

# *PWR135-01*

## *Principles of Professional Communications*

**Instructor:** Fred Jordan  
**Office:** CET 207  
**Office Hours:** MW  
TR  
**Phone:** x2179  
**Email:** fjordan@wju.edu  
fjordaniv@mac.com

### **Goals:**

Communication skills often top the list of desirable traits cited by employers. On a deeper level, the ability to communicate and recognize the often subtle means with which others communicate is essential in a media-saturated society such as ours.

This course has two primary goals. The first is practical. You will have the opportunity to express yourself using a variety of tools and techniques as we survey the methods and means of communications. Together, we will examine a variety of techniques and produce a number of assignments so you hopefully become a more engaged, ethical and effective communicator.

There will be four major projects, an oral/multimedia presentation and a final portfolio. Additionally, there will be various assignments, quizzes and smaller projects.

What of the second goal? The second goal of this class is both simple and sweeping in scope: to make you broadly aware of the implications and impact of mass media both as a recipient and a participant in a thoughtful and democratic dialogue.

By the end of the semester . . .

- You should be able to recognize many of the basic principles at work in communications.
- You should be aware of some of the ways mass media works on a variety of social and aesthetic levels.
- You should be able to recognize and discuss ethical and legal concerns in communications.
- You should be able to appreciate the vibrance, ubiquitous nature and importance of communications in a variety of forms.
- You will balance professional communication as a skill (“the hired gun” who takes no ethical responsibility for how the rhetorical skill

is used) with professional communication as an art of character (the citizen communicator who shows sensitivity to the ethical dimension of professional communication and consciously seeks to use skills for socially good ends).

### **Additional Materials:**

One can never be too safe in this business: a lost or corrupted file could quickly spell the end of a promising career. To prevent any tragic mishaps, I suggest that you invest in additional backup media, such as CD-R, CD-RW, DVD media, flash drives and/or an additional hard drive. This is for your own peace of mind and not a course requirement, but “the computer ate my project” is not an acceptable response in the world of graphics and design.

Access to a decent camera is also a plus.

### **Course Format:**

This course is broken down into a four main tasks designed to expose you to a number of different media and formats. The course concludes with a portfolio of completed work.

In addition to the major projects, there will be a number of smaller assignments, quizzes and tests. I will provide specific details of the weekly assignment in class. I will also post the material on Blackboard.

Major Projects

1. Resume
2. A Simple Multimedia Presentation
3. A Radio or Television Script
4. A Simple Website
5. Portfolio

### **Revisions:**

I will not regrade your assignments, but as revision is crucial in the professional world, I suggest that you revise two assignments of your choice. I will assign a higher grade to your revised material, and average the scores of the original and revised work. Revisions are not mandatory.

Mistakes happen, as you’ve probably seen in various ads. Such mistakes reflect poorly on the client, and they don’t bode well for the production house. Needless to say, you should proofread carefully! I won’t grade an assignment with incorrect client information (factual information). I will also deduct points for every typographical and visual error. After the 7th mechanical error, I will stop grading the assignment. All assignments are due in class on the specified date.

## **Evaluation:**

I will base your grade on several components: proficiency in each of your projects, an awareness of .

There will be a series of quizzes and exercises in addition to the longer assignments.

For simplicity's sake, I score using a 100 point scale:

- 5 assignments                    50% of the final grade
- participation                    20%
- short assignments,  
quizzes and tests                30%

## **Grading Scale:**

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	65-69
F	64 and under.

## **Attendance Policy:**

Missing more than 4 classes will result in a failing grade (FA) for the term.

## **Miscellaneous:**

I won't accept late assignments. For major projects, you will lose a full letter grade for each day an assignment is late.

I expect you to participate in class discussions, to make comments and ask questions. Far from being a solitary endeavor, graphic design often takes place in a collaborative environment.

Cell phone use, needless surfing and inappropriate conversation won't be tolerated.

Plagiarism is grounds for failing the class, and possibly legal action. Remember that we will try to emulate a production house as closely as possible, so please act accordingly. Plagiarism involves the marketing of other people's work as your own, intentionally or unintentionally. This could involve using copyrighted images from the internet or trademarked material. You will be responsible for producing original material for hypothetical clients (or real, if you choose to work with them). This includes

the content of newsletters, ads, etc.

**Schedule:**

Week	Date	Activity
1st week	8/28-8/30	Introductions. Thursday: Identify and discuss a communications problem.
2nd week	9/4-9/6	Interview a professional communicator (due Tuesday), discuss the use of the three appeals. Discuss famous historical arguments, develop an argument for your resume.
3rd week	9/11-9/13	Discuss the concepts of sender, audience and client, creating a message strategy. Critique resumes.
4th week	9/18-9/20	Visual Design <b>Project 1: Resume due on 9/20</b>
5th week	9/25-9/27	Staging a visual presentation.
6th week	10/2-10/4	Visual Argument, the PowerPoint debate.
7th week	10/9-10/11	Presentation Strategy
8th week	10/18	Radio and Television writing. <b>Presentation Due</b>
9th week	10/23-10/25	The basic types of script writing.
10th week	10/30-11/1	The tools of TV production.
11th week	11/6-11/8	Using Final Cut Pro, Video message strategy.
12th week	11/13-11/15	Discuss the concept of mass media. <b>Script/news project due 11/15</b>
13th week	11/20	Media literacy, ethics.
14th week	11/27-11/29	Linear and non-linear architectures, creating a website.
15th week	12/4-12/6	<b>Website due</b>

**What to Include with your projects:**

You should submit a creative strategy, statement of purpose and audience analysis with each assignment. Additionally, include a one page summary of your experience: what worked, did you struggle, what did you learn?