following messages, and then

create these five messages as they would look based on the channel you chose for each. Assume that all channels shown are available. Support your reasoning with examples and research.

1. A manager needs to know whether Crystal in Reprographics can produce a rush job for her in two days.
2. As part of a taskforce to investigate cell phone marketing, a manager needs to establish a central location in which each team member can see general information about the task as well as add comments for others to see. Taskforce members are located throughout the country.
3. A manager wants to know what team members are available immediately for a quick teleconference meeting. They are all workaholics and glued to their computers.
4. A human resources manager during company reorganization must tell six employees they will lose their jobs.
5. A prospective client in Japan wants the price quotes for a number of a company's products as soon as possible.

Include an introductory paragraph that outlines the importance of selecting appropriate communication channels.

Keep in mind this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories which are cited and referenced.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Reference

Guffey, M., & Loewy, D. (2015). *Business communication: process and product* (8th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.

Option #2: Managing Change

The Chief Operations Officer of a Fortune 1000 company is preparing to implement a major change in Standard Operating Procedures in the next six months. This is an initiative that she has personally spearheaded over the past year and one which she knows—while extremely valuable to the company and its employees in the long-term future—will almost certainly elicit a lot of initial unhappiness, anxiety, uncertainty, and push-back from both customers and employees—especially if the key components of the change initiative are communicated carelessly.

What are some of the main communications problems the COO faces right now, over the next six months, and for up to a year after the change is implemented? What will she have to do to ensure that the message is well-received and clearly understood by both external and internal customers (employees)? What media should she use to communicate over the next several months? Explain why this is the most effective way to communicate.

Keep in mind this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.

- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

PORTFOLIO MILESTONE (25 points)

Choose one of the following two Portfolio Project choices to complete. Do not do both assignments. Identify your assignment choice in the title of your submission.

Portfolio Option #1: Writing an Outline

This week, in light of what we learned about the writing process, begin to plan in some detail how you will approach writing the Portfolio Project paper. Compose a 1-2 page outline that you can fill in over the next few weeks. Although you will not receive any points this week for this Portfolio Project preliminary deliverable, it is worth 25 points toward your final score. Review the Portfolio Project Rubric.

Post any questions or comments about the content or requirements of the Portfolio Project to the questions thread in the Discussion Forum.

Portfolio Option #2: Researching Your Case Study

Complete preliminary research on the internet and/or through the use of online library databases. Compose a 1-2 page summary of sources and an overview of each source. Although you will not receive any points this week for this Portfolio Project preliminary deliverable, it is worth 25 points toward your final score. Review the Portfolio Project Rubric.

Post any questions or comments about the content or requirements of the Portfolio Project to the questions thread in the Discussion Forum.

Module 4

CRITICAL THINKING ASSIGNMENT (75 points)

Choose one of the following two assignments to complete this week. Do not do both assignments. Identify your assignment choice in the title of your submission.

Option #1: Business Use of Digital Communication

Digital media has taken over business communication in many different ways. People seem more likely to engage in digital media communication than face-to-face communication in business these days. In a paper, answer the following:

1. What forms of digital communication are used in businesses today?
2. How are these forms of digital communication effectively used?
3. How are these forms of digital communication being misused?
4. What are the benefits and drawbacks of digital communication in business?
5. What has changed in the demographics of organizations that has really helped to push digital communication forward as a main form of communication?

Keep in mind this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Option #2: Digital Communication and Global Teams

Virtual teams are now a very realistic component of many organizations because these organizations now operate on a global level. This means that digital communication has to be the main form of communication in those companies. In a paper, answer the following:

1. What are the forms of digital communication used for global business communication today?
2. What are the benefits to being able to communicate digitally on a global level?
3. What are the drawbacks to only having digital communication capabilities on a global level?
4. How does using digital communication affect the already complex issue of intercultural communication?

Keep in mind this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Module 5

CRITICAL THINKING ASSIGNMENT (75 points)

Choose one of the following two assignments to complete this week. Do not do both assignments. Identify your assignment choice in the title of your submission.

Option #1: Social Media and Business

Select a major, publicly traded company that you are interested in and visit that company's Twitter, blog, Instagram, or Facebook page. Evaluate how they use their social media tools to deliver good news and bad news to their stakeholders. Set up your assignment following these guidelines:

Introduction (Present an overview of the company you have selected, the link to their Twitter, blog, Instagram, and/or Facebook page, and a general description of the media format that is used.)

Evaluate how the company uses the media for the delivery of good news and bad news in these areas:

1. Public/Customer Relations
2. Market Research
3. Building an Online Community

4. Internal Communication

Potential Risks (Discuss the company's potential risks in terms of how they are using this social media.)

Recommendations (make recommendations for how the company might improve their use of the social media tool in the delivery of good news and bad news.)

Keep in mind that this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Option #2: Communicating Bad News

Think of a time when someone had to deliver bad news at work or in another organization. Based on the readings and research, in what ways did this person deliver the news effectively? In what ways did things not go well, and why? What could have been done differently? What technique should have been used for the delivery, and what would have been the most successful way to deliver the message given the specific recipient of the news?

Keep in mind that this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Module 6

CRITICAL THINKING ASSIGNMENT (75 points)

Choose one of the following two assignments to complete this week. Do not do both assignments. Identify your assignment choice in the title of your submission.

Option #1: How to Make Better Presentations

In this critical thinking activity, you are to prepare a short presentation that you could potentially deliver to corporate trainers in your workplace. Your goal is to teach these trainers how to make a better presentation. Create a short presentation (8-10 slides) that delivers the content that corporate trainers need to know about

delivering effective presentations. Be sure your presentation is visually appealing and follows guidance given in this week's materials.

The presentation for your critical thinking activity must be completed using presentation software or an online presentation alternative. The presentation must include a minimum of 150 words of Speaker Notes for each slide to provide more depth than the material presented on the slide itself.

Keep in mind that this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written presentation must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- A minimum of 150 words in the Speaker Notes for each slide to provide further knowledge, critical thinking and depth into the topics presented in outline form on the slide.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Option #2: Life After Death by PowerPoint

Watch Don McMillan's YouTube clip "*Life After Death by PowerPoint*"

Alternatively, read the following article:

Getting more out of PowerPoint®. (2014). *Medical Writing*, 23(1), 22-24. doi:10.1179/2047480613Z.000000000180

Discuss the video or article in relation to the readings and research up to this point. Be sure to: (a) identify the specific bad habits noted, (b) discuss the reasons for their incorrect usage, and (c) record recommendations for using PowerPoint appropriately.

Keep in mind that this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 3-5 pages in length, not including the title and reference pages.
- 3 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text citations used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list.
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.

Review the grading rubric, which can be accessed from the assignment page. Reach out to your instructor if you have questions about the assignment.

Module 8

PORTFOLIO PROJECT:

Choose one of the following two Portfolio Project choices to complete. Do not do both assignments. Identify your assignment choice in the title of your submission.

Option #1: Best Practices in Business Communication

For this Portfolio Project, you are to benchmark the best practices in business communication based on your learning in this course. This project consists of two components: a business presentation and accompanying paper.

Business Presentation (10-12 slides)

Select at least four of the below topics to include in your presentation. Be sure to include the use of electronic messages and digital media for business communication. *Visuals, graphics, and screenshots should be included in the presentation using presentation software or an online presentation alternative. Include the URL of your presentation in your analysis paper.*

Discuss best practices in:

- Effective and ethical business communication
- Professionalism in the workplace
- Intercultural business communication
- Writing tips for the business professional
- The use of electronic messages and digital media for business communication
- Positive and negative messages
- Business presentations
- Business reports, plans, and proposals

Analysis Paper (7-10 pages)

An analysis of your selected best practices listed above must be included in your paper, with a detailed explanation and examples of the best practices for each component. Be sure to include the URL of your presentation in this document.

Keep in mind this is academic writing. It should be written in third person and should not include unsubstantiated opinions, but rather facts and theories.

Your well-written paper must adhere to the following parameters:

- 7- 10 pages in length, including reference pages.
- 6 scholarly references cited in the assignment. Remember, you must support your thinking/opinions and prior knowledge with in-text citations and references; all facts must be supported. In-text references used throughout the assignment must be included in an APA-formatted reference list. Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA*.
- Clear, concise, and focused on the assignment.
- Meets the requirements of the assignment.

Option #2: Writing a Case Study

“News is what you don’t want to tell me. Everything else is public relations.” –David Brinkley, journalist

The case study is an excellent way to help prepare students and managers to be prepared to face real-life business situations—analyzing all the relevant data, making efficient decisions, and taking appropriate action. The writing of a business case study is an important skill that demonstrates communications and analytical skills. Case studies are, in essence, narratives that tell the story of the business problem or issue at hand. These narratives, or stories, do not provide answers directly; rather, they offer as much background and situational information as possible to present the situation in as unbiased and thorough a manner as possible, writing from the viewpoints of as many of the parties as reasonably possible.

Writing and analyzing case studies allows students to demonstrate proficiency in many facets of business education—especially, in this case, in business communications and analysis. The case study is therefore a tool to offer students the opportunity to explore business communications issues in a complex manner—not simply deducing or memorizing the answer, but thinking deeply about the issues involved and how to approach a solution.

A library case study—the kind involved in this Portfolio Project assignment—does not include information that cannot be found in the public record by anyone with internet access, a library card, and rudimentary research skills. A wealth of information is available to such interested individuals, including TV and newspaper stories, blogs, government documents, federal court proceedings, and sometimes other resources—especially for organizations that are publicly traded, such as IPOs or other public disclosures.

To write your case study:

- First select a topic that is interesting both to you and to your intended audience—in this case, your instructor. Try to find a subject that is relatively timely, that is or has been in the public eye, at least until recently.
- Then, do some preliminary research on your topic, using the internet and/or online library databases. Next, consider the perspective from which you will tell the story. Who is the primary decision-maker in your scenario? Nail down the beginning and end dates of your narrative, and think about the level of detail that you want to write.
- Then, build a timeline of events that are important to your case, in chronological order.
- Identify key characters in your narrative; and identify the key issues that you'll write about, in order of importance.
- Next, prepare your first and second drafts, keeping in mind the importance of capturing your audience's attention with a quote, a crucial event, or an anecdote in the opening paragraphs. After grabbing your reader's attention, offer a brief explanation of the company's history, its industry, and its size (such as annual revenues, number of employees, market share, etc.). Introduce your reader to the key players and decision-makers. Keep in mind the "who, what, when, where, why, and how" of your story. Be sure to enumerate important assumptions; and use quotes from key players where possible. Finally, read your drafts for flow, grammar, and syntax. As much as possible, be sure that your writing is lively, accurate, and cogent. Consider any tables, graphs, figures, stock charts, maps, or other graphics to include in the appendices that will help your reader to navigate the narrative. Be sure to indicate the source of anything you use, unless you build it yourself.

Your well-written paper must include the following considerations:

- 7- 10 pages in length, including reference page(s) (not including appendices).
- Formatted according to *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA Requirements*
- Be clear, concise, and focused on the assignment.
- Utilize approximately six different outside sources that will help to support your assertions and strengthen your arguments; the CSU-Global Library is a great place to find these sources!
- Meet the requirements of the assignment.

Below is an example of the title and précis of a (rather lengthy, with the appendices) student-written business case study, to give you an idea of the tone and scope of your case study.

American Apparel: The Plus-Sized Problem

Categories: Apparel and Textile, Brand Management, Conflict Management, Customer Communication, Manufacturing

Authors: Garg, P.; Fan, K.; and O'Rourke, J.S. (Editor)

American Apparel, a multinational fashion retailer headquartered in Downtown Los Angeles, looked to target the plus-size clothing customer segment in an effort to grow its stagnant sales. It launched "The Next Big Thing," a marketing campaign requiring contestants to submit modeling shots for American Apparel's online audience to vote on. Little did they know that their ad copy, which utilized several puns as adjectives to describe larger women, would invoke a negative response by media outlets as well as incite members of the plus-size community. Nancy Upton, a size-12-wearing student and actress based in Dallas, Texas, decided to join the contest with a satirical entry, and created a blog. What happened next was a series of corporate communication problems that revealed a deeper issue of cultural insensitivity rather than just a poor choice of wording. 17 pp. #13-08 (2013)

Course Policies



Course Grading

20% Discussion Participation
45% Critical Thinking Assignments
35% Final Portfolio Project

Grading Scale and Policies

A	95.0 – 100
A-	90.0 – 94.9
B+	86.7 – 89.9
B	83.3 – 86.6
B-	80.0 – 83.2
C+	75.0 – 79.9
C	70.0 – 74.9
D	60.0 – 69.9
F	59.9 or below

In-Classroom Policies

For information on late work and incomplete grade policies, please refer to our [In-Classroom Student Policies and Guidelines](#) or the Academic Catalog for comprehensive documentation of CSU-Global institutional policies.

Academic Integrity

Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarism, reusing /re-purposing your own work (see *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA* for percentage of repurposed work that can be used in an assignment), unauthorized possession of academic materials, and unauthorized collaboration. The CSU-Global Library provides information on how students can avoid plagiarism by understanding what it is and how to use the Library and Internet resources.

Citing Sources with APA Style

All students are expected to follow the *CSU-Global Guide to Writing and APA* when citing in APA (based on the APA Style Manual, 6th edition) for all assignments. For details on CSU-Global APA style, please review the APA resources within the CSU-Global Library under the “APA Guide & Resources” link. A link to this document should also be provided within most assignment descriptions in your course.

Disability Services Statement

CSU-Global is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability requesting academic accommodations should contact the Disability Resource Coordinator at 720-279-0650 and/or email ada@CSUGlobal.edu for additional information to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Netiquette

Respect the diversity of opinions among the instructor and classmates and engage with them in a courteous, respectful, and professional manner. All posts and classroom communication must be conducted in accordance with the student code of conduct. Think before you push the Send button. Did you say just what you meant? How will the person on the other end read the words?

Maintain an environment free of harassment, stalking, threats, abuse, insults or humiliation toward the instructor and classmates. This includes, but is not limited to, demeaning written or oral comments of an ethnic,

religious, age, disability, sexist (or sexual orientation), or racist nature; and the unwanted sexual advances or intimidations by email, or on discussion boards and other postings within or connected to the online classroom.

If you have concerns about something that has been said, please let your instructor know.