Business Administration 3033: Business Communication

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Office Hours/Coaching

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00-3:30; Wednesdays 1:00-2:00; and by appointment. Please note, although I am always in my office during my office hours, I am frequently meeting with students for scheduled appointments. It is usually a good idea to let me know ahead of time when you are coming, so that you will be sure to get in.

I welcome and recommend that you come in to see me for coaching when you want additional guidance on your assignments. I will not edit your work, but I will offer suggestions for areas of improvement.

Also for additional help, feel free to use Student Writing Support in Nicholson Hall or Appleby Hall on the East Bank, 612-625-1893.

Please remember you are required to meet with me once during the semester for a 30-minute coaching session to assess and discuss our speaking skills. If you do not do this your final course grade will be lowered by one-half letter. You must bring your speech videotape to the meeting. If you know you will miss a scheduled meeting you must phone or email me in advance or it will count as a course absence.

Required Course Materials

You must have these materials by the second class session.

* A course packet of readings, case studies, and assignment sheets (available in the West Bank Book Store)

* VHS blank videotape

* A style manual of your choice—I recommend The Gregg Reference Manual for business writers if you do not already have one. (Available in West Bank bookstore)

Course Objectives

This course should help you to:

* Communicate credibly and deliver both written and spoken messages that are adapted to the specific needs of your audience and situation.
* Understand differences in message design and audience interpretation for various forms of business communication.

* Realize the persuasive strategies most effective in writing and speaking situations.

* Understand the persuasive effect of presenting quantitative information and appealing to audience logic or emotions.

* Demonstrate effective nonverbal communication skills.

* Critically judge information and information sources.

* Build sound arguments, using data and logic, when delivering a persuasive message.

* Use technology, such as PowerPoint, to increase the effectiveness of communication.

* Be able to clearly articulate and defend your opinions on case studies, world events, and issues.

Course Design

BA 3033, Management Communications, combines writing and speaking into a single, semester-long course required of all Carlson School undergraduates. This course will give you opportunities to develop your critical thinking and communication skills through discussing, speaking, and writing assignments that simulate real business communication. In order to participate successfully in this communications course, you must come to class every day prepared to actively take part in discussions, writing, speaking, and other communications activities. You will also be asked to lead a discussion during the semester. Your active participation is required on a daily basis.

Email/Computer Policy

You are expected to have access to a computer with word processing capabilities and web access and to have active email accounts. Please check your email every day especially on the days before your class meets; some important course correspondence will occur via email. You are responsible for this information. If you are not currently part of Carlson's email system, you need to be sure that you get added to it. Also, if you use an account other than your CSOM one (hotmail, etc.) you need to be sure to start checking your CSOM account for correspondence from this course.

Course Work

Recitation Session with Instructor
You are required to meet with me for a 30-minute coaching session on your speaking skills. We will view your speech videotape and assess your strengths and weaknesses and suggest methods for improvement. This session should be scheduled for sometime after your introduction speech but before your final paired presentation. If you do not attend this coaching session, your final grade will be lowered by half a letter. If you miss a session that you have scheduled without prior notification, it will count as a course absence.

**Short Assignments/Participation/Discussion (10% of your final grade)**

You will frequently be asked to do short, informal writing and speaking assignments and to actively participate in class discussions. You are expected to contribute on a daily basis. This includes things like in-class writings, take-home short assignments, grammatical exercises, impromptu speaking, class discussions, discussion leading, and skills analyses. These assignments and activities are graded on a simple plus, check, or minus basis. They are assessed primarily on your willingness to participate, try new things, and complete the work. Note, if you do not speak in class and contribute to discussion on a daily basis, you cannot expect to receive a good grade in this category.

**Discussion Assignments (10% of final grade)**

Once this semester you will be asked to lead a small group discussion based on a newspaper article that you have selected. After the discussion you will give a brief speech with a question and answer session explaining the conflict you selected and your group's recommendations for solving the problem. Also, once this semester you will serve as a group discussion evaluator. As evaluator, you watch the discussion and write a memo evaluating the effectiveness of the leader and participants.

**Unit I: Business Communication Foundations (35% of your final grade)**

This unit will introduce you to many of the basics of effective business communication, such as choosing appropriate channels, formats, and organizational patterns; audience analysis and other prewriting decisions; and elements of persuasion. You will write letters, memos, and emails. You will also give one formal persuasive presentation as well as several impromptu speeches.

**Unit II: International Business Expansion Proposal (45% of your final grade)**

In teams you will select a company and propose a plan for their continued international expansion. You and your team will create a proposal and a presentation persuading senior management to expand to your recommended country.

**Grading Standards**
A In a business environment this assignment would distinguish you as a top performer in your company. It represents work that is outstanding in every way. You fulfilled all the requirements of the assignment and went beyond by contributing additional material or developing new insights, and distinguished yourself through the use of a particularly creative or inventive approach.

B In a business environment this work would reflect well on you and your company. You completed the assignment, fulfilled all requirements, and went beyond by contributing additional material or developing new insights.

C You completed the assignment and fulfilled the requirements of it. But, in a business environment this work would not represent you or your company well without major revision and polish.

D You fulfilled some of the requirements of the assignment, but not all of them. This work would need to be completely reworked before it could be used to represent you professionally.

F You did not turn in the assignment.

Grading Scale

All assignments and the course participation grade will total 1000 points. Individual grade percentages are given for each assignment on the assignment descriptions in the course packet. Letter grade percentages are based on the following scale:

100 - 93% A
92 - 90% A-
89 - 87% B+
86 - 83% B
82 - 80% B-
79 - 77% C+
76 - 73% C
72 - 70% C-
69 - 67% D+
66 - 63% D
62 - 60% D-

Incompletes will not be given.

If you do not complete an assignment you will not receive any credit for that assignment and your course grade will be adversely affected. If there are extraordinary extenuating circumstances, consult with me immediately.

Writing and Speaking baselines

Final papers should be carefully proofread, free from significant grammatical/mechanical errors, and reflect extensive revision and editing on your part. Although the content of your papers is
always our primary concern, a paper with frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc., will not meet the basic requirements of the assignment and generally will receive a D or a C grade.

Similarly, speeches should be carefully prepared and rehearsed using notecards or an outline; they should not be read or memorized. If you memorize or read your speech to us, you will not have met the minimum requirements for the assignment and you will receive a D or a C grade.

Late Work

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day that they are due. Absolutely no late final papers will be accepted unless preapproved by the instructor. If you know you will miss class when a paper is due, turn it in ahead of time or it will not be accepted.

Late rough drafts are never accepted, will not receive feedback, and the final paper will be lowered by one letter grade.

Attendance Policy

Because this is a communications course, active participation in class is vital. If you are not here, you cannot participate, and your absence will negatively affect other members of the class as well. Therefore, your attendance is expected. If you miss four class sessions your final grade will be lowered by one half-letter grade-A to A- for example. If you miss seven class sessions your final grade will be lowered by one whole letter grade-A to B for example. If you miss ten class sessions you will automatically fail the course. Note, there is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences-please plan to use your three "allowed absences" for interviews, illnesses, travel, etc.

If absent, you are responsible for missed handouts, lecture notes, changes in deadlines or assignments that are announced, etc., during any class that you miss. Please depend on a classmate for help. You cannot make up participation assignments.

Tardiness cannot always be avoided; however, there is no excuse for frequently coming late. It is very distracting to me and other members of the class, disadvantageous to you since you may miss important directions, assignments, etc., and often causes problems when groups for assignments are formed at the beginning of class. If you have a conflict that will cause frequent tardiness, perhaps you should consider transferring to another section that meets at a different time. Please make every effort to come on time!

Odds and Ends
* You are responsible for saving EVERYTHING until the quarter is over. Keep all drafts, notebook entries, etc. Also, never turn in anything without first making a COPY of it.

* Unless otherwise directed all written work should be word-processed, in 12-pt. type, with 1-inch margins.

* As in the real world there are several things that are simply considered "poor form" in this class—showing up late, distracting others, coming unprepared, forgetting your course materials, not participating, failing to contribute to team projects, etc. Naturally, habitual poor form will negatively impact your final evaluation.

* Please let me know early in the quarter if you have any special circumstances of which I should be aware. Are you a varsity athlete who will be traveling frequently? Do you have vision, learning, hearing, or other difficulties? Is English your second (or third or fourth) language? Basically, are there things that I should know that will help me to better help you? Finally, once again, please come to see me or phone me if you have questions, problems, or concerns with the class.