Communicating in Business

Course Description

A study of the fundamentals of effective communication in business and administration. Emphasis is placed on the application of modern techniques to business writing including memos, letters and reports, and oral reporting.

Prerequisites: BUSI 0011, MISY 2305 and Junior standing or above.

Learning Objectives

- Review/learn English grammar and punctuation.
- Review/learn effective writing style principles (paragraph unity, paragraph length, active voice, etc.).
- Learn correct format and content for business letters, memos, e-mail, and short and long reports.
- Learn correct format of APA style.
- Review/learn effective speaking skills (content, delivery, PowerPoint design, etc.).
- Learn correct format and content for documents relating to employment (i.e., resume, application letter, follow-up letters).
- Consider ethical implications of various communication documents (i.e., exaggeration in sales letters and resumes, etc.) and situations (plagiarism).
- Seeks to assist students in their preparation for the Major Field Test.

Required or Recommended Readings

Textbook:


(Bring every class session)

NOTE: If the bookstore is sold out of the text, please place a special order with the bookstore or an online source immediately.
Recommended or Supplemental Reading:

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*
American Psychological Association

Blackboard Login: [https://iol.tamucc.edu/](https://iol.tamucc.edu/)

List of Supplies

- USB Flash Drive
  
  (Bring every class session)

- SandDollar Card with a positive cash balance (to use printers)
  
  (Bring on exam dates as requested)

Major Course Requirements

Exams

- Exam #1 (September 8) 50
- Exam #2 (October 11) 55
- Final (December 8) 90

  Final exams taken at other times will result in score reduction by 1 grade unless approved by university policy

Written Report

- Instruction 1 (September 6, 11:59 p.m.) 0
- Instruction 2 (September 15, 11:59 p.m.) 10
- Instruction 3 (September 29, 11:59 p.m.) 0
- Instruction 4 (October 11, 11:59 p.m.) 0
- Instruction 5 (October 25, 11:59 p.m.) 5
- Instruction 6 (October 27, 11:59 p.m.) 5
- Instruction 7 (November 1, 11:59 p.m.) 5
- Instruction 8 (November 8, 11:59 p.m.) 10
- Instruction 9 (November 15, 11:59 p.m.) 50

Oral Presentation

- Oral Presentation #1 (September 13, 15, 20) 50
- Oral Presentation #2 (November 17, 22, 29) 50

Impromptu Speaking

30

Documentation Assignment (October 25, 11:59 p.m.)

20

In-Class Assignments

- Miscellaneous In-class Assignments (? @ 5, 10, or 15 points each) ?

Course Grade Percentages: A letter grade will be determined based on the percentage earned of total points possible, as follows: A, 90-100%; B, 80-89%; C, 70-79%; D, 60-69%; F, 0-59%.
Borderline Grades: Students slightly below grade thresholds will have their course grades raised if they meet certain conditions; students further away from the threshold must meet more conditions.

Students 1 percentage point from a threshold (89, 79, 69, 59) must meet one of these conditions: (a) submitted all assignments (no zero scores appear on the Turnitin.com “My Grades” page), (b) attended all class sessions (including first day; excused absence considered an absence), (c) earned the higher grade on the final exam, or (d) completed and submitted all 9 Written Report assignments by the deadlines.

Students 2 percentage points from a threshold (88, 78, 68, 58) must meet two of these conditions: (a) submitted all assignments (no zero scores appear on the Turnitin.com “My Grades” page), (b) attended all class sessions (including first day; excused absence considered an absence), (c) earned the higher grade on the final exam, or (d) completed and submitted all 9 Written Report assignments by the deadlines.

Students 3 percentage points from a threshold (87, 77, 67, 57) must meet three of these conditions: (a) submitted all assignments (no zero scores appear on the Turnitin.com “My Grades” page), (b) attended all class sessions (including first day; excused absence considered an absence), (c) earned the higher grade on the final exam, or (d) completed and submitted all 9 Written Report assignments by the deadlines.

Students more than 3 percentage points from a threshold (86, 76, 66, 56) will not have their course grades raised

Course Policies

Exam Policies

Impromptu Speaking. Throughout the semester students will have opportunities to develop impromptu (spontaneous, unrehearsed) speaking skills. Students who attend all class sessions in which impromptu speaking exercises are held and successfully participate each time they’re called upon will receive the full 30 “impromptu speaking” points. Students who choose not to participate, are unprepared, or absent will receive proportionately fewer points.

Impromptu speaking opportunities cannot be made up; however, one missed opportunity will be forgiven. Additional missed impromptu speaking opportunities will be scored as zeros. For instance, suppose that a student earned these scores: six successful
impromptu efforts, two unprepared efforts, and three absences on dates of impromptu opportunities. That student’s impromptu speaking score would be 18 points (6/10 x 30).

Missed Exams. Exams missed for any reason (other than required university-sponsored events) may not be made up. Students who miss an exam because of an excused absence will have their Final Exam worth a higher point total (# of points of the missed exam). Students participating in required university-sponsored events (athletic events, approved field trips, etc.) must complete make-up exams within one week; make-up exams not completed within one week will result in students completing the Final Exam worth a higher point total.

Missed In-Class Assignments. In-class assignments due by the end of a given class session may not be made up. However, students who missed class because of a legitimate, excusable absence will receive “no score” (rather than zero) on any graded homework quizzes or in-class assignments that occurred on that date if they successfully complete and submit the “Excused Absence Form” to the designated link on Turnitin.com within 1 week of the excused absence. Students may submit the “Excused Absence Form” for two absences. Legitimate absences include family emergencies; sickness, one-time transportation problems (car won’t start, accident, etc); and other legitimate, unpreventable circumstances. Inexcusable absences include work conflicts, other course conflicts, nonemergency doctor appointments, and other issues that could have been completed at another time.

Athletes or other students involved in university-sponsored events missing an in-class assignment may either submit an “Excused Absence Form” (if any excused absence opportunities remain) or complete a make-up assignment provided by the instructor. The Excused Absence Form or the make-up assignment must be submitted within one week to avoid earning a zero score on the assignment.

Late Written Reports and Oral Presentations. Students are expected to complete assignments early in the assignment’s timeframe period. Students who wait until the end of the timeframe period to complete assignments, do so at their own risk. An assignment is considered late if it arrives after the designated deadline (The clocks on BlackBoard and Turnitin.com will be considered the official time; no other clock time will be considered). Due to the possibility of unforeseen circumstances such as technical difficulties or personal situations, you are encouraged to complete your assignments and quizzes in time to rectify any problems before the deadlines.

Late assignments will be accepted on certain assignments for a designated period; however, an appropriate point reduction will be imposed.

No assignment may be submitted after the Final Exam.
**Inattentiveness Policy**

Computers are to be used only for websites or programs that apply to topics covered in this class; the instructor will indicate when the computers may be used. Students may not use computers during class time to view websites, e-mail, computer games, files, or programs unless told to do so by the instructor.

In addition, students may not study for other courses, complete personal tasks (including cell phone usage of any kind), or any other activity not related to the class material being discussed at that time.

**Writing Deficiency Policy**

This is a fast-paced, intensive course that will require a lot of outside work and preparation. It will be assumed that students have obtained acceptable composition skills as well as a good understanding of basic English grammar and punctuation rules. These will not be covered extensively in class. Students lacking in these basic skills are strongly advised to take a remedial writing course first.

The instructor will evaluate student writing competence continually throughout the course. Students with writing deficiencies will be advised to complete appropriate remedial action, ranging from individualized instruction at the Writing Center or with a tutor to enrollment in a remedial English course.

Written assignments with proofreading errors will automatically receive significantly reduced scores regardless of other commendable qualities.

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required. Each student, whether present or absent, is personally responsible for announcements made, assignments, lecture notes, class discussions, handouts, and videos. A student should consult with other students for missed announcements, lecture notes, and assignments.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism Policy**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) Students may not collaborate on assignments or tests—either inside or outside the classroom. If one student’s assignment is too similar to that of a classmate’s, both students will receive zeroes regardless of which student did the copying.
This course, and all other courses offered by the College of Business (COB), requires all of its students to abide by the COB Student Code of Ethics (available online at www.cob.tamucc.edu). Provisions and stipulations in the code are applicable to all students taking College of Business courses regardless of whether or not they are pursuing a degree awarded by the COB.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. **November 4** is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Preferred Methods of Scholarly Citations**

APA style

**Classroom/Professional Behavior**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.
Disabilities Accommodations

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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Perspectives

Global Perspectives

Foreign and domestic cultural norms and values will be discussed as they relate to oral and written communication.

Demographic Diversity Perspectives

Diversity will be discussed as it relates to oral and written communication.

Ethical Perspectives

Ethical topics occur throughout the course. The textbook features some of these topics with its “Ethical Insights.” In addition, “Ethical Issue” critical thinking questions may be assigned.

Major Field Test

The Major Field Test (MFT) is required for all students pursuing the Bachelor of Business Administration degree and will be administered in the MGMT 4388, Administrative Policy and Strategy course. To prepare for this test, business majors are advised to retain their class notes, textbooks and other relevant materials from this class and the other business core courses and to fine-tune their readiness for the MFT by completing the online MFT review available through the COB website at www.cob.tamucc.edu
MGMT 3315
TENTATIVE Class Schedule

August 25  Class Syllabus
Written Report Assignment (Instruction 1: “Select an Appropriate Book Chapter”)
“H.A.T.S.” Article (Document Design) and Complete a Revision Exercise
Submit HATS Revision to Turnitin.com
   (TR 8 class ID: 4139846 enrollment password: valuable)
   (TR 11 class ID: 4139855 enrollment password: valuable)
Complete Activity 1.3 (p. 33)
Submit Activity 1.3 to Turnitin.com
Pretest assignment (available on Blackboard “Assessments”)
Introduction Activity

August 30  Homework Quiz #0 (see Ch. 4 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Written Report Assignment (Instruction 1: “Select an Appropriate Book Chapter”)
Discuss Oral Presentation #1
Review “H.A.T.S.” Article and Revision Exercise
Video 2 (“Guffey’s 3 x 3 Writing Process . . .” [10:10])
Chapter 4: “Planning Business Messages” (read before class)

September 1  Homework Quiz #1 (see Ch. 5 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Discuss Exam #1
Paragraph Unity Exercise
Revision Exercise (H.A.T.S. and paragraphing)
Chapter 5: “Organizing and Writing Business Messages” (read before class)

September 6  Homework Quiz #2 (see Ch. 6 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Readability formulas/Microsoft Spelling & Grammar review
Discuss Introductions in Written Reports (p. 391)
Revision Exercise (H.A.T.S., Paragraphing, and Introduction)
Chapter 6: “Revising Business Messages” (read before class)

September 8  Written Report Assignment (Instruction 2: “Write the Introd. Paragraphs and Survey Questions”)
Exam #1 (closed book, closed notes)
   Revision Exercise (H.A.T.S.) 1 @ 35 pts.
   Chapters 4-6 Activity sentences 5 @ 2 pts.
   Checkpoint Sentences 1-20 (pp. A-3 to A-7) 5 @ 1 pt.
September 13  ORAL PRESENTATION #1—all students attend

September 15  ORAL PRESENTATION #1—all students attend

September 20  ORAL PRESENTATION #1—all students attend

September 22  Homework Quiz #3 (see Ch. 7 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Oral Presentation #1 Make-up
Written Report Assignment (Instruction 3: “Place the Survey Instrument on Survey Monkey”)
Chapter 7: “Electronic Messages and Digital Media” (read before class)
Video 3 (“Smart E-Mails and Memos Advance Your Career” [6:36])

September 27  Homework Quiz #4 (see Ch. 8-Day 1 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Written Report Assignment (Instruction 4: “Administer the Survey Instrument”)
Chapter 8: “Positive Messages” (read before class)
Appendix B: “Reference Guide to Document Formats” (pp. B-2 to B-9 [read before class])

September 29  Homework Quiz #5 (see Ch. 8-Day 2 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Discuss Exam #2
Chapter 8 (pp. 240-243): “Goodwill Messages”

October 4  Homework Quiz #6 (see Ch. 9 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Chapter 9: “Negative Messages”

October 6  Homework Quiz #7 (see Ch. 10 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Discuss Oral Presentation #2
Chapter 10: “Persuasive and Sales Messages”
October 11  Exam #2 (closed book, closed notes)  
    Chapters 7-10  
    Checkpoint Sentences 1-45 (pp. A-3 to A-12)  
        Checkpoint Sentences 11 @ 1 pt  
        Chapter Review Questions 4 @ 3 pts.  
        Chapter Activity Questions 4 @ 3 pts.  
        Business Letter/Memo Problem 1 @ 20 pts.  

October 13  Homework Quiz #8 (see Ch. 11-Day 1 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)  
          Chapter 11 (“Report and Research Basics” pp. 337-360) (read before class)  
          Documentation Assignment Discussed (select articles)  

October 18  Homework Quiz #9 (see Ch. 11-Day 2 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)  
          Chapter 11 (pp. 361-363): “Documenting Information” (read before class)  
          p. C-3 to C-5: “Documentation Formats” (read before class)  
          Documentation Assignment Discussed (prepare in-text and reference page citations)  
          Written Report Assignment (Instruction 5: “APA In-Text Citation and Reference Page Citation”)  

October 20  Homework Quiz #10 (see Ch. 11-Day 3 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)  
          Chapter 11 (pp. 364-370): “Creating Effective Visual Aids” (read before class)  
          Written Report Assignment (Instruction 6: “Prepare Graphics”)  

October 25  Homework Quiz #11 (see Ch. 12-Day 1 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)  
          Chapter 12: “Informal Business Reports”  
          Written Report Assignment (Instruction 7: “Write the ‘Conclusions’ and ‘Recommendations’ Sections”)  

October 27  Homework Quiz #12 (see Ch. 12-Day 2 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)  
          Chapter 12: “Informal Business Reports”  
          Written Report Assignment (Instruction 8: “Write the ‘Results of the Study’ Section”)  

November 1  Discuss Chapter 12: “Informal Business Reports”  
   (see Ch. 12-Day 3 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
November 3  Homework Quiz #13 (see Ch. 13-Day 1 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Present APA Style Report Format
Chapter 13 (pp. 433-449): “Writing Formal Business Reports” (read before class)
p. C-3 to C-5 “Documentation Formats” (read before class)
Written Report Assignment (Instruction 9: “Write the Final Written Report”)

November 4  LAST DAY TO DROP A COURSE WITH AN AUTOMATIC GRADE OF “W”

November 8  Discuss Final Exam
APA Style Report Format
(see Ch. 13-Day 1 Homework listing on the Blackboard Learning Module)
Chapter 13 (pp. 433-449): “Writing Formal Business Reports” (read before class)
p. C-3 to C-5 “Documentation Formats” (read before class)

November 10  Oral Presentation #2 rehearsal
(be prepared to display PPT slides and deliver introduction, conclusion, and 2 minutes from each speaker)

November 15  Oral Presentation #2, Written Report Assignment, or Final Exam Preparation

November 17  ORAL PRESENTATION #2—See assigned list of teams chosen to speak today
Absent students may either (a) submit an “Excused Absence Form” (if they haven’t already used their two excused absences earlier in the course or (b) complete a make-up assignment (see Oral Presentation #2 assignment sheet)

November 22  ORAL PRESENTATION #2— See assigned list of teams chosen to speak today
Absent students may either (a) submit an “Excused Absence Form” (if they haven’t already used their two excused absences earlier in the course or (b) complete a make-up assignment (see Oral Presentation #2 assignment sheet)
November 29  
ORAL PRESENTATION #2— See assigned list of teams chosen to speak today
Absent students may either (a) submit an “Excused Absence Form” (if they haven’t already used their two excused absences earlier in the course or (b) complete a make-up assignment (see Oral Presentation #2 assignment sheet)

December 1  
Employment Communication Activity (Chapters 15 & 16)

December 6  
Employment Communication Activity (Chapters 15 & 16)

FINAL EXAM (Chapters 4-13 & Checkpoint Sentences 1-75 [pp. A-2 to A-19])

MGMT 3315.002 (TR 11:00 - 12:15 p.m.) = Thursday, Dec. 8, 11:00 -1:30 p.m.
MGMT 3315.004 (TR 8:00 - 9:15 a.m.) = Thursday, Dec. 8, 8:00 -10:30 a.m.

Checkpoint Sentences 15 @ 1 pt.
Chapter Activity/Review Questions 15 @ 3 pts.
   Ch. 4-10 = 7 questions
   Ch. 11-13 = 8 questions
Application Problem 1 @ 30 pts.