

BA 303-Business Communication
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Fall 2014

TR 9:30-10:45 am

Tentative Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Kendra Ingram

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Subject area on all email correspondence... ***your name, course name & section number***

Office: McDowell Administration Bldg. 335A

Office Number: (903) 886-5701

Please leave a clear message when leaving a voice mail.

Office Hours: MWF 12pm-1pm; TR 12:30pm-1:30pm

Course Description A study of the fundamentals of writing both formal and informal reports, utilizing primary and secondary research. A team approach is used for problem solving and process improvement. Included is the study of life-long learning skills as related to interpersonal communication and intercultural business communication. **Prerequisite:** Junior standing.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to develop the following professional skills:

- Students will understand how businesses communicate through formal and informal communication networks as well as in groups.
- Students will be able to recognize communication meanings that are rooted in cultural experience.
- Students will develop the ability to express themselves in writing, including a thorough knowledge of grammar, mechanics and basic writing skills, differentiating between positive, negative, neutral and persuasive messages. Students will also analyze information gathered from research to draw accurate conclusions, utilize the formats for “direct and indirect” communication strategies and formal and information styles of reports and demonstrate techniques to graphically communicate information for written and oral communications.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast active, passive and not listening behavior as well as strategies to listen effectively while demonstrating the communication elements that are part of communicating using the “you view.”
- Students will understand the ethical goals of business communication and tools for communicating ethically in business.

Required Texts: Thill & Bovee. Excellence in Business Communication. 11th Edition. ISBN 13: 978-0-13-3544176 2

Attendance

Attendance and participation will have a direct effect on your grade. **Notification should be given via email when the student becomes aware an absence is inevitable.** Excessive absences can result in a five point course grade reduction (at minimum) or an administrative drop from the course. A contact or an attempt to contact a student regarding being administratively dropped from the course will be made. Students with a concern regarding absences should discuss their specific situation directly with the instructor.

Course Grade

Final course grade will consist of the accumulation of points (weighted) earned by completion of the following: Exam I, II, III and IV, Upward, Downward and Horizontal Communication Assignments, In-Class Presentation, Written Report, Resume, Attendance and Participation. Grading will be as follows, each exam is worth 15%, Communication Assignments 5%, In-Class Presentation 5%, Written Report 5%, Resume 5%, Attendance 5% and Participation 5%. Your course grade will be based on a ten point scale: $\geq 90\%$ =A, $\geq 80\%$ =B, $\geq 70\%$ =C, $\geq 60\%$ =D, $< 60\%$ =F.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. The university will not condone plagiarism in any form. The faculty, administration, and students are expected to uphold and support the highest academic standards in this matter. Plagiarism is handled initially by the instructor. If the instructor feels the problem warrants more attention, it should then be pursued through the department head. If the department head wishes, it should be brought to the attention of the dean of the college for study and review before meeting with the standing University Discipline Committee.

See 13.99.99.R0.03 Academic Honesty at <http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesprocedures/13students/13.99.99.R0.03Plagiarism.aspx>

Notes and Reminders

All exams may consist of a combination of multiple choice, matching, true/false and short essay questions. **A grade of 0 will be assigned for a missed exam.**

Class participation points will be based on classroom activity, assignments and preparedness. Students will come prepared for the class period having read the material for the lecture, prepare/discuss current events, and be ready to participate in class/group activities and discussions. Occasional quizzes may be given to verify preparedness.

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 3

Topics and Overview

Achieving Success Through Effective Business Communication

Mastering Team Skills and Interpersonal Communication

Communicating in a World of Diversity

Planning Business Messages

Exam I

Writing Business Messages

Completing Business Messages

Crafting Messages for Electronic Media

Writing Routine and Positive Messages

Exam II

Writing Negative Messages

Writing Persuasive Messages

Planning Reports and Proposals

Writing Reports and Proposals

Exam III

Completing Reports and Proposals

Designing and Delivering Oral and Online Presentations

Building Careers and Writing Resumes

Applying and interviewing for Employment

Exam IV

Communication Assignments, In-Class Presentations, Written Report, Resume, E-Mail, Questionable Communication

Rubrics will be provided in-class/online when assignment is given in class.

Communication Assignments-

The communication assignments directed upward, downward and horizontally will prepare you to interact in written form with your colleagues, superiors and employees. Great care should be taken when planning, writing and completing communication assignments as they become a record of your interactions at all levels. The assumption in communication assignments is they will be your first communications in your first few months in your first professional position. This will be your "introduction" of your writing skills to your colleagues, superiors and employees.

They will learn your writing style, your professionalism, your tone, etc. 4

E-Mail

Most commonly used, emails have become the new standard in business communications, used in most industries for routine communications. The challenge in this assignment is to design, create and send an email “downward”. Downward means an email directed to staff below you in the organization. Your email can be directed to your administrative assistant, your staff, the maintenance staff, etc. anyone, or more than one person, below you in your organization. You choose the name, the scenario, etc. How you communicate with staff below you can be a key to your upward mobility in the organization. Be mindful of your writing style, your professionalism, your tone, etc.

Questionable Communication

The purpose of this assignment is to both identify questionable communications as well as to practice writing to our colleagues (horizontal). Assumptions can be made you will be writing to professionals on your same level in your organization. Similar knowledge, similar experiences, similar understanding. You are composing a piece for their information and review.

Introductory Memo

The assignment is entitled an Introductory Memo because the assumption is this is your first memo to your supervisor (upward) in your first few months in a new position. This will be your “introduction” of your writing skills to your supervisor. They will learn your writing style, your professionalism, your tone, etc. all from this first memo!

Written Report-

As constant and consistent communication between employees and supervisors, external clients occurs daily, weekly, etc., your written report assignment will prepare you for communicating accordingly. You will be asked to prepare a brief written report (in accordance with Ch. 13, p. 415 text) as you would in your first professional position.

Resume-

Assume the resume you prepare for this assignment is being prepared as you apply for your first full-time position. Your objective with your resume is to appropriately capture your audience’s attention to consider the content within your resume. Once the reader begins evaluating your resume, the purpose of the content is to provide relevant details, maintain reader engagement and elicit interest to secure an interview. *Your resume will reflect YOU on paper (Ch. 15 in your text will help)*. The challenge is to establish congruency using appropriate content and style.

In-Class Presentation- (5 mins. max)

Assume the presentation you prepare for this assignment is being prepared in your first full-time position. Your objective is to appropriately prepare and present your information to engage and inform your audience. The challenge is to prepare and present an effective and relevant less than five minute presentation. Chapter 14 in your text provides useful tips.