

Eng 3200: Professional Communications & Presentations

Lehman College, City University of New York | Section: XW81 | Fall 2020

W 6:00pm-8:40pm. Online. 3 credits; 3 hours

Professor Matt Caprioli (he/his/him)

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Office Hours: M - 11:00am-12:30pm; W - 4:00pm-5:30pm; F - 2:00-3:30pm

Welcome!

About your course:

The first part of Eng 3200 analyzes principles of effective verbal and written communication in economics, literature, jurisprudence, and marketing. The second part applies these theories toward common professional situations and documents. Students select the topic of major assignments based on one industry that are interested in. Students exit with a portfolio of their writing, design, research, and presentation skills that will impress various audiences in their field of interest.

Official description: Capstone project for Professional Communications students. Development of a major professional project in a chosen area of specialization, whether business, non-profit organizations, science or healthcare industries, public relations and marketing, or technical writing. Students research, write, and present complex discipline-specific content to various audiences in multiple media.

Required Course Materials:

- No required textbook
- Internet access to Microsoft Teams, Blackboard, YouTube, LinkedIn, and mattcap.com

Learning objectives & outcomes:

- Produce a portfolio of one's communication skills for potential employers
- Communicate effectively in a variety of professional contexts and media
- Articulate the principles of excellent writing and compelling presentations

Important links

- [Course link](#)
 - <https://mattcap.com/enw-3200/>
- [Microsoft Teams](#)
- Weekly Zoom meetings Wednesday from 6-8:40pm
 - <https://zoom.us/j/99354143090?pwd=TjA5NkldBENqT3FsOHdON1ZoVExOUT09>
- [Groups](#)
- [YouTube explanatory videos](#)

Assignments

Listed in order of due date

Grammar paper:

- Due: 9/21
- 5 points
- In-class grammar 2-paragraph paper that explains a rule of diction or grammar, then one's history or struggles in learning that rule.
 - The first paragraph explains the rule.
 - The second paragraph describes student's history of learning that rule.
- Review Week 4 for more details.

Work culture presentation:

- Due 9/30
- 10 points
- Using PowerPoint, students present to the class for 3-5-minutes on a single indicator of a positive work culture. The tone is relaxed, but not informal. Students will be graded on how well they approximate the principles outlined in:
 - "[Speeches That Make a Point](#)" in [Writing That Works](#) by Roman and Raphaelson (102-109)
 - "[Really Bad PowerPoint \(And How to Avoid It\)](#)" by Seth Godin (5-9)
- Review Week 3 for more details.

Case study:

- Due: 10/14
- 5 points
- Students identify a pain point and a solution in their chosen industry. They write a two-paragraph case study that showcases concision and comprehensiveness. Students will be graded on how well they approximate [this model from KPMG](#), as well as the lessons from "[Case Studies](#)" by Robert Bly.
- Review Week 7 for more details.

Infographic:

- Due: 10/21
- 10 points
- Students make an infographic with a design tool of their choice (Canva, Illustrator, PowerPoint, Word, etc). The infographic presents a trend in their industry of choice. Students informally share this infographic with the class.
- Review Week 9 for more details.

Engagements presentation:

- Due: 11/11

- 10 points
- Students research useful software platforms for their industry. They identify one platform that will accelerate operations at a company of their choice. Students then present a PowerPoint to the class for 3-5 minutes that explains why the company should adopt this software. The presentation follows the six-step “engagements” structure used at major consulting firms. The tone is formal. Students will be graded on how well they approximate the “engagements” format outlined in:
 - [“Writing for an Audience”](#) in [Writing That Works](#) by Roman and Raphaelson (90-102)
- Review Week 11 for more details.

Effective emailing activity:

- Due: 11/18
- 10 points
- In-class
- Review Week 12 for more details.

White paper and final presentation:

- Due 12/9
- 25 points
- After researching trends in their chosen field, students create and present a 4-12-page white paper on the trend. Their presentation is to be 5-8 minutes. Peers, the professor, and two external observers assess and grade the final presentation. The tone is formal.
- Review Week 9 for more details.

Podcast:

- Due: 12/9
- 15 points
- Students conduct and record an informational interview with a professional in their industry of choice **OR** present on an intriguing trend in their industry of choice. The podcast is 5-8 minutes long.
- Review Week 10 for more details.

Participation:

- Determined by 12/16
- 10 points
- Assessed by: record of attendance; practice of listening and responding to peers; offer thoughtful contributions to class discussion; make a focused effort to complete all in-class writing assignments.

=100 total possible points

A 94-100 (4.0), A- 90-93 (3.7), B+ 87-89 (3.3), B 83-86 (3.0), B- 80-82 (2.7), C+ 77-79 (2.3),
C 73-76 (2.0), C- 70-72 (1.7), D 65-69 (1.0), F 0-64 (0.0)

Grading Policies:

As with many professional environments, I do not accept any late work except under extraordinary circumstances. This means that all late work receives a zero. However, I am generous when it comes to extra credit. Unless otherwise specified, all extra credit opportunities are worth five points.

They include:

- A 10% grade increase for every assignment handed one week early.
- Writing one article for Lehman's student newspaper, *The Meridian*.
- Contributing one piece to Lehman's radio program, *The Underground Radio*.
- Earning a professional certificate through LinkedIn, HubSpot, Microsoft, or Google that is cleared with the professor.
- Completing Norton/Write segment on sentences, language, or punctuation/mechanics.

Calendar of Lectures, Readings & Assignments

Assignment due dates are marked in cyan.

Week 1 - Introductions

W - 8/26

- What is a “capstone” course?
- How do you identify professional goals?
- Which six principles of business etiquette will get you far anywhere?

Week 2 - Understanding Culture & Audience

W - 9/2

Required reading by the start of class:

- Read “[Good Writing](#)” by Steven Pinker in [The Sense of Style](#)
- Read chapter one of [Writing that Works: How to Communicate Effectively in Business](#) by Kenneth Roman and Joel Raphaelson
- Listen to “[Adidas Reckons With Race](#)” on [The Journal](#) by WSJ

Selected reading by the start of class:

- *Read **one** of the following:*
 - *Excerpted Part 1 of [Edge: Turning Adversity into Advantage](#) by Laura Huang*
 - *Chapter 2 and 3 in [Give and Take: Why Helping Others Drives our Success](#) by Adam Grant*
 - *Part 4 of [How to Win Friends and Influence People](#) by Dale Carnegie*

Agenda

- Review & discuss “Good Writing” and “Writing that Works”
- Present readings and podcasts (WSJ, Huang, Grant, Carnegie, Culture calls)
- What are the six principles of a “sticky” story?
- How should businesses respond to major societal events?
- What typifies a great company culture?

Week 3 - What Makes a Story Stick?

W- 9/9

Required reading by the start of class:

Page numbers apply to books, not PDF

- Excerpt from [Contagious: Why Things Catch On](#) by Jonah Berger (21- 27)
- Watch a “[Will It Blend](#)” video. This video series is meant to sell blenders.
- Excerpt from [Made to Stick](#) by Chip Heath & Dan Heath (10-18)
- Watch [Jill Bolte Taylor’s TED talk](#) on studying her stroke as a cognitive psychiatrist
- Read [How A Lawsuit Over Hot Coffee Helped Erode the 7th Amendment OR Tort Reform Is A Lie: Hot Coffee Still Being Used To Mislead](#)
- “[Cheer Up, Everyone’s Had Their Moment](#)” in [On Speaking Well](#) by Peggy Noonan (3-8)
- “[Speeches that Make a Point](#)” in [Writing That Works](#) by Roman and Raphaelson (102-109)
- “[Really Bad PowerPoint \(And How to Avoid It\)](#)” by Seth Godin (5-9)

Agenda

- Discuss Berger and Heath
 - Is “SUCCESS” or “STEPS” present in the Stella Liebeck case?
 - What makes Taylor’s TED talk effective?
 - Why did “Will It Blend” go viral?
- Professor’s presentation: Why a Coffee Pot Will Determine the Fate of Your Company
 - Did the professor follow the five suggestions in “Writing for an Audience?”
- For you, what is one indicator of a great work culture?
 - Potential indicators:
 - Free childcare; inspiring middle managers; clear on-boarding processes; zero nepotism; worker’s rights posted in the kitchen; free lunches; clear job promotion pathways; transparent compensation; paid paternal leave; excellent Glassdoor reviews; respect from C-suite; documented history of anti-racism; double-digit growth; innovation; fewer than 30 people
 - Brain storm as individuals or in groups
 - The professor will be on Zoom. Run ideas by him as needed.

Week 4 - Is Grammar Important in the Workplace?

W - 9/16

Required reading by the start of class:

- Ryan Wiens, “[I Won’t Hire People Who Use Poor Grammar. Here’s Why](#)” in [Harvard Business Review](#)
- “[Don’t mumble — and Other Principles of Effective Writing](#)” in [Writing That Works](#) by Roman and Raphaelson (7-35)
- “[Telling Right From Wrong](#)” in [The Sense of Style](#) by Steven Pinker (187-201)
- Watch “[3 PowerPoint Hacks](#)” by Lelia Gharani

Agenda

- Any early work culture presentations are welcome
- How do Pinker and Wiens differ in their view of grammar at work?
- What was most useful to you in the Roman and Raphaelson reading?
- Does grammar matter on Slack or Microsoft Teams?
- Have you tried any of Gharani's hacks?
- Professor's presentation on "a" vs. "an"; "she" vs. "her"; "amount vs. number"; "uninterested" vs. "disinterested"; "use" vs. "utilize"
- In-class grammar paper explaining a rule of syntax or grammar and one's history in learning that rule.
 - The first paragraph explains the rule.
 - The second paragraph describes your history of learning it.
 - Review [Pinker](#) or [Roman & Raphaelson](#) for commonly misused words or grammatical errors. You can also refer to William Strunk & E.B. White in [The Elements of Style](#), "[Chapter 4: Words and Expressions Commonly Misused](#)."
 - If you cannot think of a time you learned the proper use of a word or a grammatical rule, then choose one commonly misused word or rule of grammar outlined in Pinker, Roman & Raphaelson, or Strunk & White. Explain it, then give advice on how others can learn it.

Using the basics of MLA style, send in grammar paper by Monday at 11pm (9/21).

Week 5 - What story do you tell at work?

W - 9/23

Required reading by the start of class:

- Chapter 9 of [Edge: Turning Adversity into Advantage](#) by Laura Huang (144-164)

Agenda

- Discuss Huang
 - How do you tell a compelling story as an individual?
- Determine which industry you want to focus your major assignments on.
 - Brain storm as individuals or in groups
 - The professor will be on Zoom. Run ideas by him as needed.

Week 6 – Work Culture Presentations

W - 9/30

Agenda

- **Work culture presentations: due at beginning of class**

Week 7 - How Do You Write a Case Study?

W - 10/7

Required reading by the start of class:

- [“Case Studies”](#) in [The Copywriter’s Handbook](#) by Robert Bly (389-394)
- [“25 Case Study Examples Every Marketer Should See”](#) on HubSpot
- Case study by KPMG: [“Driving down the deal price”](#)

Agenda

- Discuss readings
- Brainstorm a case study for your industry

Week 8 - How Do You Make a Memorable Infographic?

W - 10/14

Required reading by the start of class:

- [“A step-by-step guide to designing from scratch”](#) on Canva
- Neil Patel’s [“12 Infographic Tips That You Wish You Knew Years Ago”](#)

Agenda

- **Case Study Due: students informally discuss their case study with the class**
- Discuss infographics

Week 9 - How Do You Write an Effective White Paper?

W - 10/21

Required reading by the start of class:

- “White Papers” in [The Copywriter’s Handbook](#) by Robert Bly (376-388)

Agenda

- **Infographic due:** students informally discuss their infographic with the class
- Discuss Bly
- Brainstorm our own white papers

Week 10 - How Do You Make a Memorable Podcast?

W - 10/28

Required reading by the start of class:

- [“Starting Your Podcast: A Guide For Students”](#) from NPR
- Listen to Kira Wampler, former CMO of Lyft, on [The Growth Show](#) by HubSpot. Available on:
 - [Apple Podcasts](#)
 - [Pandora](#)
 - [HubSpot](#)

Agenda

- Overview of podcast assignment
- Podcasting platforms: Anchor, GarageBand, Soundtrap

Week 11 - How Do You Recommend a New Tool at Work?

W - 11/4

Required by the start of class:

- Read interview about contracts platform Coupa
- Read profile on ZoomInfo
- Read [“Writing for an Audience: Presentations and Speeches”](#) in [Writing that Works](#) by Kenneth Roman and Joel Raphaelson (90-102)

Agenda

- What software platforms or tools in your industry are cutting-edge?
- What is an “engagements” presentation?

Week 12 - What Is Effective Email Correspondence?

W - 11/11

Required by the start of class:

- “Email” in Writing That Works by Roman and Raphaelson (45-60)
- “Writing to Sell” in The Copywriter’s Handbook by Robert Bly (71-97)

Agenda

- **Engagements presentations: due at the start of class**
- Discussion of personas
- In-class activity on effective emails
 - Email campaigns:
 - Imagine you are selling a new product for a company within your industry. You can send 3,000 emails to people who have liked your company on Facebook. You want these people to buy the new product. Identify three types of people (personas) within your industry who may buy the new product. Write each persona a short (fewer than 150 words) email explaining how the product will appeal to them.
 - Emails across a company:
 - Imagine you are VP of operations at a Manhattan-based manufacturing company with 900 employees. Your immediate boss, the SVP of Operations, informed you that her boss said that everyone will receive a 30% reduction in their annual bonus because Q4 targets fell short, due in part to a factory fire at the company’s supplier in Mexico. You are tasked with notifying the entire company of this development. How do you break the news to the 700-person “rank-and-file,” your 150 VP or director-level peers, and the 50 members of the C-Suite?

Week 13 - White Paper Workshop

W - 11/18

Agenda

- **Effective Emailing Activity: should be emailed to the professor by the start of class**
- In-class time to work on white papers

Week 14 - White Paper or Podcast Workshop

W - 11/25

Agenda

- In-class time to work on white papers or podcasts

[11/26-29 no classes, Thanksgiving]

Week 15 - White Paper or Podcast Workshop

W - 12/2

Agenda

- Workshop

Week 16 - Podcast Presentations

W - 12/9

Agenda

- Podcasts are emailed to the professor by the start of class
- White papers are emailed to the professor before the start of class.
- White paper presentations begin at the start of class.

Week 17 - Finals

W - 12/16

Agenda

- Remaining presentations
- Gifts
- A toast!

Important Statements:

Absences

All absences are considered unexcused. Your peers need you to be present to read their work and discuss concepts with them. Some absences are unavoidable, but try to be as courteous to others as you can by showing up on time. **Four absences will result in the deduction of a full letter grade.** These absences can be made up with extra credit, but it will not replenish all deducted credits. Absence is the most common reason for not graduating. Stay strong and avoid being absent!

Academic integrity/ Plagiarism

Lehman takes plagiarism seriously, as do all higher education organizations and private institutions. You were admitted into Lehman because you have the ability to excel on your own. Plagiarism is a breach of this trust. It also makes no economic sense and is reason to be fired in a professional setting. Why, your boss may ask, should I employ you when there are others who can actually do their own work?

You should familiarize yourself with Lehman's standards regarding academic integrity [here](http://lehman.smartcatalogiq.com/2017-2019/Undergraduate-Bulletin/Academic-Services-and-Policies/Academic-Integrity):
<http://lehman.smartcatalogiq.com/2017-2019/Undergraduate-Bulletin/Academic-Services-and-Policies/Academic-Integrity>

Anti-racism

Lehman College is committed to ending implicit and structural bias in its operations and curricula. The English department, in particular, aims to decolonize its curriculum to enable thinkers from all walks of life to share their valuable perspectives that have historically been repressed. As your professor, I aim to expand my syllabi and welcome suggestions for writers, speakers, or artists who are underrepresented and should visit the class or appear on the syllabus. I also encourage honest, critical thought on race and other key societal issues we read about every day. I ask everyone be respectful and assume the best in your fellow classmates. Everyone deserves space to learn and make mistakes; I ask that everyone do their best to remain supportive rather than castigatory. With that said, I will not hesitate to stop and escalate to the Department's Chair and The Office of Compliance and Diversity any behavior that harms other students.

Communication

Email: If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at any time. I am also available on Microsoft Teams. I will respond to everything within one business day. Please note that I do not check my Lehman email after 5pm.

Conduct expectations

Be discreet with eating food. No sleeping. Do not work on assignments due at the start of classes.

Counseling and support

[The Counseling Center](#) is offering virtual services for registered Lehman College students. Students can call (718-960-8761) or email counseling.center@lehman.cuny.edu with their name, EMPLID, email address, telephone number, & days and times they are available. A counselor will follow up with the student as soon as possible. Contact the professor for more information about NY state Mental Health Covid Coping Circles. The [Lehman Library research guides](#) site includes a compilation of Wellness resources:
https://libguides.lehman.edu/arts_and_wellness_coronavirus

Disabilities

The [mission](#) of the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) is to offer students with disabilities equal access to all Lehman programs and activities in a climate that is welcoming and conducive to individual growth. Students with disabilities who may need classroom accommodations or

[assistive technologies](#) are encouraged to [register](#) with the Office of Student Disability services. For more information, call 718-960-8441.

English advising page

While all of your professors are willing to advise you on your college career and professional plans, you may want additional input. <https://www.lehman.edu/academics/arts-humanities/english/advising-faqs.php>

Immigration

Undocumented students have the right to an education and to live free from of deportation. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them with me. There are many resources on campus, throughout CUNY and NYC, and I am happy to point you toward additional resources. All communication around immigration is confidential.

International students

The [International Student and Scholar Office](#) is dedicated to providing services, programs and activities that facilitate U.S immigration compliance and cross-cultural learning experiences to students and scholars in meeting their academic, personal growth and professional goals.

IT Help Desk

The Lehman help desk is responsive and knowledgeable; they're always happy to help with an technical issues or questions: <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/help-desk.php>.

Late Policy

This course will prepare you for every future course at Lehman, and especially your professional life. Just as a boss would frown on you being late for work, so will tardiness be factored into your participation final grade.

Lehman Resources during Covid-19

[Lehman's Coronavirus Resources site](#) has an invaluable Student Resources page, which including information on laptop loans and WiFi access: <http://lehman.edu/coronavirus/student.php> .

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects individuals from discrimination based on sex in any educational program receiving federal financial assistance. Sexual harassment, which includes acts of sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX, and is considered a Civil Rights offense. Lehman College encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to a faculty member, counselor, or staff; confidential resources are available through the Lehman Counseling Center at (718) 960-8761.

Tutoring & Student Services

The Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) and the Science Learning Center (SLC): Lehman College has two tutoring centers on campus. The ACE provides appointment based and drop-in tutoring in the humanities, social sciences, and writing, as well as general writing skills and test preparation workshops for the CPE. The SCL provides drop-in tutoring for natural and computer science courses. More information about the ACE and the SLC is available on their website at <http://www.lehman.edu/issp>, or by calling ACE at 718-960-8175, and the SLC at 718-960-7707.