

COURSE SYLLABUS

Advanced Communication and Presentation Skills for Managers

Course code: MGT 368/1

Semester and year: Spring 2025

Day and time: Mondays, 08:15-11:00h

Instructor: Dipl. Wi.-Ing. Heinrich Homola

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Consultation hours: Immediately following class or by appointment

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Bachelor
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisite	BA – COM 101, MGT 245
Contact hours	42 hours	Grading	Letter grade

1. Course Description

Almost every time managers communicate, they are selling: Selling their ideas; convincing subordinates, bosses, the board, shareholders or investors & other stakeholders; motivating their colleagues and their teams; leading. Offline & online, in writing, in meetings or when presenting, within the company or in public. Every time they communicate, they are also selling themselves.

Hence, one of the most important skills modern global managers need is the ability to communicate clearly, succinctly and effectively across multiple platforms and media, to multiple audiences.

This course is an advanced presentation and communication skills class for future global managers. Students will develop and refine their oral, written and visual communication skills through practical, professional level exercises and assignments in a “workshop-like” learning environment.

This will include use of content writing, writing appropriate emails, the “elevator pitch” for business ideas, designing “killing” presentations and their delivery, also online, speeches, and presenting a short “TED” like talk. Various on-line platforms and new media will be utilized in the course.

Regular use of AI platforms & tools will be an integral part of the course.

A key focus in the course will be on communicating visually and digitally.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate, develop and give professional level presentations.
- Demonstrate professional level public speaking skills.
- Demonstrate and understand the use of audience analysis to adapt a message to a professional business audience.
- Write in a professional level business “style” with clarity and precision.

- Use persuasive written, verbal and visual strategies, including story-telling, to compose a variety of persuasive messages and other communications.
- Prepare, organize and deliver an effective formal presentation (speech, "TED" talk)
- Adapt professional presentation to online delivery, achieving the same winning impact as offline.
- Demonstrate an understanding and the ability to utilize effectively, the multiple platforms and media, available today that managers use to communicate with a variety of audiences including customers, stakeholders, employees and others.
- Demonstrate, use and implement the various digital platforms, including AI tools, utilized in the course.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to choose and use particular media platforms to deliver the intended message.
- Understand and demonstrate how best to effectively communicate data, numbers and other complex forms of information.
- Place in context and lend perspective to use of visuals and graphics in communicating important business messages clearly.
- Demonstrate the knowledge of when and how to use visual, oral and written communications and how to combine them in effective communication with the chosen audience.
- Understand the key role of non-verbal communication for global managers.

3. Reading Material

This course is not following a particular textbook by chapters. However, students are required to read assigned materials before class and to be fully prepared. An assigned reading (and viewing) list will be provided in-time before class sessions.

A variety of articles, case studies, excerpts from various books, videos etc. will replace a "traditional" text. The materials will be stored on the course web site and available for download. Students are required to download materials as the course progresses and to stay current with the readings. Case studies, articles and other handouts will also be used and posted on course web site. Presentation slides will occasionally be used during lectures and will be posted on the course web site after class.

Case studies, articles and other handouts will also be used and posted on course web site.

Some Reading and Viewing Material Sources (list is not exhaustive):

Presentation Zen, Garr Reynolds

The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs, Carmine Gallo

The Non-Designers Presentation Book, Robin Williams

Slide-ology, Nancy Duarte

How To Deliver a Ted Talk, Jeremy Donovan

Videos:

Multiple Ted talks on a variety of topics.

Youtube: E.g. Vinh Giang, Florian Mueck, Carl Kwan, Ben Toalson, Nancy Duarte

Web Resources:

Primary web resource is the Purdue University Online Writing Lab.

OWL at Purdue: Main Site <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

OWL: Writing Task Resource List:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/749/01/>

4. Teaching methodology

The course is delivered through participative lectures and class discussions. Students are expected to study primary and secondary texts, and to be exposed to up-dated materials. Theoretical applications will be used as a foundation for discussion of "real-world" communication situations and issues faced by global managers.

The course will consist partly of lectures which are based on readings, case studies and other reading materials. Class participation is expected of all students. *This means reading assignments in advance and doing all required preparation for class.*

The main teaching/learning emphasis of this course is of a "hands-on" workshop approach. Depending on the designated topics for each class session, students will be presenting, re-presenting, writing, re-writing and discussing and critiquing in class sessions each other's work with the goal of improving day-to-day, "real life" management communication. Recording own performance is highly recommended

It is here where learning really happens, the ACT of applying information to a case or a practical exercise creates an indelible mark in your brain that you can recall and apply again and again in the future.

Students also have opportunities for peer and self-assessment to develop their skills in being responsible for their own learning and development.

As the course will involve "hands-on" work in class students are **required** to bring lap-tops to class when requested to do so. Students will also need an active wi-fi sign in. Laptops will only be used during specific class times per instructor's guidance.

5. Course Schedule*

NOTE: "Readings" means students have to prepare for the given class, "Assignments" means will be given in that class with deadlines usually for the following class

Date	Class Agenda
Session 1 February 3	Topic: Introduction and its significance Description: Students will be introduced to the course. Students will also be oriented to the course's syllabus, which includes the course assignments, learning outcomes, and schedule. Each student will then present for 2-3 minutes a topic given in class. Reading: None Assignments/deadlines: "Why I have taken this class" (800 words), Journal Entry #1

Session 2 February 10	<p>Topic: Visual Communication, preparation & structure of presentations, story-telling</p> <p>Description: We will talk about why and how to prepare & structure a good script for presentation. We will also talk the role of story-telling.</p> <p>Reading: Presentation Zen, chapters: Introduction, Preparation</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: How to make the best script for a presentation? Journal Entry #2</p>
Session 3 February 17	<p>Topic: "Killing presentations (1)" - presenting with Slides: Design & Delivery</p> <p>Description: We will talk about what should be included on slides when doing a presentation. We will also discuss do's & don'ts of delivery a presentation, how to avoid some pitfalls, and some tips & tricks.</p> <p>Reading: Presentation Zen, chapters: Design, Delivery</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Discuss Handout vs. Presentation, Journal Entry #3 Prepare a max. 3 minute presentation with the only focus being delivery.</p>
Session 4 February 24	<p>Topic: "Killing presentations (2)"</p> <p>Description: This class is solely about students' delivery. They will present their homework with maximum focus on enlarging their own comfort zones, experimenting.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Review of own delivery, Journal Entry #4</p>
Session 5 March 3	<p>Topic: Students' Presentations - GRADED</p> <p>Description: Students will deliver their <u>graded</u> presentation (specifics will be clarified in class).</p> <p>Reading: None</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: None</p>
Session 6 March 10	<p>Topic: The art of a good speech (1)</p> <p>Description: We will discuss types of rhetoric, speeches, how to write, how to deliver, and what is the difference to a presentation.</p> <p>Reading: TBD</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: What are the best / most famous speeches? Why? Journal Entry # 5</p>
Session 7 March 17	<p>Topic: Midterm Exam</p> <p>Description: Midterm Exam which covers the first half of the course.</p> <p>Reading: None</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: none</p>
March 24	Mid - Term Break
Session 8 March 31	<p>Topic: The art of a good speech (2)</p> <p>Description: Students will present their selections from Journal #5. Analysis & class discussion.</p> <p>Reading: None</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Review on Youtube: "Boost your Online Charisma" by Florian Mueck.</p>
Session 9 April 7	<p>Topic: Online presentations</p> <p>Description: We will be talking about the difference between live and online presentations. What must be changed? We will also discuss do's & don'ts of presenting online, how to avoid some pitfalls, and some tips & tricks.</p> <p>Reading: TBD</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Preparing online speech - graded - for class 10</p>
Session 10 April 14	<p>Topic: Students' Online presentations - GRADED</p> <p>Description: Students will do their online presentation.</p> <p>Reading: None</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Presentations (script & slides), Journal Entry # 5</p>

April 21	Easter Monday
Session 11 April 28	Topic: Business Memo writing Description: Based on P&G's proven successful teaching material, introduction to professional writing: Style, structure of reports, structure of recommendations, vocabulary, writing tips. Review of real life business examples. Reading: TBD Assignments/deadlines: Assignment Business Memo writing
Session 12 May 5	Topic: Elevator Pitch Description: We will discuss how to prepare an elevator pitch, how to deliver, students will then deliver their pitches and we will discuss in class. Reading: TBD Assignments/deadlines: Prepare elevator pitch Journal Entry # 6
Session 13 May 12	Topic: Preparation for Final Exam Description: Review of all course material Reading: None Assignments/deadlines: None
Session 14 May 19	Topic: Final Exam Description: Students will take a comprehensive final exam. Reading: None Assignments/deadlines: Final exam

* Depending on number of students in the class, topics may be shifted or consolidated in order to allow for multiple student presentations.

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Participation	42	20%	Students are expected to be present, prepared, timely, and contribute constructively to discussions.	1,2,3
Presentations**	33	25%	Demonstrate comprehension of course material and key concepts, and ability to make professional, business presentations.	1,2,3
Journal Entries	25	12%	Comprehension of course material, key concepts, ability to reflect critically on the course material, demonstrate subject knowledge.	1,2,3
Business Memo writing:	20	13%	Demonstrate comprehension of course material and key concepts, and ability to write structured, professional, business documents.	1,2,3
Midterm	15	10%	Comprehension of course material, and key concepts.	1,3
Final Exam	15	20%	Comprehension of course material, and key concepts.	1,3
TOTAL	150	100%		

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

** Number of presentations will depend on number of students in the class

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Participation: All students are expected to participate in class discussions. Class participation means “voluntarily **speaking** and taking part in the conversation/lecture for the purpose of sharing experiences/opinions & enriching the class experience.” Expect your professor to keep track of how often you contribute to class discussion. If you don’t speak, you get a zero. Students should note that while attendance at every class is not required, class time serves as the primary opportunity to participate. Experience has shown that regular attendance will significantly help your performance in the course.

Assessment breakdown Participation

Assessed area	Percentage
Active engagement in discussion: Positive, constructive contribution to discussions and presentations, and the application of relevant course concepts (based on the course readings)	100%

Journal Entries: Students are required to reflect in writing their thoughts on the assigned topic for homework or answer any of a list of questions provided by the teacher. There will be a total of 6 entries. The purpose of the journals is to foster students’ critical reflection on discussed topics. The journal entries should be submitted on NEO in electronic form the night before the class it is due.

Assessment breakdown Journal entries

Assessed area	Percentage
Content/Quality of : - Responses are reflective in nature. - Show an ability to apply discussed content to personal experience	100%

Presentations: Students will select topics by themselves. Planned are 2 graded presentations, one in class and one online presentation. The length of the presentation is decided by the teacher (and depends on the number of students in the class). 1/3 of the presentation grade will be received for a full-length of the presentation script, 1/3 for the presentation slides, 1/3 for the delivery of the presentation. The presentation script and the presentation slides must be submitted on NEO in electronic form the night before the presentation will take place.

Assessment breakdown Presentations

Assessed area	Percentage
Script: - The content is persuasive & relevant - The presentation proceeds in a clear and logical manner - The presentation concludes appropriately and memorably	33%
Slides: - The presentation uses attractive and appropriate graphics - Slides are presentation slides and not hand-outs	33%
Delivery: - The content is presented in an engaging manner - Language used is appropriate and emphasizes the content - Gesticulation / body language is used to emphasize points - The presenter speaks naturally and does not use notes	33%

Business Memo writing: Students will write a professional business memo (e.g. recommendation, competition visit report, issue sheet) document in a format learned in previous classes. The document is simulating a real life business case. Topic will be decided in class. Length will be decided by the teacher.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Organization: - Using structures learned in class	33 %
Content/Quality of Ideas: - The content is presented in a structured manner following business logic - The content is persuasive - All content is relevant	33 %
Delivery: - Language used is appropriate and emphasizes the content - The writing style is professional, concise, persuasive - Reader oriented	33 %

Midterm Exam: An exam will be given to students at the midway point of the semester which covers all of the material covered in the readings and classes so far.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Comprehension and application of course material	100%

Final Exam: A final, comprehensive exam will be given to students on the last day of class.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Comprehension and application of course material	100%

8. General Requirements and School Policies

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU’s academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. Please see the AAU intranet for a [summary of key policies](#) regarding coursework.

Course specific requirements

There are no special requirements or deviations from AAU policies for this course.