



Carnegie Mellon University
Master of
Software Engineering

17-602 Communication for Software Engineers II

Tuesdays: 8:20-9:40, remote only

Tuesdays: 16:00-17:20 in SCR 265 (but 8:20-9:40 when remote)

Spring 2021, 3 Units

Teaching Team:

Instructor

Peter kolenich

Email

kolenich@andrew.cmu.edu

Office Location & Hours

by appointment

I have about 15 years with the department, but I have no SE experience. Instead, I came here through my work with languages and cultural adaptation/adjustment. As the non-industry person, it is my job to help you gain the skills to communicate with the future non-industry folks (i.e. many clients) in your life.

Grader

Jen Moritz

jmoritz@andrew.cmu.edu

by appointment

I have been working with the department for about a year and a half, but have 9 years of communications experience in various domains. I am here to help ensure your English is clear and correct to help you be prepared to communicate effectively throughout your career.

Course Description. All software engineers have technical skills. **The best** software engineers also have the skills to effectively *communicate* their technical ideas, then *collaborate* with others to implement those ideas.

This is the second course in a two-semester sequence. This semester challenges you to identify and practice interpersonal, verbal, and written skills as you work to become better communicators and collaborators. Through a combination of in-class exercises, case studies, projects, presentations, and written assignments, you will assess your current skills and build upon them. These skills are needed to successfully work as part of a team, as well as with other teams, stakeholders, and even people external to your organization.

Prior Knowledge.

1. Communication for Software Engineers I (17601)
2. English proficiency sufficient for graduate-level work.

It is assumed that you are capable of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. If your fluency is lacking, we strongly encourage you to use the [Student Academic](#)

[Success Center](#). Also, you can see **Canvas> Resources for Writing Help** for a list of helpful resources.

Students who seek additional instructional support should know that the [Student Academic Success Center](#) has transitioned to remote services that can be found on the website. Your college/departmental advisors and resources are also valuable assets for you.

Learning Objectives. By the end of the semester, you will demonstrate improvement in the following areas:

1. Applying factors that allow you to achieve your communication goals
2. Communicating ethically (appropriate, accurate language in all contexts)
3. Conveying ideas clearly and concisely
4. Including examples and cited sources to support your ideas
5. Giving and receiving feedback in various relationships
6. Creating written and verbal communication (individually or collaboratively) that meets your goals and addresses audience needs
7. Delivering presentations (individually or collaboratively) that meet your goals and address audience needs
8. Create a highly functioning team
9. Address common pitfalls of teamwork
10. Simplify complex ideas to a point that they meet your audiences' needs
11. Represent concepts visually to achieve your communication goals.

Learning Resources. There is one required textbook for this course -- it is the same book you used in the fall:

Real Communication by Dan O'Hair, Mary Weimann, Dorothy Imrich Mullin, Jason Tevin
Fourth Edition, ©2018

ISBN 978-1-319-05949-1 (PAPERBACK)

ISBN 978-1-319-07801-0 (LOOSE-LEAF VERSION)

Zoom. Zoom will be used for all remote meetings. Please make sure you do the following:

- Have Zoom installed on your device
- Update Zoom regularly
- Have a camera you can look at directly during class
- Have a working microphone

Some classes/portions of classes (e.g. presentations) will be recorded. These recordings are for learning and assessment purposes. They are not a means of making up a missed class.

Assessments and Grades. You must have a B- or better to pass this class, which is a required part of your curriculum. Your grade is based on homework assignments and in-class work or activities.

All work is graded on one of the following scales:

| Time Log | Small assignments | All other assignments |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 0: not done ● 1: done | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 0: Unacceptable ● 1: Needs improvement ● 2: Meets expectations ● 3: Exceeds expectations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 0: Unacceptable ● 1-2: Needs improvement ● 3-4: Meets expectations ● 5-6: Exceeds expectations |

When we are grading your work, we consider three questions:

- Did you meet the Basic acceptance criteria for all assignments?
 - If your work does not meet these basic criteria, you will automatically receive a zero (0).
- Did you meet the assignment-specific acceptance criteria (completeness of work)?
- How well did you meet the acceptance criteria (quality of work)?

Assignments are weighted based on size and type:

- Time Log: **5% of your grade**
- Assignment - small: **10% of your grade**
- Assignment - medium: **25% of your grade**
- Assignment - large: **30% of your grade**
- Final project: **30% of your grade**

Grading scale

Because of the assignment grading scheme, we use an adjusted grading system to determine your letter grade for the course. If you always meet expectations, you will receive all 2s. Calculating 2 out of 3 gives a score of 66.67%, which equates to a B.

| Letter Grade | Percentage | Letter Grade | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| A+ | 98 - 100 | B- | 58 -65 |

| | | | |
|----|---------|----|-------------|
| A | 90 - 97 | C+ | 50-57 |
| A- | 82-89 | C | 42-49 |
| B+ | 74-81 | C- | 34-41 |
| B | 66 - 73 | R | 33 or below |

Your grade is your responsibility. Monitor it throughout the semester. Immediately contact your instructor if you have questions or concerns. Do not wait until the end of the semester to determine if you're passing the class -- by then, it will be too late to correct the situation.

Something goes wrong

NOTE: There will be no opportunities for you to choose an assignment to redo this term.

However, things happen, so you have the right to submit one (1) assignment late without penalty. This assignment must be submitted within 48 hours of the due date AND you must email me with the name of the assignment to which I should apply this 'things happen' scenario.

Additionally, you may be *required to redo* one or more assignments during the term.

Academic Integrity. CMU demands a lot from its students. You will have a heavy workload. You will feel overwhelmed. You will probably wonder if you'll ever sleep again. (You will.)

CMU also demands honesty and integrity in all academic work:

<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/academic-integrity.html>

- We expect you to complete your own writing (unless you are collaborating on a group project). Assignments are scanned by TurnItIn, and we do pay attention to the similarity scores.
- We also expect you to cite any source you use (images, text, lectures) in your individual or group work. You must use IEEE guidelines and include both inline citations and a Works Cited page.

Bottom line: do not cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise copy the work of others! If you have questions on whether you can use a specific phrase, term, figure, or anything else – please contact us prior to turning in your assignment. Cheating is cause for failing the class.

Diversity Statement. At Carnegie Mellon University, we believe in treating every individual with respect. We are diverse in many ways, and this diversity is fundamental to building and maintaining an equitable and inclusive campus community.

Diversity can refer to multiple ways that we identify ourselves and each other. Each of these diverse identities shape the perspectives our students, faculty, and staff bring to our campus.

At CMU we work to promote diversity, equity and inclusion not only because diversity fuels excellence and innovation, but because we want to pursue justice. We acknowledge our imperfections while we also fully commit to the work, inside and outside of our classrooms, of building and sustaining a campus community that increasingly embraces our core values.

Therefore, each of us is responsible for creating a safer, more inclusive environment: you and me.

COVID and sanitation. In order to attend class in person, I expect that you will abide by all behaviors indicated in [A Tartan's Responsibility](#), including any timely updates based on the current conditions. In terms of specific expectations for in-person students, this includes:

- entering the classroom via the designated ingress route with appropriate physical distancing,
- wearing a facial covering throughout class,
- sitting in the seats with appropriate spacing (and not moving furniture),
- using the sanitizing wipes available in the classroom to wipe surfaces (e.g., your desk, tablet arm) upon entry and exit,
- exit the classroom at my direction, proceeding in a row-by-row fashion, following the designated egress route and maintaining proper distancing.

Facial coverings. If you do not wear a facial covering to class, I will ask you to put one on (and if you don't have one with you, I will direct you to a distribution location on campus). If you do not comply, please remember that you will be subject to student conduct proceedings, up to and including removal from CMU. Accordingly, I will be obliged to take other measures for the safety of the whole class.

Attendance and participation. This class is most effective when you are prepared for and actively participate in discussions, group work, and class exercises. You cannot participate if you aren't in class, so please make every effort to show up on time. If you must miss a class, you need to email Peter (in advance if possible). Absentees cannot make up in-class activities, but you can schedule a time to discuss course content.

Devices and other distractions. Please respect people -- and their ideas -- by focusing on class, not on your laptop, on your phone, or on your neighbor.

- Turn off and put away all devices before class. Use them only when we ask you to do so as part of a class activity.
- Avoid private conversations that distract others who are speaking (classmates and instructors).

Accommodations. If you have a disability and have an accommodations letter from the Disability Resources office, we encourage you to discuss your accommodations and needs with us (and all your teachers) as early in the semester as possible. We will work with you to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate. If you suspect that you may have a disability and would benefit from accommodations but are not yet registered with the Office of Disability Resources, we encourage you to contact them at access@andrew.cmu.edu.

Student wellness. Take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is here to help: call 412-268-2922 and visit their website at <http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>. Consider reaching out to friends, faculty, or family members you trust for help getting connected to the support that can help.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal or in danger of self-harm, call someone immediately, day or night:

- CaPS: 412-268-2922
- Re:solve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226

If the situation is life threatening, call the police

- On campus: CMU Police: 412-268-2323
- Off campus: 911

Technical issues. Please contact the Computing Services Help Center at 412-268-4357 (HELP) or it-help@cmu.edu with tech issues. If you're having troubles with Canvas, please contact canvas-help@andrew.cmu.edu or 412-268-9090.

Course Schedule. The schedule with links to all assignments is available on the course Canvas site. It may be updated/modified during the semester due to student needs or circumstances external to the course.

If you have questions about this or your coursework, please let your instructors know. Thank you, and have a great semester!