

**MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION  
FOR UNDERGRADUATES (15.279)  
Spring 2006**

**Instructor**

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**TA**

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**Course Overview**

Management Communication is intended to help you think strategically about communication and aid you in improving your writing, presentation, and interpersonal communication skills within a managerial setting. We will look at a set of "best practices" or guidelines that have been derived from both research and experience, give you the opportunity to put those guidelines into practice, and provide you with feedback on your work to help you strengthen your abilities. More often than not, we will be using a workshop format that will rely heavily on discussion and in-class exercises.

**Course Objectives**

Good communication is one of the keys to a successful career no matter what field you choose, and many different skills contribute to a professional's capacity to communicate well. The objective of 15.279 is to help you improve the ability to:

- Formulate an effective communication strategy for any message, in any medium, and in any situation.
- Write clearly, concisely, and convincingly.
- Create impressive formal presentations that are delivered with confidence and poise.
- Give and receive feedback that will improve yours and other's communication.
- Listen for understanding.
- Work effectively with others in small groups or teams.
- Understand and negotiate the difference in communication between yourself and people who are not from your culture.

Improving communication is a continuous process of learning, doing, critiquing, evaluating, and doing again. It is a process that we hope will continue for you even after you complete 15.279!

## **Course Expectations**

Because so much of the class will be "hands-on" and because feedback (ours, the TAs', and the feedback you give each other) is so important to improving writing and speaking, our expectations about our work together this semester include:

- That you are committed to improving your professional effectiveness as a communicator.
- That you are willing to share your opinions and ideas on topics presented in class.
- That you will provide each other with clear, honest, concrete, and sensitive feedback on work that is done.
- That any concept that is unclear or confusing will be challenged and examined.
- That there are no stupid questions or comments.

## **Text & Materials**

*Required*      Mary Munter, *Guide to Managerial Communication*, 6th edition, 2002.  
Course packet  
Gordon Harvey, *Writing with Sources*  
One DVD

*Optional*      Joseph Williams, *Style. Toward Clarity and Grace*  
Lauren Kessler and Duncan McDonald, *When Words Collide*  
Gene Zelazny, *Say It with Charts*

NOTE: All 15.279 materials, including overheads, can be found on MIT's OpenCourseWare website at <http://ocw.mit.edu>.

## **General Course Requirements**

### *Attendance and Participation*

Please plan on attending every class since a good part of the work that goes on will occur during class time. Please come to class having done the readings and assignments. Attendance and participation will be factored into your grade (see below).

### *Written Assignments*

Written assignments are due as indicated on the assignment sheets, and you should use standard business formats (including single spacing within paragraphs). Please proofread as spelling, grammar, and punctuation will figure into your final grade. To guard against losses or recording errors, keep copies of the papers you turn in and retain all graded assignments that are returned to you throughout the semester (more on this below as well).

All papers must be handed in on time. Late assignments may be accepted one class period after the assigned due date with the instructor's prior permission. Late assignments may be penalized. No paper will be accepted more than one week after the due date.

### *Oral Presentations*

You will give five different types of presentations of varying lengths during the term. Some of these will be given in class. Others will be given in oral presentation labs, which will take place outside of class time with a few other students and either your instructor or TA. You will sign up for a lab session the week before the labs are to take place. If you miss an oral presentation lab, you will receive a "zero" for that assignment. If you arrive at the lab without your overheads or if you are doing a PowerPoint presentation and your computer malfunctions, you will still be required to present.

You must bring the DVD to the labs, as we will videotape you. The tapes are for you to view later, alone or with the instructor or TA.

### **Academic Integrity**

Except in the case of group assignments, all written assignments should be your own work. You may (and in some cases you will be required to) have fellow students read a draft of your assignment and give you reactions, note problems, or make general suggestions. "Peer editors" may NOT, however, actually revise or rewrite your work.

### **Grading**

Each assignment may earn a maximum number of points together adding up to 100 points. The point value of each assignment and its due date is as follows:

Baseline Self-Evaluation	5 points	2/9
Presentation with Q&A	10 points	2/23-3/3
"Problem Sets" (5)	10 points	2/28, 3/7, 3/23, 4/4, 5/27
"Meeting Maker" Memo	10 points	2/28*, 3/7
Cover Letter	5 points	3/14*, 3/21
Interactive Presentation	10 points	3/31-4/11
Team Presentation	15 points	5/4, 5/9, 5/11
Team Report	20 points	**5/11
Final Self-Evaluation	5 points	5/18
In-class Exercises and Class Participation	10 points	---

\*The first date is when an ungraded draft is due; the second date is when the final draft is due.

\*\*There are interim due dates for proposals and a draft of the report. These can be found on the assignment page for the team report and presentation.