

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by College/School/Department of English  
with effect from Semester A 2016 / 17**

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**Part I Course Overview**

<b>Course Title:</b>	Collaboration in Professional Communication
<b>Course Code:</b>	EN2412
<b>Course Duration:</b>	One semester
<b>Credit Units:</b>	3
<b>Level:</b>	B3
<b>Proposed Area:</b> <i>(for GE courses only)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Humanities <input type="checkbox"/> Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations <input type="checkbox"/> Science and Technology
<b>Medium of Instruction:</b>	English
<b>Medium of Assessment:</b>	English
<b>Prerequisites:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Precursors:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Equivalent Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Exclusive Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

This course aims to develop students' awareness and understanding of the issues involved in collaborating in professional settings, and to provide them with a wide range of opportunities to engage in collaborative work. The course will focus on how collaborative practices differ in the academy and the workplace, considering questions such as modes of collaboration, power differences, conflict, varied roles and motives among participants, and other factors that influence the nature of collaboration. Students will be given opportunities to apply their understanding of these issues in practice: they will negotiate and play a variety of roles in different collaborative professional situations, with both spoken and written textual outcomes. In addition they will be required to reflect on their performance in the various collaborative tasks that they participate in.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Demonstrate a critical and informed understanding of key issues relating to collaboration in professional settings		√		
2.	Negotiate roles and tasks effectively in a range of collaborative contexts			√	√
3.	Produce a variety of text types, both written and spoken, in collaboration with colleagues				√
4.	Manage differences and conflict in a sensitive and effective manner		√	√	√
			100%		

\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

*(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)*

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4			
1.	Lectures/tutorials and discussions – introduce students to key issues relating to collaboration	√						
2.	Case studies – provide opportunities to explore and critically evaluate collaborative practices in authentic settings	√						
3.	Negotiation of roles and tasks through different channels e.g. face-to-face, e-mail, collaborative software – activities allow students to apply skills and knowledge acquired during the course		√	√	√			
4.	Simulations and role plays involving differentiated roles and motives – activities allow students to apply skills and knowledge acquired during the course		√	√	√			
5.	Planning, writing and revising texts – enable students to apply knowledge from the course to the creation of a written or spoken textual product such as a proposal or meeting		√	√	√			

**Course outline – week by week**

Week(s)	Activity
1	Introduction – differences between collaboration in the academy and the workplace
2	Multiple motives and interests in the workplace Negotiating roles and tasks; dealing with colleagues
3-4	Power and politeness; making requests The nature of conflict – cognitive vs. affective conflict Managing conflict Assessment 1 (spoken) – Negotiating roles and tasks
5	Channels of communication Social presence, rich and lean media
6-7	Writing a proposal Planning and brainstorming
8-9	Quiz (written) – key issues relating to collaborating in professional settings Modes of collaboration
10	Drafting; writing a report
11	Writing a report Accommodating and representing multiple interests in the end product: editing; cohesion and coherence
12	Consultations for presentations and report
13	Assessment (spoken, in-class) – Group presentation

#### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.					Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4			
Continuous Assessment: 100%							
Simulations – negotiating roles and tasks – allow students to apply skills and knowledge acquired during the course		√		√		20%	Group work, individual assessment
Group proposal – roles preallocated– activities allow students to apply skills and knowledge acquired during the course		√	√	√		20%	Group work, group assessment
Quiz on key issues relating to collaboration in professional settings	√					10%	Individual work, individual assessment
Group report and presentation – tasks and contributions to be negotiated by students– enable students to apply knowledge from the course to the creation of a written and a spoken textual product		√	√	√		35%	Group work, group assessment
Reflective journal(s) – encourage students to consider the central issues relating to collaboration, and to critically evaluate their performance and that of their peers, using knowledge acquired during the course	√					15%	Individual work, individual assessment
Examination: % (duration: _____, if applicable)							
* The weightings should add up to 100%.						100%	

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Adequate (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Negotiating roles and tasks (Group work, individual assessment)	Understanding of issues	Demonstrates total awareness of demands of situation and needs of other group members	Demonstrates strong awareness of demands of situation and needs of other group members	Demonstrates adequate awareness of demands of situation and needs of other group members	Demonstrates little awareness of demands of situation and needs of other group members	Demonstrates no awareness of demands of situation and needs of other group members
	Role negotiation	Handles situation with completely appropriate level of diplomacy and sensitivity	Handles situation with high level of diplomacy and sensitivity	Handles situation with adequate level of diplomacy and sensitivity	Handles situation with inadequate level of diplomacy and sensitivity	Handles situation with little diplomacy or sensitivity
	Achievement of individual goals	Completely achieves individual goals within the context of the collective need	Mostly achieves individual goals within the context of the collective need	Partly achieves individual goals within the context of the collective need	Barely achieves individual goals within the context of the collective need	Does not achieve individual goals within the context of the collective need
2. Group proposal (Group work, group assessment)	Understanding of issues	Group collectively demonstrates total awareness	Group collectively demonstrates strong awareness	Group collectively demonstrates adequate awareness of	Group collectively demonstrates little awareness of demands of situation	Group collectively demonstrates no awareness of demands of situation

		of demands of situation and respective needs	of demands of situation and respective needs	demands of situation and respective needs	and respective needs	and respective needs
	Achievement of collective goals	Resulting text is completely representative of needs and objectives of group	Resulting text is mostly representative of needs and objectives of group	Resulting text is to some extent representative of needs and objectives of group	Resulting text is insufficiently representative of needs and objectives of group	Resulting text is not representative of needs and objectives of group
	Genre requirements	Text fully meets requirements of genre	Text mostly meets requirements of genre	Text meets requirements of genre to some extent	Text barely meets requirements of genre	Text does not meet requirements of genre
	Text coherence and cohesion	Text is completely coherent and cohesive	Text is mostly coherent and cohesive	Text is to some extent coherent and cohesive	Text is barely coherent or cohesive	Text is neither coherent nor cohesive
3. Group report and presentation (Group work, group assessment)	Understanding of issues	Group collectively demonstrates total awareness of demands of situation and respective needs	Group collectively demonstrates strong awareness of demands of situation and respective needs	Group collectively demonstrates adequate awareness of demands of situation and respective needs	Group collectively demonstrates little awareness of demands of situation and respective needs	Group collectively demonstrates no awareness of demands of situation and respective needs

	Achievement of goals	Resulting texts are completely representative of needs and objectives of group	Resulting texts are mostly representative of needs and objectives of group	Resulting texts are to some extent representative of needs and objectives of group	Resulting texts are insufficiently representative of needs and objectives of group	Resulting texts are not representative of needs and objectives of group
	Genre requirements	Texts fully meet requirements of genre	Texts mostly meet requirements of genre	Texts meet requirements of genre to some extent	Texts barely meet requirements of genre	Texts do not meet requirements of genre
	Text coherence and cohesion	Texts are completely coherent and cohesive	Texts are mostly coherent and cohesive	Texts are to some extent coherent and cohesive	Texts are barely coherent or cohesive	Texts are neither coherent nor cohesive
4. Reflective journal (Individual work, individual assessment)	Understanding of issues	Shows comprehensive understanding of the key issues relating to collaboration	Shows considerable understanding of the key issues relating to collaboration	Shows adequate understanding of the key issues relating to collaboration	Shows little understanding of the key issues relating to collaboration	Shows no understanding of the key issues relating to collaboration
	Breadth and depth of reflection	Reflections and analysis of performance are very thorough and demonstrate complete awareness of areas needing attention	Reflections and analysis of performance are thorough and demonstrate reasonable awareness of areas needing attention	Reflections and analysis of performance are adequate and demonstrate some awareness of areas needing attention	Reflections and analysis of performance are poor and demonstrate little awareness of areas needing attention	Reflections and analysis of performance are very poor and demonstrate no awareness of areas needing attention



**Part III Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

**1. Keyword Syllabus**

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

collaboration  
 collaborative writing  
 conflict management  
 negotiating skills  
 power and politeness  
 professional communication  
 workplace writing

**2. Reading List**

**2.1 Compulsory Readings**

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	
2.	
3.	
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**2.2 Additional Readings**

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Ashraf, M. (2004). A critical look at the use of group projects as a pedagogical tool. <i>Journal of Education for Business</i> , 79(4), 213-216.
2.	Bremner, S. (2010). Collaborative writing: Bridging the gap between the textbook and the workplace. <i>English for Specific Purposes</i> , 29(2), 121-132.
3.	Burnett, R. (1993). Conflict in collaborative decision-making. In N. Blyler & C. Thralls (Eds.), <i>Professional communication: The social perspective</i> (pp. 145-163). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
4.	Chen, G., Donahue, L., & Klimoski, R. (2004). Training undergraduates to work in organizational teams. <i>Academy of Management Learning and Education</i> , 3(1), 27-40.
5.	Colen, K., & Petelin, R. (2004). Challenges in collaborative writing in the contemporary corporation. <i>Corporate Communications</i> , 9(2), 136-145.
6.	Couture, B., & Rymer, J. (1989). Interactive writing on the job: Definitions and implications of “collaboration”. In M. Kogan (Ed.), <i>Writing in the business professions</i> (pp. 73-93). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English and Association for Business Communication.
7.	Ede, L., & Lunsford, A. (1990). <i>Singular texts/plural authors: Perspectives on collaborative writing</i> . Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
8.	Gollin, S. (1999). ‘Why? I thought we’d talked about it before’: Collaborative writing in a professional workplace setting. In C. Candlin & K. Hyland (Eds.), <i>Writing: Texts, processes and practices</i> (pp. 267-290). London: Longman.
9.	Hansen, R. (2006). Benefits and problems with student teams: Suggestions for improving team projects. <i>Journal of Education for Business</i> , 82(1), 11-19.

10.	Hemby, V., McPherson, B., Moore, W., Szul, L., Woodland, D., & Wilkinson, K. (2004) A meeting planning project: A major component in developing teamwork and collaborative writing skills. <i>Journal of Organizational Culture, Communications and Conflict</i> , 8(2), 27-45.
11.	Lowry, P., Curtis, A., & Lowry, M. (2004). Building a taxonomy and nomenclature of collaborative writing to improve interdisciplinary research and practice. <i>Journal of Business Communication</i> , 41(1), 66-99.
12.	Palmeri, J. (2004). When discourses collide: A case study of interprofessional collaborative writing in a medically oriented law firm. <i>Journal of Business Communication</i> , 41(1), 37-65.
13.	Rentz, K., Arduser, L., Meloncon, L., & Debs, M. (2009) Designing a successful group-report experience. <i>Business Communication Quarterly</i> , 72(1), 79-84.
14.	Schneider, B., & Andre, J. (2005). University preparation for workplace writing: An exploratory study of the perceptions of students in three disciplines. <i>Journal of Business Communication</i> , 42(2), 195-218
15.	Thacker, R., & Yost, C. (2002). Training students to become effective workplace team leaders. <i>Team Performance Management</i> , 8(3/4), 89-94.