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# Syllabus

## **BCOM 3304: Business Communication**

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### **Course Description:**

Principles of business communication through letters and reports. Clear, accurate, and forceful writing; practical psychology; and business reports with implications for international business.

Prerequisites: Completion of the College of Business prerequisites, ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302.

Students who do not meet the pre-requisites must contact the instructor immediately.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

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

1. Communicate through use of appropriate English, both written and verbal, by writing effective business letters, emails, and reports, and by delivering oral presentations.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in the business writing process by analyzing the audience, planning, organizing, composing, formatting, and revising common types of business messages. This is WI and students will polish their writing skills by drafting, editing, and correcting their submission before turning in the final draft.
3. Analyze the ethical and intercultural implications of your communication choices and demonstrate respectful and appropriate business vocabulary and messages appropriate for situations and audiences by appropriately providing and receiving written and verbal feedback.
4. Learn the principles of searching for employment by examining the organizations, writing employment documents, and preparing for interviews.

### **Required Materials:**

Students are encouraged to select the format of their choice (ebook, kindle, hardcover, paperback, loan options vs. buying options) for the required reading materials and supplemental learning materials, such as flash cards, integrated learning software, supplemental exam preparation materials based on their needs, resources and learning style preferences.

**Text:**

Essentials of Business Communication, 12th Edition, by Guffey and Loewy.

**Other Recommended Reading Materials:**

This class will enable you to become a leader in your learning journey. As such, you will be provided with lots of additional and optional suggestions for reading materials, publications and books from various sources. It is up to you, your personal learning journey and desire to improve your skillset to explore new horizons throughout your college career that will help you thrive in your professional and personal sphere based on your end goals. As a general rule, I highly encourage you to look into improving your skillset through additional resources that are recommended to you by professors, mentors and leaders. Remember that knowledge is power and that recruiters tremendously value the investment you make in yourself outside of the required curriculum. Gaining additional skills will set you apart and will help you thrive as a leader and individual. This will help you tremendously in developing a competitive advantage after graduation, which is my ultimate goal and vision for you.

This class is designed to challenge you and to encourage you to step outside of your comfort zone. Learn, explore, acquire new skills, build strong connections with your teams and do not hesitate to reach out to me so we can develop a plan together to help you thrive!

**Time Commitment:**

You are expected to spend 4-9 hours per week for the course. Based on the background, some student may require more time. Time spent may be longer when assignments/exams are due.

**Methods of Instruction:**

- This course includes required readings, multimedia stories, handouts, guidelines, field-based examples, student-centered instructional tasks, interactions and reflection through a variety of interactive activities.
- Assignments are designed to apply theory to practice.
- Reflection on processes, practice, and feedback will be required.
- Assessments focus on understanding and performance-based competencies required to obtain additional skills designed to help students to become more marketable in their chosen career.

**Course design:**

This class will enable students to become independent and active learners via the use of experiential, self-reflective, cutting-edge adult learning methods using asynchronous and synchronous learning styles. As that, this course is constructed as a community of learners, where everyone, not just myself, is a creator and holder of knowledge. Thus, you are expected come to class prepared to engage, ask questions, and work collaboratively with your colleagues in groups. My pedagogical approach to this course assumes that everyone has valuable lived experiences that can be incorporated into the classroom, therefore, everyone has value to add to our discussion and learning environment. My primary role within the class is to pose questions, facilitate discussion, clarify points, and have everyone develop their own understanding of course material as it relates to their specific area of interest and specialization.

In the long term, students will acquire learning methods, soft skills and additional tools that will enable them not only to become lifelong learners but also to be equipped to stand out during job interviews and conversations with employers. The course is rigorous and challenging. The structure of the class makes your individual study and preparation outside of class extremely important. **Studying the assigned chapters, online modules, additional readings and all assigned materials before class is expected.**

## Course Evaluation:

Assignment	%
Midterm	15
Final	30
Semester Project	20
Final Project	20
Protocol Project	5
Quizzes, Participation, Professional Conduct & Assignments ****	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**\*\*\*\*Attendance, active participation, professionalism and respect of colleagues are expected. Point deductions will be allocated if necessary.**

### **Make-up and Late Assignment/Project/Quiz Policy:**

As a general rule, make-ups or late submissions will not be offered or accepted for any missed assignments/projects/quizzes. Late submissions or make-ups 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/quiz/exam.

### **Exams**

Students must attend all exams. There will be no make-up exams.

In an emergency, you must contact the professor immediately. You are required to bring a doctor's note when missing an exam, or you will receive an F for that portion of your grade. Students who miss a regularly scheduled exam and are excused for good reason, must take the final exam. The final exam will then replace the missed exam score.

## Grade Distribution

<b>A</b>	90-100%
<b>B</b>	80-89%
<b>C</b>	70-79%
<b>D</b>	65-69%
<b>F</b>	0-64%

### **Drop Policy:**

Students may drop the course with an automatic grade of W on or before the date listed in the academic calendar. The instructor will **not** drop students.

## **Communication:**

### **Email Guidelines:**

Please reserve Email for project submission. Please send emails to and from university official email addresses only.

### **Questions and Resourcefulness**

This class subscribes to the principles of active learning and experiential learning to provide all students with the best resources to succeed. Therefore, please raise general questions during the Q&A sessions at the beginning of every class. This will allow us to create a positive, collaborative and resourceful learning environment in which we share and discuss with one another in order to capitalize on each other's strengths.

To meet your needs, I need to know your needs. Please let me now if you are having problems in meeting the expectations of the course or in understanding the material. Please do not hesitate to talk to me during consultation sessions or at the beginning of class. I will do all that I can to help every student in the class to be successful. Success means not only achieving a good grade but also understanding and applying the concepts taught in the class.

## **University, Department and Course Policies:**

### **Respectful Learning Environment & Professionalism:**

A respectful learning environment is required in all educational settings, including online platforms. You are preparing for a professional career, which will involve working with people with a variety of different skillsets. Communication strategies are important to develop for you to articulate your ideas and have respectful conversations with colleagues, supervisors, clients and CEO's.

Please remember that we may not all agree on some issues that we discuss. For many of these issues there are no simple, easy, or obvious answers. Therefore, we must be respectful of others and the ideas individuals express in class, provided they follow the university code of conduct and additional behavioral standards developed and agreed upon in our classroom community. Please

communicate thoughtfully with others and approach ideas that are new to you or different from your own with respect. I would appreciate it if you turned off cell phones (or put them on vibrate), iPods, pagers, re-frame from text messaging, or using laptops for texting, e-mailing while engaged in our class discussion.

### **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:

You are required to observe the rules of academic integrity and classroom conduct established by the institution. Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Students found cheating will receive a grade of F for the course and may be subject to further disciplinary action by the administration. The Institutions Academic Integrity policies are posted on the university website and should be reviewed carefully.

Students are expected to behave in respectful manner towards other students and the professor at all times. Failure to do so will result in dismissal.

### **Research and Program Improvements:**

Any data that will be collected as part of this course may be used for program improvements and/or future publications.

# Syllabus Addendum

## **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](mailto: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](mailto: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 stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact 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 Madla 120.

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](http://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.bbcportal.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. 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>.

**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 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](mailto: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, on the basis of 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 as a whole. 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](mailto: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 are 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](mailto: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, on the basis of 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](#).



### **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.

#### Important Dates:

January 16	First day of class
March 11-17	Spring Break – No classes
March 29	Study Day – No classes
April 13	Last day to drop with an automatic “W”
April 20	Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University
April 29	Last day of classes
April 30	Study Day – No classes
May 1-7	Final exams

*The complete academic calendar is available online: <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/index.html>*