CMNS3500 – Communication Professional Placement – 10 units
Semester 2 - 2012 – Callaghan Campus

BRIEF COURSE OVERVIEW

BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION
Students undertake a work placement in organisations to apply the principles and theories acquired during the B Communication program, to develop communication skills appropriate to their chosen profession and to experience organisations, their dynamics, discourses, practices and realities in a professional environment. Direction is provided onsite by a placement supervisor.

In order to participate in this course, students must complete a compulsory Occupational Health and Safety requirement. Students will receive full information on this Compulsory Course Component in the Course Outline provided by the School of Design, Communication and Information Technology.

ASSUMED KNOWLEDGE
60 units at 2000 level and 20 units at 3000 level from the Majors in the B Communication or associated combined degrees.

TEACHING METHODS
Lecture
Practical

CONTACT HOURS
Lecture, 1 hour per week for 3 weeks.
Practical, 80 hours per term for full term.

COURSE REQUISITES
This course is only available to students enrolled in the Bachelor of Communication and associated combined degree programs. In order to participate in this course, students must complete a compulsory course briefing and workplace induction.

MODE OF DELIVERY
Internal mode

COURSE WORKLOAD
Students are required to spend on average 120 – 140 hours of effort or total load (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.
DETAILED COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE OBJECTIVES / LEARNING OUTCOMES
In this course students will:
1. under supervision, apply communication skills and knowledge acquired during the degree program to the workplace environment;
2. develop critical and creative thinking skills by participating in the workplace of communication and cultural industry professionals;
3. develop an understanding of the basic social and professional contexts in which contemporary communication operates and of the role of the communication worker within these contexts;
4. produce communication products and/or materials and participate in communication activities at a professional standard; and
5. analyse and evaluate modes of communication and discourses that operate in the placement environment.

COURSE CONTENT
The course comprises activities based on describing and critically reflecting on the placement experience, and discussing and analysing professional communication practice. A student’s willingness to take responsibility, be resourceful, show initiative and willingness to complete assigned tasks will be reflected in assessment through the debriefing process with the external organisations involved and through the student’s own critical reflection.

Students will be required to present:
1. an up-to-date CV;
2. a final draft of the letter of application to the host organisation;
3. contact details of the workplace supervisor at the host organisation;
4. a “Program of Activity Agreement” submitted by the student, workplace supervisor and the Course Coordinator.

During the semester students will attend a short lecture series to cover course requirements, assessment processes and workplace issues. At the completion of the professional placement, students will present a log of work undertaken, reflections on the placement and write an essay on their placement which analyses the modes of communication and discourses within the host organisation. The student’s placement supervisor will also supply a report on the student’s performance.

Teaching program and sequence
A detailed list of the 3-week lecture program is available on the course Blackboard site.

Timetable
Class dates, times and locations are available on the Timetable website at: http://webapps.newcastle.edu.au/timetables/class_times/classtimes.cfm

LEARNING RESOURCES

Blackboard site
Students enrolled in the course can login http://Blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/ to access the Blackboard site used to support this course. You need to visit the Blackboard site on a regular basis.

ASSESSMENT ITEMS
Reports – Placement Supervisor’s Report
Projects
Essays / Written Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Item and Description</th>
<th>Method of Submission</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weighting or pass/no pass</th>
<th>Course Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Item Returnable Y/N</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document Submission Prior to commencing the work placement students must submit the following documents to the Course Coordinator through Blackboard: 1. an up-to-date CV; 2. a final draft letter of application for work placement to the host organisation;</td>
<td>Electronic submission to the designated area of the CMNS3500 BBoard site</td>
<td>Prior to placement starting Week 5 at latest</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>N</td>
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3. **Contact details of the workplace supervisor at the host organisation (included on the Placement Agreement Form);**

4. **A Placement Agreement Form that has been submitted by the workplace supervisor. The Placement Agreement Form must be approved and submitted by the Course Coordinator prior to any student commencing their placement. Students who commence placement prior to having this documentation completed cannot assume that their placement will be retrospectively approved. This procedure is in place to ensure the work placement is appropriate for meeting the course objectives and the university insurances.**

**Note:** Directions for completing this online form can be found in the Placement Guide for Students in the Placement Documents on the CMNS3500 Blackboard site.

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<tr>
<th><strong>Supervisor Report</strong></th>
<th><strong>Written Report</strong></th>
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<td>1. Students will ensure that Placement Supervisor Feedback Survey information is given to their supervisor prior to commencing the placement - ideally at the time when the placement is being negotiated. 2. The student’s work supervisor will be contacted, and will be requested to answer questions about the student’s attitude, compatibility with the professional work environment and suitability for the profession.</td>
<td>Students will submit a report (2500 words in total) which includes: 1. A log of the work undertaken in the placement and regular reflections on the placement experiences – this should be prepared as a journal and be regularly updated throughout the placement (approximately 1000 words). 2. An academic report (minimum 1500 words) which analyses the modes of communication and discourses within the host organisation. This report will draw on readings and articles in academic journals and textbooks that you have read throughout your degree to date. A full bibliography must be included with the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electronic submission</strong></td>
<td><strong>Electronic submission to the designated area of the CMNS3500 BBoard site</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 weeks after placement is completed</td>
<td>Week 5 (if placement was completed by Week 3 or prior to Week 3) OR 2 weeks after the last day of the placement</td>
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<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>1, 2, 3 &amp; 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
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| 3 weeks after submission |
**Overview of Assessment Criteria**

**Document Submission** – the purpose and benefit of the formal document submission is to provide students with an opportunity to develop skills in constructing and completing professional communication materials designed for communication industry workplace standards.

**Supervisor Report**
The Placement Supervisor’s Report enables a series of questions about the student’s attitude, compatibility with the professional work environment, and suitability for the profession to be answered. The report will provide the student with industry standard workplace evaluation of their skills, capabilities and potential development as a future employee in the communication field/s.

**Written Report**
This written assessment meets the course objectives of analysing and evaluating modes of communication within a placement context, by enabling the student (through journal-keeping and self-appraisal) to critically reflect on industry and independent communication practices.

**Marking and Grading for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Courses & Programs**

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<tr>
<th>Range of marks</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Long Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>85-100</td>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td>Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic ability; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-84</td>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>Very Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic ability; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic ability; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of most assessment objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>Fail (FF)</td>
<td>Failure to satisfactorily achieve assessment objectives or compulsory course components. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ungraded Pass (UP)</td>
<td>A grade awarded in a course for which only a pass or fail is available.</td>
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*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).*

**Detailed Assessment Criteria**
Detailed assessment criteria for each assessment task and any additional material will be available on the course Blackboard site no less than two weeks prior to the due date of each assessment.

**Application for Adverse Circumstances**

**Late Penalty**
An assessment item submitted after the due date without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of the mark awarded for the assessment item. Ten per cent of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item will be deducted for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than five days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PRACTICAL SESSIONS

Risk Assessment and Health & Safety Requirements
The issue of safety for staff and students is taken very seriously by the University. Students studying courses requiring completion of a Risk Assessment Safety Induction or other O, H & S requirement MUST complete all safety components. CMNS3500 students will be required to attend a course briefing where Occupational Health & Safety matters and Risk Assessment criteria are outlined. All students will provide signatory confirmation of their O, H & S and Risk Assessment briefing prior to commencing at their placement location. Additionally, placement organisations are required to undertake a workplace induction - specific to that organisation. There must be a formal agreement submitted by the student, the placement supervisor and Course Coordinator before placement commences.

Attendance and/or Other Class Requirements
Students are required to attend the lecture program which takes place between Weeks 1-3 (inclusive). Unless otherwise arranged with the Course Coordinator directly, students who miss the Course Briefing & Introduction; Occupational Health & Safety & Risk Assessment Lecture; and Detailed CMNS3500 Course Assessment Overview - may not be able to satisfactorily complete the course.

CONTINUOUS COURSE EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT
Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement. Information on previous course offerings is available at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/university-surveys/ The key themes of previous feedback, and any major changes that were made as a consequence of this are outlined below.

1. Early student course enrolments for CMNS3500 have been made available in 2012 to streamline student access to course information – particularly for those students seeking to complete or commence their placements during the June-July semester break.
2. School of DCIT Administration, Professional and Technical staff servicing CMNS3500 have liaised to develop more efficient preliminary student document and Supervisor feedback submissions. This has resulted in online versions of the initial Placement Agreement Form and Supervisor Report being implemented to overcome hard copy replications and potential delays with processing student applications.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Students are required to complete the Academic Honesty Module which is on the FSCIT Student Guide Blackboard Site http://Blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/. The purpose of this module is to help students understand referencing and plagiarism issues.

No alternation to this course outline will be permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved students will be notified and an amended Course Outline will be provided to students in the same manner as the original.