THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

Course Outline

Communication and Visual Arts
Faculty of Arts

CMNS 3240-04 – 3 Credits
Advanced Professional Communication (1,2,0)
Winter 2026

Instructor: Christine Adam
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Office: 1841 Old Main
Office Hours: Monday 2:30-3:00; Thursday 1:00-2:00

Calendar Description
Students develop best practice skills in advanced professional writing with an emphasis on the design and production of strategic and planning-kevel communication documents, including a formal report, with added emphasis on online communication contexts, including multimedia production and social media. In addition, students consider and develop multi-phased communication strategies, learn advanced research skills and consider techniques for effective collaboration.

Course Description
In this course we explore a variety of advanced, strategically orientated, forms of professional writing, using theories of rhetoric, analysis of communities of interest, and multimodal design. The course is framed as a progressive project in knowledge mobilization. Students are given a selection of topics to choose from, and then are guided to develop a Proposal, a Policy Brief, and finally a Communication Package with unique visual communications materials, as tools to produce and share knowledge of the topic. You will be supported through this progression by the unit content, journal tasks, and the assignments.

Educational Objectives/Outcomes
Upon successful completion of CMNS 3240, students will be able to:
1. Produce industry-standard communication documents with professional quality writing and design.
2. Compare strategies for effective collaboration techniques across a variety of face to face and online contexts.
3. Conduct accurate and effective research of suitable quality and scope for industry-level projects and document that research appropriately.
4. Explain the unique challenges associated with using social media for professional purposes and apply social media effectively in a communication strategy.
5. Explain the unique potential of multimedia approaches to information and apply this potential in a communication strategy.
6. Explain the purpose of and produce a formal written industry-quality professional communication report such as a white paper.
7. **Evaluate a complex communication challenge and organize and execute a communication strategy that involves multiple phases and multiple media.**

Prerequisites
CMNS 1290 OR CMNS 1291 AND completion of 42 credits

Texts/Materials

Course readings and material for analysis will be posted on the course WordPress site (cmns3240.trubox.ca). Please review it regularity, as I will be updating it as the course progresses.

Student Evaluation and Course Topics

- Journal Tasks 25%
- Proposal 20%
- Policy Brief 25%
- Communication Package 30%

Weeks		Content	Graded Assessments
Week 1	January 12/14	Introduction	Journal Task 1: Decode the RFP (3%)
Weeks 2-4	January 19/21 January 26/28 February 2/4	Unit 1 – The Proposal	Journal Task 2: Defining Project Focus and Perspective (4%) Unit 1 Assignment: Proposal (20%)
Weeks 5-8	February 9/11 February 23/25 March 2/4 March 9/11	Unit 2 – The Policy Brief	Journal Task 3 (3%) Journal Task 4 (3%) Journal Task 5 (3%) Unit 2 Assignment: Policy Brief (25%)
Weeks 9-12	March 16/18 March 23/25 March 30/April 1 April 6/8	Unit 3 – The Communication Package	Journal Task 6 (3%) Journal Task 7 (3%) Journal Task 8 (3%)
Week 13	April 13	Presentations	Unit 3 Assignment: Communication Package (30%)

** Note that many of the assignments will be done in-class. Please talk to me if you are going to miss, or have missed, in-class assignments.

Class Cancellations

Note that I do not anticipate any class cancellations. If something unforeseen occurs and I need to cancel class, I will place an announcement in Moodle as soon as possible.

Accessibility Services

TRU's Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy (BRD 10-0) outlines the university's responsibilities to provide accommodations for students with disabilities. Accessibility Services at TRU provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact Accessibility Services at 250-828-5023 or **as@tru.ca** for support. *Students and faculty now have access to a user-friendly student services portal. After students are approved for academic accommodations for the upcoming semester, they can log into the student services portal with their TRU credentials and send their accommodation letter directly to their instructor(s).* See Accessibility Services for more information.

Academic Honesty and Attendance

Students must be familiar with and follow the following TRU policies:
- Academic Integrity, Policy ED-5-0. Resources for compliance with this policy can be found at the Academic Integrity Centre website.
- Student Attendance, Policy ED 3-1

Students should expect these policies to be enforced in this course. All policies can be found online at https://www.tru.ca/policy.html

A word about Generative Artificial Intelligence:

I am aware of the advent of generative AI technology, and I can see the potential of you using these tools to complete the work for this class. However, I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the limitations of these tools and to engage in careful revision, editing, and fact-checking of anything AI produces for you. **You are also required to disclose any use of AI in this course either in the introduction to the assignment or in an appended document.** This disclosure should include screen shots of the prompts you gave AI and its output. Failure to undertake careful revisions or to disclose AI use may result in significant grade penalties.

Generative AI is changing the way many of us do our jobs, including me. I have employed the use of generative AI to help develop assignment topics and, in fact, the very first draft of this course outline (it looks very different now, but ChatGPT got something on the blank screen). Any time I use AI in the class, you can expect me to disclose where and how I used it. We are all learning how to use this technology responsibly, and I hope we can have further discussion if you have any questions.

source: https://aieducation.trubox.ca/syllabus-language/

Confidentiality of class materials

To enhance flexibility and access, class slides and other resource materials will be made available to you via our class website. I do not give permission for these to be uploaded to Generative Artificial Intelligence or shared on any platforms outside of this class.

Confidentiality of class lectures

Class discussions and questions are encouraged in my courses; to protect the privacy of all in attendance recording of class lectures is not allowed (unless you have official accommodations supported by TRU Accessibility Services).