17-657 Communication for Software Engineers – Spring 2019

Tuesdays from 5:00 – 6:20

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SCR 265

Weekly Schedule: Readings and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Readings for next week	Assignments
1 Jan 15	Semester overview Team Charters	Reading: Wolfe, Chapter 3, Getting Started with Team Charters Reading: Markel Chapter 20, section "Writing Instructions" Reading: DQTI, Chapter 3, Task Orientation	Submit team charter first draft
2 Jan 22	Technical Documentation: Guiding Users Part 1 Class Notes; Guiding Users 2019	Reading: DQTI, Chapter 11 excerpt, Visual Effectiveness	Submit Team Charter: Peer Review + Final Draft Write a procedure: First Draft
3 Jan 29	Technical	Readings: Reviewing	Pick best set of

	Documentation: Guiding Users Part 2 [Class Notes; Guiding Users 2019](#)	[and Testing Technical Docs](#)	[instructions](#)
4 Feb 5	Technical Documentation: User testing + evaluating instructions [Class Notes; Guiding Users 2019](#)		[Write a Procedure: Final Draft](#) [Fix these product messages: Part 1](#)
5 Feb 12	Technical Documentation: Product messages [Class Notes; Guiding Users 2019](#)	[Reading: Excerpt from Norman's "Design of Everyday Things"](#)	[Fix these product messages: Part 2](#) [Reflection: Usability (First draft)](#)
6 Feb 19	Elevator speeches	[Reading: Markel Chapter 20: excerpt on technical definitions](#)	[Reflection: Usability - Final Draft](#) [Write and present a technical definition for non-technical audience](#)
7 Feb 26	Technical Documentation: Definitions	[techdef_2018.ppt](#)	[Purchase textbook: "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable"](#) [Journal: spring pre-miderm](#)
8 March 5	Technical Documentation: Present Definitions	[Reading: 5 Dysfunctions, pages 3-25](#)	Discussion board posts: [5 Dysfunctions of a Team: Cultural fit](#) [Complete meeting role worksheet and bring to](#)

			class
9 March 12	Spring Break - no class		
10 March 19	Effective Team Communication	Reading: 5 Dysfunctions pages 26-70	
11 March 26	Teamwork: Lencioni's 5 Dysfunctions Trust/Absence of Trust	Reading: 5 Dysfunctions pages 71-99 Reading: Managing Conflict and Power	Complete conflict worksheet and bring to class
12 April 2	Teamwork: Lencioni's 5 Dysfunctions Conflict/Artificial Harmony	Reading: 5 Dysfunctions, 100-162	
13 April 9	Teamwork: Lencioni's 5 Dysfunctions Commitment, Accountability, Results	Reading: 5 Dysfunctions 163-190	Team assessments
14 April 16	Teamwork: Team assessments and team-building activities	Reading: 5 Dysfunctions 190-322	Final project assigned Elevator speech for your team's project
15 April 23	Elevator speeches, revisited		
15 April 30	Inter-team reporting		

Learning Objectives

The main objective is to make you a more confident and capable communicator. By the end of this course, you will:

- Recognize the importance of situational analysis, planning, and revision
- Improve your ability to:
  - Write documents that are clear and concise, that achieve your goals and meet the needs of your readers, and that conform to conventions for format and correctness

- Give oral presentations that are interesting and clear, and that achieve your goals and those of your audience
- Collaborate with a team to produce high-quality presentations, documents, and other work products
- Apply the principles of effective communication to improve your own writing and presentations and to give helpful feedback to your peers
- Work well within a team on an interpersonal level

How the course works

To accomplish the course objectives, we will focus on the following major themes:

- Foundations of communication
- Public speaking
- Communicating technical information
- Interpersonal and team communication

Figure 1: Major themes and general class topics

Readings, classroom activities, and assignments will align with one or more of these themes (Fig. 1); often they will apply to more than one theme.

Class sessions are a mix of mini-lectures, discussions, and workshop activities. With your input, we will adjust the class to meet your needs. Thus, we keep the seminar flexible. The schedule attached to this syllabus is subject to change depending on students' needs.

During the academic year, an expert in software engineering may join us to discuss his or her views on an aspect of software engineering. The remainder of the time will be devoted to informal discussion. If there is a visit, you will reflect on the guest's visit in writing. If the visit occurs during the spring semester, each Studio team may be required to present its elevator pitch to the guest expert.

Occasionally, we will ask you to write or speak during class with little advance warning, giving you experience in performing under pressure. We might give some short quizzes to encourage you to read the homework.

Required Prior Knowledge

This course assumes you have fluency in English and are capable of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in that language. If your skills are lacking, you are strongly encouraged to enroll in the ICC workshops that are offered throughout the year.

The course also requires you to have an open mind and a willingness to try new approaches. Though you may not appreciate all of the work we do, none of it is detrimental to your health.

Required textbooks

We have two required textbooks for this course:

- *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, 1ˢᵗ Edition, 2002, Patrick Lencioni (Jossey-Bass). ISBN-10: 0787960756; ISBN-13: 978-0787960759

- *Technical Communication, 12ᵗʰ Edition 2017,* Mike Markel (MacMillan Learning | Bedford St. Martin's). ISBN-10: 1319058612; ISBN-13: 978-1319058616

You already have Markel's book from the first semester. You can purchase Lencioni's book online. It's fine to buy a used copy.

Grading

To pass this course, you must have a B- or higher. **Your grade is your responsibility, so make sure you are monitoring your progress**. Grades displayed on Canvas do NOT reflect work that has not been submitted and work that has not be graded.Therefore the grade displayed is only an approximation.

What counts toward your grade?	Homework and assignments
	Class attendance and participation
	Class work, including presentations, writing exercises, and quizzes
	Preparedness for and your participation in class discussion or activities planned around a reading

Grading scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A+	95 - 100
A	90-94
A-	85-89
B+	80-84
B	75-79
B-	70-74
C+	65-69
C	60-64
C-	50-59
R	49 or below

Homework and assignments are meant to help you improve your communication skills. They can vary based on the specific needs you have in your other MSE/MSIT_SE courses this semester. Homework and assignments include work such as readings, writing exercises, presentations, and longer papers.

We will distribute (via email and/or on Canvas) detailed information about each assignment as the semester progresses.

Handing in homework and assignments

- Unless otherwise noted, your homework should be in a Word document so that we can add comments to it. Do not simply write a response using Canvas's native text tool or submit a PDF.

- Upload your homework or assignment to the corresponding Canvas assignment. If you need help, let us know so that we can cover it in class.

- Name your files *YourLastNameFirstName_AssignmentName* (for example, KolenichPeter_GladwellResponse). NOTE: Please use your name as it appears on Canvas.

- Put a heading at the top of every document. This should include your name, the date, and assignment name.

- Late submissions will receive a zero (R).
  - If you have special circumstances that require you to miss a deadline, please contact us immediately.

- Your grade will drop one level if there are careless errors (see *Proofreading,* below).

Proofreading
Get into the habit of proofreading carefully so that your documents make a good impression on readers. If we find a typo, missing word, or other indication that you did not spell check *and* proofread, we will lower your grade regardless of the quality of the content.

Re-doing an assignment
Most assignments will require you so submit two drafts this term. Therefore, you will NOT have the option of redoing work with a low score other than the second draft.

Conflicts
If you have a conflict between a homework deadline and a religious holiday, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can resolve the issue according to university guidelines.

Class attendance and participation

This class is most effective when you actively participate in discussions, group work, and class exercises. In order to participate, you must attend class.

If you must miss a class, contact Jennifer and Peter (in advance if possible). Absentees cannot make up in-class activities or get credit for class participation.

When we calculate your final grade, we will take into account your attendance and participation.

Use the GCC for help with writing and presenting

For assistance with the written or oral communication assignments in this class, visit the Global Communication Center (GCC). GCC tutors can provide instruction on a range of communication topics and can help you improve your papers and presentations. The GCC is a free service, open to all students, and located in Hunt Library. You can make tutoring appointments directly on the GCC website: http://www.cmu.edu/gcc. You may also visit the GCC website to find out about communication workshops offered throughout the academic year.

Use the ICC for help with English

For assistance with using your English skills in the best possible way, visit the Intercultural Communication Center (ICC). "ICC classes focus on a variety of skills crucial for the success at the university (and often challenging for nonnative English speakers). These include: academic fluency, presentation skills, pronunciation, technique for class participation, summarizing and paraphrasing, US academic culture and expectations, and ITA training" and you can find their current offerings on their website (https://www.cmu.edu/icc/ and https://www.cmu.edu/icc/calendar/index.html and https://www.cmu.edu/icc/language-training/index.html).

Academic Integrity

Other than while participating in group projects, you are expected to complete your own writing and cite your sources properly. For additional information, see Carnegie Mellon's Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism at http://www.cmu.edu/policies/documents/Cheating.html.

Bottom line: do not cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise copy the work of others! If you have questions on whether you can use a specific phrase, term, figure, or anything else – please contact us prior to turning in your assignment. Cheating is cause for failing the class.

Accommodations

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability and have an accommodations letter from the Disability Resources office, we encourage you to discuss your accommodations and needs with us (an all your teachers) as early in the semester as possible. We will work with you to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate. If you suspect that you may have a disability and would benefit from accommodations but are not yet registered with the Office of Disability Resources, we encourage you to contact them at access@andrew.cmu.edu.

Student Wellness

Take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is here to help: call 412-268-2922 and visit their website at http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/. Consider reaching out to friends, faculty, or family members you trust for help getting connected to the support that can help.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal or in danger of self-harm, call someone immediately, day or night:

CaPS: 412-268-2922
Re:solve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226
If the situation is life threatening, call the police
On campus: CMU Police: 412-268-2323
Off campus: 911

If you have questions about this or your coursework, please let us know. Thank you, and have a great semester!