

# Syllabus

## Communication 308: Communication in Fundraising

Instructor Heather K. Davidson, Heather.Davidson@wwu.edu

---

### Course Goals

This course will help you identify and secure resources for the support of nonprofit and community agencies by developing techniques for designing comprehensive fundraising plans, conducting prospect research and cultivation, practicing appropriate stewardship, leading campaigns for various types and vehicles of giving, utilizing technology to facilitate resource development, and implementing creative approaches to fundraising. This is accomplished through exploration of the following:

- An overview of the philanthropic landscape in the United States including local, national, and international contribution efforts which highlight major theories and concepts in fundraising.
- Developing and communicating a narrative case for support, planned giving, campaign planning and management, donor stewardship and retention, prospect research and analytics, and volunteer engagement.
- Harnessing social media for promotional communication, effective and ethical use of social media, participant recruitment platforms, and online stakeholder relations.

The bulk of our time will be spent focusing on your applied skills, most of which will center on a major service-learning project that has the potential to make our class experience a University Legend. Yep, *Legend*. My goal is to get you on board and keep you there so that each of us can say we did something revolutionary and life-changing and add it to our résumés by the end of the quarter. (More on that later...)

I would like you to walk out of this class confident you can plan, implement, manage and assess quality professional fundraising efforts for any number of stakeholders; work as an advocate capable of conjuring awareness, participation, monetary and in-kind donations for your organization; conduct outreach to connections and community members in support of your work; and design and implement high-quality effective marketing strategies through a variety of delivery platforms. As with all of my courses, you should also have increased awareness of and ability to manage business, time, social, and interpersonal issues that will affect your work life.

### Required Course Materials\*

McCrea, J. & Walker, J. C. (2013). *The generosity network: new transformational tools for successful fund-raising*. New York: Random House.

Portnoy, D. (2015). *The non-profit narrative: how telling stories can change the world*. Lexington, KY: Portnoy Media Group.

\*Additional readings will be required, mostly available on our Canvas site. Please check Canvas frequently for postings and updates.

### Mandatory Participation Aspects

Because we will actively plan, implement and assess a fundraising campaign over the course of our quarter which will put reputations of individuals, community members, and WWU under scrutiny during its promotion, there are a few mandatory participation aspects to consider:

- We will co-create a social media contract to dictate the use of mandatory Twitter accounts over the duration of the quarter. Every student is **REQUIRED** to access the internet multiple times weekly and engage in activity surrounding our fundraiser and other course components.
- Everyone is **REQUIRED** to be present for a 4hr window (either 2-6pm, or 4-8pm) during the execution of our fundraising kick-off event on Saturday, May 30 at Boundary Bay.
- Teams will be **EXPECTED** to schedule and attend out-of-class supplemental activities as needed (technology training, donation procurement, equipment acquisition, etc.) to successfully complete service-learning tasks in a manner.

The aspects are vital to the success of the fundraiser and to course learning, and if you cannot meet them we will collectively fail. (No pressure.)

**Disclaimer:**

**This is an intense course. Stick it out and you'll grow a ton, but you're going to have to work for it. I advise all students to carefully evaluate their lives to determine whether or not the commitment of this course is something manageable, and then to act accordingly. If you cannot meet the mandatory participation aspects noted above or are taking this course to "boost your GPA" you are bound to be sorely disappointed; if this refers to you, please consider dropping the class as soon as possible to make room for waitlisted students. It is, however, entirely possible to earn a solid A from your efforts in the course--presence, quality work, and growth permitting.**

**Course Standards**

This course will be as action-packed as you should expect your professional life to be. The requirements of frequent Canvas logins (3x/wk), consistent attendance, punctuality and participation are essential to your success. Missing class more than once or twice in the short time we have together is no more acceptable than it would be to miss important workdays at any company. When you have a deadline for an assignment, reading, or a presentation, you must have the work prepared at the very beginning of class. These deadlines will come up often. For the sake of yourself and your team, get a great calendar system figured out early and don't allow yourself to fall behind!

**Here's the fine print. Read it.** Any student who misses more than two classes may fail the course. If you turn in an assignment after the start of class on its due date it is late. Late assignments will be downgraded by up to one full letter grade for each day they are late. Missing a presentation or an exam will result in a failing grade unless you have physical proof of some serious emergency that prohibited your presence (e.g., a bill from the paramedics or a selfie of you with a firefighter in front of your burning apartment complex\*). You must complete all assignments to pass the course!

\*Please don't set your apartment complex on fire to avoid presenting.

If you happen to miss a regular class meeting (with no presentation or exam) I expect you to email me a *brief* heads up about why you will be absent, just like you would a supervisor at any job. You should check Canvas and then consult with other students to find out what you missed; please do not ask me until you have done at least this much. Depending on the content of the day your absence, your communication with me, and your situation, your absence may cost you participation points. Grades will be calculated as follows:

Canvas Conversations (6)	10%	A 95-
Artifacts & Analysis (2)	20%	100 A- 90-
Heartbeat Meetings (8)	10%	94
Social Media Strategy	20%	B+ 86-89
Service-Learning Experience*	30/40%	B 82-85
Final Exam [Contingent]	0/10%	B- 78-81
		C+ 74-77
		C 70-73
		C- 67-69
		D 60-66
		F 0-59

Presence and participation (including Canvas conversations, attendance and promptness, engaging in classroom activities and an insightful synthesis of content knowledge in discussions, courtesy and professionalism) may affect your grade by up to one full letter grade either direction. Consistent engagement raises grades; lack of it reduces them.

Please turn your cell phones off during class—not on vibrate, but **OFF**. You do not want to be the person whose phone starts playing Nicki Minaj or buzzing uncontrollably during another student's presentation! If you have a laptop or tablet with you it should be put away during student presentations and group activities unless you are instructed to use it.

Your personal improvement is highly valued in this class. Even if you already possess superior skills you should incorporate feedback and make improvements from one assignment to the next. The overarching expectation is personal growth—regardless of your starting point coming into the course—and receiving and incorporating feedback is an important part of growing your professional skill set. Demonstrations of improvement can positively affect your grade.

### **Class Climate**

In order to maintain a positive working environment please adopt the following practices for class climate:

- Refrain from eating in class. It's a 2hr class; you'll survive. On the other hand, coffee, water and other beverages are fine so long as you don't spill them and they don't stink.
- Please don't wear overbearing perfume or cologne, come in smelling like smoke of any kind, or cough or sneeze without covering your mouth (all equally distracting and invasive).
- Turn off your phones, music devices, and any other thing on your person which might make noise or distract and disrupt what we're trying to get done in the little time we have together
- Most importantly, assume good intent by those you work with. Everybody wants to be successful; help them!

### **Western's Academic Honesty Policy**

The Department of Communication Studies is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and ethical support. It endorses and acts on WWU's policies and procedures detailed in the section titled: "Academic Honesty Policy and Procedure." You can find this information in Appendix D of the WWU Catalog; or here: [http://catalog.wvu.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=907#Academic\\_Honesty\\_Policy](http://catalog.wvu.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=907#Academic_Honesty_Policy). The policies, procedures, and guidelines will be assiduously upheld. They protect your rights and the rights of your classmates, as well as those of the faculty. In short, I don't mess around when it comes to academic integrity.

It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone but yourself. Violation of these standards will result in personal and professional detriment. If you have doubts about any of these practices, confer with me or another faculty member or the Secretary to the Academic Honest Board at [AcademicHonestyBoard@wvu.edu](mailto:AcademicHonestyBoard@wvu.edu).

### **All-Access Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act provides reasonable accommodations for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systematic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. Accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability, though I am happy to help all of my students succeed any way I can. Please notify me and Office of Student Life promptly of any accommodation(s) needed for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodations to be delayed or unavailable, or create other undue stress. Accommodations should be approved through the Director of disAbility Resources for Students, Anna Blick, OM 120, 650-3083, [drs@wvu.edu](mailto:drs@wvu.edu). Visit disAbility Resources on the web for more info on their services. <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/drs/>.

### **Tentative Course Schedule (*Subject to Change*)**

Readings should be completed prior to class the day they are scheduled. Written assignments and Canvas comments should be submitted by the beginning of the class they are due. Remember: if they are not, they are late.

Week	Date	What's Happening?	What's Due?	Readings
1	W 4.1	<b>Shake the Giving Tree</b> Course Introduction	Bring hardcopy of syllabus New Hire Paperwork (in-class)	Syllabus
2	M 4.6	<b>Service-Learning Overview; Social Media for Fundraising</b>	Team contact sheets (in-class) Social Media Contract (in-class)	GN Epilogue NPN Ch 5
	W 4.8	<b>Organization is Key!</b> Guest: Dan Purdy	Team assignment orientation (in-class) Twitter handles posted to Canvas	Canvas
3	M 4.13	<b>SL Technical Training</b> Guests: AJ Barse; STC Staff	Canvas Convo 1/6 Team Calendar	GN Intro
	W 4.15	<b>Transforming Fundraising</b> Current Landscape of Fundraising <i>Heartbeat #1</i>	Review memos on Canvas	GN Ch 1
4	M 4.20	<b>Not the "Same Ol' Story"</b> Narrative Power in Fundraising	Canvas Convo 2/6 Artifact & Analysis 1/2	GN Ch 2 NPN Intro, Ch1
	W 4.22	<b>Create Community</b> <i>Heartbeat #2</i>	Memo 1/5 Artifact Reviews, Roundtable Talk	GN Ch 3 NPN Ch 2
5	M 4.27	<b>Cultivate Community</b> Guest: TBD	Canvas Convo 3/6	GN Ch 4 NPN Ch 3
	W 4.29	<b>Presentations at Work</b> <i>Heartbeat #3</i>	Memo 2/5	GN Ch 5
6	M 5.4	<b>Second Tech Training</b>	Canvas Convo 4/6 Twitter Talk 1/2	GN Ch 6
	W 5.6	<b>The "Ask" Heartbeat #4</b>	Memo 3/5	GN Ch 7
7	M 5.11	<b>Dept. of Meh!</b> AKA Inspiration Day Guest: TBD	Artifact & Analysis 2/2	NPN Ch 6&7
	W 5.13	<b>Jeffersonian Dinners: Feeding Fires</b> <i>Heartbeat #5</i>	Artifact Reviews, Roundtable Talk Canvas Convo 5/6 Memo 4/5	GN Ch 8
8	M 5.18	<b>Frontline Fundraising</b>	Canvas Convo 6/6	GN Ch 9
	W 5.20	<b>Preparing for Fundraising Events</b> <i>Heartbeat #6</i>	Memo 5/5 Twitter Talk 2/2	Canvas
9	M 5.25 No Class	<b>Memorial Day</b> "Decoration Day is the most beautiful of our national holidays...The grim cannon have turned into palm branches, and the shell and shrapnel into peach blossoms." ~Thomas Bailey Aldrich	Meet w/team to complete tasks before deadline.	
	W 5.27	<b>Team Showcase</b> <i>Heartbeat #7</i>	All SL tasks complete 10min Team Showcase Potluck signup	Canvas
<b>GameDay!</b>	<b>S 5.30</b>	<b>#WeAreWWU Kick-Off Event</b> 3-7pm, Boundary Bay Beer Garden	<b>On-site at Boundary for shift, minimum; encouraged to stay longer!</b>	2-6pm <b>OR</b> 4-8pm

<b>10</b>	M 6.1	<b>Potluck Debrief &amp; Closure</b> <i>Heartbeat #8</i>	Stakeholder Gratitude Final Study Guides [if required]	Canvas
	W 6.3 No Class	<b>Mental Health Day</b> “There is virtue in work and there is virtue in rest. Use both and overlook neither.” ~Alan Cohen	SL Individual Reflection	Everything
<b>11</b>	W 6.10	<b>Finally, Finals!</b> [If required.]	Completed Study Guide	

## ASSIGNMENTS

I try to provide as much information as possible in the syllabus and on Canvas about your assignments, and to allow flexibility in the approach to a lot of the details while retaining core requirements for all students. Please read all of my directions in both spaces carefully, review rubrics where available, participate in *Heartbeat Meetings* to clarify questions, double-check your perception with your colleagues, and feel free to direct any lingering questions my way after that.

All written assignments should be double-spaced and written in APA format, complete with references as appropriate. Each assignment is **required to be uploaded to Canvas on the corresponding assignment thread by the start of the class period in which they are due unless otherwise noted**. Please **name your attachment with your own name as well as the type of assignment**. (ie: HDavidson\_memo1.doc)

### Canvas Conversations (6)

These regular dialogues are what keeps us from taking regular reading comprehension quizzes. If they fail to produce quality, timely, thoughtful conversations that is what they will become. Each Canvas conversation grade will consist of two parts: your own original response, and engaged and relevant dialogue with others.

- For a good barometer consider between 2-3 paragraphs in your own post, and at least a cumulative paragraph in your combined responses to others.
- All Canvas Conversations should be complete by the start of class on the due date listed.
- Use proper citations, grammar, spelling, and punctuation in your posts, and include links to outside resources when applicable.
- Each prompt will hinge on course content; your job here is to dig deeper in the co-created understanding of what it means to engage it in our fundraiser and in future endeavors.

*What's in it for you?* A better way to demonstrate and further your own understanding of course concepts by engaging with the content and the ideas of our learning community.

### Artifacts & Analysis (2)

In an effort to increase your understanding of theoretical applications in fundraising you will seek out, select, and analyze two different fundraising artifacts. You will then provide two quality peer reviews citing useful takeaways your colleagues highlight in their analyses.

- An artifact can be a website, book or article related to a program, organization, specific campaign, or individual and their fundraising work. You will be assigned the overarching topic you will investigate, but beyond that the details are yours to uncover and report on.
- Each analysis will take the form of 3 double-spaced pages citing a minimum of four references (texts, guests, other assignments, lessons, etc), and will include links or examples of the artifact under discussion for consideration.
- Following submissions and reviews you will engage in artifact roundtable talks in class. Come prepared to these two class sessions with a sample printout of your artifact itself, and a brief (3min or less) distillation of your analysis. Be prepared to share your artifact and to hear about others' as well, taking note of useful information.
- Grading of this assignment rests on both your own analysis, and the feedback you provide to your colleagues about theirs on Canvas and in class discussions. Quality over quantity is key.

*What's in it for you?* The chance to delve deeper into fundraising best practices in order to enhance your own tool kit, think critically about course content, and learn from the collaborative dialogue with your colleagues.

### **Social Media Strategy**

Social media is a vital component of modern fundraising and your ability to use it effectively and professionally is imperative to your professional preparedness. In order to practice your skills in social media marketing and communications you will engage in a number of mandatory social media interactions. This is achieved over the course of the quarter in the following ways:

- Participation in drafting, submission of Personal Social Media Contract (Twitter)
- Submission of Twitter handle; growth in social media network; maintenance of professional profile
- Interactive tweets using course hashtags, #COMM308 or #WeAreWWU, 3x/weekly in response to topic of the week
- Active participation in two in-class Twitter Talks

*What's in it for you?* A way to gain valuable visibility and to foster the success of your fundraiser. Additionally, if strategically sound, your social media contributions to this course can contribute to unforeseen personal, professional, and academic opportunities for you as well.

### **Service-Learning Experience**

This assignment is designed to help you develop personally and professionally, and will enhance your organizational, interpersonal and professional communication skills in ways too complex to capture in a one-sentence summary. ServiceLearning is a vital part of a complete liberal arts education, as well as an indispensable component of Communication Studies curriculum. Beyond that service-learning is one of the best ways to both absorb and practice course content. Experiential education in the local community benefits not only those of you assigned to it, but also better the organizations you serve and the University reputation as well. Additionally, it contributes positively to the growth your personal network. All that said, please act accordingly when working with team members and in outreach efforts!

Teams will be formed following the completion of an in-class service-learning survey. Once formed, it is your responsibility to connect and begin working with your team to complete the project. The type of project(s) will vary by specific fundraising focus and team skill sets, but you should find connections between course content and your project and be able to articulate these connections in the various components of this assignment. The individual expectation is approximately 25hrs of work per student, though how that breaks down will depend on your team's needs.

The schedule for this assignment will vary according to team responsibility, however, each group will present their work at the end of the quarter. To receive full credit for this assignment, you will need to complete the following as a team:

- Team contact sheet
- Team calendar
- Presence, reporting, and collaboration at *Heartbeat Meetings* (in-class check-ins constituting participation)
- Team Written Report. This 7-8pg double-spaced co-authored paper should include the following:
  - Team Overview: This is a brief (<1pg) introduction to the members of your team. It should include a blurb about each member's role in the project completion.
  - Team Tasks for Current and Future Success of Fundraiser: This segment should focus on the history, current status, and future goals relating to the tasks your team tackled. Provide insight into the vision your team worked with, the techniques you used to complete current projects, and how you have helped set the fundraiser up for continued success.
  - Use APA citations and thoughtfully reference three or more course lessons, guests, activities, or readings.

- Team Updates (5): These are updates in memo form. They should include the current status of your work, challenges you are facing, and your steps for the following week. There are five updates due on the calendar. Each should be written and submitted by a different team member, but the order is up to the team. You will submit each update on Canvas. If your team has greater or fewer than 5 members you will need to navigate the submission or lack thereof as a team to fulfill the requirement of five submissions.
- Team Showcase: At the end of the quarter your team will give a 10min presentation based on your team tasks and learning outcomes. Whether you created promo videos, conducted community outreach, or participated in hands-on event day tasks, this is your time to show how you fulfilled the assignment and to tell us what you learned in the process. Using any (pre-approved) presentation style you choose your team will showcase your work and talk about your experiences in relation to course materials from the quarter. Be sure to include quality visual media.
- Individual Reflection Statement: This 4-5pg double-spaced statement will focus specifically on your personal growth through the service-learning assignment and include an honest evaluation of each of your teammates. Whether you explore your growth in interpersonal communication skills, technological skills, presentation confidence or career pathways, this capstone piece should highlight and demonstrate your newfound understandings. If things were great, I want to know; if they weren't, I want to know what you learned from it.
  - You will evaluate each of your team members on their contribution to not only your service-learning project, but to you professionally. As in the real world not everyone you work with will be your favorite or most reliable coworker; others will be outstanding and teach you many unexpected lessons. This is the space wherein you are expected to share these impacts. These reflections are confidential and will only be excerpted for your colleagues anonymously under extenuating circumstances. Submit on Canvas by 2:30pm on the due date (NOTE: we are not in class this day!). Be sure to reference a minimum of two course readings, activities, guests or presentations in your reflection on your learning experience.

*What's in it for you?* An excellent learning opportunity where you are encouraged to branch out of your comfort zone and plan a real fundraiser to help further WWU's mission, and a once-in-your-college-career chance to build an incredible addition to your résumé, professional network, and sense of personal efficacy.

### **Final Exam**

The final exam will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. It will be a comprehensive exam covering readings and information presented in class throughout the quarter. While much of our class addresses practical skills, useful theory and information is presented in the text and in class through lecture and your own presentations. The exam will give you an opportunity to show you've absorbed this content.

*What's in it for you?* A traditional way to demonstrate your cumulative knowledge of, and reflection on course concepts. Beyond that, not much but stress and time in a computer lab to test when you'd rather be out in the sun--it's still a final.

**\*PLEASE NOTE\*** If we reach our fundraising goal you will have sufficiently demonstrated your acquisition of knowledge and skill this quarter and **the final will be waived in its entirety**. If we fall short we will use the final to explore why it happened so that we can be better prepared in future efforts.

**Outreach Attire** I would like to see you interact with stakeholders for our event in what I would call "business casual." What I mean by this is you should look presentable, but I think it's unreasonable to expect you to spend your day on campus or out in the community dressed up in strict formal business attire. Here's what I absolutely do not want to see on your outreach days: your toes, your navel or any other part of your midriff, your cleavage, baseball caps, workout gear, rips, your underwear, or excessive wrinkles in your clothing.

If you do not own clothes that fit this description currently you will need to acquire them. They will be necessary and useful items to own in your professional future, and will be required for your first major

presentation. If you cannot acquire them by means of retail store, thrift store, or borrowing from a friend or family member there are other options available in our community.

For women I recommend the Back to Work Boutique. This thrift operation is run by the YWCA, and provides work attire for women in need. There are no income restrictions, but it is designed for women who are entering the workforce or seeking employment who cannot otherwise acquire appropriate clothing. You simply call (360) 734-4820 and set an appointment, then meet with a consultant who will outfit you with several pieces of professional wardrobe staples completely free of charge.

For men I suggest the Men's Haberdashery (Hope House). This operation provides professional attire to men who are entering or returning to the workforce, and is free of charge. To make an appointment, call 360-676- 2178 ext. 4005.

I want you to feel comfortable and confident in your presentation attire both in class and in your professional future. For other clothing resources in our community please visit:

<http://bellingshamschools.org/sites/default/files/departments/FIC/Clothing%20Resources.pdf>.