

# MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION (MNA)

Meeting Times: 12:00pm – 1:45pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Dates: Module 1 | August 18, 2020 – October 1, 2020  
Location: Jordan Auditorium and via Zoom (if necessary) using [this link](#)

Instructor: Brett Beasley, PhD  
Office: 126B Mendoza College of Business  
Contact: 574.631.0307; [bbeasle1@nd.edu](mailto:bbeasle1@nd.edu)  
Office Hours: (Via Zoom) MWF 11:30 to 12:50  
Sign up on [my appointment page](#).

→ [Jump to Course Schedule](#)

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the communications role and responsibilities of not-for-profit managers with external constituents as well as boards of directors. Starting with the fundamentals of writing and speaking, this course emphasizes the development of the ability to advocate persuasively as part of an overall marketing strategy.

## LEARNING GOALS

1. Identify, articulate, and apply advanced **principles** of effective managerial writing and speaking.
2. Assess the **rhetorical situation** for a nonprofit business communication encounter, including analyzing the intended audience and determining ethical and sustainable communication objectives.
3. Design and produce **written solutions** (letters, memos, pitches, etc.) that conform to standards of the marketplace and that are effective for achieving your communication objectives.
4. Prepare and deliver a well-organized, professional, and engaging **presentations**.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Readings.** The required texts for the course are *Creating Signature Stories* by David Aaker (**A**) and *The HBR Guide to Better Business Writing* by Bryan A. Garner (**G**). All other readings are provided on Sakai (**S**) or are available online (**O**) at no charge.

**Assignments.** The key deliverables for this course include a memo, a story, a stakeholder matrix, a business letter, a pitch slide deck, an infographic, and a case study. These assignments are designed to help students gain practical experience creating their own communications materials, and they enable students to apply concepts from readings and discussions in the act of design and delivery.

**Presentations.** Students will gain practice speaking and presenting in a friendly, collegial environment (in front of their peers and instructor). One presentation will be for a live audience, and the other presentation will take the form of a pre-recorded video. These presentations offer an opportunity to practice persuasion tactics and in spoken format and to respond to the format's unique challenges and affordances. Students will receive feedback on their speaking as well as on non-verbal cues such as presence and body language.

**Attendance / Participation.** I allow one unexcused absence. Additional unexcused absences will result in a two-point deduction from your course grade up to 10 total points. Failure to participate in class activities can also result in a loss of points. In light of the COVID-19 global pandemic, I am open to making exceptions to this policy when necessary. Please speak to me if you require special accommodations due to illness. **Please note that attending class via Zoom (in the event of a "red pass") is acceptable and does not count as an absence.**

## GRADING

Week 1 Assignment: Take a Stand Memo	5 points	5%
Week 2 Assignment: Your Signature Story	10 points	10%
Week 3 Assignment: Stakeholder Matrix	10 points	10%
Week 4 Assignment: Business Letter	10 points	10%
Week 5 Assignment: Pitch Slide Deck	10 points	10%
Week 6 Assignment: Infographic	10 points	10%
Week 7 Assignment: Case Study	15 points	15%

5-Minute Presentation 1: Signature Story	10 points	10%
5-Minute Presentation 2: Your Pitch	10 points	10%
Attendance / Participation	10 points	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Late Work.** All assignments turned in late will receive a two-point deduction per day. (Late work is accepted if you are unwell, but you must provide a University Health Services note.)

**Evaluation.** Student work is evaluated by the instructor according to how well it meets standards specified for the assignment. Student responses to assignments are not graded on a curve. However, the Mendoza College of Business specifies a maximum average grade point for each MNA course section between 3.3 and 3.6 on a 4.0 scale. As such, your instructor will work hard to carefully distinguish among work that is subpar, good, and truly outstanding in order to meet this requirement.

The following minimum standards for student work align with what would be expected of employees in an actual business setting. Texts and presentations should be:

- **Professional.** Appearance and format set the first impression. The proper use of headings, white space, margins, and other visual devices all contribute to readability and accessibility of information in a document.
- **Error-free.** Simple mechanical and grammatical accuracy is absolutely necessary. Nothing destroys an author's credibility faster than typographic errors or errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation.
- **Audience-appropriate.** It is your audience who ultimately decides whether your writing works for them. You can put your best foot forward by using a style that aids clarity of expression, by using a tone that is appropriate for the relationship, and by providing a solution that actually addresses their concerns.
- **Purposeful and well-supported.** Whether you set out to explain, to analyze, or to persuade, your document or presentation should have a clear purpose that is supported by appropriate facts and details. In addition, outside research should always be properly documented or communicated during your speech. After all,

for your reader or audience to find you credible, you should allow them to independently verify any credibility that you are borrowing from others.

When your instructor assesses the quality of your work beyond these minimum standards by assigning a letter grade, it might be helpful to consider how a letter grade would translate to an actual quality evaluation – and mission success – in the workplace:

- **A:** Impresses with the professionalism and clear understanding of purpose, audience, content, expression, organization, style, and mechanics. You are proud to have this work represent your organization.
- **A-:** Pleases with aspects of professionalism and understanding of purpose, audience, content, expression, organization, style, and mechanics. However, this document or presentation needs improvements in a few of these areas to be truly polished. You need to pay attention to – and to address – certain details before delivering. This work is close to final draft but needs another proofreading and final revision.
- **B+ / B:** Geared toward an audience and contains some good points. However, it lacks organization strengths; its content lacks specificity; it demonstrates stylistic problems; and/or its logic falters. In other words, it needs some important substantive revisions. This work is more first draft than not.
- **B- or lower:** Demonstrates significant deficiencies in some areas of content, arrangement, audience approach, tone, style, or mechanics. In other words, this work might embarrass you and your organization.

**Classroom Safety:** As per University policy, you are expected to have completed a daily health check before attending class in person. When we are together in our classroom or another physical space, you are expected to wear a mask and to follow appropriate distancing measures.

**Privacy Statement:** To protect the privacy of every person in our classroom community, the sharing of any learning materials from our course (including, but not limited to, recordings of live meetings or class sessions, work from other students, pre-recorded course content, etc.) is prohibited. Do not record class sessions for any reason without first

securing written permission from me. The intentional sharing of learning materials or private information from our course with external groups or individuals, without the written permission of the instructor, represents a breach of trust and a violation of the Honor Code.

**Academic Honesty Statement:** Each Notre Dame student is responsible for knowing and following the Academic Code of Honor, which can be found at [honorcode.nd.edu](http://honorcode.nd.edu). As a faculty member, I must report any Honor Code violations. We will discuss strategies for avoiding plagiarism in more detail later in the semester. If you are at any point confused or unsure about a matter pertaining to academic honesty, I encourage you to bring those concerns to me as soon as possible.

**Disability/Accommodations Statement:** If you have specific learning needs, please let me know as soon as possible. Students with a documented disability should contact Disability Services at [sarabeadisabilityservices.nd.edu](http://sarabeadisabilityservices.nd.edu) to request accommodations.

**Inclusivity Statement:** I share the University's commitment to social justice and strive to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. In this course, we will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, economic class, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.

**Commitment to Mutual Understanding and Constructive Disagreement:** In order to create a classroom environment that supports respectful, critical inquiry through the free exchange of ideas, the following principles will guide our work: Treat every member of the class with respect, even if you disagree with their opinion; Bring light, not heat; Reasonable minds can differ on any number of perspectives, opinions, and conclusions; Because constructive disagreement sharpens thinking, deepens understanding, and reveals novel insights, it is not just encouraged, it is expected; All viewpoints are welcome; No ideas are immune from scrutiny and debate; You will not be graded on your opinions.

**Title IX Statement:** The University of Notre Dame provides services for those who have been affected by sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating or domestic violence, stalking and any conduct that creates a hostile environment. For help and further information including contact information for on and off-campus resources, please consult <https://titleix.nd.edu/support-resources>. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the University any information disclosed to me about potential or suspected instances of sexual assault, sexual misconduct, harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, or conduct that creates a hostile environment. [Click here for more information.](#)

**Writing Center:** We encourage all students to take advantage of the resources available at the Notre Dame Writing Center. Please visit the website to schedule an appointment.

**English for Academic Purposes:** Fellows in the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Program can help you to improve your academic English. The EAP is located in 329 DeBartolo Hall in The Center for the Study of Languages and Cultures. Please make an appointment for a tutorial session by visiting their website.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

**Note:** Each class session's readings are in one of four places: **(G)** Garner's *The HBR Guide to Better Business Writing*, **(A)** Aaker's *Creating Signature Stories*, **(S)** our Sakai resources page, or **(O)** Online. The readings are due for the date listed.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading / Assignment</b>
<p><b>Week 1:</b></p> <p><b>Take a Stand</b></p> <p><i>"The very essence of leadership is that you have to have vision. You can't blow an uncertain trumpet."</i></p> <p>—Fr. Ted Hesburgh</p>	Tues 8/18	<p><b>Day 1: From Information to Transformation</b></p> <p><b>(O)</b> Fr. John Jenkins, "<a href="#">We're Reopening Notre Dame. It's Worth the Risk.</a>" in the <i>New York Times</i></p> <p><b>(O)</b> Fred Rogers's <a href="#">testimony</a> before congress on behalf of public television.</p>
	Thurs 8/20	<p><b>Day 2: From Grandstanding to Humility</b></p> <p><b>(O)</b> "<a href="#">When you take a stand, go beyond grandstanding.</a>" at the Notre Dame Deloitte Center for Ethical Leadership's Research and Insights page</p> <p><b>(O)</b> <a href="#">The 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer</a>, pages 1-24.</p> <p><b>(S)</b> Jacqueline Novogratz, "Partner Humility With Audacity"</p> <p><b>(G)</b> "Memos and Reports"</p> <p><b>Assignment: Take a Stand Memo. Due on Saturday (8/22) at 2:00pm.</b></p>

<p><b>Week 2: Tell a Story</b></p> <p><i>"The only way to change a heart is to tell a story."</i></p> <p>—Martha Nussbaum</p>	<p>Tues 8/25</p>	<p><b>Day 3: The Facts vs. The Story</b></p> <p>(A) "What is a Signature Story?"</p> <p>(O) Steve Denning, "<a href="#">Telling Tales</a>" in the <i>Harvard Business Review</i>.</p>
	<p>Thurs 8/27</p>	<p><b>Day 4: Experiences vs. Mission</b></p> <p>(A) "What Makes a Signature Story Strong?"</p> <p>(A) "Your Professional Signature Stories—Understanding Yourself" in Aaker, <i>Signature Stories</i>.</p> <p><b>Assignment: Your Signature Story. Due on Saturday (8/29) at 2:00pm.</b></p>
<p><b>Week 3: Have a Strategy</b></p> <p><i>"A vision without strategy remains an illusion."</i></p> <p>—Lee Bolman</p>	<p>Tues 9/1</p>	<p><b>Day 5: Communicating (with a) Purpose</b></p> <p>(G) "Know Why You're Writing"</p> <p>(O) Sean Gibbons, "<a href="#">The Case for Communications</a>" in the <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i></p> <p>(S) Chip Heath and Dan Heath, "Talking Strategy" from <i>Made to Stick</i></p>
	<p>Thurs 9/3</p>	<p><b>Day 6: Understanding Your Stakeholders</b></p> <p>(S) Steven Pinker, "The Curse of Knowledge" from <i>The Sense of Style</i></p> <p>(G) "Understand Your Readers"</p> <p>(A) "Signature Story Audiences"</p> <p><b>Assignment: Stakeholder Matrix. Due on Saturday (9/5) at 2:00pm.</b></p>
<p>NOTE: Please attend Mutale Nkonde's lecture, "<a href="#">Advancing Racial Literacy in Tech</a>" (via Zoom) on Friday, Sept. 4 at 1:00pm. A recording will be provided for those who cannot attend the session live. After attending or viewing, please submit a 250-300 word response applying the themes of the course to the lecture's delivery and/or content.</p>		

<p><b>Week 4:</b></p> <p><b>Get Personal</b></p> <p><i>“When we fail to listen to those the world excludes, we lose the possibility of solving problems that matter most to all of us.”</i></p> <p>—Jacqueline Novogratz</p>	<p>Tues</p> <p>9/8</p>	<p><b>Day 7: Listening and Giving Feedback</b></p> <p>(S) Jacqueline Novogratz, “Listen to Voices Unheard”</p> <p>(O) <a href="#">“Great Leaders are Good at Hearing Bad News”</a> at the Notre Dame Deloitte Center for Ethical Leadership’s Research and Insights page</p> <p>(O) <a href="#">“Be honest or kind? Do you really have to choose?”</a> at the Notre Dame Deloitte Center for Ethical Leadership’s Research and Insights page</p> <p>(G) “Performance Appraisal”</p>
	<p>Thurs</p> <p>9/10</p>	<p><b>Day 8: Conversation</b></p> <p>(S) Sherry Turkle, “Work,” from <i>Reclaiming Conversation</i></p> <p>(G) “How to Write a Business Letter”</p> <p><b>Assignment: Business Letter. Due on Saturday (9/12) at 2:00pm.</b></p>
<p><b>Week 5:</b></p> <p><b>Speak Up</b></p> <p><i>“Speech, the most specifically human sound, and the most significant kind of sound, is never just scenery, it’s always event.”</i></p> <p>—Ursula K. Le Guin</p>	<p>Tues</p> <p>9/15</p>	<p><b>Day 9: Speaking in Public</b></p> <p>(S) Amy Cuddy, “Slouching, Steepling, and the Language of the Body” in <i>Presence</i></p> <p>(O) Nick Morgan, <a href="#">“How to Become an Authentic Speaker”</a> in the <i>Harvard Business Review</i></p>
	<p>Thurs</p> <p>9/17</p>	<p><b>Day 10: The Art of the Pitch</b></p> <p>(S) Dan Pink, “The Pitch” in <i>To Sell is Human</i></p> <p><b>Assignment: Your Pitch Slide Deck. Due on Saturday (9/19) at 2:00pm.</b></p>

<p><b>Week 6: Cut Through the Noise</b></p> <p><i>"A lie can get halfway around the world before the truth can even get its boots on."</i></p> <p>—Mark Twain</p>	<p>Tues 9/22</p>	<p><b>Day 11: Clarity</b></p> <p>(O) "<a href="#">The Power of Simple</a>" in the <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i></p> <p>(G) Chapters 7-11 (pp. 37-65)</p>
	<p>Thurs 9/24</p>	<p><b>Day 12: Measuring What Matters</b></p> <p>(S) Jerry Z. Muller, Selections from <i>The Tyranny of Metrics</i>: "The Argument in a Nutshell," "Recurring Flaws," and "When and How to Use Metrics: A Checklist"</p> <p>(S) Edward Tufte, "The Fundamental Principles of Analytical Design" from <i>Beautiful Evidence</i></p> <p><b>Assignment: Make an Infographic. Due on Saturday (9/26) at 2:00pm.</b></p>
<p><b>Week 7: Find Common Ground</b></p> <p><i>"If I look at the mass, I will never act. If I look at the one, I will."</i></p> <p>—St. Teresa of Calcutta</p>	<p>Tues 9/29</p>	<p><b>Day 13: Bridging Differences</b></p> <p>(O) "<a href="#">To lead in a divided world, learn how to close the empathy gap.</a>" at the Notre Dame Deloitte Center for Ethical Leadership's Research and Insights page</p> <p>(S) Jacqueline Novogratz, "Hold Opposing Values in Tension"</p>
	<p>Thurs 10/1</p>	<p><b>Day 14: Inspiration</b></p> <p>(O) "<a href="#">The Little-known Emotion that Makes Ethical Leadership Contagious</a>" at the Notre Dame Deloitte Center for Ethical Leadership's Research and Insights page</p> <p>(A) "Higher Purpose Signature Stories Inspire"</p> <p><b>Assignment: Case Study. Due on Saturday (10/3) at 2:00pm. Note: No late work accepted after midnight on Sunday (10/4).</b></p>
<p><b>Module 1 Grade Submission Deadline: Oct. 5 at 3:45 p.m. ET</b></p>		

*"The pitcher cries for water to carry / and a person for work that is real."*  
—Marge Piercy