B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title: Professional Communication Skills (4-year System)
Advanced Professional Communication Skills (3-year System)

Course Code: ENG3303 / ENG303

Recommended Study Year: 3rd & 4th Year for 4-year System
2nd & 3rd Year for 3-year System

No. of Credits/Term: 3

Mode of Tuition: Lecture and Tutorial

Class Contact Hours: 2 hours Lecture/week
1 hour Tutorial/week

Category in Major Programme: Discipline Elective

Prerequisite(s): N/A

Co-requisite(s): N/A

Exclusion(s): N/A

Exemption Requirement(s): N/A

Brief Course Description

The course aims to help students to develop a high level of communicative competence in professional English. It will inculcate in them a deep understanding of the role and importance of language and communication in business and other professional settings, and enable them to effectively apply their oral and written professional communication skills in their future employment.

Aims

Students will be able to use English communication skills effectively in professional contexts such as business meetings and interviews, and write appropriate business texts. They will also identify problems and undertake to solve them, either individually or in groups.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. function effectively in English in professional contexts.
2. read and write appropriate and effective texts of different genres in English, particularly those used in business.
3. develop their insight in perceiving problems and problem-solving skills.
4. cultivate team spirit.
5. express critical views on a variety of subjects confidently and effectively in English.
6. learn how to learn.
Indicative Content

1. Notices, Agenda and Minutes
2. Meeting Skills
3. Negotiations
4. Public Speaking
5. Analytical Reports
6. Interview and Discussion Skills

Teaching Method

Students are expected to actively participate in tutorials. They will be asked to perform situational tasks which resemble those which they are likely to encounter in business. A learner-centred approach will be adopted and activities like simulations and role-plays will be extensively used. Students are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and make use of the English learning materials available in the Self-Access Centre to improve their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. To prepare for the pre-negotiation meeting, they need to read about complex professional situations and gather extra information on their own. They identify problems, set priorities and goals, and devise strategies to solve the problems individually and in collaboration with their group members. Learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are measured.
2. They will learn to write two of the most common business genres, 1) agenda and minutes, and 2) report, in an appropriate professional style. Learning outcome 2 is measured.
3. They will prepare procedures and negotiation strategies with their group members. They will then negotiate on some business issues with members of another group in a business meeting. Learning outcomes 1, 3 and 4 are measured.
4. They will write a report on the outcomes of the negotiation. They need to demonstrate their analytical ability, awareness of audience and purpose, and the ability to write in a professional style. Learning outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 5 are measured.
5. They will be asked a number of questions on a wide range of topics in an interview which resembles selection interviews in professional contexts. They will need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of current affairs, independent thinking, analytical power and communication skills in English. Learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 are measured.

Assessment

100% continuous assessment
Required Readings

Materials specifically designed to achieve learning objectives will be distributed throughout the course, but students are referred to the following for a deeper/wider understanding of the subject matter and for further practice:

Supplementary Readings

Kerbey, E. and Satterwhite, M.L. Professional Business Writing.
Sanchez, H et al., English for Professional Success, [sound recording], Boston, Mass, Thomson ELT, 2006.