BAAS 305.01W
Corporate Communications
COURSE SYLLABUS for Summer I 2014

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Welcome to Web-based BAAS 305!

The ***best*** way to contact me is by e-mail. This is an online course; therefore, expect most communication to be online as well. I will respond to e-mails within a 48 hour time period. **Please ONLY send e-mails directly to Omar.Brown@TAMUC.edu (instead of using the email feature in eCollege). All e-mails *must* include BAAS 305.01W in the subject line and use proper e-mail etiquette.**

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

Technical Communications, Sixth Edition by Rebecca E. Burnett (2005). Thomson-Wadsworth. ISBN 978-1-4130-0189-1. TAMU-Commerce Bookstore prices: Used $171.15; New $213.90

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is a study of the effective exchange of information between individuals and organizations including email, reports, memorandums, letters, presentations, web page design, advertising, marketing, and public relations. Emphasis will be placed on professionalism, etiquette, and awareness of a multi-cultural environment in both internal and external communications. MS Word, MS Excel Spreadsheets, MS Power Point, and E-mail will be reviewed as tools of information exchange.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Describe rhetorical elements that experienced communicators consider, including context, organization, and purpose through planning, creation, and presentation of written and oral presentation material.
- Identify the synergistic link between understanding reading and writing of technical and business information in multi-cultural environment in corporate communications.
- Study, develop, and practice ethical collaborative skills that enhance enhanced communications using effective timelines and schedules.
- Design and select effective visuals using technology to enhance specific communication functions.
- Understand the relationship of the design of information to the critical goals of accessibility/legibility, comprehensibility/readability, and usability.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

GENERAL POLICIES FOR CLASSES:

All students enrolled at the University will follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. See Student's Guide Handbook, Rules and Procedures, Code of Student Conduct at http://www.tamuc.edu/studentLife/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf

The instructor urges registered online students to familiarize themselves with eCollege by going thru the eCollege tutorial or orientation process. This will ensure that each student will have sufficient knowledge on how to accomplish the requirements of the course. It is NOT the Instructor's responsibility to teach students on how eCollege works. **The instructor assumes that each student has a working knowledge of eCollege and has a MyLeo e-mail address.**

First time eCollege users: eCollege is generally very user friendly; however, should you have any questions or concerns about it, you may want to complete an eCollege orientation. You can access the online eCollege Orientation by clicking on the following link: http://online.tamuc.org/
The home page will give you directions on how to proceed from there. Your login is your Campus-wide ID # and your password is the same as you use for your MyLeo.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a "Browser Test," login to eCollege, click on the 'MyCourses' tab, then select "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

Technical Support: If at any time you experience technical problems (e.g., you can't log in to the course, you can't see certain material, etc.) please contact the eCollege Help Desk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Help Desk can be reached by sending an email to helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or by calling 1-866-656-5511. Additionally, you can click on the "Help" button located at the top of each page for more information.

POLICIES RELEVANT TO BAAS 305 STUDENTS:

Grading, Key Content Areas, and Assignments: Knowledge of the substantive material covered in the course is of central importance. Grades in BAAS 305 are based upon a student's work in three key content areas. These content areas reflect the course objectives and the core communication skills that students are expected to learn. Each of these content areas represents a fixed percentage of the course's content. Since this is a junior level course, grading will include consideration of content as well as grammar, spelling, style, and organization.

The best way to approach the class is to (1) Read the assigned chapters, (2) View the chapter notes, (3) Prepare for and review each chapter quiz, and then (4) Review material for the exams. The student's companion website is useful in these regards.

Four (4) of Five (5) Exams	12.5% each
Assignments	15%
Quizzes	20%
Discussions	15%
Total	**100%**

Percentages for course grade level are as follows:

A =	90-100 %
B =	80-89.9 %
C =	70-79.9 %
D =	60-69.9 %
F =	00-59.9 %

Grades will be awarded based upon a point system. Your total number of points will be divided by the total number of points available to determine your grade percentage.

EXAMS: Exam dates are marked on the syllabus. EXAMS ARE NOT MEANT TO BE OPEN BOOK OR GROUP WORK. All exams are based on terms, concepts, applications, and examples from the textbook.

There will be five exams given throughout the semester (including the final). Each exam is worth 10% of your total course grade. **The exams will be timed and can only be accessed once. Therefore, once you begin, you may not stop and come back to it later.**

BE SURE TO DISABLE INTERNET EXPLORER'S POP-UP BLOCKER BEFORE BEGINNING YOUR EXAM!!! YOU COULD BE KICKED OUT IF YOU CLICK ON THE TIMER AND HAVE NOT DISABLED THIS!!! IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT YOU COMPLETE THE EXAMS ON TIME AND THAT YOU PLAN ACCORDINGLY. YOU NEED TO BE SURE YOU PLAN TO TAKE THE QUIZZES AND EXAMS ON COMPUTERS WITH RELIABLE CONNECTIONS. NO MAKE UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN!!!!!!

NOTE: If a student experiences "technical difficulties"; is absent from the exam due to proven extenuating circumstance(s); or incorrectly submits the exam, a comprehensive make-up exam will be given to the student during final exam week. If a student cannot meet the scheduled exam deadline, contact the instructor for alternative arrangements one week PRIOR to the exam date.

SYLLABUS QUIZ: There will be an initial quiz over the syllabus, due on Sunday **6/08/14**. This will be a multiple choice quiz worth 3% of your total grade. Be sure you have read the syllabus thoroughly, as the quiz is timed. There is no make up for this quiz.

CHAPTER ASSIGMENTS & QUIZZES: There will be quizzes and case studies given throughout the semester. These are worth a total of 32%. For each assignment and quiz, the class will discuss topics relevant to the materials being discussed through research. You are expected to contribute to each class session, so you demonstrate active class participation through quizzes and assigned assignment. Please see tentative schedule below. That's why these assignments and quizzes are weighted rather heavily in your final term grade. Always allow yourself plenty of time to work on these, since you can improve your grade simply by doing well in this area.

Students are expected to understand and utilize APA Formatting, which is required for every written assignment in this course. Please take the time to see our Doc Sharing folder for a Power Point presentation concerning APA Formatting. An extensive resource is also available within the Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.

Submitting papers: All written assignments must be submitted to the appropriate dropbox within eCollege and be produced in **12-point, Arial type, and double-spaced, with one inch margins**. Always use block left format with jagged right margins. Always use tabs at the beginning of paragraphs. Proofread carefully. **Grammar, punctuation, and style count heavily in this course.** You'll be amazed what Spell Check and Grammar Check will either miss or absurdly advise you to do. Additional format instructions are provided along with assignment details. Late papers will NOT be accepted! Students will receive a grade of zero for failing to correctly upload an assignment and on time.

Weekly Content: Each chapter's **content** will be open during the week it is scheduled and will be closed after the exam that covers it is completed. For example, the content for Chapters 1 through 5 will be closed after Exam 1 is completed. However, assignments are due on a weekly basis (generally on Sundays, except for final week). Please keep up with the scheduled readings and required coursework for the week – see schedule below. Once a chapter or assignment has been closed, it will not be re-opened.

Discussion Boards: The discussion board is worth 15% of your grade. The preferred pattern for the discussion activity is that it becomes a conversation, not necessarily a series of posts and replies.
The format for grading the discussions will apply to both semester-long and other discussions (including the section/readings). Grading will include **quantity** of postings and replies, **quality** of postings and replies, **number** and **variety** of topics discussed in discussions, **frequency** and **regularity** of discussions, and **timeliness**.

Students are expected to share their thoughts, responses and/or ideas, in order to learn from each other's opinions. Initial postings and replies are not considered differently in the grading process. Although some professors may set minimum numbers or "appropriate" numbers of postings and replies, students in this class should be aware that the number of postings and replies is only one factor that goes into the grading. Grading of the discussions does tend to be somewhat cumulative, in that a few really outstanding posts or replies may not provide very many points. On the other hand, many low quality posts do not add much value to the discussions. Students should also be aware that copying things off the internet and posting it should include an appropriate reference. Also remember that simply making this kind of posting without making personal observations is not a quality post. Duplicated posts that someone else has already made and replies that are essentially "me too" or "I agree" without further discussion are not quality postings. It is the responsibility of each student to keep up with the scheduled readings and discussions for the chapters. **Please also note that heavy activity during the last few days cannot compensate for a lack of participation during the term**. Plan to participate throughout the entire semester. Once the chapter discussions have been closed, they will not be re-opened and will be in read-only format.

IMPORTANT POSTING RULES:

1) Postings may be a few sentences or a couple of paragraphs in length. The key to a quality post is that it provides thoughtful, clear analysis, and insight into the topic or questions. Your postings will be carefully read.
2) To achieve the highest possible score for discussion participation, student should maintain active engagement through consistency and quality. Quality is more important than quantity.
3) Plagiarism among students (copying others" postings) will **NOT** be tolerated. Please note that TAMU-C has explicit rules regarding plagiarism and will be subject to penalties. Students are advised to carefully read everyone's postings to ensure that no one has plagiarized your answer.
4) Students with very FEW or NO SUBSTANTIVE class participation will not receive the highest credit and failure to post at all will result in student not receiving participation points.
5) Proofread all posts and written communications to eliminate any offensive references, poor sentence syntax, misspelled words, etc. Keep errors to a minimum.

Extra credit work will NOT be assigned, so please do not ask.

Professional Conduct: The instructor reserves the right to manage a positive learning environment and thus will not tolerate inappropriate conduct in the course; this includes not contributing appropriately in class, or disregarding assignments and grading policies. Additionally, I expect every student to maintain a professional level with respecting opinions of the instructor and fellow students. Understand that this factor is highly subjective. I will explain to you why I graded you the way I did, and I will grade students fairly in relation to each other.

Academic Integrity: In this course the need for collaboration is undeniable if you are to excel, even in cases of individual work. There is a fine line in this process. You are encouraged to seek the help and advice of others. However, you *must* do your own work. My personal policy, which will guide this course, is this: I trust you to behave honestly and ethically in all circumstances. Please ask me if you have questions about what is proper and what is not.

Academic Honesty**:** Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Instructors "are expected to uphold and support student integrity and honesty by maintaining conditions that encourage and enforce academic honesty. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material." See 13.99.99.R0.10 Academic Honesty at https://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/13.99.99.R0.10AcademicHonesty.aspx**.**

PLAGIARISM: Some people seem to believe that anything found on the Internet is free to use as they please. The "cut and paste" option also makes it quite tempting. However, information on the web must be properly cited just as you would any "hard copy" periodicals. In this course, APA style citation is expected. Any written assignments must include in text citations as well as a separate reference page. Keep the following in mind:

1. It is generally not advisable to quote anything verbatim in a paper unless there is an overriding reason to do so, such as the use of a particular phrase or sentence that illustrates a point well and should not be changed. When you do so, you must provide place the statement in quotes in addition to a footnote at the end of the quote. Not placing the statement in quotes implies that the wording is your own.
2. Changing a few words in a sentence (for example, "large" to "big") may alleviate the need for quotes (depending on how much you change), but it is not the best way to go. If you are not going to provide a direct quote, then the material should be stated in your own terms. Changing a couple of words implies laziness.
3. Every idea you get from another source must be cited. Placing 100 citations in a paper does not imply that the work is not original, but that you did a proper job of giving credit where it was due.
4. The real danger in a "cut and paste" approach to report writing is that you end up including a lot of information that is related to the topic about which you are writing, but does not really address what you are trying to say. Putting things in your own words allows you to focus your comments more effectively.

Any deviation from the guidelines concerning quotes and citations constitutes plagiarism, as it suggests that you are trying to submit someone else's work and creativity as your own. In accordance with the Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct Section 5.b [1, 2, 3], the penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. Acts of plagiarism will result in writing assignments and research projects not being acknowledged when assigning course grades. In such cases, no opportunities will be afforded for "rewrites" and a grade of zero will be recorded for the assignment and an "F" recorded for the semester. If you have any questions, please let me know.

The following web site provides valuable insight relating to what constitutes plagiarism and how it may be avoided: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR BAAS 305.01W Summer I 2014
Please Note: Late papers will NOT be accepted.

Week Of	Week	Chapter	Assignment
6/3 – 6/8	1	Course Introduction & Syllabus 1 Workplace Communication 2 Culture 3 Technical Information 4 Audiences 5 Collaborating	Academic Honesty Policy (required) Syllabus Quiz Workplace Comm. Discussion **Exam 1 (Ch. 1-5)**
6/9 – 6/15	2	6 Information 7 Planning & Drafting 8 Revising & Editing 9 Usability	 Planning & Drafting Assign. **Exam 2 (Ch. 6-9)**
6/16 – 6/22	3	10 Organizing 11 Designing 12 Visual Forms 13 Electronic Communication	 Designing Quiz Electronic Comm. Discussion **Exam 3 (Ch. 10-13)**
6/23 – 6/29	4	14 Definitions 15 Technical 16 Process	 Process Quiz **Exam 4 (Ch. 14-16)**
6/30 - 7/3	5	17 Oral Communication 18 Correspondence 19 Proposals 20 Report 21 Instructions & Manuals	 Report Quiz **Exam 5 (Ch. 17-21)**

Please Note: The instructor reserves the right to change this schedule as circumstances may dictate. All changes will be announced.

Rubric for Module Assignments

Criterion	4 A-level qualities (90–100)	3 B-level qualities (80–89)	2 C-level qualities (70–79)	1 or 0 D- or F-level qualities (60–69 or <60)	Score
Completeness	Complete in all respects; reflects all requirements	Complete in most respects; reflects most requirements	Incomplete in many respects; reflects few requirements	Incomplete in most respects; does not reflect requirements	
Understanding	Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s)	Demonstrates an accomplished understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s)	Demonstrates an acceptable understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s)	Demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s)	
Analysis, evaluation, and recommend-ations	Presents an insightful and thorough analysis of all issues identified; includes all necessary financial calculations	Presents a thorough analysis of most issues identified; includes most necessary financial calculations	Presents a superficial analysis of some of the issues identified; omits necessary financial calculations	Presents an incomplete analysis of the issues identified	
	Makes appropriate and powerful connections between the issues identified and the strategic concepts studied in the reading; demonstrates complete command of the strategic concepts and analytical tools studied	Makes appropriate connections between the issues identified and the strategic concepts studied in the reading; demonstrates good command of the strategic concepts and analytical tools studied	Makes appropriate but somewhat vague connections between the issues and concepts studied in the reading; demonstrates limited command of the strategic concepts and analytical tools studied	Makes little or no connection between the issues identified and the strategic concepts studied in the reading	

	Supports diagnosis and opinions with strong arguments and evidence; presents a balanced and critical view; interpretation is both reasonable and objective	Supports diagnosis and opinions with reasons and evidence; presents a fairly balanced view; interpretation is both reasonable and objective	Supports diagnosis and opinions with limited reasons and evidence; presents a somewhat one-sided argument	Supports diagnosis and opinions with few reasons and little evidence; argument is one-sided and not objective	
Analysis, evaluation, and recommend-ations	Presents detailed, realistic, and appropriate recommendations clearly supported by the information presented and concepts from the reading	Presents specific, realistic, and appropriate recommendations supported by the information presented and concepts from the reading	Presents realistic or appropriate recommendations supported by the information presented and concepts from the reading	Presents realistic or appropriate recommendations with little, if any, support from the information presented and concepts from the reading	
Research	Supplements case study with relevant and extensive research into the present situation of the company; clearly and thoroughly documents all sources of information	Supplements case study with relevant research into the present situation of the company; documents all sources of information	Supplements case study with limited research into the present situation of the company; provides limited documentation of sources consulted	Supplements case study, if at all, with incomplete research and documentation	
Writing mechanics	Writing demonstrates a sophisticated clarity, conciseness, and correctness; includes thorough details and relevant data and information; extremely well-organized	Writing is accomplished in terms of clarity and conciseness and contains only a few errors; includes sufficient details and relevant data and information; well-organized	Writing lacks clarity or conciseness and contains numerous errors; gives insufficient detail and relevant data and information; lacks organization	Writing is unfocused, rambling, or contains serious errors; lacks detail and relevant data and information; poorly organized	
APA guidelines	Uses APA guidelines accurately and consistently to cite sources	Uses APA guidelines with minor violations to cite sources	Reflects incomplete knowledge of APA guidelines	Does not use APA guidelines	
				Total:	

Note: Criteria are evaluated on a 4-3-2-1-0 basis. Total rubric points are converted first to a letter grade and then to a numerical equivalent based on a 0–100 scale: 33–36 = A (93–100); 32 = A– (90–92); 30–31 = B+ (88–89); 24–29 = B (83–87); 23 = B– (80–82); 21–22 = C+ (78–79); 15–20 = C (73–77); 14 = C– (70–72); 7–13 = D (60–69); 0–6 = F (below 60).

[Edison State College, June '09]