



# University of Alaska Anchorage

## Master of Science Project Management Program

PM 622 Project Communications Management  
*Course Overview*

October 2008-PMI Global Congress

[www.uaa.alaska.edu/espm](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/espm)

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# MSPM Program Requirements

It is strongly recommended that PM A601 – Project Management Fundamentals be taken in the students first semester.

Complete the following requirements (33) credits:

- PM A601 Project Management Fundamentals 3
- PM A610 Project Scope Management 3
- PM A612 Project Time Management 3
- PM A614 Project Cost Management 3
- PM A616 Project Quality Management 3
- PM A620 Project Human Resource Management 3
- PM A622 Project Communications Management 3
- PM A624 Project Risk Management 3
- PM A626 Project Procurement Management 3
- PM A685 Project Management Case Study and Research 6

## Electives

- PM694A Construction PM 3
- PM694B IT PM 3
- PM694C Advanced Project Controls 3

**I. Date of Initiation:** April 1, 2002

**II. Course Information:**

- A. School: School of Engineering (SOE)
- B. Course Subject/Number: PM A622
- C. Course Title: Project Communications Management
- D. Credits: Three (3)
- E. Contact Hours:
  - 1. Lecture hours/week: Three (3)
  - 2. Laboratory hours/week: None (0)
  - 3. Total time of work expected outside of class, hours/week: Six (6)
- F. Course Description: Advanced communication processes and techniques used to successfully manage the project on time, within budget, and to the satisfaction of the customer. These processes include compilation, distribution, storage, and disposing of project information. Special Note: It is highly recommended that PM A601 be taken in the first semester.
- G. Grading Basis: A - F
- H. Course Prerequisites: PM A601 - Project Management Fundamentals
- I. Restrictions: Graduate Level Standing
- J. Fee Amounts: \$25/semester SOE computer lab fee (one fee regardless of how many courses the student is enrolled in)
- K. Coordination: All schools, colleges and faculty list
- L. Course Level Justification: This course builds on the project communications management definitions presented in PM A601 – Project Management Fundamentals and has strong ties to PM A612 – Project Time Management and PM A614 – Project Cost Management. 80% of project failures are due to communication, while only 20% are due to technical difficulties. This course draws and builds on student's undergraduate and professional background in oral and written communication to study specific communication techniques and applications utilized in Project Management to communicate project needs and results in a global arena.

**III. Instructional Goals and Student Outcomes:**

- 1. The instructor will
  - 1.1 Provide students with advanced level understanding of Project Management Communication processes.
  - 1.2 Enable students to send and receive oral and written communications effectively and in a timely manner during the life of a project.
  - 1.3 Provide scenarios of communication processes and problems encountered in the project environment and provide solutions to these problems.
- 2. The student will
  - 2.1 Understand how the communications they are involved in directly affect the project as a whole.
  - 2.2 Effectively manage communications during the life of the project, from inception to completion.
  - 2.3 Communicate project progress both internal and external to the project.
  - 2.4 Assess the type of communications needed for the project and utilize the correct choice of media to communicate with.

**IV. Course Activities:**

The course will be conducted as a series of weekly lectures that will include, class participation, presentations, and case studies.

**V. Guidelines for Evaluation:**

Students are evaluated on successful completion of (a) weekly assignments that will include case studies, problem sets and reading reviews testing understanding, (b) oral presentations and discussion, (c) a midterm paper and a final examination, and (d) a significant team based research project and presentation.

**VI. Topical Outline:**

- 1. Introduction to Basic Communications
- 2. Communication Planning
  - 2.1 Requirements
  - 2.2 Stakeholders
  - 2.3 Stakeholders Analysis
  - 2.4 Management Plan
- 3. Information Distribution
  - 3.1 Implementing the Communication Management Plan
  - 3.2 Retrieval Systems
  - 3.3 Distribution Methods

4. Types of Communication
  - 4.1 Oral, Written, Listening, Speaking
  - 4.2 Internal (within the project)
  - 4.3 External (to the customer, media, etc.)
5. Communication Styles
  - 5.1 Active
  - 5.2 Passive
  - 5.3 Aggressive
6. Earned Value Analysis
  - 6.1 Schedule Performance Index
  - 6.2 Cost Performance Index
  - 6.3 Variance and Trend Analysis
7. Performance Reporting
  - 7.1 Performance Reviews
  - 7.2 Variance, Trend, and Earned Value Analysis
  - 7.3 Performance Reports
  - 7.4 Forecasting
  - 7.5 Change Requests
8. Report Writing and Record Keeping
  - 8.1 Techniques and Tools
  - 8.2 Applications
9. Communicating with Other Cultures
  - 9.1 Cultural Awareness
  - 9.2 Cultural Differences
10. Dealing with the Public
  - 10.1 Convert user requirements to systems requirements
  - 10.2 Conflict and Resolution
11. Communication Failures
  - 11.1 Breakdown
  - 11.2 Barriers
  - 11.3 Conflict
  - 11.4 Mediation
  - 11.5 Resolution
12. Communication Coordination
  - 12.1 Presentation Techniques
  - 12.2 Choice of Media
  - 12.3 Feedback Loops
  - 12.4 Meeting Management Techniques
13. Administrative Closure
  - 13.1 Performance Measurement Documentation
  - 13.2 Project Archives
  - 13.3 Project Closure
  - 13.4 Lessons Learned

## VII. Suggested Texts:

- Fleming, Q., & Koppelman, J., (2000), Earned Value, Project Management Institute.
- Hargie, O., Dickinson, D., & Tourish, D. (1999), Communication in Management, Ashgate Publishing Co.
- Project Management Institute., (2000), A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide), Project Management Institute, Inc.

## VIII. Bibliography:

- Cairncross, F., (2002), The Company of the Future: How the Communications Revolution Is Changing Management, Harvard Business School Publishing.
- Crawford, K., (2001), The Strategic Project Office: A Guide to Improving Organizational Performance, Marcel Dekker.
- Fearn-Banks, K., (2001), Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach, Mahway, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Flannes, S., & Levin, G., (2001), People Skills for Project Managers, Management Concepts.
- Rahim, J., (2001), Managing Conflict in Organizations, Third Edition, Quorum Books.
- O'Rourke, J.S. IV, (2000), Management Communication: A Case-Analysis Approach, Prentice Hall PTR.
- Page, S., (1998), Establishing a System of Policies and Procedures, Stephen Page.
- Punzo, R., (2000), Managing Global Projects/Managing Across Cultures, Princeton Training Press.
- Samovar, L., (2000), Oral Communication: Speaking Across Cultures, Roxbury Publishing Co.

**90% Communications**

# Effective Project Communication

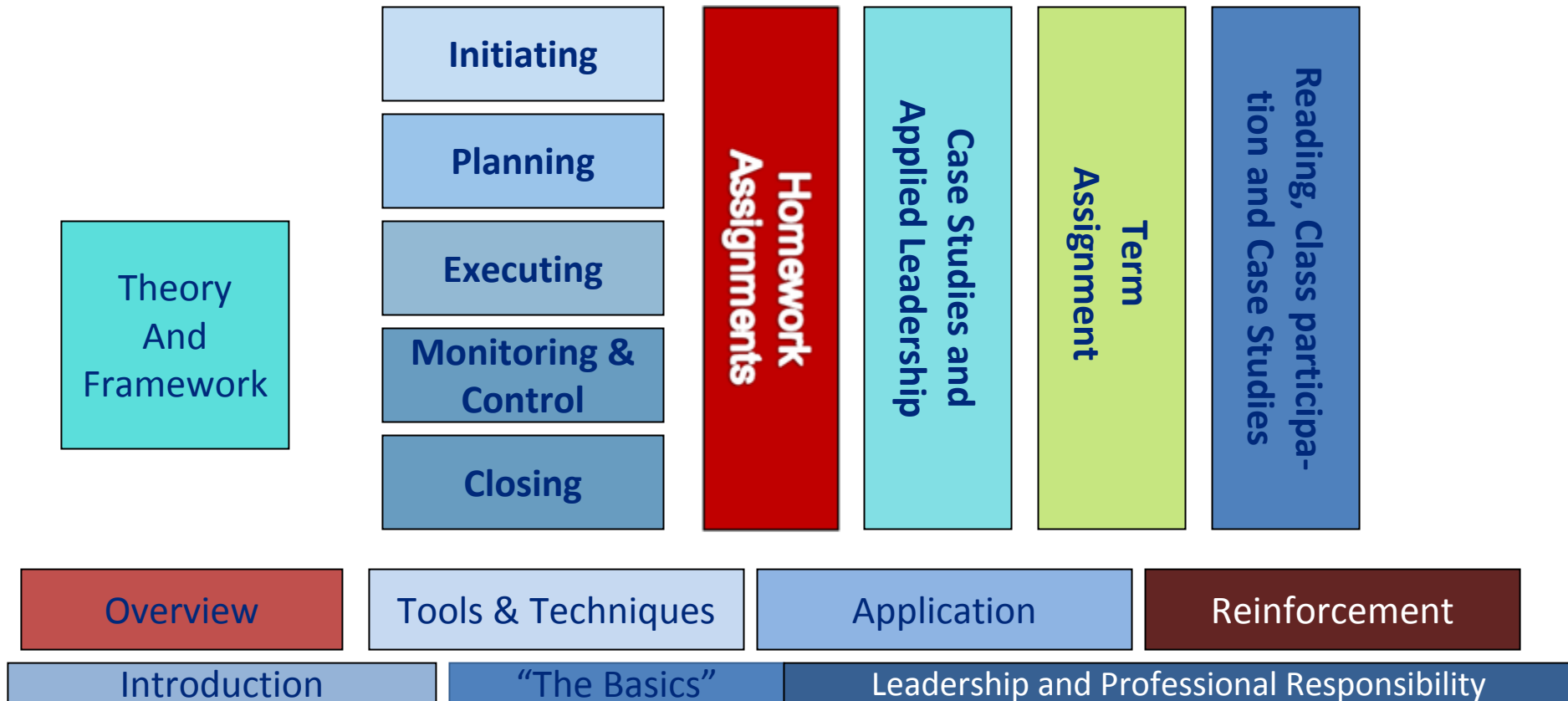
## Objectives:

- To establish common understanding of necessary information at the requisite depth among project stakeholders
- Minimize barriers that inhibit understanding
- Increase clarity and utility of information

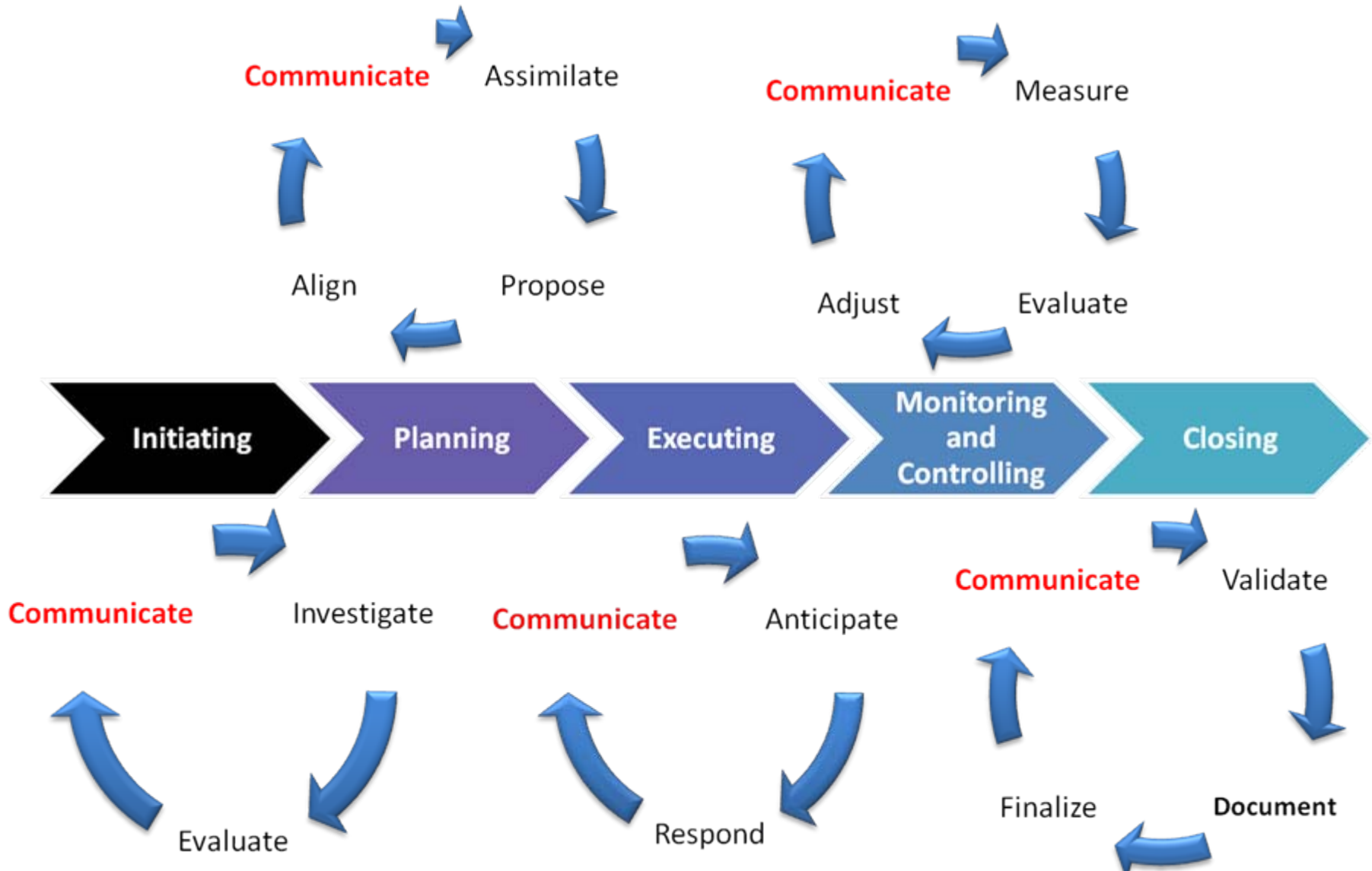
## Role of Project Manager:

- Facilitate effective communication among project stakeholders and maintain alignment
- Establish environment of trust and inclusion
- Identify and address communication barriers
- Implement constructive conflict resolution processes
- Lead by example: honesty, clarity and effectiveness

# UAA PM 622 Project Communications Management Course Overview



# Communication Within The Project Management Process Groups



# Approach

- Apply basic tools and techniques to real student projects
  - Communication objectives defined for each assignment
  - Student presentations to class (subject matter, tools, modes, audience, and mechanisms)
  - Group discussion of results and challenges
  - Peer consulting
  - Evaluations completed by peers, instructor and self
- Case Studies, in-class exercises and situational role-play to enhance communications leadership capabilities
  - Leadership, building trust and motivation
  - Constructive conflict resolution
  - Cross-cultural teams
  - Change leadership
  - Professional ethics
- Final Project: Tools and concepts applied to communication improvement opportunity
  - Written paper and presentation
  - Application within work environment

# Approach: Assignment Examples

Assignment	Initiating Process Group	Planning Process Group	Executing Process Group
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Subject Matter</li> <li>•Tools</li> <li>•Oral communication</li> </ul>	+Audience + Mode	+Communication Mechanisms +Teamwork +Conflict resolution
Application of material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Select Tools (effective and ineffective examples)</li> <li>•Presentation to Class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Select Tools</li> <li>•Presentation to class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Select Tools</li> <li>•Presentation to class</li> </ul>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Self</li> <li>•Peers</li> <li>•Instructor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Self</li> <li>•Peers</li> <li>•Instructor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Self</li> <li>•Peers</li> <li>•Instructor</li> </ul>

# Case Study Example

- Columbia's Last Mission: Role Play
  - Integrated communication in complex environment
  - Situational dynamics and leadership
  - Impacts of organizational culture, team structure and cognitive bias on communication
  - Professional ethics

# Other Thoughts

- Distance students integral part of class session
- Use tools experienced by distance students
- Virtual Office Hour

# Course Materials

- Text Books:
  - *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) Third Edition*, PMI 2004
  - *The Project Management Communications Toolkit* by Carl Pritchard, Artech House 2004. Focus: Communications tools and techniques
  - *Leading Through Conflict* by Mark Gerzon, Harvard Business School Press, 2006. Focus: Role of Leaders in communication
  - *Leading Change* by John Kotter, Harvard Business School Press, 1999

# Course Materials

- Case Studies and Articles
  - ***Columbia's Final Mission***, Harvard Business School Multimedia Case 9-305-032, 2005. Lecture Focus: Situational Dynamics: Assessment, Communication and Outcomes
  - ***Barriers and Gateways to Communication*** By Carl Rogers and F.J. Roethlisberger, Harvard Business Review, November-December 1991. Lecture Focus “Communication: The Role of Leaders”
  - ***Why Didn't We Know?*** By Ralph Hasson, Harvard Business Review Case Study, April 2007. Lecture Focus: “Communication: The Role of Leaders”
  - ***Making Differences Matter*** Thomas, Ely, Harvard Business School Press, Nov 1, 2002. Lecture Focus: “Global teams and Cross-cultural Team Leadership and Communication “