



MONASH University

FIT2035
Communications for IT professionals

Unit guide

Semester 1, 2009

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FIT2035 Communications for IT professionals - Semester 1, 2009

Unit leader :

Lecturer(s) :

Clayton

- Ros Rimington
- Noriaki Sato

Tutors(s) :

Clayton

- Ros Rimington
- Noriaki Sato
- Malini Jayaganesh

Introduction

Welcome to FIT 2035 Communications for IT Professionals unit. This 6-point unit is a core unit in all Industry-based Learning (IBL) courses offered in the Faculty of Information Technology.

This unit was primarily designed to respond industry sponsors' increasing demands that IBL students are assisted in their preparation for successful placements by a program that develops the confidence, understandings and ability to participate in personal and professional, formal and informal workplace communications.

Unit synopsis

ASCED Discipline Group Classification: 020399 Information Systems not elsewhere classified.

This unit provides a theoretical and practical overview of personal and professional communications. Topics include: the elements of communication, barriers and cultural differences; active listening and feedback cues; public speaking; technical and business text structures, and language features; workplace communications; personal and professional ethics and codes of practice; negotiation skills and conflict resolution; cross-cultural communications and sensitivity required in the current global economic and business context.

The unit is delivered in two parts. Each week, a one-hour lecture will introduce theoretical backgrounds of the weekly topic, and this is followed by practical exercises and activities in a three-hour workshop. In this way, students will learn both theoretical and practical aspects of the issues discussed in the unit.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the unit, students should have skills that enable them to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to take leadership roles and work co-operatively with peers/colleagues.

2. Describe the purpose, protocols and procedures for, and the roles of participants, in formal/informal meetings and interviews.
3. Describe several conditions and procedures for negotiation and dealing with conflict.
4. Be sensitive to and demonstrate understanding of cultural differences.
5. Describe the cross-cultural understandings and challenges of participating in the global economy.
6. Describe the elements of effective communication and discuss barriers to the production and reception of meaning.
7. Explain and demonstrate the appropriate adjustment of register in formal and informal, social and professional, verbal and non-verbal interpersonal communications.
8. Select and use strategies for effective and efficient productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (reading and listening) communications.
9. Produce a variety of professional writing genres in the appropriate text structure using the appropriate language features. For example, memos, emails, faxes, business letters, reports and job application letters.
10. Understand current ICT trends e.g. communications groupware.
11. Present a formal (oral) report to peers in a formal business setting and demonstrate the ability to translate the written genre into the spoken.
12. Demonstrate the ability to make effective use of technology in oral and written communication.
13. Discuss a variety of organizational structures, management styles and culture.
14. Discuss workplace demeanour and reporting relationships.
15. Understand and apply the CSA code of ethics and professional practice and analyse the competing interests and possible consequences of a variety of ethical dilemmas.
16. Demonstrate the ability to make an effective presentation, orally and in writing, of a technical IT subject to a non-technical audience.

Workload

- 1 one-hour lecture
- 1 three-hour workshop
- 6 to 8 hours of additional study per week

Unit relationships

Prerequisites

Before attempting this unit you must have satisfactorily completed

Completion of 24 points at First Year, or equivalent.

Relationships

FIT2035 is a core unit in the Industry-Based Learning Stream of the Bachelor of Business Information Systems

Continuous improvement

Monash is committed to 'Excellence in education' (Monash Directions 2025 - <http://www.monash.edu.au/about/monash-directions/directions.html>) and strives for the highest possible quality in teaching and learning.

To monitor how successful we are in providing quality teaching and learning Monash regularly seeks feedback from students, employers and staff. One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through Unit Evaluation Surveys. The University's Unit Evaluation policy

(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/unit-evaluation-policy.html>) requires that every unit offered is evaluated each year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the surveys as they are an important avenue for students to “have their say”. The feedback is anonymous and provides the Faculty with evidence of aspects that students are satisfied and areas for improvement.

Faculties have the option of administering the Unit Evaluation survey online through the my.monash portal or in class. Lecturers will inform students of the method being used for this unit towards the end of the semester.

Student Evaluations

If you wish to view how previous students rated this unit, please go to <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/cheq/evaluations/unit-evaluations/>

Unit staff - contact details

Unit leader

None provided

Lecturer(s) :

Ros Rimington

Noriaki Sato

Tutor(s) :

Malini Jayaganesh

Noriaki Sato

Ros Rimington

Additional communication information

Lecturer/Tutor: Ros Rimington (Faculty ofEngineering)

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Lecturer/Tutor: Noriaki Sato (Hargrave-AndrewLibrary)

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Teaching and learning method

This is an on-campus unit. Compulsory lectures and workshops are complementary to each other, and students' attendance will be taken and assessed as a part of the final results. It is also expected that students spend at least an additional 6 to 8 hours per week to study the lecture material and prepare for workshop activities.

Communication, participation and feedback

Monash aims to provide a learning environment in which students receive a range of ongoing feedback throughout their studies. You will receive feedback on your work and progress in this unit. This may take the form of group feedback, individual feedback, peer feedback, self-comparison, verbal and written feedback, discussions (on line and in class) as well as more formal feedback related to assignment marks and grades. You are encouraged to draw on a variety of feedback to enhance your learning.

It is essential that you take action immediately if you realise that you have a problem that is affecting your study. Semesters are short, so we can help you best if you let us know as soon as problems arise. Regardless of whether the problem is related directly to your progress in the unit, if it is likely to interfere with your progress you should discuss it with your lecturer or a Community Service counsellor as soon as possible.

Unit Schedule

Week	Topic	Key dates
1	Introduction to the unit and theory of communication	
2	Introduction to professional writing	
3	Professional writing (cont.)	
4	Writing a job application	Proposal due Mar 27
5	Writing a cv and cover letter	
6	Interview techniques	Job application assignment due April 9
Mid semester break		
7	Working in teams	
8	Conflict resolution	Progress report due May 1
9	Report writing	
10	How to present	
11	Management and organisational structures	
12	Cross-cultural issues and professional ethics	Final report due May 29
13	Review	Journal due June 5

Unit Resources

Prescribed text(s) and readings

There is no prescribed textbook for this unit because of the nature of the unit's contents. Instead, each week students will be provided with a list of relevant reading materials/exercise instructions, which will be used to prepare students for the next workshop.

Students will, however, find the following recommended texts highly relevant and useful not only to prepare for lectures/workshops, but also to consolidate their understanding of unit materials.

Recommended text(s) and readings

Baker E, Barrett M & Roberts L (2002) *Working Communications*. Queensland: Wiley

Bromberg M & Liebb J (1997) *The English You Need to Know*. New York: Barrons

Dwyer J (2005) *Communication in Business - Strategies and Skills*. Sydney: Prentice Hall

Eunson B (2005) *Communicating in the 21st Century*. Queensland: Wiley & Sons

Hofstede G (1991) *Culture and Organisations*. London: Harper Collins

McKenna B, Thomas G & Waddell N (2004) *Australian Guide to Corporate Communication - A Practical Handbook on Effective Writing and Speaking*. NSW: Social Science Press

Mohan T, McGregor H, Saunders S & Archee R (2004) *Communicating as Professionals*. Australia: Thomson

Windschuttle K & Elliot T (1994) *Writing Researching, Communicating*. Sydney: McGraw Hill

Equipment and consumables required or provided

Students studying off-campus are required to have the minimum system configuration specified by the Faculty as a condition of accepting admission, and regular Internet access. On-campus students, and those studying at supported study locations may use the facilities available in the computing labs. Information about computer use for students is available from the ITS Student Resource Guide in the Monash University Handbook. You will need to allocate up to **n** hours per week for use of a computer, including time for newsgroups/discussion groups.

Study resources

Study resources we will provide for your study are:

Library access

The Monash University Library site contains details about borrowing rights and catalogue searching. To learn more about the library and the various resources available, please go to <http://www.lib.monash.edu.au>.

The Educational Library and Media Resources (LMR) is also a very resourceful place to visit at <http://www.education.monash.edu.au/library/>

Monash University Studies Online (MUSO)

All unit and lecture materials are available through MUSO (Monash University Studies Online). Blackboard is the primary application used to deliver your unit resources. Some units will be piloted in Moodle. If your unit is piloted in Moodle, you will see a link from your Blackboard unit to Moodle (<http://moodle.monash.edu.au>) and can bookmark this link to access directly. In Moodle, from the Faculty of Information Technology category, click on the link for your unit.

You can access MUSO and Blackboard via the portal: <http://my.monash.edu.au>

Click on the Study and enrolment tab, then Blackboard under the MUSO learning systems.

In order for your Blackboard unit(s) to function correctly, your computer needs to be correctly configured.

For example:

- Blackboard supported browser
- Supported Java runtime environment

For more information, please visit: <http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/students/downloadables-student.html>

You can contact the MUSO Support by phone : (+61 3) 9903 1268

For further contact information including operational hours, please visit:
<http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/students/contact.html>

Further information can be obtained from the MUSO support site:
<http://www.monash.edu.au/muso/support/index.html>

Assessment

Unit assessment policy

To pass this unit, a student must obtain:

- 40% or more in the unit's examination
and
- 40% or more in the unit's total non-examination assessment
and
- an overall unit mark of 50% or more

If a student does not achieve 40% or more in the unit examination or the unit non-examination total assessment, and the total mark for the unit is greater than 44% then a mark of 44-N will be recorded for the unit.

Assignment tasks

- **Assignment Task**

Title : Written assignment

Description :

Each student will conduct his/her own mini-project during the semester, and produce a proposal, a progress report and a final report.

Weighting : 25%

Criteria for assessment :

Criteria 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 16 described in the Learning Objectives

Due date : Proposal, Mar 27; Progress report, May 1; Final report May 29

- **Assignment Task**

Title : Job application assignment

Description :

Description: Students will submit a complete job application (i.e. a CV, a cover letter, and a document containing responses to key criteria).

Weighting : 10%

Criteria for assessment :

Criteria 7, 8, 9 and 12 described in the Learning Objectives

Due date : April 9

- **Assignment Task**

Title : Oral presentation

Description :

Students will deliver an oral presentation on the same topic they selected for the report writing assignment.

Weighting : 20%

Criteria for assessment :

Criteria 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 16 described in the Learning Objectives

Due date : Workshops in weeks 11 and 12

- **Assignment Task**

Title : Attendance and participation

Description :

As teaching of this unit is heavily based on students' participation in workshop exercises and activities, students' attendance and participation will be assessed towards students' final results. Students will also be required to keep journals as a hurdle task, which will then be submitted at the end of the semester.

Weighting : 20%

Criteria for assessment :

Criteria 1, 2 and 3 described in the Learning Objectives

Due date : Journal due June 5

Examinations

- **Examination 1**

Weighting : 25%

Length : 2 hours

Type (open/closed book) : Closed book

Assignment submission

All the assignments are to be submitted manually at the faculty's office. The materials to be submitted should have appropriate presentation and format, detailed instructions for which will be provided during the workshops.

Assignment coversheets

The assignment cover sheet can be downloaded from the Faculty of IT Website:
<http://infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/assignments/>

University and Faculty policy on assessment

Due dates and extensions

The due dates for the submission of assignments are given in the previous section. Please make every effort to submit work by the due dates. It is your responsibility to structure your study program around assignment deadlines, family, work and other commitments. Factors such as normal work pressures, vacations, etc. are seldom regarded as appropriate reasons for granting extensions. Students are advised to NOT assume that granting of an extension is a matter of course.

Requests for extensions must be made to the unit lecturer at your campus at least two days before the due date. You will be asked to forward original medical certificates in cases of illness, and may be asked to provide other forms of documentation where necessary. A copy of the email or other written communication of an extension must be attached to the assignment submission.

Late assignment

Assignments received after the due date will normally not be accepted unless an agreement has been reached with the lecturer prior to the due date.

Return dates

Students can expect assignments to be returned within two weeks of the submission date or after receipt, whichever is later.

Assessment for the unit as a whole is in accordance with the provisions of the Monash University Education Policy at <http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/>

We will aim to have assignment results made available to you within two weeks after assignment receipt.

Plagiarism, cheating and collusion

Plagiarism and cheating are regarded as very serious offences. In cases where cheating has been confirmed, students have been severely penalised, from losing all marks for an assignment, to facing disciplinary action at the Faculty level. While we would wish that all our students adhere to sound ethical conduct and honesty, I will ask you to acquaint yourself with the University Plagiarism policy and procedure (<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/plagiarism-procedures.html>) which applies to students detected plagiarising.

In this University, cheating means seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in any examination or any other written or practical work to be submitted or completed by a student for assessment. It includes the use, or attempted use, of any means to gain an unfair advantage for any assessable work in the unit, where the means is contrary to the instructions for such work.

When you submit an individual assessment item, such as a program, a report, an essay, assignment or other piece of work, under your name you are understood to be stating that this is your own work. If a submission is identical with, or similar to, someone else's work, an assumption of cheating may arise. If you are planning on working with another student, it is acceptable to undertake research together, and discuss problems, but it is not acceptable to jointly develop or share solutions unless this is specified by your lecturer.

Intentionally providing students with your solutions to assignments is classified as "assisting to cheat" and students who do this may be subject to disciplinary action. You should take reasonable care that your solution is not accidentally or deliberately obtained by other students. For example, do not leave copies of your work in progress on the hard drives of shared computers, and do not show your work to other students. If you believe this may have happened, please be sure to contact your lecturer as soon as possible.

Cheating also includes taking into an examination any material contrary to the regulations, including any bilingual dictionary, whether or not with the intention of using it to obtain an advantage.

Plagiarism involves the false representation of another person's ideas, or findings, as your own by either copying material or paraphrasing without citing sources. It is both professional and ethical to reference clearly the ideas and information that you have used from another writer. If the source is not identified, then you have plagiarised work of the other author. Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that is insulting to the reader and grossly unfair to your student colleagues.

Register of counselling about plagiarism

The university requires faculties to keep a simple and confidential register to record counselling to students about plagiarism (e.g. warnings). The register is accessible to Associate Deans Teaching (or nominees) and, where requested, students concerned have access to their own details in the register. The register is to serve as a record of counselling about the nature of plagiarism, not as a record of allegations; and no provision of appeals in relation to the register is necessary or applicable.

Non-discriminatory language

The Faculty of Information Technology is committed to the use of non-discriminatory language in all forms of communication. Discriminatory language is that which refers in abusive terms to gender, race, age, sexual orientation, citizenship or nationality, ethnic or language background, physical or mental ability, or political or religious views, or which stereotypes groups in an adverse manner. This is not meant to preclude or inhibit legitimate academic debate on any issue; however, the language used in such debate should be non-discriminatory and sensitive to these matters. It is important to avoid the use of discriminatory language in your communications and written work. The most common form of discriminatory language in academic work tends to be in the area of gender inclusiveness. You are, therefore, requested to check for this and to ensure your work and communications are non-discriminatory in all respects.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities that may disadvantage them in assessment should seek advice from one of the following before completing assessment tasks and examinations:

- Faculty of Information Technology Student Service staff, and / or
- your Unit Coordinator, or

- Disabilities Liaison Unit

Deferred assessment and special consideration

Deferred assessment (not to be confused with an extension for submission of an assignment) may be granted in cases of extenuating personal circumstances such as serious personal illness or bereavement. Information and forms for Special Consideration and deferred assessment applications are available at <http://www.monash.edu.au/exams/special-consideration.html>. Contact the Faculty's Student Services staff at your campus for further information and advice.