

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

Business Communication and Protocol

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Dominic Standish dominic.standish@gmail.com or dominic-standish@uiowa.edu

Please refer to the University of Iowa policy on email use. E-mail will be responded to within 24-48 hours (excluding weekends and non-class travel periods). University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu).

Course home:

CIMBA Undergraduate Program

University of Iowa

C300 Pappajohn Business Building (PBB)

Tel: [319-335-0920](tel:319-335-0920)

Directory information for Dr. Dominic Standish can be found here:

<https://tippie.uiowa.edu/people/dominic-standish>

CLASS

Meeting days and time variable, usually 3.35-5.20pm.

MEETING TIMES

Class location room 18 with mandatory in-person attendance.

OFFICE HOURS

2.30-3.30pm on days we have class, faculty office.

COURSE SITE

To access the course site, log into [Iowa Courses Online \(ICON\)](#) using your Hawk ID and password.

ACADEMIC

COURSE

Supervisor

Tippie College of Business, DEO: Cristi Gleason, Accounting, Phone: 319-335-1505, Email: cristi-gleason@uiowa.edu

Program Goals

The Tippie College of Business Undergraduate Program has learning goals that drive decisions about curriculum and assignments within courses.

#1: Graduates will use analytical, creative, and collaborative approaches to solving complex, ambiguous problems

#2: Graduates will demonstrate effective written, spoken, and visual communication

#3: Graduates will obtain global awareness and understanding

#4: Graduates will demonstrate ethical reasoning

#5: Graduates will obtain professional preparation

Course Description and Goals

Course objective: The course provides a foundation in business communication and protocol. The goal is to help you transition from communicating like a student to communicating like a professional within a workplace environment. Class assignments focus on context and audience analysis-- “Who is your audience? What do they need to know?” and prioritize message structuring and appropriate tone.

Covering critical areas of the professional job lifecycle, BCaP includes:

- Applications, references and hiring processes
- Team collaboration and networking
- Project management and multi-channel communications
- Effective slide design, data visualization and storytelling
- Navigating career decisions

Learning outcomes

After course completion, students will be able to:

- Identify the needs of professional audiences and create appropriate business messages for specific and diverse individuals/groups
- Write professional-level content that frontloads information and delivers precise, efficient phrasing in a variety of business documents
- Create organized and insightful presentations built on a cogent storyline and effective visual elements
- Present business messages confidently and clearly to internal and external audiences through effective speaking practices

BCaP centers around your professional journey and provides practical experience in effectively engaging in collaborative, multi-modal digital communication environments. It emphasizes the importance of understanding your organization's culture, goals, purpose, context, and audience for successful communication.

Topics covered in the course include:

- Composing standard business email messages
- Organizing and synthesizing information
- Developing presentation and team-building skills
- Integrative soft skills, such as intercultural engagement and practice. These skills are highly valued by companies when hiring new employees.

By the end of the course, you will possess a foundational understanding of professionalism, enabling you to adapt your communication and collaboration styles effectively in various working contexts and with diverse audiences. BCaP prepares you to excel in professional scenarios, empowering your success in the dynamic business 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 (find the best communication channel/identify the appropriate communication format)
- attend to appropriate detail (identify keywords; separate signal from noise in receiving information)

Media/System Requirements

Technical requirements for completing this class include:

- Student-provided personal computer with reliable Internet access.
- If you need assistive technologies that have different computer and technology requirements, then you will be responsible for making those arrangements. Please check with [Student Disability Services](#) to determine the requirements for specific technologies and for assistance if necessary.

Textbook/Materials

The required textbook for this course is available to you through “ICON Direct eTexts” link in the left-hand navigation menu on the course ICON site taking you to Unizin Engage.

- Title: **Business Communication and Character, 11th edition**
- ISBN: 978-0-357-71813-1
- Author: Amy Newman
- Publisher: Cengage
- Copyright Year: 2023

The University will bill you automatically as a student enrolled in the course for the cost of eTextbook access for \$53.12. You may [opt out](#) of this content (deadline before Friday, Feb. 9), but the consequences of doing so may affect your outcomes in this course:

- You will lose access to any additional content your instructor might add to the eTextbook, such as links to other content, additional supplemental resources, highlights, annotations, and any study tips your instructor may add to guide your engagement and learning in the course.
- You risk falling behind in the course if you have not acquired alternate versions of the same materials by the first week of class.
- Faculty are not responsible for providing you with alternative materials or waiving course/class requirements.

BCaP faculty have selected the eTextbook option because it represents a huge saving of the list price of \$274.95 for the printed textbook. Providing inclusive access to the textbook ensures that everyone has the same edition of the textbook and has it ready to use in the first week of class. There is a hard copy of the textbook available to reserve in the CIMBA office.

Grading Criteria: Individual assignments

Each assignment is assessed on its own merits with points awarded for successful fulfillment of communication aims.

All points are earned; there is no assignment or class activity which a student starts with full points and then loses them. As this class is intended to prepare students for communicating in the workplace, BCaP professors will assess your work product (graded assignments below).

Final course grades will be assessed based on the student's performance in the following items. ***Note: prompts and assignments may vary, per instructor discretion.**

Graded Assignments	Individual Points	Team Points	% of Final Grade
Job Application Email	40		10%
Recorded Interview Response	40		10%
Case Study: Justify a Business Decision	50		12.5%
Team-Building Presentation (In-person)	20	20	10%
Written Pitch Deck: Final Submission	50	40	22.5%
Client Pitch Presentation	30	20	12.5%
5 Quizzes (Over the semester – 10 pts each)	50		12.5%
Exit Interview	20		5%
Professionalism	20		5%
Total Points:	320	80	400
	80%	20%	100%

Final course grades will be assigned as follows based on points earned but will be largely consistent with the recommended grade distribution for core courses in the undergraduate program:

A to A- = 100 – 90%

C+ to C- = 79 – 70%

F = below 60%

B+ to B- = 89 – 80%

D+ to D- = 69 – 60%

Grading Recommendations

Guidelines for Tippie College of Business undergraduate core courses are as follows:

Core Courses	A Range	B Range	C Range	D, F Range(s)
Distribution %	20%	40%	30%	10% as warranted

**Note: There is no “rounding up” of decimal points for BCaP final grades.*

Course Work

***Note: prompts and assignments may vary, per instructor discretion. Some additional assignments, quizzes, and in-class activities may occur outside of these major ones.**

The following course work narrative weaves together the different stages of your BCaP professional journey, showing how each assignment leads you closer to your goals and plays a crucial role in shaping your career during the life cycle of a job.

Job Application Email (Individual)

At the beginning of your professional journey, you take a significant step by reaching out to a former employer or professor to request a job reference. Your meticulously crafted email appeals to your personal/professional relationship with them and highlights your strengths, achievements, and shared experiences. You also communicate the application protocol and deadlines to ensure a seamless process.

Recorded Interview Response (Individual)

As your job application progresses, the hiring manager expresses interest and invites you for a one-way video interview. Prepared and eager to impress, you carefully craft your response, using compelling storytelling to showcase your skills and passion for the role. Your goal is to leave a positive and lasting impression on the employer.

Case Study: Justify a Business Decision (Individual)

You are now a finalist for a job at a consulting firm. As part of the application process, the employer asks you to complete/submit a case study analyzing a fictitious scenario, to assess your problem-solving and communication skills. This challenges your ability to synthesize information, assess a situation, determine the best strategy to optimize company productivity and profit, and then communicate why your decision is justified. Emphasis will be on strategic decision-making rather than detailed calculations.

Team-Building Presentation (Team & Individual)

Congratulations! You have been hired at a boutique consulting firm. While onboarding, your new manager emphasizes team cohesion and assigns a special team-building exercise. Each member of your new team shares their unique qualities and together you explore how these differences can foster effective collaboration. The presentation to your manager brings the potential of your team to life, igniting a sense of unity and purpose.

Written Pitch Deck (Team & Individual)

To help build your book of business, your new employer sponsors you to attend a work conference. While there, you impress a prospective client who seeks a consulting firm to help their company navigate a business issue. You have secured the opportunity to submit a written pitch deck to their company's board for a potential partnership with your firm. Your consulting team collaborates to create a visually captivating deck tailored to address the client's needs and assert recommendations, incorporating available data and research. You submit the finalized written pitch deck to the client for consideration.

Client Pitch Presentation (Team & Individual)

The pinnacle of your journey approaches as your team's written pitch deck impresses the client company's board members enough for them to select your consulting firm as a finalist. The focus turns to your client pitch presentation. Visual presentation slides, concise narratives, and an expertly facilitated

Q&A session aim to impress the board, helping your team to hopefully win the contract and partner with the target company.

Exit Interview (Individual)

Due to your quality working track record, you have built a credible and positive reputation in the industry. An unexpected opportunity emerges as another prospective client you have previously solicited seeks to hire you. After thoughtful consideration, you accept the offer, leading to an exit interview conducted by HR. Their survey captures your insights and reflections, marking the closure of a significant chapter in your professional journey.

Course-Specific Policies and Guidelines

Class attendance: Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory. Treat attendance in class as you would attendance at an internship or place of employment. It is a courtesy to stay away if you are sick, but you must receive authorization from the CIMBA Office Staff.

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.

Students who miss class are responsible for checking the section ICON site and, once on a team, for consulting team members about any missed activities and expectations for the next class. It is *not* the job of the BCaP professor to catch you up with what you missed in class unless you have a medical absence of extended duration requiring coordinated action by the Office of the Registrar.

Inclement Weather/Class Cancellation: Although it is our intent to offer every class at its assigned time, on rare occasions there are weather or other emergency events that require alternative arrangements be made for class delivery. If that happens, please stay alert for an email indicating how the class will be handled. These arrangements may include: 1) Cancelling the class completely – all reading and work that was due is expected to be completed and turned in on time through ICON; 2) Holding an online version of the class (i.e., via Zoom) – you will receive an email invitation to join the session remotely from a computer with an internet connection – headphones are recommended; 3) Using recorded videos and presenting other materials to you through ICON so we can cover the course materials asynchronously.

Late/Missed Assignments: Because I regard this class as I would any job responsibility, I hold students to strict standards of timeliness and ethics. In this regard, late work is unprofessional and will be penalized. Assignments that are late will receive an automatic 10% grade reduction. Each following day that the assignment is still late will result in another 10% reduction in the grade until multiple reductions compound to 0% on that assignment (up to 10 days past its deadline). Please note that, to help ensure academic integrity, there is an exception to this rule for quizzes. Quizzes in this class have firm deadlines and cannot be made up. **Any missed quiz will receive an automatic, non-negotiable 0%.**

Assignments due at the end of the semester will be accepted with the penalties noted above until 5PM on the last day of the final exam period (April 12, 2024).

Missed in-class presentations may not automatically be made up. Students who miss a speech/presentation because of illness must present a note from CIMBA Office Staff.

Plagiarism and academic honesty: All student work must be original and completed specifically for this course during the current semester. Using content from previous semesters, other courses, other students, or external sources without proper attribution constitutes plagiarism and will result in academic misconduct penalties as per college policy. Plagiarism includes any use of research, writing, or intellectual property from any source without appropriate documentation.

If students have questions about providing sufficient documentation or collaborating appropriately, they should seek guidance from the instructor **before** submitting their assignments. Ignorance about plagiarism will not be considered a valid excuse for academic misconduct.

All written assignments must be uploaded electronically to ICON and may be subjected to plagiarism screening. Instances of plagiarism will be reviewed by the BCaP instructor and may result in a zero on the assignment and a drop of a full letter grade for the final course grade. In severe cases, plagiarism may lead to failure of the course and trigger an official academic misconduct investigation. Students reported for academic misconduct in this class will not be allowed to withdraw later and may be required to submit all team assignments individually.

Cases warranting an official investigation will be reported to the Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Program (Charles Keene). The student may face disciplinary probation for the remainder of their undergraduate studies at the University of Iowa. Decisions on academic misconduct may be appealed to the Tippie College of Business Judicial Board and then to the Associate Dean. The appeal process will be determined by the Honor Code for the Tippie College of Business. Please refer to the Tippie College Honor Code and the Student Handbook for university regulations on academic honesty (<http://tippie.uiowa.edu/honor-code.cfm>). Course governance of the Tippie Honor Code will adhere to collegiate policies and guidelines.

Academic Misconduct: The Tippie College of Business at the University of Iowa follows this Honor Code regarding wider 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.

Communications: Students can expect to receive communications from the instructor (via course “Announcements” in ICON). Students are also responsible for all official correspondence sent through their University of Iowa email address. Students can expect to receive responses to email inquiries within 24-48 hours. Privacy considerations, such as federal law, may apply when using an address other than the standard University e-mail address.

Electronic devices: Student use of electronic devices during class (smartwatches/smartphones, headphones or earbuds, tablets, other personal electronic devices) may or may not be allowed depending on the class activity and professor preferences. Your professor should notify your section whether the default policy is to allow use of personal electronic devices unless specifically prohibited (policy A) OR to not allow use of personal electronic devices unless specially authorized to do so (policy B). Unauthorized use of personal electronic devices during class will negatively affect the course engagement grade component. The CIMBA section of BCaP will follow policy B.

Class Recording Policy: There is no college policy stipulating that classes be recorded and available to students on ICON. If some of the sessions in this course are recorded or live-streamed, such recordings/streaming will only be available to students registered for this class. These recordings are the intellectual property of the faculty and they may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit, written consent of the faculty member. Further, students may not share these sessions with those not in the class, or upload them to any other online environment. Doing so would be a breach of the Code of Student Conduct, and, in some cases, a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy: Acceptable use of ChatGPT and/or other AI writing tools in the creation of any submitted course work is decided by instructor discretion. In my course, the use of AI for creating course work is **not** allowed unless specifically directed by me. However, if directed to use AI, students bear full responsibility for all the course work they submit. All submitted work must adhere to the assignment guidelines and consider the grading criteria. AI is a valuable tool, but it must be used judiciously. If any course work is generated using AI, students are required to customize and refine it to fit the specific context, audience, and content requirements of the assignment. Keep in mind that the quality of the AI-generated content should not be used as grounds for contesting a grade. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the work submitted reflects their understanding and effort in the course.

Student grievances: Student concerns about this course should first be discussed with your professor. For unresolved concerns, seek assistance from the CIMBA Director, Stephanie Schnicker, stephanie-schnicker@uiowa.edu. Concerns about the grading of a particular assignment must be brought to the attention of the CIMBA Director within two weeks of receiving the grade, or if the concern is that an assignment has not been graded, two weeks after the assignment was submitted. Should the concern continue to be unresolved, you may also contact the BCaP course supervisor, Cristi Gleason, Accounting, Phone: 319-335-1505, Email: cristi-gleason@uiowa.edu.

Collegiate and University Policies and Guidelines

The administrative home of this course is the Tippie College of Business, which governs academic matters relating to the course such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, issues concerning academic misconduct, and how credits are applied for various graduation requirements.

Different colleges might have different policies.

The Tippie College of Business is committed to providing students with a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment in which to pursue their educations. In addition, Students at Tippie adhere to an Honor Code that emphasizes the importance of honesty and integrity. Student concerns about this class or your performance in it can be discussed with the instructor or the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs. More details about these and other policies are available on the Tippie [website](#).

The University of Iowa is committed to the [protection of freedom of speech and the principles of academic and artistic freedom, to accommodating students with disabilities, and to accommodating absences due to religious holidays](#). In addition, students are expected to comply with the University's Code of Student Life. The University is also committed to non-discrimination and prohibits all forms of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and related retaliation. The University also provides resources for student mental health as well as for the basic needs and support of students. More information about these and other policies can be found on the [Provost's Office's website](#).

Course Calendar

BCaP follows a scheduled course structure. It is essential to manage time effectively and complete your assigned work by the firm due dates indicated in the calendar.

**Note: lecture content, assignments and schedule may vary, per instructor discretion.*

Week 1

1. Introductions and course overview (1 hour).

Reading:

Syllabus in class.

2. Professional communication. Business writing versus academic writing. Audience Analysis.

Reading:

Business Communication and Character (BCC) Chapter 1, esp. sections 1-4 and 1-5.

Week 2

3. Team organization and communication.

Reading:

BCC Chapter 2, esp. sections 2-2 and 2-3.

Job Application Email (Due by January 30).

Week 3

4. Developing business writing skills. Teammate pitches.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 4, esp. sections 4-2 and 4-3.

5. Hiring processes and interviewing. Answers to interview questions.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 4, section 4-4b.

Team Formation Survey (Due by February 8).

Week 4

6. Negotiating job offers.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 5.

Quiz 1: Foundational Communication Concepts (Due by February 15).

Week 5

7. Introducing business presentations.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 7.

Living and Working Abroad: Expatriate Panel - Adjusting to a new culture, job, team, and organization.

8. Cross-cultural communication. Bring your full self to work.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 3, esp. sections 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, and 3-4.

Recorded Interview Response (Due by February 22).

Week 6

9. Evidence-based business decisions. Claim statements. Overview Pitch Deck project.

Reading:

Effective claim document.

Quiz 2: Claims & Summary vs. Synthesis (Due by February 27).

10. Overview Introductory Team Presentation.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 6, esp. sections 6-1, 6-2, and 6-3

Case Study: Justify a Business Decision (Due by February 29).

Week 7 Travel week.

Week 8

11. Refresh on Pitch Deck Project. Discuss Pitch Deck Requirements.

12. Deck storyline considerations. Drafting synthesized analysis.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 9, esp. sections, 9-1, 9-2, 9-4, and 9-5.

Team-Building Presentation. (Due by March 13).

Company Tours. Presentations and professional networking.

13. Conflict management.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 10, sections 10-1, 10-2, 10-3 (esp. 10-3d and 10-3e), and 10-4.

Quiz 3: Team Dynamics and Networking (Due by March 15).

Week 9

14. Creating effective data visualizations. In-class workshoping.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 11, sections 11-1 and 11-2.

15. Refresh on final submission requirements.

Quiz 4: Aesthetic Design for Slide Docs (Due by March 20).

16. Creating cohesive deck designs and formatting. In-class workshoping.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 11, sections 11-3, 11-4.

Week 10

17. Finalizing the written pitch deck. In-class workshopping.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 12, sections 12-2, 12-3.

18. Professionalism online. How to present via Zoom.

Reading:

BCC, Chapter 12, sections 12-4, 12-5.

Optional Pitch Deck Draft Submission (Individual) (Due by March 27).

NOTE: this is for feedback only and is ungraded.

Week 11

19. Assessing work capacity. Self-advocacy.

Quiz 5: Presenting Professionally Online (Due by April 3)

20. Career assessment. Factors to consider when deciding to leave a job.

Written Pitch Deck: Final Submission (Due by April 5).

Week 12

21. Giving notice of resignation. Exiting current role. Course wrap-up.

Exit Interview (Due by April 12).

22. Client Pitch Presentations and Q&A segments. Date to be confirmed by CIMBA staff.