Standard Course Outline for IS 331 Professional and Workplace Communication

I. **General Information**
- IS331
- Professional and Workplace Communication
- 3 Units
- Prerequisites: None
- This course is open to all university.
- Course Coordinator / SCO Prepared by: Lori Brown
- Date prepared / revised: May 10, 2013/September 15, 2013

II. **Catalog Description**
Techniques, skills, and theories of empowering communication for entering and succeeding in the workplace and professional setting. Principles and professional practices of leading at work, interpersonal and collaborative workplace relationships, specialized writing and presentations, and workplace wellness are emphasized.

III. **Curriculum Justification(s)**
Communication is the *skill most sought* after by employers, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) 2013 survey. In fact, NACE’s results point to communication-related abilities as four of the top seven employer desired attributes on candidate resumes. Yet, employers grade average new graduate recruits lower in communication skills than others.

In today’s world there is more communication, across more platforms, creating more opportunities in business, than at any other time in history.

Well developed professional and workplace communication skills are an essential component to success in the workplace. Employees with strong communication skills and knowledge are not only sought after, but are more likely to thrive and contribute to the positive workplace and organizational culture, thereby making them highly valued employees. Career entry, progression, and promotion can be enhanced with the empowering skills of professional and workplace communication.

This course focuses on development of important workplace communication concepts, theories, and skills. Major concepts and skills include employment communication, principles of leadership, including ethics and adapting to differences; workplace relationship skills; collaboration; presentations and writing; time management; business etiquette; and wellness in the workplace.

Additionally, upon completion of this course, the student should complete tasks which align with three of the CBA learning goals as described below.

IV. **CBA Undergraduate Program Learning Goals:**
This course meets the following CBA undergraduate learning goals:

**Learning Goal #1 - Critical Thinking:** Students will be able to demonstrate conceptual learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

**Learning Goal #2 - Ethics:** Students will be able to demonstrate awareness of ethical, social responsibility, and citizenship issues and the ability to apply them in decision making in the local, regional, and global communities.
Learning Goal #3 - Team & Interpersonal Skills: Students will be able to demonstrate interpersonal skills for working in a dynamic and diverse world, including in a team environment.

Learning Goal #4 - Communication Skills: Students will be able to demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills in English.

Upon completion of this course, the student should complete tasks which align with these CBA learning goals.

V. Course Objective(s) and Student Learning Outcomes

This course is intended to develop knowledge and skills necessary for effective communication advantageous within the workplace and professional environment. The primary objectives of the course are to have the students learn the following:

A. Course Objectives
   1. Advance leadership knowledge and skills based upon communication principles
   2. Increase understanding of relating to others at work
   3. Improve knowledge and skills in characteristics of effective collaboration
   4. Develop awareness of managing time and wellness in the workplace
   5. Develop verbal and written presentation skills

B. Measurable Student Learning Outcomes
   Upon completion, successful students will be able to
   1. send and interpret verbal and nonverbal messages with accuracy and effectiveness.
   2. recognize differences that impact members of an organization and enact appropriate communication strategies to help attain diversity.
   3. prepare personal career goals.
   4. develop communication and critical thinking skills necessary for securing a job and succeeding in the diverse, ever-changing workplace.
   5. demonstrate knowledge of leadership styles and approaches
   6. build positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace.
   7. plan and conduct an interview in both interviewee and interviewer roles.
   8. distinguish groups and teams and recall communication factors that influence the effective development of teams.
   9. demonstrate competence in making a decision as a team.
   10. identify and overcome common obstacles in group meetings.
   11. demonstrate knowledge of leadership and problem solving communication in teams.
   12. create and deliver a business presentation.
   13. anticipate and respond to questions during a presentation.
   14. plan and create proper business documents.
   15. demonstrate knowledge of research and theories regarding wellness in the workplace.
   16. demonstrate awareness and knowledge of workplace ethics.
   17. demonstrate knowledge of workplace and professional etiquette.

VI. Outline of Subject Matter

Unit I: Communication Principles for Leadership
   a. Communicating and leading at work
b. Being aware of self and others: Enhancing communication and leadership

c. Preparing for employment

d. Using verbal and nonverbal messages

e. Listening and responding

f. Adapting to differences

g. Understanding workplace ethics

Unit II: Relationship Skills

h. Relating to others at work

i. Interviewing principles and skills

j. Interviewing types

k. Workplace conflict

l. Professional etiquette

Unit III: Collaboration Skills

m. Collaborating in teams

n. Enhancing team meetings

Unit IV: Presentation and Writing Skills

o. Developing professional presentations

p. Delivering professional presentations

q. Achieving your presentation goals: informing, persuading and relating

r. Writing for business

s. Technical writing and presentations

Unit V: Managing Time, Managing Wellness in the Workplace

s. Work-life conflict and balance – a communication centered approach

t. Burnout – links to workplace communication

u. Organizational support and identification as workplace messages

This is a broad outline of topics to be covered. Subject matter and sequence of topics may vary by instructor.

VII. Methods of Instruction

The preferred method of instruction for this course is lecture-workshop based. Within every section, opportunities for class discussion, group work, and student presentations are allowed. Instructors are encouraged to utilize in-class activities to enhance student learning through small group interactions. Lectures enhanced through multimedia presentations are strongly recommended. A variety of exercises and homework assignments should be incorporated to develop students’ communication abilities. A capstone team project reflecting course content should be included. A career fair, demonstrating students’ knowledge, collaboration, and presentation skills related to entering the workplace is recommended.

VIII. Extent and Nature of Technology Use

Some use of technology will depend on individual instructors. Instructors are encouraged to use BeachBoard and provide opportunities for students to utilize presentation, collaborative, and other technologies as appropriate.

IX. Textbooks

The following is a short list of textbooks that are most likely to be used for this course. Instructors may assign one or more of these and/or include other relevant texts/readings.

   Beebe & Mottet
X. Instructional Policies Requirements

A. Assessment Criteria, Grading, Assignments, and Testing

Preparation and delivery of in-class presentations
Students complete at least one individual presentation and one team presentation.

Preparation of a business document
Students complete at least one written business document demonstrating writing skills covered in the course.

Quizzes and Exams
Students will complete quizzes and exams (optional), mid-term exam (required – at least one). The final could be an exam or culminating project experience.

Projects
Instructors will assign a comprehensive capstone course project that requires demonstration of competency with several course objectives. The career fair mentioned in section VII or service learning are suggested projects.

A standard grading rubric is utilized to report on the results of the students’ in-class presentations.

Traditionally, letter grades of A, B, C, and D are assigned to students based on a 10-point scale.

B. Attendance and Participation Activities

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and complete all assignments to ensure passing the class with a grade of C or better.

C. Required Statement

In compliance with university policy final grades are based on at least three, and preferably four or more, demonstrations of competence. In no case will the grade on any class test count for more than one-third of the course grade.

D. Attendance, Withdrawal, Late Assignments

Students are expected to have regular, punctual attendance. Students are requested to notify instructor when they will be absent.

No late work is accepted, except by prior approval of instructor. Withdrawal policy is the same as that of the university.
E. Special Needs Students

Students with disabilities are responsible for notifying their instructor as early as possible of their needs for an accommodation of a verified disability. A student with a disability is urged to consult with Disabled Student Services as soon as possible in order to identify possible accommodations to enhance academic success.