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CCOM 206   **Communication in Engineering**   **Fall 2021**
Section 712

Course Start and End Dates:	**Thursday, September 2 to Thursday, December 2**
Class Meets:	**Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:05 p.m. to 5:25 p.m.**
Location:	**SH688 355**

Instructor:	**Kodi Scheer (she/hers)**
Office Hours:	**by appointment via Zoom**
Email:	**kodi.scheer@mcgill.ca**

Course Description and Objectives: The key objective of this course is to develop the fundamental research and communication skills needed by professional engineers. Principally, these are (i) the process and production of written research that is required by the professional engineer and the engineering graduate student, and (ii) a team-prepared (written) and presented (oral) business proposal. Using the APOS framework—Audience, Purpose, Organization and Style—you will write these and other texts, while developing the analytical and critical skills needed to evaluate your own work and the work of others. As part of the course, you will gain experience working in teams, which is essential to success in the engineering profession.

By the end of the course you will have learned how to:
- develop the research, presentation, and writing skills needed by engineers to communicate ideas in a clear, succinct, and organized fashion
- demonstrate a sound understanding of the relationship between content and form
- address intended audiences with effective communication strategies and appropriate media

Course Text: Key chapters have been shared on myCourses. Please read these by the dates indicated on the course schedule.

Major assignments:

1. **Cover Letter**: You will learn how to prepare a persuasive letter and résumé that demonstrate your suitability for a particular job posting by matching your experience and skills to the employer's requirements while communicating in an appropriate tone and format.

2. **Research Paper**: By writing and submitting multiple drafts, you will learn and perform the basic methodology of research writing in order to examine an engineering issue using a persuasive, problem/solution approach.

3. **Business Proposal and Oral Presentation**: Your team will research and write a persuasive report on a business solution involving an engineering issue. Your team will also write and practice a group oral presentation of your proposal that will be presented to your classmates. While completing the business proposal, you will practice skills that are necessary for working in professional teams and conducting business meetings.

Other genres will be studied, including email, memos, technical descriptions, instructions, abstracts, summaries, and oral presentations.

Assignment	Due date	Anticipated Return date	Value	Max. Length
Portfolio	Ongoing		15%	--
Cover Letter (CL1* and CL2)	Draft 1: Oct 15	Oct 19	5%	1 page
	Draft 2: Oct 21	Nov 2	5%	1 page
Research Paper Proposal (RPP)	Oct 7	Oct 15	5%	1.5 pages
Research Paper Outline (RPO)	Oct 21	Oct 26	5%	2 pages
Research Paper (RP1* and RP2)	Draft 1: Nov 2	Nov 11	20%	8-10 pages
	Draft 2: Nov 23	Dec 2	10%	8-10 pages
Business Proposal: Oral Presentation (BPO)	Nov 30/Dec 2	End of term	15%	4-5 min. each
Business Proposal: Written (BPW)	Dec 2	End of term	20%	25-30 pages

(**Note:** 1 *double-spaced* page, excluding any images, graphs, etc., is roughly equivalent to 250 words.)

*For these assignments (CL1 and RP1), students will receive detailed audio feedback on a first draft. Students must revise these assignments in an attempt to improve both their skills and the final mark for each assignment. A separate grade will be awarded for the second draft. **Submitting the same draft twice will result in a mark of 0 for the second draft.**

As per McGill regulations, a student may not submit an essay that has already been submitted and graded for a course taken in a previous semester. Violations of this regulation will be reported to the Dean of Students for possible disciplinary action.

Portfolio: Short assignments for class sessions
These short exercises provide opportunities for you to demonstrate your understanding of the lecture material while simultaneously preparing you for the course's major assignments. Totalling 15% of your mark, they include:
- Writing and speaking exercises and quizzes (8%)
- Multiple forms of peer evaluation (3%)
- Participation during discussions (4%)

Cover Letter (10%) and Résumé
You will develop a one-page cover letter (Draft 1: 5%; Draft 2: 5%) based on guidelines discussed in class. You will also draft a résumé after attending a required out-of-class workshop given by the McGill Engineering Student Centre (MESC) (-1% for missing; attendance is taken). Although there is no grade for the résumé, it must be attached to the first draft of your cover letter: the contents of the résumé and cover letter must mesh. You will receive a grade (5%) and individual audio feedback on Draft 1. You must revise your cover letter based on your instructor's audio feedback and submit it as Draft 2 (5%). If you would like one-on-one feedback on your résumé, contact the Industry Liaisons at MESC.

Research Paper

Consider your audience and write a research paper that (i) convinces them of the significance of a specific, small-scale engineering problem, (ii) details potential solutions to this problem, and (iii) persuades your audience as to which potential solution is best.

- **Research Paper Proposal** (5%): This 1 to 2-page assignment is designed to ensure that you commit, in a timely manner, to researching a specific small-scale problem and to considering potential solutions to this problem.
- **Research Paper Outline** (5%): This 2 to 3-page assignment is designed to ensure that you find and synthesize the resources required to determine the best solution to the problem you have committed to investigating; you should demonstrate that you are properly prepared to build a persuasive argument for your research paper.
- **Research Paper** (30%) You will write a research paper (Draft 1: 20%; Draft 2: 10%) in which you describe a specific small-scale engineering problem and its causes, review possible alternatives, and recommend a practical solution. This paper will demonstrate your ability to conduct academic research and to write a persuasive and well-structured report. *Length*: 2000 to 2500 words. You will receive audio feedback on Draft 1 (20%); Draft 2 (10%) must respond to your instructor's audio feedback.

Communication in Engineering Excellence in Written Communication Award

The second draft of your Research Paper will be considered for the Communication in Engineering Excellence in Written Communication Award. Each term, instructors submit the best paper in each section to the Writing Recognition Committee. Twice a year, the Committee adjudicates these papers based on the quality of ideas, rigour of research, organization of arguments, and clarity and precision of writing. Overall winners are announced twice annually. Each overall winner will receive a $500 scholarship from the Faculty of Engineering, and his or her paper will be published on eScholarship@McGill, a digital repository that stores and showcases the publications and theses of McGill University faculty and students. (Note: You may opt out of the competition by emailing your instructor when you submit Draft 2 of your Research Paper.)

Business Proposal

Your final assignment is a group project. Working in a team of up to five students, you will create a company and then write to a potential client (an audience you choose) proposing that your company be hired to carry out a specific engineering-related project. You may also consider undertaking a "real" project by responding to an existing engineering RFP or by consulting with the McGill Office of Sustainability in order to choose a topic affecting the McGill campus.

- **Written format** (20%): The written document must be a persuasive, attractive, and detailed document, matching the requirements established in class. *Grading:* This is a single report submitted by your team: generally, the team mark applies to all. Exceptions may occur in the rare cases when the instructor determines that one or more members either did not contribute sufficiently (lower than group grade) or contributed far more work (higher than group grade). *Length*: 25-30 pages. *Business Meetings*: Team business meetings will be held both during and outside of class time. Proper business meeting order must be maintained, and your team will produce and submit minutes following each meeting.
- **Oral presentation** (15%): Together, your team will present its business proposal to an audience who needs to be persuaded that this is a sound and worthwhile project. Present your part of the proposal in a succinct and engaging manner. This is a team created, choreographed, and rehearsed assignment with grades assigned to each individual speaker and to the team's overall performance. *Length:* 4 to 5 minutes per team member.

Requirements, Policies, and Procedures:

- **Participating is a must for success in this course. Please be sure to contact your instructor if you must miss or cannot prepare for any of these sessions:**
  - -resumé presentation
  - -library research workshop
  - -peer feedback on cover letter or research paper
- **In order to pass CCOM 206, you must submit all assignments worth 20% or more** (i.e., Research Paper Draft 1 and written Business Proposal).
- **Assignment Submission:** All assignments must be submitted, on their due date, to the correct folder on myCourses. Accordingly, assignments submitted via e-mail or in any other medium will not be accepted unless the instructor has given prior written permission. Work submitted for evaluation as part of this course may be checked with text-matching software within myCourses.
- **Consequences of Late Submission:** Late work (i.e., work not submitted by the deadline in the appropriate format) will be penalized by 5% per day, including weekends. Work handed in more than 7 days late (including weekends) will not be accepted. Legitimate exceptions include documented medical, family, and personal emergencies and observance of holy days. Students planning to observe holy days should notify the instructor by email **at the beginning of the course.** Holy days known to McGill are listed here: https://www.mcgill.ca/importantdates/holy-days-0#Holy%20Days%202020.
- **This course is administered via *myCourses*.** Students are advised *to check the myCourses site on a daily basis*. Failure to do so may result in your missing important information. **Neither absence from class nor failure to check *myCourses* is an acceptable excuse for being unaware of important course-related information**.
- **Recording class activities:** Students may not record any class proceedings or collect any electronic data (including photos and videos) from class activities without the express consent of the instructor.
- **Instructor generated course materials** (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, test questions, recorded lectures, etc.) are **protected by law** and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without the explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.
- **Email communication:** Note that, in accordance with McGill University's official email policy, the instructor will not respond to email messages sent from outside the McGill network (e.g., hotmail). As well, while instructors appreciate that email correspondence is an efficient method of communication, students should keep in mind that instructors are not on call. Students should therefore not expect a response to emails during the weekend or after 5:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Prior to contacting instructors via email, students seeking course-related information, including information about assignments, should first attempt to locate that information by (a) consulting the course syllabus or textbook, (b) consulting materials uploaded to the course website (*myCourses*), or (c) consulting with other students in the class. Generally speaking, during the week, a valid request submitted via e-mail will receive a response within 36 hours, exclusive of weekends and statutory holidays.

Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Range
A	85-100
A-	80-84
B+	75-79
B	70-74
B-	65-69
C+	60-64
C	55-59
D	50-54

Course Schedule

	Date*	Topic	Reading/Work Due on this day
1	Sept. 2	Communication, language and the writing process	
2	Sept. 7	Communication considerations: Audience, Purpose, Organization, Style	**Read:** "An Approach to Academic Writing" **Bring:** Job or internship posting (MyFuture) **Complete:** Resume Worksheet
3	Sept. 9	Writing professional letters and email -Job Interview activity **Resumé presentation** TONIGHT from 6-7 p.m.	**Homework:** think about an engineering problem you'd like to research
4	Sept. 14	**How to write instructions** **Resumé presentation on Sept. 15 (if you didn't attend the previous session)** 6-7 p.m.	**Bring:** instructions for something you own
5	Sept. 16	Oration and physical presentation	**Read:** "Oral Presentations: Preparation and Delivery" AND "Alternate Refrigeration Systems for Improving Ice Quality in NHL Arenas"
6	Sept. 21	**"How to" presentations**	**Due:** your 60-second presentation
7	Sept. 23	Library workshop	**Complete:** library worksheet
8	Sept. 28	Inquiry: research questions and thesis statements	**Read:** "Research Writing as a Process"
9	Sept. 30	Library workshop	**Bring:** Two relevant journal articles
10	Oct. 5	Research proposal workshop	
11	Oct. 7	Peer feedback on draft 0 of cover letter	**Due: Research Proposal** **Bring: Cover letter Draft 0**
	Oct. 11-13	**Reading Break (no classes)**	
12	Oct. 15	**Make-up Lecture, Tuesday Schedule** Making persuasive arguments	**Due: Cover letter Draft 1**
13	Oct. 19	Topic sentences, outlines, citations	**Read:** "Stucture" by John McPhee
14	Oct. 21	Identifying rhetorical strategies: ethos, logos, pathos	
15	Oct. 26	Introduction to Business Proposal teams Business brainstorming	**Due: Cover Letter Draft 2** **Due: Research Paper Outline**
16	Oct. 28	Business Proposals: expectations and more brainstorming	Read: "Proposals"
17	Nov. 2	Peer feedback for Draft 0 research paper	**Due: Research Paper Draft 0**
18	Nov. 4	Conducting meetings	**Read:** "Taking Part in Meetings" **Due: Research Paper Draft 1**
19	Nov. 9	Business meeting	

20	Nov. 11	Choosing figures and creating tables/ Business meeting	**Due:** Business Proposal RFP
21	Nov. 16	Business meeting	
22	Nov. 18	Abstracts and Summaries/ Business meeting	**Due: Research Paper Draft 2**
23	Nov. 23	Business meeting	**Due:** Presentation Outline
24	Nov. 25	Business meeting/Practice oral presentation	
25	Nov. 30	Oral presentations	
26	Dec. 2	Oral presentations	**FINAL DAY OF CLASS!**

University Policies, Procedures, and Resources

Land Acknowledgment

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1. McGill Resources for Academic Success

(a) Inclusive Learning Environment

McGill is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment. If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with your instructor. If you have a special learning need or disability, you are encouraged to contact the Office for Students with Disabilities. For more information, visit their website at https://mcgill.ca/osd/.

(b) Health and Wellness

Student wellbeing is a priority for the University. To help students find the support they need as quickly as possible, all of McGill's health and wellness resources have been integrated into a single Student Wellness Hub, a one-stop shop for everything related to physical and mental health. If you need access to services or would like more information, you are strongly encouraged to visit the Virtual Hub.

Students also currently have *free* access to Keep.meSAFE, a psychological counselling service where students can speak to a counsellor in *one of six languages*. For more information, please visit the Student Services web page at https://www.mcgill.ca/studentservices/.

(c) COVID-19 Academic Considerations Framework

The University has put in place a *protocol for students who receive a positive COVID-19 test, start exhibiting symptoms, or have been asked to self-quarantine due to contact with someone who has tested positive.* Note that students in any of these circumstances must follow certain protocols that will ensure their own health and safety and that of the rest of the McGill community. Please consult this page for what steps to follow: https://www.mcgill.ca/coronavirus/health-guidelines/potential-covid-19-exposure-what-do.

The University has also put in place a *protocol for students who may require academic accommodations in the Fall 2021 semester related to COVID-19*. Please consult the Student section of the FAQs site: https://www.mcgill.ca/coronavirus/faqs#Students.

(d)   McGill Writing Centre (MWC) Tutorial Service

Writing well is key to both academic and professional success. The McGill Writing Centre (MWC) offers credit courses in academic and professional writing, and a tutorial service open to all McGill students. The tutorial service offers one-to-one sessions with seasoned instructors and experienced tutors who will work with you at any stage of the writing process.

For information about the availability of in-person and online appointments, please visit the following website: https://www.mcgill.ca/mwc/tutorial-service.

(e)   McGill Library

Find a workshop, learn about library services, and reach out to your liaison librarian for research help at https://www.mcgill.ca/library/orientation.

2.   Academic Conduct

(a)   Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for knowing McGill's rules and regulations concerning academic honesty, which can be found on the Student Rights and Responsibilities website. Violations of academic integrity undermine not only the value of honest students' work, but also the academic integrity of the University and the value of a McGill credential. The Student Rights and Responsibilities website provides resources that can help students avoid dishonest work, and an explanation of the disciplinary measures that go with it. To learn more about academic integrity, visit the following website: https://mcgill.ca/students/srr/.

As of Fall 2019, all newly admitted students must complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial (AIT) in Minerva during their first semester at McGill. Failure to complete the tutorial will place a hold in Minerva and restrict the student from registering for courses in the following semester. The Tutorial can be accessed as follows: **Minerva → Student Menu → Academic Integrity Tutorial.**

Work submitted for evaluation as part of this course may be checked with text-matching software within *myCourses*.

(b)   Respectful and Professional Communication

This course is designed to help you learn to communicate professionally both during your time at McGill and in your future workplaces. In keeping with McGill's policies on student rights and responsibilities, it is expected that during class discussions and small group interactions you will communicate constructively and respectfully. Sexist, racist, homophobic, ageist, and ableist expressions will not be tolerated in the classroom or during group meetings held outside of class.

To learn more about these policies, please consult this site: https://mcgill.ca/students/srr/policies-student-rights-and-responsibilities.

3.   Policy Against Sexual Harassment and Violence

McGill University is committed to creating and sustaining a safe environment through proactive, visible, accessible, and effective approaches that seek to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual

violence. *McGill's Policy against Sexual Violence* underlines this commitment and ensures that procedures are in place to address complaints. To learn more, visit the Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support, and Education website at this link: https://www.mcgill.ca/osvrse/.

Sexual Violence Training: "It Takes All of Us"
In accordance with Québec law (Bill 151), all newly admitted students must complete the sexual violence training course, called "It Takes All of Us," in *myCourses* during their first semester at McGill. Failure to complete the training will place a hold in Minerva and restrict the student from registering for courses in the following semester. The training can be accessed through *myCourses* and will appear as a separate course in your profile. For more information, please visit this site: https://www.mcgill.ca/osvrse/

4.   Policy on Harassment and Discrimination

McGill University is committed to promoting an equitable environment where the fundamental dignity of all of its members is respected. The objectives of McGill's *Policy on Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited by Law* are to promote education and awareness about equity issues and to ensure that procedures are in place to address complaints. To learn more about McGill's policy, including how to report a complaint, visit this site: https://www.mcgill.ca/how-to-report/.

5.   Final Grades

The official final course grade is the one that appears in Minerva. An unofficial final grade appearing in other locations may be subject to change. The School of Continuing Studies reserves the right to correct mistakes.

To learn more about University letter grades, visit this page: https://www.mcgill.ca/study/2021-2022/university_regulations_and_resources/undergraduate/gi_grading_and_grade_point_averages .