

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: BCOM 2800 SQ20

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Office Hours by Zoom: Tuesdays 9–11 a.m. and by appointment

Welcome to BCOM! This course provides the opportunity to develop stronger written, oral, and visual communication skills for today's diverse technological and global business environments. You will learn to craft persuasive messages tailored to appropriate audiences. You will improve key interpersonal skills: listening, assessing nonverbal messages, and giving and accepting critical feedback. You will master basic business forms (emails, memos, and reports), prepare placement materials (cover letters and resumes), learn successful interview techniques, and work on oral presentations. You will also explore the importance of creative, flexible thinking while helping to build a supportive online classroom community. I'm eager to help each of you develop effective, accurate communication practices that carry you far in life.

COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE GOALS

- ◆ **Recognize** varying approaches for effective communication in diverse business environments.
- ◆ **Understand** complex communication forms; audience analysis; and message crafting, revision, and delivery.
- ◆ **Strengthen** oral and written communication through attention to accuracy, coherence, and persuasiveness.

METHODS

- ◆ Read *Business Communication 7* (eds. C. Lehman & D. DuFrene) and supplemental materials.
- ◆ Complete regular assignments to develop professionalism, time management, and attention to detail.
- ◆ Develop cover letters, resumes, and other professional materials.
- ◆ Analyze what communication strategies work and what don't, and how to recommend improvements.
- ◆ Give a final business presentation/report with compelling visuals and strong, effective delivery.

COURSE ENVIRONMENT

Our class community should be a place respectful of gender/identity, age, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and culture. If you feel uncomfortable, please share your concerns with me.

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Lehman, C., & DuFrene, D. (Eds.). (2020). *Business communication* (10th ed.)
- Dedicated notebook for course notes/activities
- Sense of humor!

Recommended: Brooks, B.S. et al (Eds.). (2019). *Working with Words*. New York: Bedford–St. Martin’s. Although media related, this book remains one of the clearest writing and editing resources.

- ◆ **Communication:** I respond quickly to emails during normal business hours (8 a.m.–5 p.m. *weekdays*). **Except for emergencies, I will not answer emails after 5 p.m. or on weekends**, especially during this term, when maintaining a work/life balance will be critical to mental health.
- ◆ **CANVAS:** Review session modules carefully and in advance for all readings/materials, assignments, etc., (To ensure learning outcomes, I may alter sessions, material covered, or due dates.)
- ◆ **Class Structure:** Each Tuesday/Thursday session will have an individual Canvas page with materials identified for that day: a combination of book chapters, articles, videos, etc., as well as a recorded session or PowerPoint from me. You will also have regular assignments to submit by email or Canvas, as directed.

Especially in this online format, ***you will get out of the course what you put into it!*** Past students report that this course helps raise other course grades, improves internship and scholarship candidacies, and assists selection for other programs (plus, future employment and advancement!), but *only* if you put in your best effort and fully invest in your success.
- ◆ **Teamwork:** Today’s business environment often demands virtual communication and teamwork. In this case, our unusual set-up this term might be a benefit, as you’ll have an excellent way to practice these virtual skills. As in the workplace, you will engage in online discussions and tasks with your assigned team.
- ◆ **Your Ongoing Feedback:** Periodically, I’ll check in to ask how the course is going for you. Keep in mind, though, that the term is occurring under *extraordinary* circumstances for which no one is truly prepared!
- ◆ **Emergencies/Extraordinary Circumstances:** Talk to me immediately if any compromising situation arises (e.g. you or a family member becomes ill, etc.), so that we can strategize solutions together.

ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENT

✍ To gain the most from this course, you should dedicate yourself from the start, stay organized, follow instructions, and ask for help at any time. Instructions may seem “picky,” but they train you to pay **attention to detail**—a skill you don’t acquire magically upon graduation. In a career, failing to follow instructions or missing deadlines may cost you a job or promotion. Develop these skills now, when the stakes are lower.

Proofread *all* work/communication (including emails to me and other faculty/staff) for grammar, punctuation, and tone. Ask yourself, “*What does this message convey about me and my professionalism?*”

Commitment Tasks – These opportunities (smaller skills-based assignments) help prepare you for later substantive assignments while multitasking with varying deadlines, and help you grow as a communicator and

business professional – all *critical* for your future success. (Note: Because I drop the lowest quiz score, you may not make up quizzes.)

1. Canvas Profile
2. Employer Profile/Job Posting
3. Graphics Assignment
4. LinkedIn Profile
5. Online Interview
6. Business Report Analysis
7. Other Professional Development (To Be Announced)

Presentations & Written Work — Initial grades will reflect whether you demonstrated reasonable effort and followed instructions; subsequent grades will reflect *improvement* based on feedback and integration of course content. This course assumes strong competency in basic language skills and grammar: *spelling/grammatical errors or failing to follow instructions will lower your grade*. Check all work carefully against detailed Canvas assignment posts to ensure you meet all expectations.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

(See CANVAS for details, according to due dates/relevance.)

- 15% = ComTasks
- 5% = Enrollment Email (1%) & Revision (4%)
- 15% = Good-News Email/Bad-News Memo
- 15% = Resume (5%); Cover letter & feedback (10%)
- 15% = Microessays/Micropresentations (#1 = 2.5% each; #2 = 5% each)
- 25% = Final project [written report & presentation]
- 10% = Professionalism

GRADING SCALE

Final letter grades reflect weighted averages. My judgment prevails in all borderline cases.

A+ = 98–100%*	A = 93–97%	A- = 90–92%	
B+ = 88–89%	B = 83–87%	B- = 80–82%	
C+ = 78–79%	C = 73–77%	C- = 70–72%	
D+ = 68–69%	D = 63–67%	D- = 60–62%	F = 59.9% and below

*The SU grading system does not allow for A+ (98+ = “A” on the transcript). But if you show such exceptional performance, I will write a commendation for your employment portfolio (and copy your department chair).

ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND RESOURCES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

“Seattle University asserts that academic honesty and integrity are important values in the educational process. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense against the academic community. Acts of academic dishonesty or fraud will be addressed according to the Academic Integrity Policy.” [Full policy in CANVAS Resources.] Dishonesty in BCOM2800 will result in varying consequences depending on the violation. Take pride in your work to ensure your grade reflects *your* abilities. Cutting corners hinders you from developing important skills, while possibly setting you up to be exposed later as inept or a fraud.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

- Library and Learning Commons (<http://www.seattleu.edu/learningcommons/>) includes: Learning Assistance Programs, Research [Library] Services, Writing Center, Math Lab
- Academic Integrity Tutorial (on Canvas and SU Online)

ACADEMIC POLICIES ON REGISTRAR WEBSITE

<https://www.seattleu.edu/redhawk-axis/academic-policies/>

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Grading Grievance Policy
- Professional Conduct Policy (for certain professional programs)

NOTICE FOR STUDENTS RE: DISABILITIES

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an “invisible” disability such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or mental health condition) that interferes with your performance in this class, please arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services **(206) 296-5740**. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations require these arrangements.

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. This prohibition includes sexual misconduct, which encompasses sexual harassment and sexual violence. Seattle U remains committed to providing a safe and equitable learning, living, and working environment. Seattle U offers emergency, medical, and other support resources, as well as assistance with safety and support measures, to community members who have experienced or been impacted by sexual misconduct. Seattle U requires all faculty and staff to notify the University’s Title IX Coordinator if they become aware of any incident of sexual misconduct experienced by a student. For more information, visit <https://www.seattleu.edu/equity/>. If you have questions or concerns, you may directly contact the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Institutional Equity (oi@seattleu.edu; 206.296.2824) University Resources and Policies.