

# *Senior Seminar in Communication, CM 431-01*

(Required for All CM Arts Majors)

## **SAMPLE SYLLABUS**

**Course Description.** This is a capstone course in Communication Arts. It provides an opportunity for students majoring in Communication Arts to apply what they have learned in their courses of study toward a substantial project during the semester. This project may take three different forms: (1) a major small group service project; (2) an individual internship; or (3) a substantial research project/thesis in which students will develop, execute, write up, and orally defend a scholarly paper. Each option allows students to fulfill the following objectives:

- A. Illustrate their ability to speak and write effectively
- B. Think critically
- C. Demonstrate to the faculty in Communication Arts, as well as to themselves, they have achieved a high level of competency from their undergraduate course content, which qualifies them to receive a degree in Communication Arts from the University of Alabama in Huntsville

### **Option 1: Internship**

#### **Requirements**

1. Prerequisite: A or B in Human Communication (CM 231), or approval by professor.
2. You must apply for the internship and receive faculty approval. The application is posted on CANVAS and must be completed and emailed to the course professor. Note: Students who have completed 3 hours of internship credit (CM 400) are not eligible for the internship option.
3. You must identify a communication-related internship opportunity. This may be with a non-profit, for-profit, or government organization. It may be paid or unpaid. The work should focus on some communication-related activity that interests you. Examples include writing, producing, reporting, editing, or advertising for a newspaper, television station, or radio station; public relations for a firm; social media for an organization, etc. See the list of potential internship options posted at the following link: <https://www.uah.edu/ahs/departments/communication-arts/internships>. Regardless of the internship's nature, you must complete at least 135 hours of work.
4. You must initiate and complete an internship contract with the on-the-job supervisor. All specific tasks must be clearly identified and agreed upon between you and the supervisor. The contract must be signed by you, the supervisor, and course professor.
5. You must keep a detailed log or journal of your daily work experiences. In the log, you should critically reflect on and apply your communication classroom content and make notations of the days and hours worked.
6. To ensure all is going well with your internship, you will complete a written midterm report.
7. You will also create a portfolio illustrating your work (e.g., social media posts made, stories written, advertisements created, links to videos developed, etc.) to be turned in at the end of the internship.
8. At the end of the internship, you will deliver an oral presentation of your internship experience to a panel of Communication Arts faculty.
9. A written evaluation of your work must be completed by the on-the-job supervisor. It is your responsibility to ensure this written evaluation is delivered to the course professor by the designated date.
10. Given that this is an upper division Capstone course, you are expected to do a significant amount of outside work to independently complete your assignments and internship responsibilities and hours. However, you are also expected to attend class during the designated times listed on the Schedule to discuss your progress, tasks, upcoming assignments, and any problems.

### **Internship Outcomes and Assessment**

1. The internship is meant to provide real-world and large-scale experience in a communication-related field, which will be assessed through the daily log, portfolio, and the on-the-job supervisor's evaluation.
2. The internship also provides an opportunity for students to connect their communication courses to practical work activities and demonstrate an understanding of concepts, principles, and practices in the major degree program. This will be assessed through the daily log and final oral presentation.

### **Internship Grading**

Daily Log/Internship Journal (Graded by Course Professor)	100 pts. (12.5%)
Midterm Report (Graded by Course Professor)	50 pts. (6.25%)
Evaluation of Work by On-the-Job Supervisor (Assessed by Supervisor)	200 pts. (25%)
Portfolio (Graded by Course Professor)	200 pts. (25%)
Final Oral Presentation of Internship Experience (Graded by Faculty Panel)	200 pts. (25%)
Participation [timely completion & submission of paperwork; course meetings (as scheduled) (Graded by Course Professor)]	50 pts. (6.25%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>800 pts. (100%)</b>

## **Option 2: Research Thesis**

### **Requirements**

1. Prerequisite: Must have received an A or B in Research Methods (CM 370) to pursue a social scientific study or an A or B in Rhetorical Criticism (CM 375) to pursue a Rhetorical study.
2. You must apply for the research thesis and receive faculty approval. The application is posted on CANVAS and must be completed and turned into the faculty member you would like to work with.
3. Once you are approved to complete a research thesis, you will work directly with your faculty thesis adviser. You will complete a series of assignments that will build on each other and ultimately lead up to the final product. The following typed assignments must be completed by the date noted in the course schedule and submitted directly to your thesis adviser: Annotated Bibliography, Literature Review, Prospectus, Thesis Draft, and Final Thesis (written and oral presentation). Separate documents will provide specific information about each assignment.
4. Thesis-related assignments should be given directly to your thesis directors on or before their due date. Thesis directors will grade the majority of thesis-related work, with the exception of the final oral presentation, which will be graded by the thesis director and at least one other faculty member who has expertise in your chosen research area.
5. All bibliographic materials must conform either to the APA or MLA style, depending upon your overall research methodology.
6. You should schedule time to individually meet with your adviser. You are responsible for contacting your thesis adviser regarding meeting times. Your adviser will not track you down.
7. Given that this is an upper division Capstone course, you are expected to do a significant amount of outside work to independently complete your assignments. However, you are also expected to attend class during the designated times to discuss your progress and upcoming assignments.

### **Research Thesis Outcomes and Assessment**

1. Students will improve their understanding of basic research in communication studies by developing an annotated bibliography, literature review, prospectus, research draft, and a final research thesis.
2. Students will acquire theoretical knowledge about communication research practices by reading scholarly work pertaining to their research topic.
3. Students will learn to defend their original scholarly ideas, which will be assessed through the final thesis presentation and oral defense.

## **Research Thesis Grading**

Annotated Bibliography (Graded by Thesis Adviser)	100 pts. (13.33%)
Literature Review (Graded by Thesis Adviser)	100 pts. (13.33%)
Prospectus (Graded by Thesis Adviser)	100 pts. (13.33%)
Thesis Draft (Graded by Thesis Adviser)	100 pts. (13.33%)
Final Thesis (Graded by Thesis Adviser)	100 pts. (13.33%)
Oral Defense (Graded by Faculty Panel)	200 pts. (26.66%)
Participation [timely completion of thesis application; meeting with thesis adviser; course meetings (as scheduled) (Graded by Course Professor)]	50 pts. (6.7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>750 pts. (100%)</b>

## **Option 3: Small Group Service Project**

### **Requirements**

1. Small group teams will be comprised of 2-3 students. You must take the initiative to find suitable partners and notify the course instructor.
2. Each small group will be responsible for securing a “client” to work with over the course of their project. “Clients” can be small-businesses, political figures, faculty members, or non-profit organizations. The “client” *must agree* to allow students to create deliverables for their project, but it is at the discretion of the “client” whether they choose to use the project in the future. *No payment may be taken by the students for services rendered.* Example projects might include: A Social Media campaign for the Huntsville Chapter of March of Dimes; Coordinating a Special Event to fundraise for a local foundation; Launching a Public Relations Campaign to increase awareness about magnet schools in the Huntsville City School System; Coordinating Community Outreach Media (video and/or print) for a local School Board Member election campaign; Assisting Our Valley Events.com through blog articles and special events; Working with a Communication Arts faculty member to obtain, examine, and write up research findings; Working with a Theatre faculty member with an upcoming play; Assisting RocketHatch.com with their speak-off event publicity and social media campaign; Work with UAH Student Events, Alumni, or Advancement in the coordination of a large-scale campus event; Designing Training and Development Program to instruct Huntsville City School Principals on motivating Millennial Generation Teachers; etc. Note: Regardless of the specific project you choose, all group members must be in agreement to work together on the project, and the workload should be substantial, warranting group effort.
3. Student groups must complete meetings with the “client” as needed in order to ensure guidelines and deliverables are clear and agreed upon by all parties. Students must coordinate signing a contract with the “client” to ensure that all parties know what is expected and in what time frame the work must be completed. The contract should be signed by the client and all group members and submitted to the course professor. The group should also prepare a typed proposal and submit it to the course professor detailing the nature of the group project.
4. You must individually keep a detailed log or journal of your daily work experiences. In the log, you should reflect on and apply your communication classroom content and make notations of the days and hours worked, as well as the group dynamics.
5. To ensure all is going well with your group project, you will individually complete a written midterm report.
6. You will also create a collective portfolio illustrating your work to be turned in at the project’s conclusion (e.g., video footage of work, websites designed, blog entries, articles written, evidence of research conducted, etc.).
7. At the end of the term, you will deliver an oral presentation of your small group’s experience to a panel of Communication Arts faculty.
8. A written evaluation of your work must be completed by the client. It is your responsibility to ensure this written evaluation is delivered to the course professor by the designated date.
9. You are expected to be a responsible group member. Toward this end, you will complete a typed summary paper where you discuss your group dynamics and rate your partners on his/her contribution to the project.

10. Given that this is an upper division Capstone course, your group will do a significant amount of work independently and outside of scheduled class time. However, you are also expected to attend class during the designated times noted on the Schedule to discuss your progress, tasks, and any problems.

**Small Group Service Project Outcomes and Assessment**

1. The small group service project provides students the opportunity to work with peers to complete a major project. Their ability to work effectively with others will be assessed through peer ratings, the client’s evaluation, and the portfolio.
2. The small group service project allows students to connect their communication courses to practical work activities and demonstrate an understanding of concepts, principles, and practices in the major degree program. This will be assessed through the daily log and final oral presentation.

**Small Group Service Project Grading**

Daily Log/Journal (Graded by Course Professor)	100 pts. (11.77%)
Midterm Report (Graded by Course Professor)	50 pts. (5.9%)
Evaluation of Work by Client (Assessed by Client)	200 pts. (23.53%)
Portfolio (Graded by Course Professor)	100 pts. (11.77%)
Final Oral Presentation of Group Experience (Graded by Faculty Panel)	200 pts. (23.53%)
Summary Paper (Graded by Course Professor)	50 pts. (5.9%)
Ratings by group members	100 pts. (11.77%)
Participation [timely completion & submission of paperwork; course meetings (as scheduled) (Graded by Course Professor)]	50 pts. (5.9%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>850 pts. (100%)</b>

**Notes to All Students**

**Grading Scale:** A+(100-98), A(97-93), A-(92-90), B+(89-87), B(86-83), B-(82-80), C+(79-77), C(76-73), C-(72-70), D+(69-67), D(66-60), F(59 and below) \*\*\*Note: Plus/Minus Grades will be given.