BCOM 2800: Business Communication

Winter Quarter 2017

I. GENERAL

Course information

- Course code: BCOM 2800-03
- # credits: 5
- Location: PIGT 102
- Class times: T/TH 3:45-5:50
- First session: 1/3/17
- Last session: 3/9/17
- Final Exam: Thr, Mar 16, 4:00-5:50

Instructor information

- Instructor: Nathan Colaner, Ph.D.
- Office Phone: 206-296-5628
- Email: colanern@seattleu.edu
- Office: PIGT 316A
- Office hours: 10:00-11:00 T/R

(or) Email to arrange appointments outside office hours

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

BCOM 2800 (Business Communication) is a core course in business for undergraduate students. The course introduces the contexts, concepts, and formats of business communication, focusing on both written and oral communication and applying the concepts practically. The first half of the course (Modules 1-5) will focus on specific technical communication skills, such as emailing and crafting messages, while the second half of the course (Modules 6-10) will focus on abstract but equally important business communication issues, such as persuasion, trust, courage, emotional intelligence, and civility.

III. BOOKS


IV. ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

25%, 25% Midterm and Final Exam: There are two exams in this course. A study guide for the exams will be provided.

30% Weekly Practicals: After each week, I will give an assignment that will be due the following Monday by noon. These assignments will each reflect a practical business writing skill, such as a memo, resume, email, etc. These assignments will be graded from 0-3 in half point increments, based on quality of effort and promptness.

10% Reflection Essay: At the end of the quarter, each student will write an essay about the three most personally impactful aspects of this course. Like the weekly practicals, the grade is based on quality of effort and promptness.

10% Presentation: You will choose a new product, service, or technology, and present it to the class. Presentations will last about 4 minutes. These will all occur during Module 5.

0% Attendance & Participation: Attendance and participation are expected as minimal requirements of enrollment. As such, attending/participating will not help your grade (except indirectly of course), but not attending/participating will hurt you.

**Attendance:** All absences must be made up with a one-page paper summarizing a Canvas page from the class you missed. You get this by talking to me or emailing me, and there is a place on Canvas to upload your make-up assignment. Please note that this is true both for what are often called ‘excused’ and ‘unexcused’ absences – there is no difference as far as your grade is concerned. **Failure to make up absences will result in a deduction of 1.5 points from your final grade for each absence.** You can make-up only two classes. The only way to have the opportunity to make-up more than two classes is to have documented explanations for your absence (such as athletic notice, doctor’s note, disability notice, etc.) or some extreme extenuating circumstance for which no documentation is possible. You must contact me within 72 hours after missing class to get the make-assignment. After I give you the make-up assignment, you will have one week to turn it in. Also, two extreme tardies count as one absence. I define “extreme tardy” as being 30 or more late for class.

**Participation:** I will informally keep track of six different behaviors that negatively affect classroom participation: 1) not being prepared for class 2) constant tardiness, 3) failure or unwillingness to participate in classroom discussions at appropriate times, 4) distracting behavior, 5) disrespectful speech toward peers, and 6) minimal participation in group activities. I will notify you at least once during the quarter, and also by email after the last class day if you will lose any points from your final grade. You will have 1 week from when you are notified if you disagree with my assessment. If you disagree, I will take your disagreement into consideration, although I still have the final say. **Please be aware that you may lose up to 7 points from your final grade because of a maximum 1 point deduction in each of the 7 categories listed below.**
V.  **GRADE BREAKDOWN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Categories</th>
<th>Weekly Practical</th>
<th>30%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection Essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Possible Deductions from Final Grade:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deduction</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Each Absence (unless absence is made-up)</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprepared for class (i.e. haven’t done the reading)</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal participation in group activities</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes late (every two)</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure or unwillingness to participate in classroom discussions at appropriate times</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distracting behavior (including text/internet browsing)</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disrespectful speech toward peers</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant tardiness in general</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading scale for Exams and Final Grade:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance:** Attendance is required in every class as described in the Student Handbook. Attendance will be recorded every day. Please read the detailed description of the absence policy above.

**Late work:** You may turn in your weekly practicals by the Thursday midnight after they are due for a maximum of half credit. Late elements of other aspects of the course will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**Policy on missed exams:** Makeup exams for full credit will be given only upon demonstrated need (like severe illness, emergency, mandatory athletic travel, etc). Make-ups needed for any other reason will have a 20% deduction. Any make-ups will be scheduled at the convenience of the instructor.

**Canvas:** As indicated above, this course uses Canvas heavily and you will need constant access to this site. There is also a Canvas ‘app’ that you are encouraged to download. You will need to spend significant time on the Canvas site (or with the materials you download from Canvas) to be successful in this class.

**Discipline:** The first time you violate one of the classroom policies, I will send you a polite, firm, discreet email asking you to change your behavior. If the behavior does not change, I will have to involve the university in formal discipline. In my 12 years of teaching, I have had to take this first step several times. I am happy to report that I have never had to take the second step, and I would appreciate your cooperation in keeping my streak going.

**Email:** You must have an active Seattle University email account that you check at least once a day. I will frequently make announcements in the Canvas site which automatically notifies you via email. For security reasons, you cannot use a non-SU account as a replacement for the account assigned to you. You are also responsible to make sure your inbox does not get full. I may not re-send documents to you that bounce back because your inbox is full. Check to make sure you send SU emails from your smartphone. You can also ‘message’ through Canvas or the Canvas app.

**Academic Misconduct:** Any acts of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic 0 on the assigned work and could result in expulsion from the class if the act of dishonesty is egregious. All forms of academic dishonesty or misconduct are prohibited. Academic dishonesty includes any of the following: A) the use of the ideas or words of another as one’s own for an academic assignment, B) cheating during an examination by copying from another student or by using information in the form of unauthorized aids, or C) submission as one’s own work, an assignment, or a test, prepared by another.

**Extra Credit:** There is no extra credit of any kind available in this course. This means it is extremely important you stay on top of due dates and do your best the first time around.
VII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Students with Disabilities: In case of a disability requiring accommodation, it is your responsibility to request such accommodation from the Disability Services Office (Learning Center, Loyola Hall, Room 100). Make an appointment with the Disability Specialist who will evaluate, determine, and grant the needed accommodation. An official request is required for every quarter that an accommodation is needed. To ensure granting of the needed accommodation, make the request early in the quarter.

Help with Writing: All Seattle University students, both undergraduate and graduate, are invited to use this free service to discuss writing projects in a friendly environment. At the Writing Center, students work on all stages of writing, including brainstorming, organizing, drafting, revising, and editing.

Course Withdrawal: Failure to officially withdraw from a course without completing it will result in an F grade on the student’s academic record.

Counseling Center: Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is committed to helping students meet the challenges of life during college, graduate and professional school by encouraging healthy personal choices and balanced perspectives. Students seek counseling and psychological services for a wide variety of reasons, including depression and anxiety; life crises; identity issues; relationship concerns; difficulty with loss or other life transitions; sexual choices and concerns; problems related to alcohol or drug use, as well as many other issues of concern. Our professional team of licensed social workers, psychologists, and graduate trainees, provide time-limited group, couples and individual psychotherapy for students and referral services for those requiring specialized or longer term care. These services are provided free of charge to students enrolled in classes. All clinical services are confidential: no information is released without the student’s consent, unless required by law.

VIII. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To identify contexts of business communication, including environments, flows, and barriers
- To become purpose-driven and audience-aware when planning messages
- To develop accuracy (in grammar and mechanics) and style (so that messages are effective, efficient, and ethical)
- To format different types of business document properly (letter, memo, e-mail, report, résumé)
- To organize messages based on content
- To deliver oral presentations with an awareness of nonverbal cues and of the proper role and use of visual aids (PowerPoint)
IX. CLASS SCHEDULE; *pages marked with an asterisk require a reading before class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Planned Canvas Pages to Cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Module One: Business Communication Style</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1/3 T | 1: Course Introduction  
       | 2: Best Practices for Conciseness: Keep it Simple  
       | 3: Make it Concise!  
       | 4: A Framework for Business Communication Style |
| 1/5 R | 5: Best Practices for Clarity: Easy Reading  
       | 6: Make It Clear!  
       | 7: Basic Term of Communication  
       | 8: Strategic Communication |
|       | Module Two: Modern Business Communication |
| 1/10 T| 1: Names  
       | 2: Cross Cultural Communication  
       | 3: Email Elements  
       | 4: Rewrite these Emails |
| 1/12 R| 5: Best Practice for Email  
       | 6: Rewrite these Emails |
|       | Module Three: Entering the Job Market |
| 1/17 T| 1: Communicating Yourself  
       | 2: Manage Your Online Presence  
       | 3: Best Practices for LinkedIN |
| 1/19 R| 4: Albers Placement Center  
       | 5: Mentoring |
|       | Module Four: Professional Persona |
| 1/24 T| 1: Professional Persona  
       | 2: Best Practices for Presentations  
       | 3: Next Week's Presentations  
       | 4: Becoming an Authentic Speaker* |
| 1/26 R| Midterm |
|       | Module Five: Presentations |
| 1/31 T| Student Presentations |
| 2/2 R | Student Presentations |
### Module Six: Persuasion

**2/7 T**
- 1: Communication Virtues
- 2: The Concept of Persuasion*

**2/9 R**
- 3: The Art of Persuasion
- 4: Rewrite these Emails

### Module Seven: Emotional Intelligence

**2/14 T**
- 1: What Makes a Leader?*
- 2: Four Kinds of Emotional Intelligence

**2/16 R**
- 3: Empathy
- 4: Building the EQ of Groups*

### Module Eight: Trust

**2/21 T**
- 1: Trust and Communication
- 2: What Trust is Not*

**2/23 R**
- 3: Authentic Trust*
- 4: Rational Trust

### Module Nine: Courage

**2/28 T**
- 1: Four Types of Moral Problems
- 2: Ways of Thinking about Values, part one*
- 3: Case Studies

**3/2 R**
- 4: Ways of Thinking about Values, part two*
- 5: Moral Rationalizations
- 6: Case Studies with a Framework

### Module Ten: Civility

**3/5 T**
- 1: Voice to Values Review
- 2: What is Civility?
- 3: Case Studies

**3/7 R**
- 4: The Price of Incivility*
- 5: Case Studies

**Final Exam: Thursday, March 16, 4:00-5:50**