

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
SAMPLE SYLLABUS**

COURSE NUMBER: MANA 3370

COURSE TITLE: Information and Communication Techniques

REQUIRED TEXT: Mary E. Guffey. Essentials of Business Communication 7th, 2007.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an opportunity for development of clear and persuasive business communication skills, study of interpersonal communication channels in internal and external environments, and experience in writing business letters, reports, and other written communications.

PREREQUISITES: None

TEACHING METHOD:

There will be limited lecture in this course. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings and participate in experiential activities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Knowledge objectives of this course include:

1. Create accurate, clear, concise audience-centered messages – verbally and in writing
2. Use informal and formal research techniques to gather information
3. Create a competitive career package, including job-specific résumés and cover letters
4. Write effective e-mail messages, memos, business letters, and formal reports
5. Demonstrate employment interviewing techniques and professional presentation skills
6. Effectively incorporate feedback to improve business communication skills
7. Understand the importance of making ethical communication decisions and the need for personal accountability in all aspects of business communication
8. Develop a philosophy of communication etiquette for use in the workplace
9. Understand contemporary business culture in order to adapt communication messages
10. Gain awareness of the ethical implications of business decisions in international and domestic settings
11. Utilize critical thinking and problem-solving skills to create responsible, effective, and sustainable solutions to global business problems

Competencies to be demonstrated in this course include:

1. Computer-based Skills
 - a. Word Processing: Unless otherwise stated, students are required to compose all written assignments using a standard word processing program.
 - b. Presentation Software: Students will prepare and present visual aids for speaking assignments using Microsoft PowerPoint.
 - c. Internet Search Skills: Students will utilize online search engines and databases to conduct informal and formal research.
2. Communication Skills
 - a. Written Communication: Students are required to complete various writing

- assignments, including e-mail messages, résumés, cover letters, memos, and formal reports. All written work should be referenced in MLA citation style.
- b. Oral Communication: Students are required to complete various speaking assignments, including an elevator pitch, a mock employment interview, and a persuasive group presentation.
 - c. Nonverbal Communication: Students will learn to recognize and use effective nonverbal cues when speaking and listening.
 - d. Listening Skills: Students will use effective listening techniques to enhance their performance as team members and as individual members of the course.
3. Interpersonal Skills
- a. Team-based Abilities: Students will participate in team activities and assignments. Team projects and peer editing will help students develop the tools they need to be successful in the business world.
 - b. Conflict Resolution: Students will learn communication strategies for resolving conflict in one-on-one and team settings.
4. Problem Solving (Critical Thinking)
- a. Conceptual Thinking: To complete the group project assignment, students will identify and define a current ethical problem in today's international business climate and develop possible solutions to that problem.
 - b. Gathering and Analyzing Data: Students will gather and analyze demographic/psychographic data from potential audiences to adapt messages.
 - c. Creativity and Innovation: Students will use innovation and creativity to present information in a way that captures and maintains audience interest.
5. Ethical Issues
- a. Ethical Communication: Students will learn ethical communication practices for use in the classroom and in the workforce.
 - b. Academic Integrity: Students will be held to a very high standard in regard to personal integrity, intellectual honesty, and ethical behavior. University standards regulating academic integrity are strictly enforced.
6. Personal Accountability for Achievement
- a. Learning Climate: This classroom will be a positive and productive learning environment for all students based upon open communication, respect for diverse backgrounds, ideas and opinions, as well as non-discrimination.
 - b. Attendance: Attendance is mandatory in this course. Because this is a skills-based course, attending every class session is critical. Being absent will deprive students of valuable class discussions and will also prevent them from fulfilling certain graded in-class assignments/quizzes. Students are expected to be in class (on time) everyday. Excessive absences and/or tardiness will result in a loss of Participation/Attendance points. On speech days, an unexcused absence will result in the loss of 5 points from a student's total score (whether the student is speaking that day or not).
 - c. Participation: The quality of a student's participation in this course will greatly influence the quality of his or her learning. Participation grades are based on:
 - i. Attending class (physical presence is necessary, but not sufficient)
 - ii. Demonstrating that assigned materials have been read
 - iii. Completing all assignments in accordance with deadlines

- iv. Asking thoughtful questions that extend the thinking of the class
- v. Contributing “real life” examples to demonstrate theory
- vi. Expressing respect for all classmates and the instructor
- d. Deadlines: All major assignments and exams must be completed on the assigned dates. No make-ups or extensions will be permitted unless the student obtains permission from the instructor prior to the due date and has a verifiable excuse. Missing a speech or an exam results in a zero. One letter grade will be deducted for each day that any other assignment is late.
- e. Professionalism: Being professional means showing up on time, being prepared, respecting others’ opinions, not interrupting, being courteous to those who are speaking, and working with others in a spirit of cooperation. Students are expected to demonstrate these behaviors at all times in this class.
- f. Presentation Etiquette: On presentation days, students have dual responsibilities as speakers and audience members. When a student is presenting, s/he will come prepared, meet assignment expectations, and dress professionally. When a student is an audience member, s/he will be attentive, supportive of peers, and will ask challenging but constructive questions when presentations are finished.
- g. Discussion of Graded Assignments: Success in this course requires thoughtful self-evaluation of performance. When students discuss grades with the instructor, they must be prepared to make a well thought-out case regarding the evaluation. Arguments must be related to the assignment as presented and based on how it compares with the evaluation criteria (not on how it compares to assignments in another course or a fellow classmate’s grade). Discussions about assignments should occur within one week of receiving evaluation.
- 7. Competence in Basic Business Principles
 - a. Awareness of International and Domestic Implications of Business Decisions: Students will develop strategies for communication in both international and domestic settings
 - b. Understanding and Appreciation of Strategic Impact of Business Decisions: Students will learn how communication practices influence business decisions

Outcomes for students to successfully complete this course include:

1. Creation of accurate, concise audience-centered messages in the form of written correspondence, written reports, memos, job-specific resumes, and cover letters
2. Demonstration of listening techniques in class activities
3. Demonstration of informal and formal research techniques through accurately obtained and cited report and presentation material
4. Demonstration of superior employment interviewing techniques and professional presentation skills through mock interview and professional presentation assignments
5. Effective incorporation of feedback demonstrated through writing revisions, speech delivery improvement, and assignment self-reflection
6. Development of communication etiquette for use on the job market and in the workplace through mock interview and professional presentation assignments
7. Understanding of contemporary business culture demonstrated through research and practical demonstration in writing and speaking assignments

TOPICS COVERED:

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Classroom Hours (approx)</u>	
Importance of Communication	1.5	
Verbal and Nonverbal Communication	2	
Writing Process (Planning)	3	
Creating Business Messages	3	
Writing Process (Revision)	2	
Job Search	6	
Business Correspondence	1.5	
Employment Interviewing		1.5
Informal Reports	1.5	
Proposals & Formal Reports	2	
Letter Writing	1	
Interpersonal Communication	1	
Intercultural Communication	1	
Communication Ethics	1.5	
Conflict Resolution	1.5	
Audience Analysis	1.5	
Persuasive Messages	2	
Effective Oral Presentations	3	
Communication Apprehension	2	
<u>Visual Aids</u>	<u>1.5</u>	
Total Hours	40	

ASSIGNMENTS:

This skills-based course will use the following assignments to measure a student's *understanding* of academic theories as well as his/her *demonstration* of effective business communication skills.

Writing Assignments:

1. Memo: Prior to the mock employment interview, each student will locate an advertisement for an upcoming internship or post-graduate job. Each student will research the position and the institution offering it and compose a formal memo outlining his/her findings. Research presented in this memo will provide the basis for the student's interview. Students will complete two drafts of the memo, one for the interview assignment and a revised version for the final portfolio project.
2. Career Package: After locating and researching a potential internship or job, each student will compose a *cover letter* and *résumé* that will help him/her get an interview for it. The material provided in this package will represent the student's qualifications as a job candidate. Students will turn in two drafts of package materials, one prior to the interview and a revised version in the final portfolio project.
3. Follow-up Message: Students will submit a follow-up message after the interview.
4. Group Progress Report: In this report students will outline an international ethical problem and possible solutions. Groups will submit two drafts of the progress report, one to accompany the group project and a revised version for the final portfolio project.
5. Formal Report: The formal report will be completed to accompany the group presentation.

In this report, each group will outline an ethical problem related to international business affairs and propose solutions to that problem.

6. Portfolio: At the end of the course each student will submit a professional portfolio that contains revised written assignments. Ideally, all of the materials produced in this course will be related so each student can present this portfolio to potential employers during internships/post-graduate job interviews. This will help students initiate their “brand,” communicate industry knowledge and qualifications, and set students apart from peers competing for the same types of jobs.

Speaking Assignments: Each presentation will be evaluated on content and delivery.

1. Elevator Speech: In the business world, students will encounter a number of opportunities to network. Business professionals need to develop skills to communicate about themselves in a succinct and interesting manner. This short introductory speech will help members of the class get to know each other.
2. Employment Interview: Students will participate in a 6-minute mock employment interview. During this interview each student must present him/herself as an ideal candidate for a target position and demonstrate the ability to answer challenging questions candidly, succinctly and accurately.
3. Group Presentation: Students will work in a group to create and deliver a presentation on an ethical problem related to international affairs. Because group members must count upon one another for success, each student is expected to contribute and participate to the highest of his/her ability. Each group is expected to create an effective PowerPoint presentation to aid in presentation delivery.
4. Group Presentation Delivery: Although group members will receive the same grade for the content of the presentation, each group member will receive an individual grade based on his or her verbal and nonverbal delivery during the presentation.
5. Current Events: To help students apply theoretical knowledge to real-life situations, each student will give a brief (1-2 minute) presentation in which he or she links course content to a current event (assignments will be determined in class). Current events will be used foster engaging and thought-provoking discussion.

Knowledge Assessment: The following assignments will gage retention of course material.

1. Grammar Pre-test: This will test knowledge and mastery of grammar and syntax.
2. Midterm Exam: This exam will test knowledge and mastery of course material, including material covered in the textbook and classroom discussions.
3. Class Participation: These points will be the result of attendance records, participation in active listening during lecture and student speeches, active participation in class activities, and completion of participation assignments.
4. Group Participation: These points are the result of group member and self-evaluation of participation in group project assignments: progress report, formal report, and group presentation. Evaluations must use course material to justify scores given.

EVALUATION:

Grades are determined on a straight percentage scale based on the number of points earned out of a maximum of 700 points. **There will be no further rounding or curving of grades.**

Writing Assignments:

Research Memo	25 pts
Career Package	50 pts
Follow-up Message	15 pts
Progress Report	25 pts
Formal Report	75 pts
Portfolio	30 pts

Speaking Assignments:

Elevator Speech	20 pts
Elevator Speech Self-Evaluation	15 pts
Interview	75 pts
Interview Self-Evaluation	15 pts
Group Presentation	65 pts
Group Presentation Delivery	15 pts

Other Assignments:

Current Event	15 pts
Grammar Test	25 pts
Midterm Exam	60 pts
Group Participation	75 pts
Participation/Active Listening	100 pts

Total: 700 pts

Final grades are calculated as follows:

A = >90% B = 80%-90% C = 70%-79% D = 60%-69% F = <60%

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

College of Business Statement of Ethics:

The ethical problems facing local, national and global business communities are an ever-increasing challenge. It is essential the College of Business and Technology help students prepare for lives of personal integrity, responsible citizenship, and public service. In order to accomplish these goals, both students and faculty of the College of Business and Technology at The University of Texas at Tyler will:

- Ensure honesty in all behavior, never cheating or knowingly giving false information.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect for all students and faculty regardless of race, creed, gender, age or religion.
- Develop an environment conducive to learning.
- Encourage and support student organizations and activities.
- Protect property and personal information from theft, damage and misuse.
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner both on and off campus.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY STATEMENT

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment of the award of a degree, and/or the submission, as one's own work of material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

University regulations require the instructor to report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. In the event disciplinary measures are imposed on the student, it becomes part of the students' official school records. Also, please note that the handbook obligates you to report all observed cases of academic dishonesty to the instructor

DISABILITY STATEMENT

If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact Ida MacDonald in the Disability Support Services office so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodation must provide documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Support Services counselor. For more information, call or visit the Student Services Center located in the University Center, Room 111 or phone 566-7079 (TDD 565-5579).