AEE 4930: Communication and Leadership Development
Capstone Experience, Spring 2010
T 6 period (12:50-1:40); R 6-7 periods (12:50-2:45)
0116 Matherly Hall

Instructors

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Course Description:
This capstone course will integrate the content and skills that Communication and Leadership Development (CLD) students have learned in their prerequisite courses. Specific concepts/skills that students will draw upon in this class include the following:
- Idea generation, creative and critical thinking, peer review and critique
- Campaign strategy and development
- Media writing and graphic design
- Special event planning and management
- Leadership concepts and competencies (teamwork, conflict resolution, leadership, project management)

Course Objectives:
At the completion of the course, the learner will be able to:
- Develop the plan, creative elements, and communications materials for a special event.
- Integrate concepts of teamwork, conflict resolution, leadership, and project management.
- Think critically about issues facing the agricultural industry.
- Think critically about career fields the student may be interested in pursuing.
- Utilize creative and critical thinking skills to develop a professional portfolio of work including statements of philosophy grounded assessment inventories of who you are as a person/professional.

Prerequisites:
Students must have taken the following courses to take this course (unless the student receives prior approval from the instructors):
- AEE 3070c: Digital Media Production
- AEE 3414: Leadership Development
- AEE 4031: The Communication Process

It is also recommended (but not required) that students have taken these courses.
- AEE 3413: Interpersonal Leadership
- AEE 4434: Communication and Leadership in Groups and Teams
- AEE 4035: Advanced Ag Communication Writing
- AEE 4036: Advanced Ag Communication Production
- AEE 4454: Global Leadership
- AEE 4506: Nonformal Teaching Methods

Required Texts:
- *Quarterlife Crisis* (2001). Alexandra Robbins & Abby Wilner. Penguin Putnam Inc., NY. ISBN: 1-58542-106-5
- *Organizing Special Events and Conferences* (2001). Darcy Devney. Pineapple Press, Sarasota, FL. ISBN: 1-56164-217-7

Optional Text:
- *Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual, 2008 or 2009 edition* by the Associated Press (Helpful for completing the news release assignment.)

Class Format:
The class will feature lecture and discussion. During some Thursday class periods, students will have time to work on course assignments. Students will be expected to present, lead, and/or participate in discussion. Students' grades will be lowered for excessive absences.

Grading Scale: Will be posted on WebCT

UF grading policies: For information about UF grades and grading policies, including the new **minus grades**, please visit **http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html**.

Assignments:

Communication Element for Special Event Plan	150
Special Event Plan DRAFT (Team Assignment)	75
Special Event Plan Assignment	225
Panel News Release	100
Current Events Presentation	50
Current Events Paper	100
Resume DRAFT	10
Professional Portfolio	300
Participation Points	90
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	1100

All course assignments listed above will be graded using rubrics. Students will be provided a detailed description of each assignment and grading rubrics in class when the assignments are assigned. Copies of the assignment sheets and the rubrics will be posted on the course WebCT page.

Late assignment policy: Turing in assignments after the due date is NOT acceptable and will result in a zero for that assignment. In *very rare cases*, late work will be accepted if documented extenuating circumstances are provided and/or discussed with the instructors in advance.

Responsibilities to the Learning Community (Attendance and Participation): Since you are taking a capstone course you are nearing completion of your undergraduate program and will soon need to meet the demands of full time employment. This course is your last in a series which have equipped you with knowledge and skills to be successful at work. Similar to places of employment, if you don't show up or if you are consistently late you can't be successful and you may face disciplinary actions up to and including being fired. In this class, you are expected to be on time and ready to participate. Missing or being late to class multiple times will result in a lower (and possibly even failing) grade.

Coming to class unprepared does not speak well of your professional ability and will negatively affect your grade. You have a responsibility to attend class and participate and you will be rewarded for doing so.

Cell phones: Students are asked to turn off their cellular phones before entering the classroom.

WebCT/Blackboard Course Page:
All students are required to have gatorlink log in information (which provides access to WebCT) for this course. While assignments, rubrics and other course material will be handed out during class, these materials will also be posted on the course WebCT page as a back-up. Students *must* access the course page frequently for success in the course. Grades will be posted regularly and students are responsible for monitoring their posted grades.

University Academic Honesty Policy
In 1995 the UF student body enacted a new honor code and voluntarily committed itself to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. When students enroll at the university, they commit themselves to the standard drafted and enacted by students.
In adopting this honor code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the university community. Students who enroll at the university commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the honor code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the honor code is bound by honor to take corrective action. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon community acceptance and enforcement of the honor code.

The Honor Pledge: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: "**On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.**"

The university requires all members of its community to be honest in all endeavors. A fundamental principle is that the whole process of learning and pursuit of knowledge is diminished by cheating, plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty. In addition, every dishonest act in the academic environment affects other students adversely, from the skewing of the grading curve to giving unfair advantage for honors or for professional or graduate school admission. Therefore, the university will take severe action against dishonest students. Similarly, measures will be taken against faculty, staff and administrators who practice dishonest or demeaning behavior. Students should report any condition that facilitates dishonesty to the instructor, department chair, college dean or Student Honor Court. *(Source: 2009-2010 Undergraduate Catalog)*

It is assumed all work will be completed independently unless the assignment is defined as a group project, in writing by the instructor. This policy will be vigorously upheld at all times in this course.

Software Use:
All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal

penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Campus Helping Resources:
Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. Both the Counseling Center and Student Mental Health Services provide confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance. The Counseling Center is located at 301 Peabody Hall (next to Criser Hall). Student Mental Health Services is located on the second floor of the Student Health Care Center in the Infirmary.

- *University Counseling Center*, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, **www.counsel.ufl.edu**
- *Career Resource Center,* CR-100 JWRU, 392-1601 ext: 0, **www.crc.ufl.edu/**
- *Student Mental Health Services,* Rm. 245 Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, **www.shcc.ufl.edu/smhs/**
  - Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)
  - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
  - Center for Sexual Assault / Abuse Recovery & Education (CARE)
  - Eating Disorders Program
  - Employee Assistance Program
  - Suicide Prevention Program

Students with Disabilities:
The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. 0001 Reid Hall, 392-8565, **www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/**

Course Assignment Descriptions

Special Event Plan
Student teams develop the plan and materials for a "real" special event. Students will be assigned to one of the following "real" special events:

- **Educational/Industry Tour**: Students will develop a two-day educational/industry tour for at least 15 people and include an overnight stay. Students will plan all aspects of the itinerary (speakers, topics, order of visits, hotel, meals) and determine the budget/costs. The tour can be to any area within five hours of Gainesville, but must include at least five stops.
- **Professional Development Workshop for Professionals**: Students will organize a 1.5-day professional development workshop for professional leaders and/or communicators. Students will plan all content areas for the workshop, meals, budgets, and logistics. Plan is for 40 attendees. The workshop can be in any city in Florida.
- **National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow Professional Development Workshop**: Students will develop a plan for the 2012 National ACT Professional Development Workshop. Students will

plan all workshop topics, meals, budgets, and logistics. Plan is for 100 attendees. The workshop can be in any city in Florida.

The special event plan must include the following components:

- Objectives
- Timetable
- Volunteer/committee structure
- Theme
- Menu/catering (with a real caterer's pricing structure)

- Location (including pricing)
- Itinerary/agenda
- Communication/media
- Entertainment

Teams will submit a draft special events plan early in the semester. The plan should include each of the components listed above at least minimally addressed.

Teams will present their special event plan to the rest of the class. Your team's presentation should last no more than 10 minutes. The presentation should address all of the components listed above. Teams may choose to incorporate some of the *individual communications/creative element* pieces (see next assignment below) into the required presentation. This is a formal presentation. Teams also will distribute to each classmate a one- to two-page executive summary of the proposed special event plan. The class will vote on the best presentation/plan.

Individual communications/creative element for the special event plan

Students will develop/design a communications element (print ad, flyer, brochure, Web page, video [group of two], poster, T-shirt, news release, etc.) promoting the special event. Each student in a group should develop a separate communications element. (The special event plan is a team project. The communications/creative element is an individual project. The only exception is that two students could choose to do a promotional video. All other creative elements are to be done individually.)

Drafts of the communications/creative element are due Feb. 9 in class. Students will have their team members peer critique their work. At the end of class, the drafts will be submitted to the instructor for evaluation and critique. The finished communications/creative element will be due the same day as the special event plan. The communications/creative element also should be included as part of your professional portfolio.

Panel Discussion News Release

Students will write a news release based on the information from one of the two panel discussions during the semester. Half of the class will write a news release on the special events panel discussion, and half will write a news release on the career/professionalism panel discussion.

Current Events in Ag and Natural Resources Assignment

Students will select a current event or issue in the agriculture or natural resources/environment sector for this assignment which will be completed in two parts. Part A: At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up for a 15 minute slot, 10 minutes will be devoted to a clear description of the issue/event and five minutes for discussion/questions from the class. Part B: Students will write an issue brief detailing the issue/event, summarizing the key points, identifying the audience(s) or sides, and providing a brief analysis of the issue/event.

Professional Portfolio

Students will compile all of the work they have done that represents their skills set into a professional portfolio. Elements can include communications elements from this and other courses; plans, documents and other illustrated examples of leadership activities; class writing assignments; relevant work done on jobs or internships, "spec" work, etc. In addition, students should include a copy of their up-to-date resume and a statement of philosophy that incorporates a description of who they are as a professional communicator/leader, based on their experiences in the CLD program and especially the outcomes of the assessments they have taken while in class (MBTI, KAI, LPI, True Colors, etc.). Portfolios will include no less than 10-12 elements, and should be grouped into theme areas with a section page to separate and a table of contents in front. Students will need to place these elements into a professional looking portfolio for judging purposes.