

**Wheeling Jesuit University**  
**Department of Communication**  
**COMM-481: Senior Seminar (3 cr.)**  
**T 6:00-8:50 pm**  
**Spring 2019**

**Instructor: Dr. Nancy Bressler**

**Office: ASC 314-A**

**Phone: 304-243-2302**

**Email: [nbressler@wju.edu](mailto:nbressler@wju.edu)**

**Office Hours: T/Th 11:00-11:50; M 3:30-5:30 and by appointment**

**Course Catalog Description:**

This course is a guided experience creating a senior capstone project that is the culmination of the student's studies in the Communication major. A project will be related to the student's post-graduation roles and will be presented at Research Day in the spring. Students also finalize a professional portfolio of work that they can show to potential employers or use for graduate school applications.

**Required Materials:**

Internet access to check our Blackboard site often for information, assignments, and updates

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- 1) Create a research-oriented thesis or practical media-based project that critically explores the field of Communication (*"Creating" on Bloom's Taxonomy Scale*).
- 2) Implement what you have learned about the Communication field into a meaningful project (*"Applying" on Bloom's Taxonomy Scale*).
- 3) Identify and synthesize learning objectives connected to core ideas within the Communications field (*"Remembering" on Bloom's Taxonomy Scale*).
- 4) Utilize oral and presentational skills to articulate your project during the Student Research and Scholarship Symposium (*"Applying" on Bloom's Taxonomy Scale*).
- 5) Compile your professional portfolio (*"Creating" on Bloom's Taxonomy Scale*).

**Evaluation Methods:**

You will have the opportunity to **earn** 1000 points this semester in the following ways:

**Introduction & Significance Paper = 40 points**

**Literature Review Paper or Storyboard of Video or Drawing of Website Design = 50 points**

**Website Paragraph/Links = 50 points**

**First Draft of Project = 60 points**

**Final Draft of Project = 300 points**

**Symposium Abstract = 25 points**

**Symposium Presentation = 200 points**

**Final Professional Portfolio = 225 points (75 points per project)**

**Linked-In Page Assignment, Peer Reviews and Other In-Class Activities = 50 points**

### **Final Grades**

A = 1000-930 points

A- = 929-900 points

B+ = 899-870 points

B = 869-830 points

B- = 829-800 points

C+ = 799-770 points

C = 769-730 points

C- = 729-700 points

D+ = 699-670 points

D = 669-600 points

F = 599 and below

**\*\*Note: Final grades are NOT rounded up! If you earn 799 points, it is a C+.**

### **Assignments:**

#### ***Introduction & Significance Paper***

For the first official written assignment, identify **WHAT** you will be doing, the topic of your final project, and how it relates to the learning outcomes in Communication that you have identified for yourself within this project. Ask yourself: What information from classes, internships/service projects, or research have I learned that will be beneficial in my project? Why are **YOU** interested in doing this project and how does it illustrate what you will do/hope to do after graduation?

Next, discuss the implications for this research (consider the relational, social, and/or cultural influence). This section should make an argument for the research that you will do **OR** the significance of the project you will create.

After that, state 3 possible LOCs for your project from the handout; these can be broad for now such as “Engage in Communication inquiry”. End this paper with some possible areas you will research while building the next section of your research paper; if you are doing a media based project, identify the next steps you have for completing your project.

The entire paper should be a minimum of 3 pages (Remember: APA format is Times New Roman, 12 point, double-spaced) in length. Upload a paper copy to our Google Drive and submit a paper copy.

#### ***Literature Review Paper or Storyboard of Video or Drawing of Website***

Next, you will create the framework for your project. If you are doing a research paper, you’ll craft your literature review and synthesize scholarly sources to ultimately develop your hypotheses and/or research questions. Propose possible hypotheses and/or research questions at the end. You’ll also include revised learning outcomes for

your overall project with a deeper explanation of each. This should be a minimum 7 page paper (not including learning outcomes) in APA format.

If you are creating a video, create sketches of what your final project will look like. If you are creating a website, create drawings of the different pages that would appear on the website. If you are creating a video or a website, a minimum 2-page paper (not including learning outcomes) in APA format explaining your design decisions is also required.

At the end of your paper (and NOT included in the 7+ or 2+ page requirement), state and explain your revised LOCs for the project. These should be more specific than the previous assignment. For example, you might now know that you want to “Formulate questions appropriate for Communication scholarship.” You should state that and then explain HOW your project will address that LOC. Each LOC and explanation should be at least 1/2 a page. Upload a paper copy to our Google Drive and submit a paper copy.

### ***Website Paragraph/Links***

In order to exhibit your work during your time at WJU, you will write TWO biography paragraphs. Similar to your LinkedIn page, these paragraphs should focus on your experience, skills, and projects completed while at WJU. Additionally, be sure to include AT LEAST one link to any photograph portfolios, videos, websites, research papers, and/or other examples that demonstrate who you are and what you have learned. This website will help promote the Communications department and can be used by you to apply for internships, jobs, and graduate school. Send an email with this information to Dr. Bressler by the deadline below.

### ***First Draft of Project***

A first draft of your project is due by this deadline. If you are writing a research paper, it must be formatted in APA format and uploaded to our Google Drive. Be sure to also submit a paper copy in a folder with all earlier copies of the project with my feedback.

NOTE: IF you are considering submitting this project to the ECA Undergraduate Symposium in Providence, RI, this draft MUST be your completed project and the best representation of your work.

If you are creating a media-based project, it must be uploaded to our Google Drive, Wordpress, or Wibly. Submit the link to the project via email. Be sure to include earlier work on the project including your sketches, interview questions/answers, and any other relevant papers with my feedback in a folder.

### ***Final Draft of Project***

A final draft of your project is due before you leave for Spring Break. It should demonstrate significant revisions from the first draft based on my feedback and your fellow classmates' advice.

If you are writing a research paper, it must be formatted in APA format and uploaded to Blackboard. Be sure to also submit a paper copy in a folder with all earlier copies of the project with my and your classmates' feedback; if you are missing your peer reviews comments, your own grade on the peer review will be reduced.

If you are creating a media-based project, it must be uploaded to our Google Drive, Wordpress, or Wibly. Submit the link to the project through Blackboard if it is a website. Be sure to include earlier work on the project including your sketches, interview questions/answers, and papers with my and your classmates' feedback in a folder; if you are missing your peer reviews comments, your own grade on the peer review will be reduced.

**Final Draft of Project due Tuesday, February 26 by 7:30 pm**

### ***Symposium Abstract***

A requirement of this class is participation in Research Day (which occurs on Tuesday, April 2, 2019). You must submit a 300-500 word abstract, requesting to participate in the Student Research and Scholarship Symposium. You must give either an oral presentation or a poster presentation. Information about the event can be found at this link: <http://www.wju.edu/academics/symposium/>. You must email a copy of your confirmed submission to Dr. Bressler and upload a copy of your final abstract on Blackboard.

**First Draft of Abstract bring to class Tuesday, January 22 by 6:00 pm**

**Revised Draft of Abstract bring to class Tuesday, January 29 by 6:00 pm**

**\*\*We will submit the final drafts of your abstracts during class on January 29.**

### ***Symposium Presentation***

Once accepted for presentation, students are required to attend Research Day and present their project during the Student Research and Scholarship Symposium as either a poster or an oral presentation with visual aid. If your presentation is not selected, you must still attend your classmates' presentations and complete an additional assignment. A program of the day's events will be posted on WJU's website once students have been notified of acceptance.

**Student Research & Scholarship Symposium is Tuesday, April 2 from 9:00 am – 6:00 pm**

### ***Final Professional Portfolio***

The Communication Department has moved to a portfolio-based system to track internship and service projects. Internships, communication-based service projects, and communication-based on-campus activities count towards meeting the Portfolio requirement. You are required to do **THREE** internship or service projects.

For each project, you should submit the following forms:

- 1) Student's evaluation of project (Appendix A)
- 2) Supervisor's evaluation of project (Appendix B)
- 3) Self-assessment paper
- 4) Sample of work (if applicable)
- 5) \*\*If you registered for an internship, you also need the registration approval form and weekly journals

**Final portfolios are due Tuesday, April 16 by 7:30 pm.**

### ***Linked-In Page Assignment, Peer Reviews and Other In-Class Activities***

In order to finalize your final project, you will complete peer reviews of each others' projects during class. In addition, you will prepare for your presentation at the Student Research and Scholarship Symposium through class activities and practice presentations. To receive credit for these activities, you must attend our class meetings.

During this semester, you will complete peer reviews of your classmates' projects, abstracts and presentations. You will offer constructive feedback and advice for your classmates to enhance their work. Your grade on these assignments will be based on your feedback to help your classmates improve their work. Attendance on these days is mandatory to receive credit for the assignments.

**Linked-In Page due on Tuesday, February 12 by 6:00**

**See course calendar for specific dates.**

### **Attendance:**

Attendance is required in this class. You may miss up to two (2) classes without any penalty to your grade. After your 2<sup>nd</sup> absence, your grade will be reduced by **40 points** for each additional absence on a regular class period. **If you fail to be present at the Student Research and Scholarship Symposium OR if you fail to submit your professional portfolio, you will fail the course.**

I do not differentiate between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. If you are not in class, you are considered absent. If you miss class because of a school approved event, I must receive written documentation of your impending absence at least 7 days before the event. In the event of extreme extenuating circumstances (such as hospitalization, death of an immediate family member, etc.), this policy may be amended on a case-by-case basis. However, written documentation must accompany all requests.

Make up presentations CANNOT be made up unless there is an extreme circumstance that occurs. The day you are scheduled to present is the day you need to present your speech. If you are unable to complete your speech on that day, I recommend that you contact your fellow classmates and see if someone will switch days with you. If a fellow student is willing to switch with you, I must receive a separate email from BOTH of you acknowledging and agreeing to the change. Otherwise, you will receive a 0 for the speech.

If an extenuating circumstance happens (hospitalization, death of an immediate family member), the following procedure must be followed. **Failure to follow this procedure will result in a score of zero for the missed exam or presentation.**

1. Contact me within 24 hours of the missed exam or presentation. If the reason is due to a University scheduled event or religious holiday, I MUST be notified in advance and I will reschedule the conflict in advance.
2. If it is due to an emergency or extenuating circumstance, by the next class session you attend, provide me with documentation of your absence.
3. I will then make the final decision as to whether or not you are permitted to make up the presentation or exam. My decision is final.
4. The only absences that will be considered "excusable" for exams and presentations are death in the family, severe documentable illness, religious

holidays, and participation in a university sponsored event such as intercollegiate athletics. In any case, you must provide documentation of your absence in order for a make up to be considered.

**NOTE:** The last day of the Add/Drop Period for this semester is **Friday, January 11, 2019**. The last day to withdraw from this course with a grade of a W is **Tuesday, March 26, 2019**.

### **Submitting Your Work:**

For this course, all written assignments must follow proper APA Style. Written assignments must be typed in a 12-point Times New Roman, double spaced, spell-checked, and grammatically correct. For all assignments requiring the use of sources, proper APA citation style must be followed. Be certain to proofread and especially spell-check your work!

Most written components of this class must be submitted to Blackboard *by* the assignment's deadline. Be certain to check and double check that you have uploaded the correct file of the assignment and have submitted it to the correct location. For example, if you submit a draft of your work, I will grade your draft. Or, for example, if you submit your First Paper as your Second Paper, it will be considered late if you resubmit it after the deadline. **All late work is subject to a 20% reduction per 24 hour period.** Because assignments can be submitted via Blackboard online, each 24 hour period (including non-class days and weekends) are subject to the penalty. **If your assignment is more than 72 hours late, you will receive a 0 for the assignment.** It is essential that you submit your assignments as early as possible. Late work by even 1 minute will be assessed as late. Technical difficulties, computer crashes, and faulty internet connections will NOT be assessed as on time - please allow extra time for these possibilities and do not attempt to start uploading your assignments 5 minutes before the deadline. In addition, be certain to bring a hard copy of your work in your research folder.

Failure to properly attribute and cite other people's work is considered academically dishonest. Even paraphrasing or summarizing someone else's work without providing citations is considered academically dishonest. We will discuss in-class citation formats and how to properly give credit to sources. "I didn't know" is NOT a valid excuse – it is your responsibility to read the instructions on Blackboard, on the hand-outs I provide, and to ask questions IN ADVANCE. After the fact, not knowing is not acceptable! When in doubt, **SOMEHOW cite the source!!**

You are expected to submit your original work from this semester. The Blackboard site will give me a report if this paper has ever been submitted in another class. If you submit an assignment that you have used for another class – whether this semester or a previous semester – you will receive a 0 for the assignment. Students who resubmit work that they had done in a previous semester for this class will also receive a 0.

## **University Policies:**

### ***Academic Integrity***

Students are advised that WJU's Academic Integrity Policy will strictly be enforced in this course (see [www.wju.edu/studenthandbook](http://www.wju.edu/studenthandbook)). Questions regarding the policy may be directed to the Office of the Academic Vice-President.

Academic integrity means giving credit where credit is due in an academic setting. A violation of academic integrity at Wheeling Jesuit University can fall under one of two categories:

1. It is unethical to present as your own work the ideas, representations, or work of another.
2. It is unethical to permit someone else to present your ideas, representations, or work as his/her own intellectual property.

The sanctions that may be imposed upon finding that a violation of academic integrity has occurred range from a reduction in grade on the assignment to dismissal from Wheeling Jesuit University without expectation of re-admission.

All violations of academic integrity are reported to the Faculty Academic Integrity Officer for inclusion in your permanent file. A faculty member is required to inform the student that he/she has filed a formal citation with the Faculty Academic Integrity Officer. Within five days of having been notified, the student must contact the Faculty Academic Integrity Officer in order to set up a mandatory meeting, during which the concept of academic dishonesty, the sanction(s) imposed by the faculty member, and the process by which a student can appeal the instructor's charge will be discussed. If the student does not contact the Faculty Academic Integrity Officer within the allotted time, the faculty member's sanction is automatically imposed and the citation is placed in his/her academic record.

Please visit the "Academic Integrity and Dishonesty Policy" section of the student handbook for further details on the academic integrity policy and the consequences of violating this policy at WJU:

[http://www.wju.edu/about/hr/policies/cl\\_academicdishonesty.asp](http://www.wju.edu/about/hr/policies/cl_academicdishonesty.asp)

Plagiarism includes:

- Obtaining a paper in whole or in part from another source, such as a book, a database, the internet, another student, etc.
- Failing to use quotation marks or block indentations for all words quoted verbatim
- Failing to include citations for all borrowed ideas, whether quoted, paraphrased, or summarized.

Official E-mail: An official WJU e-mail is established for each registered student, each faculty member, and each staff member. All university communications sent via e-mail will be sent to this WJU e-mail address.

### ***Academic Resource Center (ARC)***

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) is a totally free academic-support service available to all enrolled Wheeling Jesuit University students and staffed almost exclusively by WJU students recommended for employment by WJU faculty. The ARC is located in **Bishop Hodges Library** and is open five days a week:

Sundays 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Mondays-Thursdays 1:00-9:00 p.m.

Please visit the ARC's website (the first listing under "Student Services" on the Cardinal homepage) to learn about the ARC's services (emphasizing writing, math, and the sciences) and to schedule appointments.

### ***Wheeling Jesuit University Disability Services***

Wheeling Jesuit University offers students with documented disabilities individual accommodations on a case-by case basis with confidentiality in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

In order to receive academic or physical accommodations, students with disabilities must provide current (within three years) and comprehensive documentation concerning the nature and extent of the disability and communicate their needs to the Disability Services Director, located in Ignatius Hall Room G 24 or call 304-243-4484. Students are required to meet with the director to develop accommodation plans that they will present to their course instructors at the beginning of each semester. Students with disabilities that require specific housing accommodations must contact both the Director of Residence Life and the Disability Services Director.

Ultimately, all students with disabilities are responsible for their own academic achievement. They must attend classes, complete course assignments, and fulfill all university requirements for their chosen field of study. It is up to students with disabilities to seek out available assistance on campus and to utilize individualized accommodations that promote academic success.

### ***Title IX Statement***

Wheeling Jesuit University seeks to provide an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have been the victim of sexual harassment, misconduct, or assault we encourage you to report this. If you report this to a faculty member, she or he must notify our college's Title IX coordinator about the basic facts of the incident (you may choose whether you or anyone involved is identified by name). For more information about your options at WJU, please go to <http://wju.edu/titleix/>.

### ***University Closure***

If class is cancelled due to weather conditions (or other events) check Blackboard for updates.

For changes in individual class meetings, please refer to the class Blackboard site for postings. If the University is open and I am unable to make it, an email will be sent out to the class and an announcement will be posted on Blackboard. In EITHER event (University closure or instructor cancels class), **an assignment or discussion board topic WILL BE ACTIVATED**. It is YOUR responsibility to check the site and respond/do the assignment by its due date. Several days will be given to complete the assignment, so the weather should not be a factor in finishing it. The excuse "I didn't see it" is not a valid one!

## **Course Policies:**

### ***Communication / Email***

Students are responsible for checking their WJU emails regularly. I frequently send emails through the week and on Sunday nights with reminders and additional information. Students are responsible for all content in those emails – if you got a welcome email from me, that is the account I will be sending future emails to. Checking your email is crucial because there will be a lot communicated to you via email and postings on Blackboard.

Email is the BEST and fastest way to reach me. Please be sure to email [nbressler@wju.edu](mailto:nbressler@wju.edu). I typically respond within 48 hours, but please allow up to 72 hours for a reply. If you still have not heard back from me, feel free to send another email. Within your email, be sure to include the course number and time in the SUBJECT line. In the body of the email, be sure to include your first and last name – do not assume that I will recognize your email address automatically. Always avoid “texting lingo” – phrases and sentences should always be used when communicating with any professor.

Assignments should **NEVER** be emailed to me unless it is specifically stated. Late assignments should **NEVER** be emailed to me. Use Blackboard to submit your work.

### ***Laptops***

I do allow laptops in my classroom. It is my primary form of note-taking as well. However, there are a few rules associated with bringing laptops into the classroom.

- 1) Laptops are for taking notes and/or working on class projects. They are not for chatting on-line, returning emails, checking Facebook statuses, or completing assignments for class. Abuse of this policy will result in a point deduction on your activity grade for that class. If it happens more than three times in a semester, I will insist that you not bring the laptop to class anymore.
- 2) I reserve the right to ask you to show me your notes DURING or IMMEDIATELY after class. If you are using your laptop to take notes, this should not be an issue. Failure to show me class notes will result in a point deduction for the day.
- 3) Laptops are NEVER permitted out in the classroom on exam or presentation days. There is a computer in the classroom for you to use for your own presentation. If you feel like you might need your own, you can bring it to class, but it MUST stay in your bag/case until you are presenting. No exceptions will ever be made to this policy – it is more respectful to your fellow classmates.

### ***Cell Phones***

I am realistic that everyone is frequently on his/her cell phone – it is a primary way of communicating with the world. However, the purpose of this class is to learn to communicate with your fellow classmates, not to spend the entire class time texting. Cell phones should be turned off or on vibrate **AT ALL TIMES** while in my class. The first time I see you texting within a week, I MIGHT allow it. But by the second time, a

point deduction will be assessed. The third time, you will be asked to leave class and will be counted as ABSENT for that day. If you hide the phone under the desk or a bag, you will be asked to leave class and will be counted as ABSENT for that day on the first strike! No exceptions will be made to this policy, except for emergencies (see below).

If you are waiting for an emergency call, please see me PRIOR to class. After the incident, it is TOO LATE! I am sympathetic to family emergencies, sick pets, car breakdowns, apartment issues, and/or important job prospects. In these instances, I will ask you to leave the phone on vibrate, sit close to the door, and quietly exit if a phone call comes in. However, these emergencies should not happen on a weekly basis either – prioritize your own emergencies and limit them. This policy may be terminated on a case-by-case basis if abuse or dishonesty takes place.

Similar to laptops, cell phones should remain inside of your bags on presentation days. They should NOT even be removed on those days.

### ***Food / Drink***

I do allow drinks and snacks in the classroom within reason. Feel free to bring any food or drink that meets the following criteria: others cannot hear them or smell them (ie: chips, pretzels, strong coffee, hot chocolate, etc). Also, when your fellow classmates are speaking, whether it is a presentation or during class discussions, please keep the eating and drinking to a minimum.

### ***Your Grade***

Please note that in my classes I do not give you a grade – you EARN it. There are 16 weeks in the semester, so please use each week to check your grade and ensure that it is the one that you want in the class. If not, invest some time toward improving your assignments or preparing for the next exam. If a problem arises and you need help, contact me as soon as possible. Do not wait until your grade is so mathematically low that I can no longer help. A few important notes about grades:

1. No exam, presentation, or assignment grade will ever be curved.
2. Final grades are not rounded up (an 89.8% is a B+, not an A-). Consult the grading scale on page 2.
3. After an assignment is returned to you, I ask that you wait at least 24 hours to review my comments and feedback. If you still have questions after that time has passed, feel free to contact me to schedule an appointment. You must contact me within 2 weeks of the assignment in question being returned to you. All grades are final unless there has been a mathematical error.
4. All grades become 100% final 3 weeks after I return the assignment. If you notice that a grade is missing on an assignment, there is a mathematical error, or any other mistake has been made, you must notify me within this time period. Informing me on the last day of the semester is not permitted.
5. There are NO small questions. Please feel free to speak up in class if you have a question, or make arrangements to see me outside of class. I am happy to discuss anything with you in whichever setting you feel most comfortable. If you would like to discuss a grade on an assignment, please come and see me before/after class or schedule an appointment during office hours. I HIGHLY recommend that you schedule an appointment with me during office hours - I will

prioritize students who have arranged to meet with me in advance of walk-ins that day.

**Course Outline:**

A course schedule will be provided on Blackboard under the "Course Calendar" tab. It is subject to change and students will be notified on Blackboard of any changes in advance.