



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO

Course Syllabus
Fall 2024

Course Name: Business Communication

Course #: BUAD3304.900

CRN: 12202

Instructor: Dr. Matthew A. Briseno, Ed.D. (ABD), MACM, MBA

Email: mbriseno@tamusa.edu (will reply within two (2) business days)

Office: Online – appointment only

Phone: 210.846.8927 (texting is encouraged – will reply within two (2) business days)

Class Days/Hours: Tuesdays / 3:30p – 4:45p

Class Location: Business Library Hall, Room 366

Class Modality: Hybrid/Blended Instructional

Catalog Course Description:

The course includes learning how to create application approaches, write effective reports, and investigate communication dynamics within the corporate structure and its public presence and mission. Students will gain a great understanding of public speech and presentation competency.

Prerequisites:

ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302. Students who do not meet the pre-requisites must contact the instructor immediately.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Integrate proper writing mechanics and syntax in business communication.
2. Demonstrate effective oral skills in business presentations.
3. Apply the business writing process to common professional communications.
4. Describe the importance of ethical business communication.
5. Create a research report about a current business communication topic.

AACSB Accreditation:

The College of Business has received AACSB accreditation, a prestigious award.

Writing Across the Curriculum:

This Writing Intensive (WI) course is an outreach of a writing program activated in universities throughout the world. The intent of this course and its training is to seriously engage students in the development of rhetoric and meaning in their writing. The focus in this course will be a Research Paper, worth forty percent of the final grade that proceeds through the following stages: thesis production, rough draft, and final paper. The topic and thesis approach are submitted for review and critique, as well as a rough draft of the paper. The intent of the review is to assure that critical writing techniques govern the formation of ideas appearing in linking paragraphs that support and promote the guiding thesis. The student is responsible for the final paper.

- Written assignments must be edited and proofread for error-free grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Seek the Writing Center for help with this issue.
- Outside sources used in compiling information sought in the assignments must follow APA in-text and reference sheet citation formats.
- The student is the author, and the writing is original. Undisclosed partial or total plagiarizing of an outside source is prohibited under university policy.

Required Materials:

- *Textbook:* Guffey, M. & Loewy, D. (2022). *Essentials of Business Communication*. 12th ed. Cengage Learning text. The e-book is available on Blackboard. Purchase should be made at the time of registration.
- *Blackboard:* Connect to <http://tamusa.blackboard.com>. Blackboard provides the course e-text, assignment handouts, content materials, announcements, and it is used differently in online, hybrid, and face-to-face sections. You will have lecture notes, multimedia materials and other supplementary materials on Blackboard. All class communications will be through Blackboard and students should monitor this several times a day.
- *Computer Hardware:* To participate in online sessions, you will need a computer with an internet connection, a microphone and speakers/headphones. To complete the class work, you will need appropriate software installed on the computer.
- *Time:* You are expected to spend 3-6 hours per week on the course. Based on the background, some students may require more time. Time spent may be longer when assignments are due.

Other Recommended / Reading Materials:

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (7th ed). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>.

Christian, D., Jacobsen, S., & Minthorn, D. (Eds.). (2012). *The Associated Press stylebook and briefing on media law* (47th ed.). New York, NY: Basic Books.

Cappon, R. (2003). *The Associated Press guide to punctuation*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Course Requirements every student must fulfill to succeed in course:

- Students should check the Course Calendar, Announcements, and Messages (e-mail) systems in Blackboard on a regular basis.
- Students should keep current on announcements and lectures, if not attending the live class (either in person or online).
- Students should keep current with all course assignments and discussions.

- Students should ask questions and communicate with the instructor either in class, online, or off-line.
- For all classwork, written assignments, discussions, etc., which is completed off-campus, students are responsible for availability of internet connectivity. Extensions will **not** be granted for lack of availability of internet connections.

Grading Policy:

The final course grade will be based on your participation (online discussions), and written assignments using the following weights:

Participation (Discussion Forums) 20%
 Written Assignments (4) 80%
 Total. 100%

Assignments / Research Paper:

The course has major writing assignments. Individual assignments and due dates will be listed in the course syllabus and posted through Blackboard. Considerable points will be taken off for not following the requirements for each assignment. There will be a mandatory final research paper. Handouts will be posted and will provide the guidance needed to accomplish each assignment and the research paper.

Each of the major assignments have a specific handout found in COURSE CONTENT in the Blackboard Menu.

Major assignments (4): (1) Cover Letter / Résumé: 20%; (2) Artificial Intelligence Tools: 10%; (3) Professional Emails: 10%; (4) Research Paper: 40%. Total = 80%

Online Individual / Group Activities:

None

Use of Generative AI Permitted:

Broader Use of Generative AI Permitted Within Guidelines: Use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, is permitted in this course for students who wish to use them. To adhere to our scholarly values, students must cite any AI-generated material that informed their work (this includes in-text citations and/or use of quotations, and in your reference list). Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

Make-up and Late Assignment/Discussion Policy:

After the due date, you will be allowed up to three days to make up an assignment. Please note that you will incur a **10% penalty** for late class work. Additionally, if the class work is not submitted after three days, it will not be accepted and a 0 will be assigned. Initial discussion responses will follow the same late guidelines as written assignments; however, a penalty is not assessed if the initial response is posted during the discussion week. Note: Responses to peers are a part of participation; please note that responses to peers are **not** accepted once the discussion weekends.

If you missed the cut-off date for class work as noted above, **make-up** may be accepted/administered only in extraordinary circumstances, such as, an excused official university activity, a severe illness, or a dire emergency. However, you must provide comprehensive documentation either before or within a few days of the missed assignment/discussion posting. Make-up work must be coordinated with the instructor prior to accomplishing it. Any missed class work will not be accepted after the class ends.

Class conduct and civility code: Everyone in class is expected to follow all rules in the student handbook, as well as common courtesy during classroom lectures and discussions in class and online, including the following:

1. Attendance may be taken at the beginning or the end of the class.
2. It is the students' responsibility to obtain and be able to use the required materials and software for this class.
3. Students must retain copies of all assignments and graded work for verification purposes. Keep copies of all computer files and e-mails.
4. Talking while the instructor is lecturing is extremely disruptive and discourteous to the instructor and other students.
5. Using computers or phones (except for a valid urgent need) during class for a purpose not related to class is disruptive. All cell phones and gadgets should be turned off and headphones removed.
6. For any questions about the discussions and assignments, a student should contact the instructor before the day they are due, so the instructor may have enough time to provide feedback.
7. All communications will be via e-mail communications to the Texas A&M University e-mail account, and students are expected to use their school provided email account. The instructor will reply to a student e-mail messages within 24 hours during weekdays (Monday-Friday) and Saturdays until 9:00 p.m.
8. All assignment submissions must be uploaded to Blackboard by the due date and time.

Class attendance: Students are responsible for the materials covered in class. The course is intensive and challenging, and you are expected to master the materials presented in class. Additionally, adhering to the due dates is important so that you do not become overwhelmed during the term. Students are strongly encouraged to ask questions and participate in class discussions and problem solving. Class attendance includes being physically present on Zoom in a stationary environment (not in a car).

Fall 2024 BCOM 3304-600 Class Schedule:

The provisions and information set forth in the schedule below are intended to be informational and not contractual in nature. The instructor reserves the right to amend, alter, change, delete or modify the provisions of the schedule. ***NOTE: All written assignments and discussions are due by 11:59 p.m. on the scheduled due date.***

WEEK	DATE	READING	ASSIGNMENTS
1	8/29/24	Introductions	

		Librarian	
		Use AI to brainstorm topic ideas	Appendix A
2	9/05/24	Chapter 1	Post in Blackboard
		Chapter 2	Post in Blackboard
		Use an AI Writing Assistant	
		Use AI to improve the fluency of your writing	
3	9/12/24	Chapter 13	Post in Blackboard
		Chapter 14	Post in Blackboard
4	9/19/24	Career Center Guest Speaker	
5	9/26/24	Chapter 5	Post in Blackboard
		Use AI to format APA references	Appendix B
			Resume & Cover Letter Due
6	10/03/24	Chapter 6	Post in Blackboard
		Chapter 7	Post in Blackboard
7	10/10/24	Chapter 8	Post in Blackboard
			Final Paper Topic Due

8.	10/17/24	Chapter 9 Use AI to overcome writer's block	Post in Blackboard Appendix C Memo Due
9	10/24/24	Chapter 10	Post in Blackboard
10	10/31/24	Chapter 11 Use AI to formulate a Thesis Statement	Post in Blackboard
11	11/07/24	Chapter 11	Post in Blackboard
12	11/14/24	Chapter 12	Post in Blackboard
13	11/21/24	Guest Speaker Use AI to generate feedback about your writing	Final Paper Draft Due Appendix D
14	11/28/24	Thanksgiving: No Class	
15	12/05/24	Textbook Review Course Wrap-up	Final Research Paper Due

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities:

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, or at (210) 784-1335 or visit <https://www.tamusa.edu/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center:

The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources:

As a college student, there may be times when personal stress interferes with your academic performance and/or negatively impacts your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, call 210-784-1331 or visit Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance). All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. **Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2')**. For more information and self-help resources, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling.

Emergency Preparedness:

JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff, and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbportal.com/>. More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> and <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-action-plan.pdf>. Download the SafeZone App for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance:

According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. The faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center:

The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

Broader Use of Generative AI Permitted Within Guidelines:

Use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, is permitted in this course for students who wish to use them. To adhere to our scholarly values, students must cite any AI-generated material that informed their work (this includes in-text citations and/or use of quotations, and in your reference list). Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio’s standards of academic integrity.

Meeting Basic Needs:

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

Military Affairs:

Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and in special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots’ Casa in-person room

202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances:

Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule:

Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination:

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units. Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students:

Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and that is related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K). Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities:

The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition, and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, University Catalog and to comply with them, as well as federal, state, and local laws.

3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

COVID-19 Protocol:

Knowing your COVID-19 status can prevent you from spreading the virus to those around you by taking the necessary precaution of isolating or quarantining when appropriate.

- Please refrain from coming to campus if you are confirmed to have COVID-19 (by using a Rapid COVID-19 Test or completing a laboratory test) and ensure to self-report using the online COVID-19 Reporting Portal found at: https://redcap.link/TAMUS_COVID_PORTAL. Guidance will be provided on when to return to campus.
- Please refrain from coming to campus if you had an exposure to COVID-19 that resulted in close contact (you were within 6 feet of an individual positive for COVID-19 for an accumulated time of 15 minutes or greater over a 24-hour period) until you meet the return to campus criteria. Ensure to self-report using the online COVID-19 Reporting Portal found at: https://redcap.link/TAMUS_COVID_PORTAL and please complete the RETURN TO CAMPUS FORM found at: https://banner.tamusa.edu/ssomanager/c/SSB?pkg=zwtkjotf_jira.p_redirect?JotFormPage=220213195570044.
- Please refrain from coming to campus if you have [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and consider testing immediately.
- For additional guidance, please reference the Community.Safety.TOGETHER webpage at: <https://www.tamusa.edu/community-safety-together/>.

Respect for Diversity:

We understand that our students represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives. When we are equity-minded, we are aware of differences and inequalities and are willing to discuss them so we can act to resolve them. The University is committed to building cultural competencies, or the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that enable individuals and organizations to acknowledge cultural differences and incorporate these differences in working with people from diverse cultures. Respecting and accepting people different than you is vital to your success in the class,

on campus, and as a future professional in the global community. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- Share their unique experiences, values, and beliefs.
- Be open to the views of others.
- Honor the uniqueness of their colleagues.
- Value each other's opinions and communicate respectfully.
- Keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature.
- Use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in this course and across the A&M-San Antonio community.

Key Dates for Fall 2024 Semester:

August 19 – Tuition & fee payment deadline

August 22 – Drop for non-payment

August 23 – Last day for students withdrawing to receive 100% refund for tuition

August 26 – First day of class

September 2 – Labor Day Holiday - No classes

September 3 – Last day to register

September 11 – Census Date

September 12 – Drop for non-payment

October 7-18 – Midterm grading period

November 11 – Last day to drop with an automatic grade of "W"

November 19 – Last day to withdraw from the university

November 27 – Study Day - No classes

November 28-30 – Thanksgiving break - No classes

December 5 – Last day of scheduled classes for weekday classes

December 6 – Study Day - No classes

December 7-13 – Final examinations

December 13 – End of term

December 16 – All grades due by noon

December 17 – Commencement

December 19 – Grades available in JagWire

The complete academic calendar is available online:

<https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/documents/AY2025-Academic-Calendar.pdf>