[](https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi8qs2Cvd3PAhWBSCYKHYx-AfIQjRwIBw&url=http://today.uconn.edu/2013/04/uconn-announces-new-visual-identity-program/&psig=AFQjCNEi3g1qfAr-rV5yaLTO7x5fEQCbSw&ust=1476643814070668)University of Connecticut

School of Business – OPIM 5601

*Technical Communication for Business Analytics Professionals*

FALL 2019 / Class #11952 – Section B12 – Classroom #504

# Instructor Information

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Instructor | Email | Office Location & Hours |
| **Katherine Duncan** | [Katherine.Duncan@uconn.edu](mailto:Katherine.Duncan@uconn.edu) | By appointment |
|  |  |  |
| **Instructor’s Background:** |  |  |
| **Bachelor of Communication** | **University of Massachusetts** | 2008 |
| **Master of Communication** | **Lasell College** | 2011 |
| **BI/DW & Analytics Recruiter** | **7 years in consulting firm & other businesses** | 2008 - 2015 |
| **BAPM / MBA Career Advisor** | **UConn School of Business** | 2015 - 2019 |
| **Environmental Systems Corp** | **Human Resources Manager** | 2019 – Present |

# General Information

## Description

The Business Analytics profession is increasingly responsible not only for technical duties but also leading and managing projects to provide solutions. Technical professionals often underestimate the need for strong communication skills that is a necessary component for success in any business. This is natural since most are drawn to math and sciences that can be taught and mastered. However, communication is not a quantifiable skill. Some can communicate very well, though none will ever truly master since effective communication is an art, not a science. This class is designed to offer the most tangible learning environment to the art of communication.

Analytics professionals will work on complex projects and technologies often with a team of people with specialties from varied disciplines. To be successful working on an analytics project means one must also have strong interpersonal skills to work well with the people who are contributing to the success of the overall project. To have interpersonal skills builds on the foundation of having strong communications skills to be successful. Communication skills are teachable; therefore, we will discuss, become aware of, and practice to improve for such needs. IT professionals are increasingly becoming part of work that is ever more people-oriented.

This course is designed to teach communication skills so that students will be more confident in their own communication abilities. There are many types of communication and in this course, we will focus on interpersonal communication, presentation skills and public speaking, nonverbal communication, written, and more. During this course we will dissect the realities of technical communication importance and review the complexities of the business environment. The goal is to empower students to navigate through business with greater ease and use of stronger communication.

## Course Learning Objectives

* Introduce students to basic theories and concepts of communication
* Improve student’s abilities to communicate verbally and non-verbally
* Build students’ confidence through tangible communication skill activities
* Recognize and understand different communication styles
* Improve business written communication and strengthen presentation skills
* Understand pros and cons of technology on communication today

# https://images-na.ssl-images-amazon.com/images/I/41Rq1bc2%2BqL._SX331_BO1,204,203,200_.jpgCourse Materials

## Required Materials

* Harvard Business Review Coursepack: (2 articles)

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/667870>

* + How to Improve Your Business Writing, by Carolyn O’Hara
  + How to Give a Killer Presentation, by Chris Anderson
* Additional Required Reading:
  + <http://www.inc.com/peter-economy/5-super-successful-ways-to-become-a-great-communicator.html>
* Optional Reading:
  + Textbook: Harry E. Chambers, “Effective Communication Skills: For Scientific and Technical Professionals,” Persues Publishing (2000).
  + <http://datajournalismhandbook.org/1.0/en/index.html>

# Course Schedule

| Week | Lecture / In Class Activities | Reading Due |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 10/21/2019 | * Today’s Communication Realities * Business Writing * Two Minute Speeches | HBR Article: How to Improve Your Business Writing |  |
| 10/28/2019 | * Building the Bridge of Effective Communication * Successful Presentations | HBR Article: How to Give a Killer Presentation |  |
| 11/4/2019 | * Influencing How Your Communication is Received * Public Speaking * Final Presentations (Grp 1-4) | Inc Article: 5 Super  Successful Ways to Become a Great Communicator |  |
| 11/11/2019 | * Communicating Technical Information to Nontechnical People * Final Presentations (Grp 5-9) |  |  |

# Evaluations / Grading

| Due Date | Evaluation | Grade % | Subject |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 10/21 | Two Minute Speech | 10% | Two Minute Professional Introduction |
| 10/28 | Layman’s Term Assignment | 15% | Technical Concept/Idea in Layman’s Terms |
| 11/4 | Data Journalism Assignment | 15% | Draw Insights from Data |
| 11/18 | Course Reflection Assignment | 20% | Open Reflection on the Lectures or Readings |
| Weekly | Participation | 10% | Must be present on time and engaged |
| 11/4 & 11/11 | Presentations | 30% | Final Presentations on Analytics |

# DELIVERABLES:

1. **Attendance and Class participation (Individual)**

In any professional setting you’ll be expected to arrive to business meetings on time and to be fully engaged. I will expect the same level of attention to our class meetings. Due to the quick nature of this class every session will be mandatory unless with special permission from the instructor. You must give at least 3 days of notice for missing a class and a reasonable explanation which is at the discretion of the instructor. Our classes will require active participation during each class through discussions, sharing your ideas and work experience with your peers so you can learn from each other. It is recommended to be 5-10 minutes early.

1. **Two Minute Speech (Individual)**

Students will introduce themselves to the class by giving a two-minute speech.

Your speech will need the following criteria: (2 points each)

* **At least a 2-minute introduction** in front of the class
* with **2 or more unique selling points** about yourself as well as
* **1 self-identified area of improvement** that you plan to work on while at UConn
* **Organized flow** without disjointed thoughts or non-sequiturs
* **Overall: creative and original style (Feel free to let us see your personality!)**

Public speaking is one of the most common phobias among people and few masters it. This exercise will give each student the chance to practice public speaking with a topic that is familiar – yourself! Speeches are done in the first class intentionally to gain feedback from observing your current public speaking skill level. Strong public speaking characteristics will be reviewed throughout the course with the goal of seeing growth in the final presentations.

1. **Layman’s Term Assignment (Individual)**

Business Analytics is a complex and highly specialized field. It will often be important in your career to convey extremely technical information to decision makers who may not have the same background that you have. Your assignment is to take a technical term, concept, or jargon and write a well-organized summary in layman’s terms. FORMAT: 11 pt, double-spaced, 1” margins, Write a creative title, and your name on top. Must be 200-300 words, review the *General Business Writing* document.

At the end of each assignment please write a summary statement. This should be a concise sentence summarizing your writing into one to two sentences. Please do not write a conclusion. (20-30 additional words)

1. **Data Journalism Assignment (Individual)**

Every student will research a data-heavy article or info graphic that is of personal interest – anything you want! (You may use the Public Tableau gallery for a visualization - <https://public.tableau.com/en-us/s/gallery>). Post the URL so I can see the data and who posted or monitors the information. Explain why it interests you and or insights you take away from the information. There’s no right or wrong, simply practice your writing and draw insight from data. You can elaborate on the story being told. FORMAT: 11 pt, double-spaced, 1” margins, Write a creative title, and your name on top. Must be 300-400 words, review the *General Business Writing* document.

At the end of each assignment please write a summary statement. This should be a concise sentence summarizing your writing into one to two sentences. Please do not write a conclusion. (20-30 additional words)

1. **Course Reflection Assignment (Individual)**

The purpose is to reflect on the readings and lectures to ensure concepts are understood. Students should be able to relate to one’s own communication skills or observed communication of others. You may write on any aspect in the readings or lectures you wish. Draw parallels between what you read and your/other communication observations or trends in the Analytics field. What are your key learnings? Note any ah-ha moments you had as you reviewed class material. Review the *General Business Writing* document. FORMAT: 11 pt, double-spaced, 2 pages (NO MORE THAN 2), 1” margins, Write a creative title, and your name on top.

At the end of each assignment please write a summary statement. This should be a concise sentence summarizing your writing into one to two sentences. Please do not write a conclusion. (20-30 additional words)

1. **Final Presentation (Group)**

You will be assigned to your team randomly and together choose a topic related to Data Analytics. You must submit your topic for instructor approval by 10/28 with a few sentences on why you think the class will benefit from the presentation. This assignment is extremely flexible as long as it falls into the field of Analytics and something useful for your classmates to learn from you. The purpose of this assignment is to practice your presentation skills to a large audience of mixed technical proficiency. The only mandatory requirement will be that your presentation is **not allowed to use written words** on the slides except for the first slide to introduce yourselves and topic or a title per slide. You can use images and technical charts/graphs with only words to label the axes, legends, or necessary information.

A rubric will be given for guidance and structure for your presentation though the assignment will be very flexible. Your presentation will be **10 minutes** with 2-3 additional minutes of time for classmates to offer their feedback or ask questions.

1. **Extra Credit (Individual)**

Three additional points can be earned for attending and giving a speech at a Toastmasters Meeting.

**GRADES- PERCENTAGES OF POINTS:**

A+ 97-100

A 93-96.9

A- 90-92.9

B+ 87-89.9

B 83-86.9

B- 80-82.9

C 70-79.9

F 0-69.9

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Each student is individually responsible for the integrity of his/her own work. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, each homework assignment is an individual assignment and does not permit cooperation between students. For all assignments, you must properly cite sources of information as well as the ideas and words of others. Not giving proper credit to others’ work constitutes plagiarism and is a serious violation of the University’s honor system. Similarly, turning in the same work for credit in two different courses constitutes fraud and is also a serious violation of the University’s honor system. Cheating of any sort will not be tolerated and will result in a failure of the exam or assignment, deduction in the class participation grading component, and the potential failure of the course. A student who knowingly assists another student in committing an act of academic misconduct shall be equally accountable for the violation and shall be subject to the sanctions and other remedies described in The Student Code. For details, refer to <http://www.dos.uconn.edu/student_code.html> - Appendix B.

***If there is any evidence of cheating during or after the course the student will immediately fail the course.***

**Please note:** vacations, previously purchased tickets or reservations, weddings, and other large- or small-scale social events, are ***NOT*** viable excuses for missing a final exam. Please contact the Dean of Students office with any questions.

**You Must Cite your work properly:**

Purdue’s Online Writing Lab (OWL) is a great resource if you are unfamiliar with citations. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

**General Course Policies:**

1. I use UCONN’s e-mail for individual and broadcast messages.
2. Class uses **HuskyCT** which is the online course management system used at UConn. You can access it at [http://huskyct.uconn.edu.](http://huskyct.uconn.edu/) You will need to have your NetID and password to login.
3. All students are expected to be fully prepared with all the materials assigned for that day and actively engage in our discussion of materials.
4. There will be a final presentation for this class. I selected the teams before the first day of class. Each team will prepare and present in class.
5. If you are absent from a class, you are responsible for the material covered during your absence. Please get class notes from one of your fellow students and contact me if you have any questions. I will post all session material by the day before the following class session.
6. Papers / projects / presentations will be graded on the basis of quality of analysis, thoroughness of coverage, and clarity of reasoning. Admittedly there is a subjective element to this, but I emphasize that it is not arbitrary. Papers that clearly and fully identify key issues, apply course theoretical concepts and frameworks appropriately, and are written in a clear, concise style will earn high grades; those that don't, won't. Although the emphasis will be on content, the mechanics (organization, grammar, sentence and paragraph construction, punctuation, spelling) and appearance of the paper will also count.
7. All papers should be submitted via the HuskyCT Assignment feature. There is no need to turn in hard copies of your papers.
8. All papers and presentations are due at the start of class (9:00 am) on the due date. Assignments turned in late will not be accepted. As in business, you must meet deadlines on time.
9. Please note that the subject and assignment schedule is TENTATIVE. It may change according to the progress of the class during the semester. I will review any changes with you in class, with e-mail follow-up and HuskyCT updates to avoid any misunderstanding.
10. Students are to feel empowered to challenge each other and themselves. I will not tolerate any ridicule or attack on each other’s ideas. I require that all students treat others with respect and patience. Feel free to come to me with any concerns.
11. There will be an evaluation at the end of the course which I will give you time in class to do.

The structure of this course makes it difficult to succeed if you do not keep up with the assignments. I will move fast through the material. Your need to reflect on the material and integrate is a demanding process that often cannot be condensed.