

SYLLABUS
BCOM 3311
BUSINESS COMMUNICATION
Fall 2013

Instructor: Dr. (Iva) Jeanne Sluder
Office: 4.414 SOM
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday (11:30 AM to 1:00 PM & by appointment)
Email: jeanne.sluder@utdallas.edu
Phone: 972-883-4783 (office) or 817-658-0658 (cell)

Course Prerequisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

BCOM 3311 requires students to have credit for Rhetoric 1302 and BA 3351. As an upper-level class, students should have at least college-level writing skills and both written and oral proficiency in English.

Course Description

Communication skills are rated as one of the most sought after qualities in today's job market. In nearly all aspects of professional life you will spend most of your day explaining, writing, directing, persuading, and listening to other people. Your ability to do so clearly and effectively will have a direct bearing on your success in the business world. This course is designed to give students a thorough introduction to business communication and its basic concepts and theories. This course will also provide students with ample opportunities to refine their communication skills. Students in this course will gain knowledge and skills that will assist them not only in their chosen career but will be useful in their academic and social lives as well.

Course Goals

This course is designed to help you achieve the following:

- Develop the basic communication skills you need to write, listen, make oral presentations, communicate interpersonally, and work effectively in teams.
- Value the differences between yourself and others and to employ this understanding to improve the quality of your communication.
- Recognize and value the diverse contributions of all members of an organization.
- Improve your communication skills in future courses and in your career.
- Refine the process of written and oral communication in business.
- Use methods of problem solving in business communication that can be used as an individual or as a team.
- Develop basic reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in addition to the ability to follow complete, complex written and oral instructions.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

BCOM 3311 is the second writing-intensive course in the Communications component of the Core Curriculum. As such, it addresses the following Component Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to write effectively using appropriate organization, mechanics, and style.
2. Students will be able to construct arguments that are effective and appropriate for business settings.
3. Students will be able to incorporate and interpret source material in their writing and speaking.
4. Students will be able to write and speak in different ways for different audiences.

Required Textbook (available at the UTD Bookstore)

Guffey, Mary Ellen, *Business Communication: Process and Product* (7th Edition)

ISBN: 0538466251 **Note:** This is the **only** book (and edition) acceptable for use in this class.

Required Materials

You will need a couple (new) two-pocket folders and a notebook. You will also need access to the Internet (and especially to eLearning on a daily basis).

Peer Review and Revision

The following statement comes directly from the Core Curriculum section of the UTD Undergraduate Catalog:

All courses [that satisfy the core requirement for Communications] require that students write, receive detailed feedback about, and revise at least 15 double-spaced pages.

This means that most every written exercise you do in this class will be done TWO TIMES. First, you produce a *draft* (in hard copy format) of the document and have it reviewed by one or more of your classmates. Your partner or partners will evaluate your draft using a Peer Review worksheet and return both documents to you. You will then revise the document using the feedback that has been provided to you.

Social and Environmental Sustainability

A responsible business leader of the 21st century will not only need to ensure the profitability of their company but will also need to be able to identify and manage ways in which their organization impacts its natural environment and social community. Leaders must also be able to communicate these commitments to the public in an effective and accurate way. In this class, you will complete at least one project that will help you imagine the ways in which businesses can give back to their community through significant community action programs. This project will not only help you improve your teamwork and communication skills but will also bring you into a closer relationship to the community and its needs.

Assignments

50 pts – Class Introductions and Introductory Email Assignment
100 pts – Executive Summary Assignment
150 pts – Collaborative Assignment
50 pts – Negative Message Assignment
100 pts – Job Search Assignment
100 pts – Oral Presentation Assignment
50 pts – Test
300 pts – Attendance (and Class Participation)
900 pts – TOTAL

Final Grades will be assigned according to the 2011 UTD Undergraduate Catalog scale:
A+ 900-873 A 872-837 A- 836-810 B+ 809-783 B 782-747 B- 746-720
C+ 719-693 C 692-657 C- 656-630 D+ 629-603 D 602-567 D- 566-540 F 539-0

Grading Policy

All work should demonstrate the same professional and ethical standards expected of you in the workplace, including proofreading and editing carefully all work you submit in this class. Professionalism also means that you use appropriate source citation wherever and whenever necessary so that you avoid violations of copyright and plagiarism – even if those violations are inadvertent.

You should expect to work hard in this course. Like all of your other JSOM courses, this is a **rigorous** class.

I **strongly recommend** that you review your assignments with me *before* they are due. I strongly encourage you to come by my office during my office hours or make an appointment with me if you are not available during my office hours. I **strongly encourage** you to come talk to me, email me, or text me if you have any questions or comments about any assignment or anything at all to do with this class.

I also encourage you to use our Business Communication Center in 1.213 or 1.218.

Submitting an Assignment

All assignments are due on or before the due date. I will **not** accept any late assignments. Note: Assignments must meet the criteria of the project and be submitted to me as outlined in the criteria for the assignment.

Deadlines in the professional world are a serious matter. Missed deadlines mean lost contracts, delayed product releases, skyrocketing expenses, and, in some cases, the loss, quite literally, of millions of dollars in revenue. Missed deadlines also compromise professional reputations and careers.

For these reasons, late or incomplete work is not acceptable in this course. THERE ARE NO EXCUSES.

Class Attendance

Work assigned for this class carries no less priority than work you may have to complete for any other class or job. Material and information will be presented in the classroom that cannot be replicated outside the classroom or made up at a later date. Moreover, class participation is a vital part of your learning process because this class revolves around discussions, activities, and group work. More than simply being physically present in class, participation includes you asking questions in class about readings, answering questions, offering suggestions, listening in class, and adopting a professional, positive attitude.

Based on past experience, it will be very difficult to do well in this course if you fail to attend class regularly and participate actively.

Note: Each class is worth 10 points for a total of 300 points by the end of the semester. And, coming in late and/or leaving early will cut your day's points in half.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT NOTE: I will take attendance at some point during class. If you are not there when I call your name, then you will be marked absent and that absence remains on your attendance record for the remainder of the semester. If you did not hear your name called then it is your responsibility to speak to me in person and let me know you are there BEFORE I dismiss the class for that particular day.

ONE MORE IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT BEING ABSENT: If you miss more than three classes in a row, you must make an appointment to see me. You cannot just return to class; you must meet with me in person first to discuss what assignments, activities, etc. that you have missed and what your current status in the class is at that point in time. You will not be able to make up any missed work and you will forfeit any points worked on in a group project that you did not complete.

Classroom Citizenship

In keeping with this course's professional communication mandate, students are expected to use every opportunity in the course to practice communicating in a civil and professional manner.

Student Charge

As a student in this class, it is **your** responsibility to follow up with me about any issues that you need clarified. I am readily available during my office hours, by phone (my cell or office), and especially through email and even texting.

Technology Requirements

This course is taught and facilitated using eLearning, and you must develop the habit of checking often for assignments, announcements, emails, etc. Reliable and frequent Internet connectivity is indispensable – not having Internet access will make your group projects more difficult and will not serve as a valid excuse for shortcomings on your part. Failure to check UTD or eLearning email, errors in

forwarding email, and email bounced back from over-quota mailboxes are not acceptable excuses for missing course or project-related email. Additionally, to protect your privacy rights, I will only send email through your official UTD email address or eLearning email. If you choose, you can redirect both of these addresses to external addresses.

Note: Using email within eLearning or texting are great ways to stay in touch with me throughout the semester. Please feel free to email or text me whenever you need help or just have a simple question.

Classroom and Equipment Use Policies

- NO CELL PHONES OR OTHER ELECTRONIC MESSAGING SERVICES MAY BE USED IN THE CLASSROOMS UNLESS YOU HAVE CLEARED IT WITH ME FIRST AND THEN ONLY ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS.
- Food and drink are not permitted in the classroom. Eat your meals before you come to class.
- ABSOLUTELY POSITIVELY NO TEXT MESSAGING AND NO EAR BUDS, EAR PHONES, OR ANYTHING IN YOUR EARS!
- Laptops may only be used for coursework or to facilitate coursework and only with my permission.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System, Part I, Chapter VI, Section 3, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the Course Syllabus Page 8, University's Handbook of Operating Procedures. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SSB 4.400, 972/883- 6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty and administration of the School of Management expect from our students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that

degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work. We want to establish a reputation for the honorable behavior of our graduates, which extends throughout their careers. Both your individual reputation and the school's reputation matter to your success.

The Judicial Affairs website lists examples of academic dishonesty. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, facilitating academic dishonesty, fabrication, failure to contribute to a collaborative project and sabotage. Some of the ways students may engage in academic dishonesty are:

- Coughing and/or using visual or auditory signals in a test;
- Concealing notes on hands, caps, shoes, in pockets or the back of beverage bottle labels;
- Writing in blue books prior to an examination;
- Writing information on blackboards, desks, or keeping notes on the floor;
- Obtaining copies of an exam in advance;
- Passing information from an earlier class to a later class;
- Leaving information in the bathroom;
- Exchanging exams so that neighbors have identical test forms;
- Having a substitute take a test and providing falsified identification for the substitute;
- Fabricating data for lab assignments;
- Changing a graded paper and requesting that it be regraded;
- Failing to turn in a test or assignment and later suggesting the faculty member lost the item;
- Stealing another student's graded test and affixing one's own name on it;
- Recording two answers, one on the test form, one on the answer sheet;
- Marking an answer sheet to enable another to see the answer;
- Encircling two adjacent answers and claiming to have had the correct answer;
- Stealing an exam for someone in another section or for placement in a test file;
- Using an electronic device to store test information, or to send or receive answers for a test;
- Destroying or removing library materials to gain an academic advantage;
- Consulting assignment solutions posted on websites of previous course offerings;
- Transferring a computer file from one person's account to another;
- Transmitting posted answers for an exam to a student in a testing area via electronic device;
- Downloading text from the Internet or other sources without proper attribution;
- Citing to false references or findings in research or other academic exercises;
- Unauthorized collaborating with another person in preparing academic exercises.
- Submitting a substantial portion of the same academic work more than once without written authorization from the instructor.

<http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-Basicexamples.html>

Updated: August, 2011

Plagiarism on assignments, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable. On typed assignments, this course may use the resources of [turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com), which searches the web for plagiarized content and is over 90% effective.

Students in this course suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings, and if found responsible, the following minimum sanctions will be applied:

- 1. Homework – Zero for the Assignment**
- 2. Assignments – Zero for the Assignment**
- 3. Group Work – Zero for the Assignment**

These sanctions will be administered only after a student has been found officially responsible for academic dishonesty, either through waiving their right for a disciplinary hearing, or being declared responsible after a hearing administered by Judicial Affairs and the Dean of Student's office .

In the event that the student receives a failing grade for the course for academic dishonesty, the student is not allowed to withdraw as a way of preventing the grade from being entered on their record. Where a student receives an F in a course and chooses to take the course over to improve their grade, the original grade of F remains on their transcript, but does not count towards calculation of their GPA.

The School of Management also reserves the right to review a student's disciplinary record, on file with the Dean of Students, as one of the criteria for determining a student's eligibility for a scholarship.

Judicial Affairs Procedures

Under authority delegated by the Dean of Students, a faculty member who has reason to suspect that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty may conduct a conference with the student in compliance with the following procedures:

- (i) the student will be informed that he/she is believed to have committed an act or acts of academic dishonesty in violation of University rules;
- (ii) the student will be presented with any information in the knowledge or possession of the instructor which tends to support the allegation(s) of academic dishonesty;
- (iii) the student will be given an opportunity to present information on his/her behalf;
- (iv) after meeting with the student, the faculty member may choose not to refer the allegation if he/she determines that the allegations are not supported by the evidence; or
- (v) after meeting with the student, the faculty member may refer the allegations to the dean of students along with a referral form and all supporting documentation of the alleged violation. Under separate cover, the faculty member should forward

- the appropriate grade to be assessed if a student is found to be responsible for academic dishonesty;
- (vi) the faculty member may consult with the dean of students in determining the recommended grade;
 - (vii) the faculty member must not impose any independent sanctions upon the student in lieu of a referral to Judicial Affairs;
 - (viii) the faculty member may not impose a sanction of suspension or expulsion, but may make this *recommendation* in the referral documentation

If the faculty member chooses not to meet with the student and instead forwards the appropriate documentation directly to the dean of students, they should attempt to inform the student of the allegation and notify the student that the information has been forwarded to the Office of Dean of Students for investigation.

The student, pending a hearing, remains responsible for all academic exercises and syllabus requirements. The student may remain in class if the student's presence in the class does not interfere with the professor's ability to teach the class or the ability of other class members to learn. (See Section 49.07, page V-49-4 for information regarding the removal of a student from class).

Upon receipt of the referral form, class syllabus, and the supporting material/documentation from the faculty member, the dean shall proceed under the guidelines in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures*, Chapter 49, Subchapter C. If the respondent disputes the facts upon which the allegations are based, a fair and impartial disciplinary committee comprised of UTD faculty and students, shall hold a hearing and determine the responsibility of the student. If they find the student in violation of the code of conduct, the dean will then affirm the minimum sanction as provided in the syllabus, and share this information with the student. The dean will review the student's prior disciplinary record and assess additional sanctions where appropriate to the circumstances. The dean will inform the student and the faculty member of their decision.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic email. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual correspondence and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog.

Administrative procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's Handbook of Operating Procedures.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22, PO Box 830688, Richardson, TX 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled with students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled to accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notified the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911 (b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Instructor.