

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION, SPRING 2014
COMMRC 1133
Biddle 200
MWF 11-11:50

Dr. Paul A. Lucas
Email: pal59@pitt.edu (best way to reach me)
Office: Biddle 249c
Office phone: 814-269-7150, Mailbox: Biddle 233 (look for my name)
Office hours: MWF 12-12:50; other days/times by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES

Why study marketing as a part of a Liberal Arts/Humanities/Communication education?

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a form of persuasion that invites audiences to participate in an organization's story and mission.

IMC allows organizations to publicize their marketing messages, although some approaches to marketing can be both risky and expensive. As such, we will look at the construction and creation of marketing messages, as well as the way those messages impact consumers and target audiences.

The success of IMC depends on researching well, asking good questions, and planning messages that really speak to the audience. In this course, we will work on all three.

When studying IMC, we are not only building professional skills essential for integrated marketing practice, but we are also building on our understanding of what it means to craft arguments and ideas. In this course, then, you will:

- Discover the persuasive practice of IMC from a conceptual/rhetorical and practical perspective
- Build research and writing skills necessary for professional success in IMC and related fields
- Learn basic tenets of campaign/IMC planning
- Explore the importance and impact of IMC within culture and society

REQUIRED TEXT

Sheehan, B. L. (2014). *Controversies in contemporary advertising* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications, Inc.

COURSE POLICIES

Professionalism and Attendance. Enrollment in this course represents a commitment to punctual attendance, full attention to classmates and the instructor, and active participation in all course activities and discussions. Documented participation in university events such as athletics or academic conferences/competition and documented illnesses/family emergencies or other emergency situations are not absences, as long as necessary documentation is provided to me within two calendar weeks after the absence—please consult with me about documentation should this issue arise. Sending me an email is not considered providing documentation. Classes missed for other reasons **DO** count as absences. If you suspect that you will need to miss a class at some point for scheduling, advising, group meetings, work, weddings, etc. you need to save an unexcused absence for that day. If you are absent, you are responsible for obtaining the information covered in class. Please partner with someone in the class so you can get the necessary information in the event of an absence.

Your overall course grade will be lowered by 5 full points for each unexcused absence after three. I take attendance ONCE each day. If you are late to class and miss when I take attendance, it is your responsibility to come to me that class day to make sure I have noted you are present—otherwise, I may not record that you are there, and the listed absence will stand. Keep in mind that there is no limit on point deductions due to unexcused absences.

In addition, unless there is legitimate/good reason which you discuss with me, late arrivals, early departures, cell phone/electronic device usage, or anything else that may compromise the learning experience for others will lower your participation grade.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If a circumstance leading to your absence arises during the semester and you would rather not discuss it with me, or if for some reason you will have a prolonged period of absence, I would encourage you to speak with Dr. Newman in Blackington 248. I will accept as documentation notes and emails provided to me with dates from Dr. Newman's office, and then I will work with you based on the specific situation in order to determine the best course of action moving forward.

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices. This is a communication course and you are expected to demonstrate effective listening skills. Absolutely no text messaging or phone calls (or any engagement of phones or other devices UNLESS related to coursework) will be permitted; **if anyone is noticed text messaging, taking a call, making a call, or otherwise engaging a cell phone or other electronic device in class (again, not related to coursework), it will be recorded as an unexcused absence for the day. You are permitted to have phones and other devices out, you may time classmates, and you may use devices for note-taking and pulling up materials; however, it's simple: do not give me reason to suspect you are using a device for any other purpose!**

Furthermore, I respect that you may have situations that arise during the semester. If you are ever expecting an important call or text during a class period, please notify me prior to the start of class, turn your phone on vibrate, and step out of the classroom to answer the call or text. Otherwise, the texting, device usage, and calling policy will be enforced.

If you are caught text messaging or taking or making a call or otherwise engaging an electronic device during an exam, you will receive an automatic zero for the exam.

Use of Email. This is required. If you do not access your Pitt email on a regular basis, please redirect this account to the one you do access on a daily basis. I may occasionally provide course information through Pitt email.

I expect professionalism in all emails written to me, so make sure to include an appropriate subject line, a greeting, and a closer whenever emailing me. Any emails not including a name and text in the email will be disregarded and deleted. You should be getting used to professionalism in email communication.

Use of Blackboard/Courseweb. Blackboard (Courseweb) will be used for various purposes through the duration of the course. Please check Blackboard for course information and updates.

Academic Accommodations . If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Health and Counseling Services, G-10 Student Union, 814-269-7119 as early as possible in the term. The Office of Health and Counseling Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. Accommodations will not be granted retroactively.

Academic Integrity and Using Sources. This course adheres to university standards on integrity. Unless otherwise instructed, all assignments are to be completed as your original individual work. Threats to academic integrity include, but are not limited to cheating (copying from someone else), plagiarizing (using another person's ideas and stating their words as your own), fabricating of information or citations (making up sources), facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others (letting someone copy your paper or test), having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Any information obtained from the internet or any other source must be appropriately cited or it will be considered plagiarism. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. In the event that students plagiarize by submitting work that is not their own, they will automatically fail that assignment. If students do this a second time, they will automatically fail the course (procedural process will be initiated in ANY case—this can result in additional consequences).

Failing to properly cite sources in text, in the Works Cited or References, or verbally in presentations will result in additional deductions to the assignment.

NOTE: Wikipedia, other Wikis, Encyclopedias/Encyclopedia Websites, and/or Dictionaries/Dictionary Websites should NEVER be used as sources for information in this course (with the exception of Strategy Memo #4). Wikis are not credible sources, and dictionaries and encyclopedias lack the communication application and theoretical depth we are looking for in the course. Utilizing such sources will result in a significant deduction in points on the assignment.

Submission of Course Papers and Projects. Unless otherwise directed by the instructor, all assignments are to be submitted in class on the date indicated in the schedule. Stapled hard copies (8.5x11 paper) are required for submission at the time class meets. Double-sided is great!

All course papers and assignments need to be typed, 12-pt. font, Times New Roman or Calibri, and double-spaced (though outlines and memo assignments may be single-spaced). You must abide by APA for the reference lists and in text citations.

I understand that printer malfunctions can occur and students can sometimes run late. If that happens, I want you to attend class on time. In such events, do NOT send me anything by email attachment unless and until specifically directed to do so (in other words, please speak to me or email me first; in that case, the email is due no later than 11:59 pm on the due date. A hard copy will then be required at the start of the next class meeting). Be sure to cc yourself on the email submission in case you need to verify the time stamp and that it went through. Also, be very mindful of the use of email policy should you submit materials this way.

Do NOT place late assignments under my office door assuming I will accept them—I will NOT. If an assignment is due on a particular class day in which you have a documented, excused absence, you must provide the documentation within two calendar weeks and contact me to discuss the situation also within two calendar weeks. We will then determine a schedule and how to move forward.

On Presentation Days. You will be expected to present according to the presentation order determined in class. During presentation days in which you do not present, you will be expected to be a respectful and insightful audience member. This includes the following: Q+A participation (if applicable) and cell phones off or on vibrate/silenced. If you are late on a presentation day or if you must exit the room during a speech, please wait until the current presentation is over before you enter/reenter the room. This is expected of all students/audience members so that each speaker has the opportunity to present without unnecessary distractions. Depending on class size and how presentations go, there might be times where students need to present at later dates than originally given. I will do my best to accommodate you in these cases.

Dress Code. I am often asked about the dress code for presentations. While I do not expect you to be “dressed up” for course presentations, you should have at least the academic version of business casual-style attire; nice shirt and jeans would be fine. It is important to me that you be as comfortable as possible when presenting, but remember that audiences ALWAYS assess credibility—hats, shorts, and/or sweat pants would be unacceptable attire for speeches. Failure to dress appropriately for a speech or presentation will result in a point deduction on the assignment.

Late Assignments. Late work will not be accepted unless accompanied by documentation for an excused absence (see above under “submissions”). The same applies for any speeches and presentations—they must be completed on the assigned day.

Queries Regarding Grades. If there comes a time when you disagree with the grade you have earned on an assignment, you may come to me to argue your side. However, my policy is that you need to wait at least 24 hours after the assignment is handed back to you to do so. At that point, you are to construct a one page, written request, submitted in hard copy form, clearly stating the reason for your appeal with a well-reasoned argument. **By requesting this appeal, you agree to disregard the contested grade entirely.** On appeal, the assignment will be graded again according to the criteria originally established for the assignment. **The new grade may be the same, higher, or lower than the original, contested grade.** The grade determined on review is then final. **Keep in mind!** I will not entertain any subjective requests to alter or round grades at any point during or after the semester. I do not change grades because students feel they should be changed, and I do not round scores—ever!

Statement on Classroom Recording. To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion, and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

Participation. The course is based largely on discussion. Therefore, as a student in this class you need to come to class prepared, ready to discuss your opinions and/or questions. **Participation points are not free points!** Your participation in the course will comprise 10% of your overall course grade. If you do not come to class AND frequently participate, the most you can earn is a 7/10 in participation. A 7/10 is the standard grade for participation; you must participate in class discussions consistently throughout the semester to attain a 10/10. Due to the nature of the course, there will be instances in which the class may engage in heated discussions. At all times, you need to show respect to your classmates even when they express an opinion that is different from your own. Though you will need to participate in discussions and speak frequently in class in order to get the full participation points, being an attentive audience member (paying attention and not distracting speakers/audience members during presentations) and a conscientious group member and being able to listen to others' opinions and respond to them in a respectful manner is vital to participation. Remember there are factors that can result in lowered participation grades. See the policies as listed above.

Extra Credit. If anyone is interested in extra credit, I would be happy to provide an extra credit assignment. Please contact me if at any point you would like to discuss extra credit. Once I establish an assignment and point value, I will make that assignment available to the whole class.

GRADING/ASSIGNMENT LIST

This course grades on the point system, allowing you to calculate your grade and determine what you will need to achieve.

Strategy Memos	50 points (5 @ 10 points each)
Presentation	20 points
Final Project	20 points
Participation (See Policies)	10 points
Total	100 points

GRADING SCALE

Final grades will be calculated utilizing the following scale:

A+	98 - 100%
A	93 - 97.9%
A-	90 - 92.9%
B+	88 - 89.9%
B	83 - 87.9%
B-	80 - 82.9%
C+	78 - 79.9%
C	73 - 77.9%
C-	70 - 72.9%
D+	68 - 69.9%
D	63 - 67.9%
D-	60 - 62.9%
F	0 - 59.9%

ASSIGNMENTS

Professional Article and Advertisement Discussions

On designated class days during the semester, we will discuss/explore current professional advertising and marketing in which you will provide examples. I will allow date selections early in the course—you will be expected to select two dates.

On these days, you will be expected to discuss some ideas about an advertisement you have observed/located; you will also share that ad with the class. In addition, you will need to explain and discuss a professional article you have located—from a newspaper, magazine, etc.—that deals with marketing, advertising, branding, packaging, or some other facet of IMC (try to connect the article material to your ad). Show us the article, and have citation information ready in case anyone in the class wants it. I will not collect anything from you.

For some possible publications you may want to consider, consult item #3 of the strategy memo guidelines below.

This would be a good time to listen for ads and ideas from classmates that you may want to use for your own research. The discussions will not be formally graded, but will count toward your participation—the discussions are ultimately meant to help both you and your classmates.

Strategy Memos (50 points; 5 total @ 10 points each)

In the marketplace, analytical writing often occurs in memo form, so this course will focus on developing your skills in just that kind of writing. Over the course of the semester, you will have the opportunity to complete five “strategy” memos on various topics.

In completing these memos, you will be expected to:

1. Incorporate and apply readings and discussions of this class.
2. Deliver a well-written argument that is a MAXIMUM of 500 words (single spaced).
3. Use appropriate sources, particularly from credible trade publications and sites such as *Advertising Age*, *Fast Company*, the *Wall Street Journal* “Marketplace Section,” and the “Advertising” column in the *New York Times*. With the exceptions of memo #4 and memo #5 (see details in the memo overviews), at least two articles from your selection of trade publications should be referenced per memo. Course readings such as the textbook can be used, but would not count toward this total.
4. Follow basic elements of memo format—but not content—of the example attached near the end of the syllabus. Remember: your memo assignments require sources.
5. Display familiarity with the conventions of memo form.
6. Use a proper tone for a corporate/professional audience.
7. Use necessary in text citations and attach a References page, citing all sources with APA format (6th ed.).

Participation (10 points)

See the description under “course policies.”

“Strategy” Memo Overview****NOTE: You must select a different brand for each memo**

Strategy Memo 1: *Storytelling (10 points)*: Integrated Marketing Communication looks to create/instill a strong and consistent message (“story”) across all facets of an organization’s communication. Select a brand and, in a memo, describe that brand’s advertising campaign and its use of persuasion. What is the “story” of the brand’s messages? In what ways are the IMC efforts effective or ineffective?

Strategy Memo 2: *The Role of Liberal Arts in the Marketplace (10 points)*: We talked in class about the importance of a Humanities/Liberal Arts perspective in marketing (and we viewed some professionals in *The Persuaders*). We will apply that in this memo. Select a brand and answer the question: how would you “brand” yourself in your career search? What sets you apart from competitors and how do you make brand promises or guarantees of your quality? How are you somehow “like” your selected brand?

Strategy Memo 3: *Reviewing the Situation (10 points)*: The rhetorical situation is a key concept in persuasion that has numerous implications for the marketplace. In this memo, find an advertising campaign for a brand and research it. Describe the campaign’s purpose (how it meets exigence), the target audience(s) for the campaign, and constraints the campaign is working with.

Strategy Memo 4: *Evaluating Sources (10 points)*: During your career, you will have to draw from a variety of sources when researching. For this assignment, select a brand and identify, through research, a problem(s) that brand has had in its advertising. Use the following three sources: an entry on Wikipedia, an article from a trade publication (*New York Times*, *Newsweek*, etc.), AND an academic journal article not used in class lecture (use online journal databases like EBSCOhost in the library). In a memo, compare the three sources by answering the following: what advertising problem(s) did the sources identify? What could other brand competitors learn from the problem(s)? What recommendations would you give to the brand moving forward?

Strategy Memo 5: *Marketing and Consumers (10 points)*: People are often quick to dismiss marketing practitioners as unethical in their practices. This is not necessarily the case. As we close out the semester thinking about how consumers are impacted by marketing (and after seeing *King of Kong*), explain in a memo why it might be important for marketing practitioners to engage in ethical practices if they hope to promote the longevity of and consumer interest in their brand(s). Use at least two academic/scholarly journal articles not used in class lecture (use online journal databases like EBSCOhost in the library) to complete this assignment.

Presentation Overview: Building the Brand (20 points)

For this assignment, you and your three partners (depending on class size) will put together/explain an advertisement that depicts a brand (i.e. what the brand communicates, offers, and uniquely stands for)—you should select an existing brand and NEW product or service of your choosing. You must build upon a brand’s existing message, mission, and advertising campaign but you cannot simply give “more of the same;” it is vital in marketing that you propose an idea that makes you stand out, and that is what you will be doing here. While it’s not necessary for you to actually construct the ad, you and your partners should be able to illustrate the ad by doing ALL of the following (you and your partners will be graded together on the quality of these items):

1. Beginning with the creation and distribution a questionnaire of at least five questions—given to your alumni contact AND four other people outside our class—due in advance of the presentation
2. Explaining the proposed advertisement—logos, images, language/text, slogans, etc.—and the “product” (loosely defined) advertised
3. Explaining how the product (or service) and the advertisement fit within the brand’s existing mission as well as the other components of the brand’s IMC
4. Establishing, with strong rationale, the price of the product or service
5. Explaining how consumers will make the purchase—online, in store, etc. (particular website or store)
6. Selecting the appropriate medium for the advertisement and providing a rationale
7. Discussing the need and target audience/projected income of target for the advertisement and providing a rationale
8. Conducting additional research that allows you to back up your ideas for items #1-4 (At least three sources from trade publications such as *Fast Company*, *Advertising Age*, and/or *The Wall Street Journal* “Marketplace” section should be used)
9. Explaining how course concepts and communication literature assisted your ideas for the advertisement
10. Pitching the idea to your alumni contact and working with the feedback (feedback email due at presentation)
11. Providing me with both the outline and a References page in APA format (sources should be cited in the presentation AND the outline as necessary)—outline submission to me MUST be hard copy and is due on the day of the presentation
12. Using PowerPoint sparingly (you may want to show images or include BRIEF bullet points; do not use PowerPoint in a way that takes detracts from the presentation’s content)—keep in mind the length of the presentation when using PowerPoint
13. Giving a presentation that is approximately 25-30 minutes in length, showing careful attention to preparation, speech delivery, and professionalism (remember that you are marketing yourself, as well, so business casual is a MINIMUM)
14. Allowing all partners to contribute to the presentation—Q+A with the class to follow

Final Paper Overview (due at final exam w/discussion): Industry Analysis (20 points)

In the final assignment, you will have the opportunity to learn more about a field where you may eventually want to work. The assignment is two-fold, as it will also require a brief presentation/discussion at the time of our final exam. Your ability to reflect and analyze will be largely what is graded for quality here.

1. **Term Selection:** Select 5 major terms or ideas/concepts from our course readings and/or lectures. **Note:** Definitions need to be in line with the course readings or lectures.
2. **Industry Analysis:** Select an industry (some examples: steel, public school, music, cell phone, video game, candy, beverage, fast food, financial, etc.) and research it. Then, using and **BOLDING** your 5 terms from item #1 and **AT LEAST 10 CREDIBLE SOURCES NOT USED IN CLASS LECTURE** (at least 3 of which must be scholarly), prepare an essay that answers the following questions:
 - What is the history and contemporary practice of this industry in terms of advertising and branding?
 - What are the important advertising issues/problems currently facing this industry?
 - Who are the target audiences and what is the consumer impact for this industry?
 - Are there any key advertising agencies that assist this industry?
 - Where can/might this industry go in the future, and what suggestions would you offer for the industry’s marketing and persuasion?
3. Essay should be a MINIMUM of 10 pages (double spaced) not including title page and references
4. Use necessary in text citations and attach a References page, citing all sources with APA format (6th ed.)

COURSE CALENDAR*

- Monday, January 6:** **What are we doing here?**
Course Introduction
- Wednesday, January 8:** **Overview of IMC and Syllabus/Policies**
Syllabus, Memo, and Article Discussion Overview (Order)
- Friday, January 10:** **Introduction to IMC**
Thinking Strategically
Read: Chapter 1
- Monday, January 13:** **IMC and its Story**
Brands and Brand Building
Read: Chapter 15
- Wednesday, January 15:** **Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion**
Professional Article and Ad
- Friday, January 17:** **IMC Compared to Other Business and Marketing Models**
Why Use it?
Read: Chapter 3
Strategy Memo #1 Due
- Monday, January 20:** **NO CLASS**
- Wednesday, January 22:** **Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion**
Professional Article and Ad
- Friday, January 24:** **Managing Identity and Equity**
Issues of Influence and Image
Presentation/Questionnaire/Pitch Overview w/Group Selections
Read: Chapter 5
- Monday, January 27:** ***The Persuaders (film)***
- Wednesday, January 29:** ***The Persuaders (film)***
- Friday, January 31:** **Advertising**
Part of the IMC Scope
Read: Chapter 4
Strategy Memo #2 Due
- Monday, February 3:** **Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion**
Professional Article and Ad

- Wednesday, February 5:** **The Internet**
Part of the IMC Scope
Read: Chapter 16
- Friday, February 7:** **Politics and “Branding”**
Part of the IMC Scope
Read: Chapter 14
- Monday, February 10:** **Addictions**
A Different Role?
Read: Chapter 11
- Wednesday, February 12:** **Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion**
Professional Article and Ad
- Friday, February 14:** **Addictions**
Tobacco and Alcohol
Read: Chapter 12
- Monday, February 17:** **Prescriptions**
Pharmaceuticals and Drugs
Read: Chapter 13
Strategy Memo #3 Due
- Wednesday, February 19:** **Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion**
Professional Article and Ad
- Friday, February 21:** **Stereotypes**
Gender, Race, Age, and Sexual Orientation
Read: Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9
- Monday, February 24:** **Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion**
Professional Article and Ad
- Wednesday, February 26:** **Feedback/Group Work Day**
Questionnaire Portions Due/Discuss with Me
- Friday, February 28:** **Shopping!—and Meaning**
Consumer Behavior—The Side of the Consumer
Read: Chapter 2
- Monday, March 3:** **Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion**
Professional Article and Ad

Wednesday, March 5:	The “Vulnerable” Market Marketing to Children/Treating Consumers like Children Final Paper Overview <i>Read: Chapter 10</i>
Friday, March 7:	Presentation Discussion with Ideas from Class
March 10-14:	SPRING BREAK; NO CLASS
Monday, March 17:	BUILDING THE BRAND PRESENTATION
Wednesday, March 19:	BUILDING THE BRAND PRESENTATION
Friday, March 21:	BUILDING THE BRAND PRESENTATION
Monday, March 24:	BUILDING THE BRAND PRESENTATION
Wednesday, March 26:	BUILDING THE BRAND PRESENTATION
Friday, March 28:	BUILDING THE BRAND PRESENTATION
Monday, March 31:	BUILDING THE BRAND PRESENTATION
Wednesday, April 2:	Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion <i>Professional Article and Ad</i>
Friday, April 4:	The Question of Ethics Is that Realistic? <i>Read: Chapter 17</i> Strategy Memo #4 Due
Monday, April 7:	Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion <i>Professional Article and Ad</i>
Wednesday, April 9:	<i>King of Kong (film)</i>
Friday, April 11:	<i>King of Kong (film)</i>
Monday, April 14:	Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion <i>Professional Article and Ad</i>
Wednesday, April 16:	Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion <i>Professional Article and Ad</i> Strategy Memo #5 Due

Friday, April 18: **Professional Article and Advertisement Discussion**
Professional Article and Ad

FINAL EXAM TIME: **Monday, April 21st from 3:00-5:00pm**
Final Paper Due (Class meets for discussion)
All Extra Credit Due

*Note: Course calendar/due dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor

Memo (Basic Format Example)*****Use For Format, Not Content; Remember Source Requirement***

TO: Dr. Paul Lucas

FROM: John Smith

RE: Proposal for Research

DATE: September 16, 2013

On Wednesday, August 27, 2013, Dr. Lucas requested that research be done to verify the importance of integrated marketing communication in today's economic situation. The purpose of evaluating integrated marketing communication in the context of our organization brings to light the following questions:

1. How does IMC change or alter the current business model for our organization?
2. How will the incorporation of IMC benefit the organization in the future?
3. How is our organization currently fulfilling its mission?

OVERVIEW

The proposed study will gather the following information through a traditional questionnaire that addresses the following issues:

1. Current returns for the company
2. Projected returns for IMC incorporation
3. What is communicated through the current mission
4. How IMC adds to the company's reputation
5. Demographic information on consumers

Questions will be asked to maximize the possibilities for cross comparison of variables. For instance, the data could be used to see whether some facets of IMC assist the current business model and mission or if they would accomplish something similar to current practices.

The questionnaire will be mailed to a sample of the organization's employees and practitioners. Consumers will also be included in this study, since the consumers will have an idea of what is being communicated about the organization through both its branding and its communication channels. The consumers will be questioned via a mailing list.

Once the questionnaire is formally created, it is our hope that we will have greater insight into the field of integrated marketing communication as well as its potential benefit to our organization.

Grading Criteria for Work

The following is the grading criteria used for all written work and presentations (adapted from McKerrow, 2001):

F- Assignment reveals a lack of understanding of the theories and a careless inattention to matters of style (presentational or grammatical) resulting in an incomprehensible answer.

D- Assignment reveals less than adequate understanding of theory, concept, or other relevant information. Answer may also misapply concept, use an inappropriate or weak example in attempting to clarify an explanation, or may ramble in an attempt to explain. Assignment is most likely carelessly constructed (written/presented).

C- Assignment provides an on-target recitation of the correct material from the text or other sources being consulted. Answer meets the basic expectations with respect to number of outside sources or other conditions of a specific assignment. The writing, while clear and comprehensible, is otherwise non-exceptional, or gives evidence of inattention to basic matters of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

B- Assignment is not only on-target, but is written in a clear, well-organized style, with few errors (and indicates attention given to correcting spelling or punctuation mistakes). In addition, examples illustrate thought beyond recall or recitation of a text's commentary and adds to the overall understanding of the theory, concept, or other materials being evaluated. There is evidence of having gone beyond the text to consult other sources of information that might be relevant.

A- Assignment goes beyond that required for a "B" response to indicate critical analysis, offering evidence of a cogent, well-reasoned defense of a position or argument that is advanced relative to the object under consideration. In other words, the answer reveals a clear authorial voice in command of the material. In addition, the style is elegant, indicating careful attention to presenting a well-constructed, well-thought-out response that advances understanding, stimulates thought or is otherwise evidence of exceptional thinking.

These standards apply as general guidelines for the evaluation of assigned papers, essays, presentations, etc. As should be clear, inattention to matters of style/format will result in a corresponding decrease in a grade, even when content is otherwise clear and on-target. As a further explanation of these criteria, consider the following comments:

- A "C" assignment is a good answer—it simply does not do any more than is being asked.
- A "B" assignment is a better answer, but does not reveal depth of analysis that would be required to be considered exceptional.
- An "A" assignment is an exceptional piece of work. Simply understanding the material is not the equivalent of an "A."