

School of Agriculture  
 Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences  
 Department 065 General Agriculture

**DAGR 0410 Communication Skills**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**  
**September - December 2008**

<b>No. of Credits:</b>	4
<b>Instructor:</b>	Barbara Metrycki, Room 160D Agriculture, Phone: 474-6871; e-mail: Barb_Metrycki@umanitoba.ca Website: <a href="http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~metrycki">http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~metrycki</a>
<b>Office hours:</b>	Drop-ins are welcome; or make an appointment
<b>Classes:</b>	Two 75-minute classes per week (Tuesday classes are held in the microcomputer lab, Room 137 Ag.)
<b>Place in the program:</b>	First year; required
<b>Required text:</b>	<i>Communications</i> courseware, plus a writer=s handbook of your choice
<b>Other supplies:</b>	USB Memory Key; College level dictionary, Canadian edition

### Course Objectives

This course will develop the thinking, writing and speaking skills that students need to achieve success in the agricultural or academic environment of their choice. The course aims to:

- \$ Introduce communications= strategies for agricultural audiences and situations
- \$ Develop students= abilities to transmit information clearly
- \$ Develop students= abilities to present information in professional-looking formats

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- **Discuss and Apply Communications Principles**
- **Write Effective E-Mails, Memos and Letters**
  - \$ Identify and focus on the main message
  - \$ Use formatting effectively to present written information
  - \$ Edit text efficiently
  - \$ Avoid common grammatical errors in writing
- **Conduct Employment Communication**
  - Package skills in a job-getting cover letter and résumé
  - Conduct a job search
  - Prepare for a job interview
- **Write A Business Report**
  - Evaluate information resources
  - Include graphics in text to support understanding
  - \$ Avoid plagiarism by adhering to correct referencing principles
  - \$ Think critically
- **Give An Oral Presentation**
  - \$ Speak confidently and authoritatively, with or without, speech notes

## **Class Conduct**

Students must turn off cellular phones carried into class or the computer lab or put them on answer service mode. All pagers must similarly be turned off or put on silent mode. Personal sound systems, e.g. iPod, may not be used at any time in the classes.

## **Policy on Assignments**

Students' final grades will be a percentage based on the successful completion of assignments and test materials. **All assignments, including the final examination, must be completed to receive a passing grade.** Students must also attain a **grade of 50%** or better in the final examination. Students who do not meet all of these requirements will receive an F in the course.

## **Late Assignments**

Marks will be deducted on a graduated scale from late assignments unless a written request to submit an assignment late has been approved. This request should state the reason for the late submission.

## **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

According to the University of Manitoba's Undergraduate Calendar, *To plagiarize is to take ideas or words of another person and pass them off as one's own.*<sup>@</sup> In order to help students avoid plagiarism, this course devotes a class to the issue of how and when to cite sources in written work.

As the Calendar states, It will also be considered plagiarism and/or cheating if a student submits a term paper written in whole or in part by someone other than him/herself, or copies the answer or answers of another student in any test, examination or take-home assignment. Plagiarism or any other form of cheating in assignments,... examinations or term tests is subject to serious academic penalty (i.e.: suspension or expulsion.) A student found guilty of contributing to cheating is also subject to serious academic penalty.<sup>@</sup>

## **Attendance**

Because each assignment is broken into segments that are taught during classes, attendance is very important. Each student is responsible for the content of missed classes and assignments.

In the public speaking sections of the course, attendance is mandatory. In public speaking, students form the audience for others. In addition, the commentary that follows speeches provides valuable learning not covered elsewhere.

***Details on the grammar requirement***

*Twenty per cent* of each assignment and test will be allotted to grammar. Those who experience difficulties with grammar are encouraged to:

- S Attend grammar workshops offered throughout the term
- S Review grammar problems individually with the instructor
- S Obtain remedial help from the Learning Assistance Centre, phone: 474-9251.

<b>Assignments</b>				
<b>#</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Due*</b>
1.	Grammar The grammar component of each assignment will total 20%.	Writing/ Speaking		
2.	Professional Communication Test		10%	Oct. 2
3.	Memo(s)	Writing	10%	Oct. 16
4.	Report: <b><i>Outline - Oct. 9</i></b> <b><i>First draft in class - Oct. 28</i></b> <b><i>Final Nov. 13</i></b>	Writing	15%	Nov. 13
5.	Résumé and cover letter <b><i>Bring résumé draft to class Oct. 14</i></b>	Writing	10%	Oct.30
6.	Five-minute extemporaneous oral report		15%	Nov. 20, 25 and 27
7.	Class exercises	Writing/ Speaking	15%	Throughout the term
8.	FINAL EXAM	Writing	25%	To be announced
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100%</b>	

\* Due dates are subject to change

<b>SCHEDULE</b>			
<b>Week</b>	<b>Weekly content</b>	<b>Students= weekly reading</b>	<b>Graded Evaluation</b>
1 16/18th Sept.	a Course introduction Why Communications Matters <hr/> b What is Communications/ Axioms	Read: Understanding the communicative situation pp1-14  Read: Documenting sources p 85	
2 23/25th Sept.	a What are Communications Challenges <hr/> b Common Faults of Professional Writing	Read: Writing letters and memos and Use a businesslike format pp107-111  Read: Common faults of professional writing pp 15-29	<b>TEST- Oct. 2nd</b>
3 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept./2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct.	a Memo, letters and email <hr/> b. TEST – UNIT 1: Communications		<b>ASSIGN 1. LETTER/MEMO</b>
4 7/9th Oct.	a Memo and email <hr/> b Memo and email		
5 14/16th Oct.	a Employment Communication: Cover letter <hr/> b Employment Communication: Job Search (Career Centre)	Read: 3. Preparing a résumé pp31-51	<b>ASSIGN 2. COVER LETTER/ RÉSUMÉ</b>
6 21/23rd Oct.	a Employment Communication <hr/> b Employment Communication: Interview Preparation (Career Centre)		

7 28/30th Oct.	a What is a report First draft report due in class: _____	Read: Clarifying and classifying reports pp 53-68	<b>ASSIGN 3. REPORT</b>
	b Tables and figures; Conclusions		
8 4/6th Nov.	a Electronic sources _____	Read: Documenting sources pp 83-90	
	b Plagiarism/ citations/ reference page	Read: Do you know the rules about academic integrity and plagiarism	
9 11/13th Nov.	a NO CLASS <i>Remembrance Day</i> _____	Read: Preparing an Effective Oral Presentation pp 113-124	<b>ASSIGN 4. ORAL PRESENTATION</b>
	b: Delivery techniques		
10 18/20th Nov.	a Using visuals _____		
	b Oral reports in class		
11 25/27th Nov.	a Oral reports in class _____		
	b Oral reports in class		

*a* is a Tuesday class in the Computer lab; *b* is a Thursday class