

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SYLLABUS IS PROVISIONAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS THE SEMESTER PROGRAM IS FINALIZED



Business Communication and Protocol

BUS3000

Spring 2020

Professor Name: Dr Dominic Standish

Professor Email: dominic.standish@gmail.com

Course objective: The course provides a foundation in business communication and protocol. The objective is to help you transition from communicating like a student to communicating like a professional within a workplace environment. Class assignments emphasize audience analysis– “Who is your audience? What do they need to know?”– and prioritize message organization and credibility.

An integral part of business protocol involves learning how to create a high-functioning team. Team assignments are deliberately “messy” and open to multiple approaches within the framework of expectations outlined for the assignment. Employers have expressed the desire that new hires take more initiative on projects; demonstrate more tolerance of ambiguity, and practice how to navigate through that ambiguity.

This course focuses on audience, purpose, context, and style, but will do so by working with blogs, video, visual communication and social media platforms in addition to creating standard business documents and presentations. We aim to prepare you for participating in a collaborative multi-modal digital communication environment.

The most challenging aspect of the course: creating clear and concise business message solutions (for written, oral, and visual communication) from an assignment scenario that may be ambiguous and/or contains a lot of moving parts to consider. This course enables you to practice how to succeed in the busy and open-ended environment that will most likely typify your future workplace.

Learning outcomes

After course completion, students will be able to:

- **differentiate between descriptive statements and claim statements**
- **write effective claim statements**
- **front-load information**
- **structure organized written and oral messages**

- **analyze audience to determine communication preferences**
- **use appropriate and positive tone**
- **consider skim value and directional visual design in creating documents/slides**
- **change and control writing/speaking style depending on communication and audience requirements**
- **work as a team in creating a decentralized design approach (everyone contributes to figuring out the plan) to deliberately open-ended or ambiguous team assignments**
- **consider diversity as a sharing of different ways to be effective rather than as an accommodation to an otherwise preferred way of doing or being in any given environment**

The course curriculum prioritizes and facilitates these critical thinking abilities:

- **recognize the importance of context**
- **imagine and explore alternatives**
- **synthesize information**
- **enhance pattern recognition** (identify the optimal communication channel / identify the appropriate communication format)
- **attend to appropriate detail** (identify keywords; separate signal from noise in receiving information)

Course assignments include written messages and reports (in multi-modal formats, some of which may emphasize visual communication), oral presentations, and team-building exercises. These assignments focus on conveying information or taking a position and backing it up with evidence.

Topics covered: composing standard business e-mail messages; organizing and reporting workplace research; developing presentation and team-building skills. Protocol coverage focuses on integrative skills (soft-skills) that companies expect new hires to possess. The final report deck assignment may also require you to conduct some secondary research.

Required text:

Guide to Managerial Communication, 10th edition (by Mary Munter and Lynn Hamilton, Pearson, 2016). The ISBN number is 978-0-13-297133-1.

Grading: Individual assignments receive points based on the criteria noted below—there is no normative “curve” to the points assessed for individual assignments; each assignment is assessed on its own merits using criterion-reference awarding of points. With criterion-referencing, students receive a percentage of points based on the quality of their work in relation to the criteria defined by the instructor and specified by the rubric. Students’ achievements are measured by this mastery of concepts and skills.

As this class is intended to prepare students for communicating in the workplace, the following criteria will apply to the assessment of points for each assignment:

- 91% of available points or higher= Manager would be impressed by the quality of your work on the assignment and would assess the work as ready to be submitted “up the chain of command” to his or her own supervisor. The work is clean, clear, complete and concise and shows evidence of the communicator having made an effort to insure the information is easy to process for whomever is receiving it while still satisfying content requirements and expectations.

- 90-82% of available points= Manager would be satisfied with your work on the assignment. It fulfills some of the expectations outlined in the 91% or above category but not all of them.
- 81-73% of available points= Manager would ask you to revise or rewrite sections before allowing those outside the department to see it but would be fairly confident you understood the nature of the assignment given to you.
- 72-64%= Manager would note the poor quality of work on at least parts of the assignment and would urge you to seek assistance to improve your skills. Manager would be likely to ask you to begin the assignment over from the beginning rather than attempt to revise the work you've already done.
- 63% of available points or lower= Manager would be unsatisfied with your work on the assignment and would require improvement as a condition of continued employment at that particular position.

Typically for final grades, about 15% and no more than 20% of student's grades in the A range; about 50% receive grades in the B range and 30-35% in the C range or below (including Ws).

No student, even the student with the highest final grade point total across all sections, will receive a final grade of A+ unless that student's point total at the end of the semester is 98% of the total available points or higher.

No student who has not engaged in academic misconduct in the course, even the student with the lowest final grade point total across all sections, will receive a final grade of F unless that student's point total at the end of the semester is 59% of the total available points or lower or the student has accumulated 4 (classes meeting once a week) or 7 (classes meeting twice a week) absences.

Point values for assignments/course performance:

	Individual points	Team
• Linked In profile	15	
• E-mail #1 – routine message	15	
• E-mail #2 – bad news message	20	
• Internal memo to team	30	
• Team Charter		5
• 1 st team presentation	10	10
• Elevator pitch recorded	20	
• Elevator pitch F2F	15	
• Midterm exam	50	
• Report deck	45	45
• Team presentation	20	40
• Team Experience Report	15	
• Blog assignments	20	
• Class engagement	15	
• Individual participation as a team member	10	

Total points: 400 (team points 100/400 = 25%)

Note that students cannot request additional activities to earn points.

The exam format will be written answers to set questions. Excellence in the exam can be achieved by answering set questions completely and through in-depth analysis of set texts.

Ways to lose points:

Attendance (see Attendance Policy below).

Late assignments. 10 points will be deducted every time an assignment is not brought with you to class and turned in at the start of the class session (printed out). Be aware of printing queues. Arriving at class while your document is still printing means it is late.

You may do them in advance. If an assignment is late, do it eventually and submit it by the time points are assigned. 15 points will be deducted for each assignment not turned in when the assignments are graded.

Late assignment (not brought to class by the assigned date and time).....10 points

Each assignment not turned in by the time grades are assigned.....15 points

Final point scale: Final grades will be by percentage, following customary scales.

98.00+ = A+; 92.00 – 97.99 = A; 90.00 – 91.99 = A-; 88.00 – 89.99 = B+; 82.00 – 87.99 = B; 80.00 – 81.99 = B-; 78.00 - 79.99 points = C+; 72.00 – 77.99 = C; 71.99 - 70.00 = C-; 68.00 – 69.99 = D+; 62.00 - 67.99 = D; 60.00 – 61.99 = D-. F = below 60 points.

Let's talk:

I am eager to meet with you about the course. I will be available in the faculty office for appointments that you can book by emailing me: dominic.standish@gmail.com

Class Schedule

Week 1

1. Introductions.

Introduction post. LinkedIn assignment. Start blog.

Reading: Syllabus

Week 2

2. Communication Strategy.

Routine message (E-mail #1.)

Reading: *Guide to Managerial Communication (GMC) Chapter 1*

3. Communication Strategy.

LinkedIn assignment due. Blog#2.

Reading: *Guide to Managerial Communication (GMC) Chapter 1*

Week 3

4. Composing Efficiently.

Reading:

GMC, chapter 2 and Effective Claims handout.

5. Composing Efficiently.

Routine message (E-mail #1.) due. Blog#3.

Reading:

GMC, chapter 2.

6. Writing: Macro Issues.

E-mail #2 (bad-news message).

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 3.

Week 4

7. Writing: Macro Issues.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 3.

Assign blog post #4.

8. Writing: Micro Issues.

Teams announced. Assign team charter.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 4 and the appendix.

Week 5

9. Writing: Micro Issues.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 4.

Team charters due in class. Assign internal memo to team.

10. Speaking: Verbal Structure.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 5.

Assign elevator pitch

11. Mid-term exam.

Week 6

12. Speaking: Verbal Structure.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 5.

13. Elevator pitches delivered in class.

14. Speaking: Non-verbal Skills.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 7.

Blog post #5.

Week 7

15. Speaking: Non-verbal Skills.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 7.

Week 8

16. Speaking: Visual Aids.

Conduct overview of report deck; Select report deck topics; assign 1st team oral presentation.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 6.

17. Speaking: Visual Aids.

Conduct research for report deck project outside of class using library resource page as a guide. Review effective claim statements. Workshop storylines for report decks.

Reading:

GMC, Chapter 6.

Week 10

18. 1st team presentation due. Workshop positioning statements (headers) for report deck.

19. Positioning statement for each report deck slide due at beginning of class (team assignment). In class: Workshop visual design (review *GMC chap 6*—especially “chartjunk” and concept diagram material). Assign 2nd team presentation

Week 11

20. Workshopping of PPT report decks in class—may include whole-class critique of slides. Emphasis on analytical development of report deck “story line” and on substantiation of positioning statements.

21. Team conferencing with instructor on first submission of report decks and in-class teamwork on report decks or presentation PPT slides during non-conferencing time.

Week 12

22. Final submission of PPT report decks due. Begin 2nd team oral presentations. Assign Team Experience Report.

23. Conclude team oral presentations. Team Experience Report.

Attendance Policy

Attendance at all classes and CIMBA sanctioned activities is MANDATORY. All unexcused absences will have the following consequences:

- a. 1st absence will result in a loss of a 1/3 of a letter grade in that class
- b. 2nd (cumulative) absence will result in a loss of an entire letter grade in that class
- c. 3rd (cumulative) absence will result in a dismissal from the program.

Absences due to illness require a note from the CIMBA Office Staff. If a student is sick and cannot attend class, he/she must inform the CIMBA Staff immediately. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.

Grievance Policy

Student concerns regarding this course should first be discussed with me, the faculty member teaching this course. If we can't resolve the complaint, you may contact the CIMBA Director, **Stephanie Schnicker**, on 319-335-1041, <stephanie-schnicker@uiowa.edu>. The Director will review the details of the complaint and involve the Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Programs, as needed.

Academic Misconduct

The Tippie College of Business at the University of Iowa follows an honor code regarding academic misconduct. That code can be found at <http://tippie.uiowa.edu/honorcode.cfm> and includes cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, obtaining an unfair advantage, forgery, facilitating academic dishonesty, and misrepresentation. Be sure you are familiar with this code. Students who exhibit academic dishonesty will receive a zero (0) for the assignment or examination involved and may receive an "F" for the class. All incidents of cheating will be reported to the CIMBA staff, as well as to the Senior Associate Dean of the Tippie College of Business. The decision of the professor may be appealed to a Judicial Board. The Honor Code for the Tippie College of Business will determine the appropriate appeal process.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities/Academic Accommodations

A student seeking academic accommodations such as a modification of seating, testing, timing, etc. should

first register with Student Disability Services, then contact **Stephanie Schnicker**, <stephanie-schnicker@uiowa.edu> in the CIMBA Office to make further arrangements. See <http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu> for more information.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. If you feel that you are being or have been harassed or you are not sure what constitutes sexual harassment, we encourage you to visit the University website, www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu/index.php, and to seek assistance from the CIMBA Director, **Stephanie Schnicker**, <stephanie-schnicker@uiowa.edu>, at 319-335-1041.