

# COMM 496 - SENIOR SEMINAR

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## Course Description

The Senior Seminar is required for all majors in the Communication Department. The course will include an overview of the communication field and job markets, the development of a resume and cover letter, experience in interviewing, and the production of a capstone portfolio including a CD Rom.

## Textbook

Camenson, Blythe. *Great Jobs for Communications Majors*. Lincolnwood, IL; VGM Career Horizons, 1996.

Schultze, Quentin J. *Communicating for Life: Christian Stewardship in Community and Media*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic (Baker Book House), 2000.

## Course Objectives

This course is designed to give students:

- exposure to the possibilities in the communication field.
- experience in developing a professional resume and cover letter
- opportunity to compile a professional portfolio
- an overview of the ethical considerations in this area
- a recap of the whole area of communications from a Christian world view

## Attendance Policy

This course meets only once a week. Thus it is crucial that you be at each class period. According to school policy, students must attend at least 75 percent of the class periods to pass the class. In this one-credit class, you can miss only 3 class periods. You will be dropped from the class on the fourth absence. In addition to the basic school policy, it is crucial that students be present as class sessions that will focus on student participation and interaction. Your absence will make a difference to the entire class! We need and want your involvement.

## Course Methodology and Requirements

The class will include the reading of the textbooks (outside class) with follow-up assignments. All written or out-of-class assignments will be used as a basis for the class discussion. Students will complete the following major assignments (smaller, daily work may also be assigned):

1. Self-assessment. The student will complete an assessment of his or her own personality, abilities, values, skills, and goals. The instructions and content for this assessment are available in the text. Assignment details are online. Paper is to be uploaded to the dropbox on Angel.
2. Professional Resume & Cover Letter. Each student will prepare a professional-looking resume listing all relevant, real-life information for use in employment applications. In

addition to the resume, the student will **prepare a professional-looking cover letter** that introduces him/herself to the potential employer and brings attention to their interest in employment. This assignment will be graded in two parts – draft version for review by an approved advisor and final professional copy to be graded by Dr. Pace. The draft version should be uploaded to Angel. An approved advisor can be Dr. Pace, your academic advisor, the career counselor, or someone in your career field with expertise concerning resumes. **The draft resume/letter must be signed by the reviewer with comments and suggested changes shown.** The final version is to be printed on high-quality paper with no errors. Turn in the reviewed copy with the final copy.

3. Practice Interview. Each student will setup an interview with a professional person in his/her field of interest where the student will practice interviewing skills. The professional person is under no obligation to hire or recommend the student for employment. The exercise is simply to give the student practice at interviewing and to provide some evaluation as to the student's abilities. A written report of the experience should be uploaded to the Angel dropbox by the deadline.
4. Test over the text, *Communicating for Life*. This test will be mostly objective over the terms and basic principles presented by the author. There will also be some worksheets on the Schultze book given in class.
5. Professional portfolio. Each student will prepare a two-part professional portfolio that could be used for the purpose of achieving employment in the student's field of interest. The first part of the portfolio would be a collection of printed materials, photos, layouts, and electronic materials. The first portfolio part should be in a folder or notebook that is professional and commonly used by people in the specific field of interest. The second part is a digital copy of all materials used on CD-R or DVD-R for Communication Department archive. **Students are required to show their portfolios to their adviser or a communication dept. faculty in the related field before turning assignment in for grading. Please have adviser/faculty sign your portfolio checklist.**

## Grading

Students will receive a semester grade based on the following scale:

Class participation	5%
Self-assessment	15%
Professional Resume & cover letter	20%
Practice Interview	15%
<i>Communicating for Life</i> test	15%
Professional Portfolio	30%

***Cannot pass without at least a C- (69.5%). Cannot graduate without passing this course.***

**Course Outline** (Reading assignments are expected to be completed by the date listed.)

8/25 – Introduction to course, requirements, & texts. Discuss self-assessment.

9/1 – Preparing the portfolio and other assignments. Read Schultze chaps. 1 & 2.

9/8 – **Self-assessment due online today!** No class due to spiritual emphasis. Read Camenson chap. 1.

9/15 – How to do senior papers. (Bring your copy of senior papers to class.)

9/22 – How to do a resume & cover letter. Read Camenson chap. 2.

9/29 – **Draft resume & cover letter due online!** Read Camenson chap. 3, Schultze chaps. 3-4

10/6 – Networking – it's who you know, guest speaker, Mrs. Pace-Miller. Read Camenson chap. 4.

10/13 – Strategies for Media Use – Read Schultze chaps. 5 & 6.

10/20 – Interviewing – being your best under pressure – guest speaker, Dr. Kelton -  
Read Camenson chap. 5

10/27 – Communicating for Life – an overview. Read Schultze chaps. 7 & 8 **Final Resume & cover letter due on paper!**

11/3 – No class – attend conference day sessions. Read Camenson chap. 6

11/10 – **Practice Interview Reports due online today!** –Preparing for that first job, special speaker, Ms. Melinda Booze – Schultze chaps 9 - 12

11/17– Going to graduate school? Special presentation - *Communicating for Life* test today!

11/24 – Happy Thanksgiving! No class.

12/1 – Freelancing – Practical tips from those in the business – Mr. Stanek, guest speaker - Read Camenson chap. 8

12/8 – Graduates Recognition - **All portfolios and digital discs are due today by 12 PM (noon) in Dr. Pace's office. Late portfolios will not be accepted.**

There is no final exam for senior seminar. Your portfolio is due on the last scheduled day of class.

### **Pace's Acamania Web Site**

To get the latest in seminar information on a 24/7 basis, connect to Dr. Pace's Web site regularly. Forms, handouts, and other information can be found there for your convenience. Type the following URL address in your browser while on the Internet: <http://www.doctorpace.net>

### **POLICY ON INCOMPLETE WORK**

All assignments given during this course must be completed by the end of the course. Once the

semester ends, a student will receive an F if any major assignment is missing. All late assignments may be penalized up to 20% off the grade the assignment has earned. Students receiving an F due to incomplete work should repeat the course. Extended illness and other legitimate reasons for late work will be considered on an individual basis. **PORTFOLIOS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED LATE.**

### **Laptops, cell phones, and other electronics**

Students should silence or shut off cell phones during class. Cell phone calls should be made only during breaks. Laptops in class may be used provided the student does not do homework, games, web surfing, emailing, or other unauthorized activities during class time. Any other electronics such as PDAs, Blackberries, Gameboys, etc. should not be used during class. Failure to follow these directions will negatively affect the student's participation grade.

### **TESTS**

Students who are absent the day of a test may only be excused because of sickness (with doctor or nurse signature), family emergency, or administrative permission. Unexcused absences during tests will require the student to take a similar test at the first opportunity. A late penalty up to 20% off the grade earned may be applied.