

MCB-GRAD 5900-001 Special Topics in Graduate Education  
Professional Writing/Communication Skills

This is a required course for students in the PSM. The class meets once a week for 50 minutes. The class is dedicated to the development of professional communication skills, with hands-on practice. [The companion course, immediately after our class in the same room, features invited speakers from industry, including some former students from the program. Attendance is expected.] Full attendance is required for course credit, except for excused absences. All assignments must be submitted to my email address below two days before the due date.

Instructor: Professor Philip Yeagle  
[philip.yeagle@uconn.edu](mailto:philip.yeagle@uconn.edu)  
(860) 486-6296

Class time: This course will be operated in the distance learning mode with synchronous class meeting via WebEx <https://uconn-cmr.webex.com/meet/ply02001>  
Please log-in to this WebEx room at the class time listed above.

Grading: 40% written assignments, 40% oral presentations, 20% class participation  
No written exams

There will be required written assignments for many class sessions, and multiple oral presentations during the semester. Assignments are due on the Tuesday before class to my UCONN email (with one exception – see Feb 27 description).

Planned schedule of classes and assignments.

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| Jan 21 | Introduction to class and assignments. In class activity, 2-minute oral introduction you to class, including your educational background, your employment experience, something interesting about you, and your goals for your PSM program |
| Jan 28 | <u>Written</u> analysis of the UConn website, in class activity, 2-minute oral statement “why I should go to UConn” (what does the UCONN website tell you that would encourage you to enroll?); introduction to elevator talk content      |
| Feb 4  | Find a job at a company website – <u>Written</u> : description of that job in one page and share description orally with class   |
| Feb 11 | Oral minute: Elevator talk. <u>Written</u> : email to company inquiring about that job (intro to “translation” assignment)   |
| Feb 18 | <u>Written</u> : what I want in a job (one page). Oral minute: what I want in a job<br>What do employers want in an employee?  |
| Feb 25 | <u>Written</u> : Translation of science text; <u>DUE BY Feb 22</u> in email<br>Oral: share your “translation”  |

Mar 4	<u>Written</u> : Your Story; Oral minute: your elevator talk
Mar 11	Cover letter & resumé features – discussion in class
Mar 18	<u>Written</u> : your cover letter and your resumé; cover letter & resumé discussion
Mar 25	2 oral minutes of your elevator talk; introduction to interview questions
April 1	<u>Written</u> : revised cover letter & resumé due. Mini-interviews in class
April 8	Mini-interviews
April 15	Spring Break
April 22	How to leave a job. Workplace issues

## Policies

Assignments and answers to questions may be discussed with each other. However, the use of another's words as one's own in written assignments constitutes plagiarism and may result in a failing grade. Please consult the UConn student policy for further details.

### **Student Authentication and Verification**

The University of Connecticut is required to verify the identity of students who participate in online courses and to establish that students who register in an online course are the same students who participate in and complete the course activities and assessments and receive academic credit. Verification and authentication of student identity in this course will include the ability to login using UConn NetID and the official list of registered students with photos.

### **Resources for Students Experiencing Distress**

The University of Connecticut is committed to supporting students in their mental health, their psychological and social well-being, and their connection to their academic experience and overall wellness. The university believes that academic, personal, and professional development can flourish only when each member of our community is assured equitable access to mental health services. The university aims to make access to mental health attainable while fostering a community reflecting equity and diversity and understands that good mental health may lead to personal and professional growth, greater self-awareness, increased social engagement, enhanced academic success, and campus and community involvement.

Students who feel they may benefit from speaking with a mental health professional can find support and resources through the [Student Health and Wellness-Mental Health \(SHaW-MH\)](#) office. Through SHaW-MH, students can make an appointment with a mental health professional and engage in confidential conversations or seek recommendations or referrals for any mental health or psychological concern.

Mental health services are included as part of the university's student health insurance plan and also partially funded through university fees. If you do not have UConn's student health insurance plan, most major insurance plans are also accepted. Students can visit the **Student Health and Wellness-Mental Health located in Storrs on the main campus in the Arjona Building, 4th Floor**, or contact the office at **(860) 486-4705**, or <https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/> for services or questions.

### **Accommodations for Illness or Extended Absences**

If illness prevents you from attending class, it is your responsibility to notify your instructor as soon as possible. You do not need to disclose the nature of your illness. However, you will need to work with your instructor to determine how you will complete coursework during your absence.

If life circumstances are affecting your ability to focus on courses and your UConn experience, students can email the Dean of Students at [dos@uconn.edu](mailto:dos@uconn.edu) to request support. Regional campus students should email the Student Services staff at their home campus to request support and faculty notification.

COVID-19 Specific Information: People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and can include: Fever, Cough, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Chills, Repeated shaking with chills, Muscle pain, Headache, Sore throat, New loss of taste or smell.

Additional information including what to do if you test positive or you are informed through contact tracing that you were in contact with someone who tested positive, and answers to other important questions can be found here: <https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/updates-events/coronavirus/>

### **Student Responsibilities and Resources**

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important [standards, policies and resources](#), which include:

- The Student Code
  - Academic Integrity
  - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
- Copyrighted Materials
- Credit Hours and Workload
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

### **Students with Disabilities**

The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020 or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>.

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government." (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from [Blackboard's website](#))

### **Software/Technical Requirements (with Accessibility and Privacy Information)**

The software/technical requirements for this course include:

- HuskyCT/Blackboard ([HuskyCT/ Blackboard Accessibility Statement](#), [HuskyCT/ Blackboard Privacy Policy](#))
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) ([Adobe Reader Accessibility Statement](#), [Adobe Reader Privacy Policy](#))
- Microsoft Office (free to UConn students through [uconn.onthehub.com](#)) ([Microsoft Accessibility Statement](#), [Microsoft Privacy Statement](#))
- Access to high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps (4 Mbps or higher is recommended).
- WebCam

For information on managing your privacy at the University of Connecticut, visit the [University's Privacy page](#).

**NOTE:** This course has NOT been designed for use with mobile devices.

## Help

[Technical and Academic Help](#) provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course uses the learning management platform, [HuskyCT](#). If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through the [Help Center](#). You also have [24x7 Course Support](#) including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

## Student Technology Training

Student technology training is now available in a new HuskyCT short course created by students for students. It will prepare you to use the IT systems and services that you will use throughout your time at UConn, whether learning online or on-campus. It is available at [https://lms.uconn.edu/ultra/courses/80016\\_1/cl/outline](https://lms.uconn.edu/ultra/courses/80016_1/cl/outline).

## Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](#) page for more information.

## Evaluation of Course Experience

Students will be given an opportunity to provide feedback on their course experience and instruction using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE).

The University of Connecticut is dedicated to supporting and enhancing teaching effectiveness and student learning using a variety of methods. The Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) is just one tool used to help faculty enhance their teaching. The SET is used for both formative (self-improvement) and summative (evaluation) purposes.