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 and situations (plagiarism).
- Seeks to assist students in their preparation for the Major Field Test.

Required or Recommended Readings

*Textbook:*


APLIA Online Homework (registration/purchase instructions provided at the end of this syllabus)

*Recommended or Supplemental Reading:*

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

American Psychological Association

*Blackboard Login: 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 (June 8)      50
   Exam #2 (June 15)     60
   Final                90

     Final exams taken at other times will result in score reduction of 20 points unless approved by university policy.

Written Report
   Assignment 1 (June 8, 11:55 p.m.) 2
   Assignment 2 (June 9, 11:55 p.m.) 2
   Assignment 3 (June 10, 11:55 p.m.) 2
   Assignment 4 (June 11, 11:55 p.m.) 0
   Assignment 5 (June 15, 11:55 p.m.) 2
   Assignment 6 (June 17, 11:55 p.m.) 2
   Assignment 7 (June 23, 11:55 p.m.) 2
   Assignment 8 (June 24, 11:55 p.m.) 2
   Assignment 9 (June 25, 11:55 p.m.) 2
   Assignment 10 (June 30, 11:55 p.m.) 75

Oral Presentation
   Oral Presentation #1 (June 9)      50
   Oral Presentation #2 (June 25 & June 29) 50

Aplia Online Homework Assignments
   75
   10 Aplia assignments: 8 chapters, 1 grammar tutorial, 1 writing tutorial

   Aplia Online Homework Assignments: There are 10 required Aplia assignments over the semester, as indicated in the “Required?” column of the Aplia schedule (inside “Aplia Assignment” section of the Blackboard course menu). Each assignment has a due date after which the assignment is locked. Students may attempt each assignment up to 3 times before the deadline; the average of all attempts will be the score recorded. Only the top 8 (of 10) assignments will count toward a student’s grade. That means that students have two free passes. Please note that once a due date has passed, the assignment is no longer available. If students miss an assignment for any reason, legitimate or otherwise, that will count as one of their two free passes.

In-Class Assignments (Chapter Activities, Miscellaneous Assignments)
   Miscellaneous In-class or Outside 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 1 percentage point from a threshold (89, 79, 69, 59) must meet one of these conditions: (a) submitted all graded in-class and outside-class 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 [student with 89% course average after the final would need to earn an “A” grade on the final to receive an “A” course grade], (d) completed and submitted all 10 Written Report assignments by the deadlines, or (e) delivered the Introduction and Conclusion for the team’s Oral Presentation #2.

Students more than 1 percentage point from a threshold (88, 78, 68, 58) will not have their course grades raised.

Course Policies

Exam Policies

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 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 one absence.

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

Students are expected to attend class on time and concentrate on the material being covered in class. Students who are tardy, leave early, distracted (phone, noncourse computer application, homework for other courses, etc.) may have 1 point dropped from their next exam for each such offense.

Writing Deficiency Policy

This fast-paced, intensive course 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. June 19 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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 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 Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

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 Corpus Christi Hall 116.

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.

Statement of Academic Continuity

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

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.
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 course, “Administrative Policy and Strategy.” 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. Students will enroll in BUSI 0088 “MFT Review” (concurrently with MGMT 4388) during their final semester; this online course should fine-tune their readiness for the MFT by encouraging them to complete the online MFT review materials and required quizzes available on the course Blackboard learning modules.
June 1  
Class Syllabus
“H.A.T.S.” Article (Document Design) and Complete a Revision Exercise
Submit HATS Revision to Turnitin.com (class ID: enrollment password: valuable)
Complete Activity 1.3 (p. 32; available on Bb “Learning Module”)
Submit Activity 1.3 to Turnitin.com
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 1: “Write the ‘Background’ Essay”)
Chapter 4: “Planning Business Messages” (read before class)
Chapter 4 Activities
Pretest assignment (available on Blackboard “Assessments”)

June 2  
Discuss Oral Presentation #1
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 2: “Provide responses to any six of the ‘Identifying’ .”)
Review “H.A.T.S.” Article and Revision Exercise
Discuss Exam #1
Video 2 (“Guffey’s 3 x 3 Writing Process . . .” [10:10])
Discuss Chapter 5: “Organizing and Drafting Business Messages” (read before class)

June 3  
Discuss Exam #1
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 3: “Provide responses to any six of the ‘Evaluating’ .”)
Discuss Chapter 6: “Revising Business Messages” (read before class)

June 4  
Discuss Exam #2
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 4: “Complete the O*Net Interest Profiler”)
Discuss Chapter 7: “Short Workplace Messages and Digital Media” (read before class)
Video 3 (“Smart E-Mails and Memos Advance Your Career” [6:36])
Discuss Appendix B: “Document Format Guide” (pp. B-1 to B-2 [read before class])
June 8  
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 5: “Research at least three secondary sources . . .”)
Discuss Chapter 8: “Positive Messages” (read before class)
Discuss Appendix B: “Document Format Guide” (pp. B-2 to B-9 [read before class])
Exam #1 (closed book, closed notes)
  Document Design Exercise (H.A.T.S.) 1 @ 25 pts.
  Chapters 4-6 Chapter Review questions 5 @ 2 pts.
  Chapters 4-6 Activity sentences 5 @ 2 pts.
  Checkpoint Sentences 1-20 (pp. A-3 to A-7) 5 @ 1 pt.

June 9  
ORAL PRESENTATION #1—all students attend
Absent students may either (a) submit an “Excused Absence Form” (if they haven’t already used their one excused absence earlier in the course or (b) complete a make-up assignment (see Oral Presentation #1 assignment sheet)
Discuss Chapter 8: “Goodwill Messages” (pp. 265-269)

June 10  
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 6: “Research at least two secondary sources . . .”)
Discuss Oral Presentation #2
Discuss Chapter 9: “Negative Messages”

June 11  
Discuss Chapter 10: “Persuasive and Sales Messages”
Discuss Oral Presentation #2

June 15  
Discuss Chapter 11 (pp. 374-380; 396-400): “Reporting in the . . . Workplace” (read before class)
Exam #2 (closed book, closed notes)
  Chapters 7-10
  Checkpoint Sentences 1-45 (pp. A-3 to A-12)
    Multiple Choice Questions 60 @ .5 pt.
    Checkpoint Sentences 10 @ 1 pt.
  Business Letter/Memo Problem 1 @ 20 pts.

June 16  
Discuss Chapter 11 (pp. 396-400): “Documenting Information” (read before class)
Discuss pp. C-1 to C-3: “Documentation Formats” (read before class)
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 7: “APA in-text citation . . .”
June 17  Discuss Chapter 11 (pp. 402-408): “Creating Effective Graphics”
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 8: “Prepare graphics”)

June 18  Discuss Chapter 12 (pp. 419-423): “Informal Business Reports” (Conclusions & Recommendations)
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 9: “Write the ‘Conclusions’ & ‘Recomd. sections’”)
Discuss Chapter 12 (pp. 433-449): “Informal Business Reports” (Short Reports)

June 19  LAST DAY TO DROP A COURSE WITH AN AUTOMATIC GRADE OF “W”

June 22  Discuss Final Exam
Present APA Style Report Format
Discuss Chapter 13 (pp. 475-491): “Writing Formal Business Reports” (read before class)
Discuss p. C-1 to C-4 “Documentation Formats” (read before class)
Discuss Written Report Assignment (Assignment 10: “Write the final written report”)
Oral Presentation #2 meetings (time permitting)

June 23  Review APA formatting
Discuss Chapter 12 (pp. 433-449): “Informal Business Reports” (Oral #2 chapter)

June 24  Oral Presentation #2 meetings

June 25  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 one excused absence earlier in the course or (b) complete a make-up assignment (see Oral Presentation #2 assignment sheet)

June 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 one excused absence earlier in the course or (b) complete a make-up assignment (see Oral Presentation #2 assignment sheet)

Employment Communication (Chapters 15 & 16)
June 30  Workday:  Written Report Assignment and/or Final Exam
Written Report Assignment due

July 1  Employment Communication (Chapters 15 & 16)

July 2  FINAL EXAM (Chapters 4-13 & Checkpoint Sentences 1-75 [pp. A-2 to A-19])
MGMT 3315.001  (M-R  8:00 - 9:55 a.m.)  =  Thursday, July 2,  8:00 – 9:55 a.m.

Multiple Choice (Ch. 4-13)  90 @ ½ pt.
Checkpoint Sentences  15 @ 1 pt.
Application Problem  1 @ 30 pts.