

Syllabus 2018W: LWS 550 – Professional Communication Strategies

BACKGROUND

The ability to work in a team and strong communication skills are qualities that are consistently in demand by employers. It is particularly important to effectively communicate and collaborate on issues related to land and water, as they are inherently complex and involve multiple jurisdictions and stakeholders. We also live in a time where we have access to many tools that can enhance our communications by making them more engaging through online platforms and multimedia. These tools can help to connect the science of land and water systems to non-scientists such as planners and policy makers.

COURSE FORMAT

Winter Term 2

When: Tuesday, Thursday 11:00 – 12:30 pm

Room: MCML 358

Each class will consist of a lecture, class discussion/activity, small group work period or tutorial. See the schedule below for more details.

Guest speakers will be incorporated to complement depth and appropriate breadth of subject matter and current developments in communication strategies. Most tutorials will consist of hands-on sessions to facilitate learning about online and multimedia tools, thus you will need a computer.

Instructor: Julie Wilson

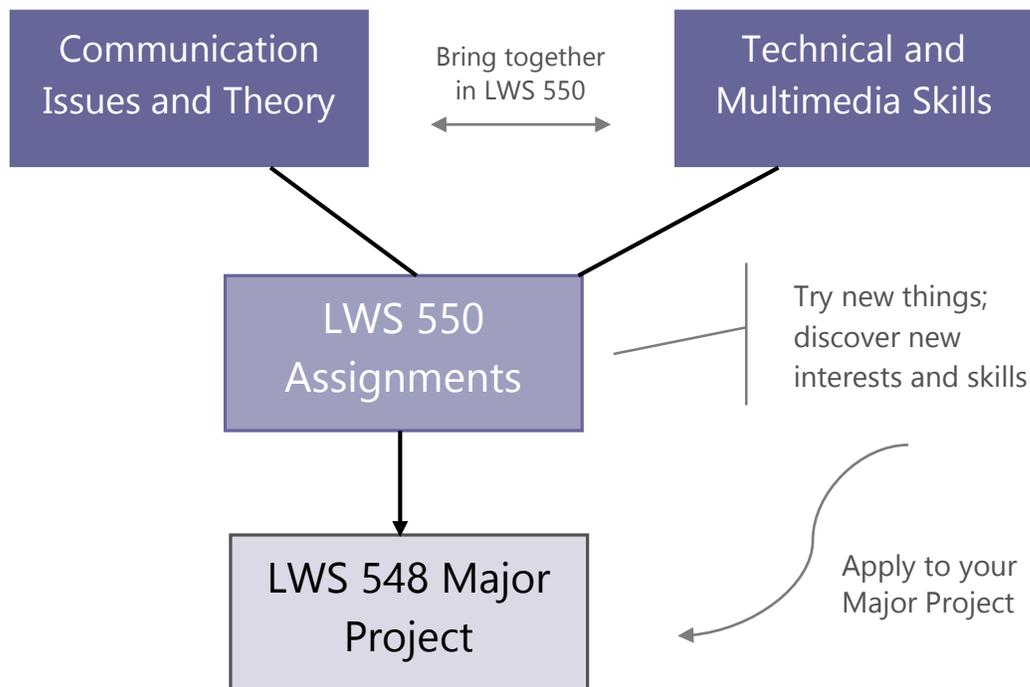
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RELATION TO LWS 548 – MLWS MAJOR PROJECT

LWS 550 is designed to equip MLWS students with a variety of tools and experiences to improve their communication skills in the workforce. The course involves several group activities designed to build and enhance your team work and collaboration skills. Many of the tools you will learn about in this course will be useful in the presentation of your Major Project.

This course will bring together Communications Issues and Theory with Technical and Multimedia Skills, which will help to develop your professional communication strategies for various written assignments. The diagram below helps to visualize how components of the course fit together, and tie in with the LWS 548 Major Project.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, learners should be able to:

Gain the skills required, through the application of **critical thinking and assessment**, to **prepare and deliver professional communications** of complex information **in a collaborative team environment effectively and credibly**, by **employing information technologies** congruent with audience needs.

More specifically:

1. Describe different communication formats/delivery used by professionals.
2. Be innovative and creative in their professional communications assessment and delivery. Note the balance needed between content and style.
3. Evaluate professional communications by exploring and applying critical thinking and analysis to published communications and information.
4. Develop and deliver professional communications in a credible and academically rigorous manner.
5. Assess and evaluate the needs of the end-user or audience.
6. Develop competence in the (professional) use of information technologies (e.g., data visualization, video production, emerging technologies).
7. Discuss ethical considerations of professionals and their communications.
8. Work effectively in a collaborative team environment.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Collaboration is a key feature of the LWS 550 course. This means that group work will constitute a major part of the course. Students must come prepared to class, take ownership of their roles and responsibilities in group work, in order to positively contribute to others' learning. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and make it up on your own time.

EVALUATION

- **In-class Activities, Discussions, Tutorials (Participation) (15%)**
- **Writing a Paragraph (in class) (5%)**
- **Critical Review Assignment (10%)**
- **Creating an Argument: (30%)**
 - Five Part Argument (33%)
 - In-Class Debate (33%)
 - Op-Ed Assignment (33%)
- **Final Project (40%)**
 - Policy Brief (55%)
 - Video Presentation (30%)
 - Communication Action Plan (15%)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or final project and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Assignment/Activity	Worth	Date*
In-class Participation	15%	On-going
In-class Paragraph	5%	Jan. 29
One-page Critical Review	10%	Due: Feb. 6, by midnight
<i>Creating an Argument (30%)</i>		
Five-part Argument	33%	Due: Feb. 13, by midnight
Debate Activity	33%	Feb. 26
Op-Ed	33%	Mar. 6, by midnight
<i>Final Project (40%)</i>		

Policy Brief	55%	Apr. 4, by midnight
Communication Action Plan	15%	Apr. 4, by midnight
Video Presentation	30%	Apr. 8, by midnight
Final Project Peer Review	Counts towards participation	Apr. 11, by midnight

**Due dates may be subject to change.*

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic(s)
Week 1	Introduction to LWS 550 course
Week 2	Introduction to communication and role of the professional
Week 3	Professional Ethics
Week 4	Stakeholder Roundtable; Credibility and Peer Review
Week 5	Strategies for Effective Writing and Critical Review (Assignment)
Week 6	Weight of Evidence; Introduction to Argument in Professional Communication (Assignment)
Week 7	Introducing Debate as Professional Communication Tool
Week 8 – Feb 18-22	Reading Break – No classes this week
Week 9	Debate Activity and Debrief (Assignment)
Week 10	Introduction of Final Project and Digital Media Tutorials; Data Visualization Principles
Week 11	Tutorials: Data Visualization using Tableau software
Week 12	Tutorials: Video production (planning, capturing, editing)
Week 13	Tutorial: Copyright and Creative Commons; Project work session
Week 14	Discuss Communication Action Plans; Final class and project due

Order of the topics is subject to change.

READINGS

Readings and other important information will be posted on Canvas.

Access the LWS 550 page by going to canvas.ubc.ca, log in with your CWL and password, and click the LWS 550 course link. Here you will find a copy of the course syllabus and assignments. You will also see a link to the Discussion Board, which we will use in a few exercises in the course.