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COMMUNICATION COURSES

Because the Board receives a lot of requests as to what will qualify as a written or oral communications course, the Board has compiled the following information to provide guidance and direction to help clarify the requirement. Of course, if you have any questions, please contact the Board office.

BACKGROUND:

Employers often consider graduates unprepared for employment and lacking in communication skills. Employers agree that communication skills should be a specific course in the curriculum. These skills can also help in developing other attributes of the graduate which will help them succeed in their careers.

There should be an emphasis on the development of the communication process. Writing and oration style and the mechanics of writing and speaking are as important if not more important than the content of the communication. Oral and written reports that are completed for classes other than communication classes are more often graded and evaluated based upon content and subject matter rather than word usage, grammar, style and the other mechanics of communication such as voice, body language and intellect. Presentation skills can help a student or graduate earn respect and can instill confidence and lead to success.

POLICY:

The purpose of communication is to send a message about an experience or perception or point of view. The language and words are the verbal tools but there are non verbal tools such as attitude, action and appearance. It is extremely important to get across to the audience the meaning of the message in an effective and confident manner. The biggest difference between presentations in communication courses and presentations evaluated for other classes is the element of "audience feedback". It includes the "how" as well as the "what".

Courses that will qualify for the communications requirement (both oral and written) are those courses that are taken as a part of the curriculum and are for the purpose of teaching the fundamentals of the communication process. The communications requirement is not to be fulfilled by oral and/or written presentations for other classes or by classes that do not stress or teach the mechanics of the communication process. The communication classes teach not only the verbal tools to convey a message but also the non verbal tools and provide a mechanism of evaluation and feedback of the student's process of communication in addition to the content.

Sample of courses that may qualify (awarded credit by a college or university approved by the Board):

Composition I and II
Speech
Business Communications
Negotiation and Conflict Resolution
Reason and Argument (as a law course only)
Professional Writing
Technical Writing
Personal Communication
Interpersonal Communications
Research Papers
Thesis Papers
Debate

Sample of courses that will not qualify:

Poetry
Fiction
Literature
Drama
Theater
Foreign Language
Papers or Presentations prepared for assignment credit under other classes

