



Course BCOM 3310.005
Course Title Business Communication
Professor Victoria McCrady
Term Spring 2020
Meetings MWF 10:00 AM - 10:50 AM JSOM 2.802

Professor's Contact Information

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Office Location JSOM 4.420

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If you email me, please use your UTD email. Include your class and section number in the subject line of the email.

Office Hours MW 12:30 PM to 2 PM
Additional times available by appointment

General Course Information

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions RHET 1302 and (ACCT 3100 or BA 3100 or BCOM 3100 or FIN 3100 or HMGMT 3100 or IMS 3100 or MKT 3100 or ITSS 3100 or OPRE 3100).

Course Description Introduction to various types of professional communication, with an emphasis on business writing. Students will gain experience writing and revising business email, letters, proposals, and job search documents. Students will work both individually and in teams and will exit the course with a clear understanding of the centrality of communication in business.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will refine their multi-media career development and job preparedness by creating a position-specific resume.
2. Students will refine their ability to construct effective intra-firm communication documents by writing an executive summary of a persuasive report.
3. Students will refine their ability to construct effective presentations for external stakeholders by creating a persuasive presentation.

Required Texts & Materials The materials required for this class and any others using Cengage products are included in ONE Cengage Unlimited subscription. For \$119.99 per semester, you get access to ALL your Cengage online textbooks, and access codes, in one place. \$7.99 hardcopy textbook rentals are also available for select

titles. Download the free ***Cengage Mobile App*** to get your Cengage Unlimited online textbooks and study tools on your phone. Ask for Cengage Unlimited in the bookstore or visit cengage.com/unlimited.

- Other Materials**
- Correct English
 - Grammarly

Extra Credit No extra credit - individual or whole class - will be offered in any Business Communications course.

Grading Policies & Criteria

All work should also 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 citations wherever and whenever necessary so that you avoid violations of copyright and academic honesty – even if those violations are inadvertent.

Workplace-Based Grading Rubric

The following rubric emphasizes audience and overall standards. This rubric will be used on some assignments this semester, and the rubric should serve as an overall guide for expectations.

For this course, the +/- system will also be used. For example, an A- may have one minor edit.

Letter Grade	Description
A	Your supervisor would send this document or approve the work without any changes. Management would be impressed and remember your work when a promotion is discussed.
B	Your supervisor would send this document with minor editing. Your work would “get the job done.” Management would be satisfied and have to spend minimal time suggesting any edits.
C	Your supervisor would ask you to revise and edit before allowing people outside of your department to see the document. Management would be dissatisfied and have to spend some time suggesting edits and revisions.
D	Your supervisor would be troubled by the poor quality of work. Revision and editing are essential. The document must be rewritten before being sent or distributed within or outside of your department. Management may feel time has been wasted on the part of you or your supervisor.
F	Your supervisor would consider the poor quality of work or your sloppiness as a sign that you may need to be replaced. Your document shows a misunderstanding of communication basics and writing conventions. Management would look for someone else to do this job.

Modified from Mike Markel's *Technical Communication*, Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's

Grading Scale: Final Grades

In terms of the grading scale, final grades will be rounded up from the 0.50 mark. 100-97% = A+ , 97-94 = A , 93-90 = A- , 89-87 = B+ , 86-84 = B , 83-80 = B- , 79-77 = C+ , 76-74 = C , 73-70 = C- (and so on).

Graded Assignments

The instructor will grade assignments using a point system. The points below represent the total credit allowed for each assignment. See eLearning for assignment descriptions.

#	Due Dates	Assignment	Points	Responsibility
1	15-Jan	Email #1: "What does it mean to be a professional business communicator in your field?" (May be revised.)	50	Individual
2	Various	Course & Textbook Quizzes	200	Individual
3	14-Feb to 21-Feb	Targeted JSOM Format Resume & Cover Letter	100	Individual
4	28-Feb	Email #2: "Bad News" Email	150	Individual
5	Due Last 5 Mondays of Semester	Full Participation in Attendance Discussion Board & 100% on EVERY Monday Video From Your Professor	25	Individual
6	3-Apr	Individual Recommendation Report	130	Individual
7	5-Apr	3 LinkedIn Learning Certifications	30	Individual
8	10-Apr	Executive Summary of Individual Recommendation Report	70	Individual
9	17-Apr	Status Report	10	Individual OR Team
10	20-Apr	Online Class Discussion: "We have seen a disruption of work, timelines and expectations, along with a shift to online communication this semester – a shift that businesses around the globe are also experiencing. What has this semester taught you about being a professional communicator?"	10	Individual
11	27-Apr	Team Recommendation Presentation Video (Including Handout & Visual Aid)	175	Individual OR Team
12	29-Apr	Email #3: "Using experiences from this semester, explain what it means to be a professional business communicator in your field."	50	Individual
		Total	1000	

CorrectEnglish Pilot

JSOM has asked the BCOM program to pilot the use of CorrectEnglish software. The software's goal is to improve student writing before drafts are submitted. Ideally, this can help improve your writing and your grades.

BCOM students in this section will engage with the software as they would as team members in a quality assurance team. Students will assess their own writing, their experience with CorrectEnglish and alternatives, and create a purchase recommendation individually and as a team.

CorrectEnglish evaluates organization, style, overall, focus, and content. The system also provides statistics about word use and sentence length, and the Kincaid Level of the document. You should upload your document or copy and paste your writing. Then click the "+Fix My Doc" button. You may use CorrectEnglish for other writing or courses if you wish. Some instructors will provide more specific instructions on how to upload or to use the system.

Please use CorrectEnglish and document your experience at every opportunity. This attention to detail will both help you improve your writing and will mirror the experience you will have during your career as you investigate new software for potential acquisition.

Please note, in CorrectEnglish, the “Stats” tab will give you green check marks when the document seems somewhat correct to the Correct English platform. A green check does not necessarily mean the document will pass based on the BCOM rubrics. However, a red X in a yield sign should be a signal that serious revision is needed. If numerous errors are highlighted or you get X in the yield signs on the Stats, then please make use of the Business Communication Center or the Writing Center.

Please feel free to provide feedback on CorrectEnglish in writing in the class discussion. I will also run an anonymous survey about it at least once this semester.

COURSE POLICIES

A number of course policies have been implemented and are enforced to ensure quality of education and fairness. It is your responsibility to be familiar and comply with each policy. Often, students do not read these policies. Sometimes, I wonder how many students read the syllabus. To check, I am conducting an experiment. Please email me your favorite picture of an echidna by the third week of class to earn three points of extra credit. You might need to look up this fascinating creature. Do not tell anyone else about this experiment. Do not forget to follow the email guidelines. *If you have any questions about the policies please let your professor know.*

Attendance

It is your responsibility to make sure you are counted present in each class. Be honest. Be on time. Be aware. If you forgot to sign in, accept the penalty. You must be present for your group presentations to receive any credit for that assignment.

You get **three free absences**. Each absence after that equals a **loss of 10 points** from your final grade (out of 1,000 total points). If you are absent/tardy for any reason, you are responsible for the material covered and any announcements made. Continual tardies will negatively affect attendance grades.

You may have one additional absence for a job interview or training. If you wish for an absence to qualify for this excuse, upload a PDF or screenshot of the email from the interviewer or applicant that includes that person’s contact information (typically in the signature block). The instructor may deny this absence upon review.

Receiving an excused absence means you will not be penalized for excessive absences; it does not mean you are relieved from responsibility or are entitled to turning in the work or making up a missed assignment without penalty. If you have a university-approved excused absence, email me documentation (a note from your doctor, etc.) of that absence.

Tardiness can be a problem in communication classes – particularly in classes that last only 50 minutes. Be aware that the sign-in sheet will be updated five minutes into class to note tardiness. Every three tardy entrances counts as an absence, primarily because the late entrance is distracting. After 15 minutes, a student’s entrance into the classroom no longer counts for credit. If your work schedule changes and you cannot attend class on time, immediately schedule a sit-down meeting with the professor that includes an email from your employer with the updated schedule and contact information for your employer.

Do not schedule extra hours at your work during the class time.

Technology in the Classroom

Use laptops, tablets, and cellphones in the classroom **ONLY** after receiving instructor permission. Your

distraction changes the classroom environment and conveys a lack of respect.

Reviewing Assignments

I am happy to review your assignments before they are due. However, I will not review assignments and give feedback over email as it is often more beneficial to discuss documents in person. Instead, please stop by my office hours or make an appointment. Please try to allocate enough time (at least 24 hours) to see me in advance of the assignment deadline so that you have time to make recommended revisions. Be aware that asking the professor for advice does not guarantee an “A” (excellent) or “B” (very good) grade.

Late Work

Most assignments this semester are due on Fridays. Please know that the actual time the assignment is due is 10:00 PM. Students are given a courtesy extension, in case they have trouble at the last minute, until 11:59 PM. Thus, you have almost two hours to reconnect to your wifi or to address an odd submission.

It is your responsibility to submit any due assignments before the courtesy deadline of 11:59 PM on the date due. Save every assignment before you submit. Go through the complete process to submit. Double-check BEFORE YOU SUBMIT to make sure that you are submitting the correct assignment. **No assignments can be submitted late for credit.**

Please note that I will not accept document edit dates as proof that you finished your assignment prior to the deadline. To be fair to the whole class, I grade submitted assignments, not completed, un-submitted ones.

I will allow you, if you make an error in submission, to submit that assignment to the “ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT CONSIDERED” assignment. This assignment category will be graded at the END of the semester.

Email

Email is the best way to contact the professor with questions outside of class or office hours. When you email the professor, include the course and section number in the subject line. Use an appropriate salutation and explain the context of the situation and your request or problem. End with an appropriate closing and your name and contact information.

Do not submit assignments to the professor via email. While you might discuss a situation with the professor via email, and you might copy and paste part of that discussion to the first page of a document submission (to remind the professor), submit all assignments in eLearning. Again, if you make an error in submission, submit that assignment to the “ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT CONSIDERED” assignment as soon as possible. This assignment category will be graded at the END of the semester. Include an explanation for the submission and understand that the assignment may only earn 5% to 10% of the original points possible.

TurnItIn.com

These are the most common issues with submissions via TurnItIn.com. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have correctly submitted assignments to eLearning. Pay attention.

1. **Change Your Browser:** Many students experience problems and do not try a different browser. This is common troubleshooting. So, if you have problems, switch browsers and try again.
2. **Check for Emailed Receipt:** Students do not look for an emailed receipt after submission. If you have correctly submitted your assignment, you should receive an emailed receipt. (NOTE: If you never receive a receipt, you probably made an error.)
3. **Read Instructions:** Students do not read the instructions during the submission process and they assume a document is submitted before the submission is complete. So, read the screen carefully. (NOTE: When you see the picture of the document on the screen, you must verify that the document is the correct assignment and continue with the process before the file will be

officially submitted.)

Grade Disputes

1. **Challenging a grade:** I am always willing to discuss your grades with you. Upon receiving your grade, please **wait 24 hours** before contacting me. Use this time to think over your questions, compare your submission to the assignment/rubric, and read my comments. To challenge a grade, schedule a meeting with me **within one week** of the assignment being returned to you. Prior to our meeting, you will email me your concerns in writing (this can be included in the same email you send to schedule a meeting). Please note that a challenge may result in grades being raised or lowered.
2. **Questions on grading:** If you want to meet not to challenge your grade but just gain a clearer understanding behind my grading, I am happy to do that as well. If you think I made a mistake in entering your grade, do not hesitate to email me and ask (you can do so before the 24-hour wait period).
3. **Proposal grade challenges:** If students have a proposal grade challenge, they must submit a written challenge that addresses the rubric and workplace grading rubric. As part of the challenge, students will agree to accept a new grade based on the new assessment. At that point, the proposal will be assessed by a different business communications instructor. The new grade, whether higher or lower than the original grade, will now be the students' grade on the assignment.

Handwritten Assignments

Do not turn in handwritten assignments other than peer reviews. If you submit a handwritten assignment, you will receive no credit for the assignment.

Document Types

Please submit only assignment files that the professor can easily view to grade. The .PAGES documents are among those that I cannot view. So, submit these documents as .PDFs.

Participation

Please come prepared and participate in the discussion and activities for the day. In keeping with the course's professional communication mandate, students are expected to use every opportunity in the course to practice communicating in a civil and professional manner.

If a personal situation arises during the semester that may affect your classroom performance, please talk to me sooner rather than later. If you wait until the end of the semester, I may not be able to help you as much as I could earlier in the semester. I can work with you more easily if you speak to me when the situation arises.

Technology Requirements

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. Get into the habit of checking both eLearning and your UTD email for assignments and announcements. I post many class announcements in eLearning. Failure to check your UTD email account, errors in forwarding email, and email bounced from over-quota mailboxes are not acceptable excuses for missing course or project-related email or deadlines.

Statement Regarding Potential Academic Dishonesty

All allegations of scholastic dishonesty will be submitted to the Office of Judicial Affairs who will determine guilt or innocence. If a determination of guilt is found, at minimum a grade of zero will be recorded for the assignment/activity in question. The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

University Policies

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies (e.g., email use, accommodations through the Office of Student AccessAbility, etc.) and procedures segment of the course syllabus. <http://coursebook.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Business Communication Center

You are strongly encouraged to use the BCC located in 12.106. Visit <http://bcc.utdallas.edu/> to make an appointment, find out how to check out a video camera, learn how to use APA to cite materials in your writing, and learn how to strengthen your speaking and PowerPoint design. Keep in mind that there can be a wait when major assignments are due. Planning ahead and making an appointment will help you make more effective use of your time.

JSOM Career Management Center (CMC)

The CMC (JSOM 12.110) is a great resource to JSOM students. They offer services like career coaching, resume and cover-letter critiques, mock interviews, etc. They also have many events and workshops designed to help you succeed. Visit their website at <http://jindal.utdallas.edu/career-management-center/>.

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

"As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."

Course Calendar

Week	Day	Date	Agenda
Wk #1	Mon	13-Jan	Welcome! Discuss syllabus & course policies/processes. Brainstorm: If I am a business owner, what do I want from my employees?
	Wed	15-Jan	Complete in class -> Email #1: "What does it mean to be a professional business communicator in your field?" (May be revised.)
	Fri	17-Jan	Discuss email & introduce business communication (Ch. 1)
Wk #2	Mon	20-Jan	<i>Martin Luther King Day - No UT Dallas Classes on Monday</i>
	Wed	22-Jan	CorrectEnglish Purchase Recommendation Report Assignments
	Fri	24-Jan	Submit essay to CorrectEnglish. Begin CorrectEnglish trial & Individual Recommendation Report.
Wk #3	Mon	27-Jan	Ch. 2 & Ch. 3
	Wed	29-Jan	Introduce Email Assignment & Ch. 4
	Fri	31-Jan	Due in online textbook (MindTap): Ch. 1 - 4 & Grammar/Syntax
Wk #4	Mon	3-Feb	Resumes & Cover Letters (Ch. 13 & 14)
	Wed	5-Feb	Peer Review: Print cover letter copy and bring to class with job ad.
	Fri	7-Feb	Peer Review: Print targeted resume copy and bring to class with job ad. Due in online textbook (MindTap): Ch. 13 & 14
Wk #5	Mon	10-Feb	Introduce "Bad News Email"

	Wed	12-Feb	Class does not meet: Students dress for and attend the Career Fair. Feb 12 - All Majors (Non-STEM) Day UTD Activity Center 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Post with selfie & write up in discussion board.
	Fri	14-Feb	Class does not meet: Resume & Cover Letter Due at Conference Work on Individual QA Report.
Wk #6	Mon	17-Feb	Class does not meet: Resume & Cover Letter Due at Conference Work on Individual QA Report.
	Wed	19-Feb	Class does not meet: Resume & Cover Letter Due at Conference Work on Individual QA Report.
	Fri	21-Feb	Class does not meet: Resume & Cover Letter Due at Conference Due in online textbook (MindTap): Ch. 5, 6 & 7 Work on Individual QA Report.
Wk #7	Mon	24-Feb	Bad News Email Discussion
	Wed	26-Feb	Bad News Email Peer Review (Bring printed copy to class.)
	Fri	28-Feb	Due: Bad News Email
Wk #8	Mon	2-Mar	In-Class: Begin/expand QA report
	Wed	4-Mar	In-Class: Purchase Recommendation Groups Meet - QA Tests
	Fri	6-Mar	Peer Review: Print copy of Individual QA report and bring to class. Final conferences for students who did not have them earlier (print your documents). Due in online textbook (MindTap): Ch. 8, 9 & 10
Wk #9	Mon	9-Mar	In-Class: Purchase Recommendation Groups Meet - QA Tests
	Wed	11-Mar	Peer Review: Individual Recommendation Report (bring printed copy)
	Fri	13-Mar	Optional Class (schedule & assignment questions)
Wk #10	Mon	16-Mar	Spring Break !! Monday, March 16 – Sunday, March 22
	Wed	18-Mar	
	Fri	20-Mar	

See next page for updated calendar.

Wk #11	Mon	23-Mar	COVID-19 Spring Break II.... <i>Monday, March 23 – Sunday, March 29</i>
	Wed	25-Mar	
	Fri	27-Mar	
			Watch eLearning video lectures on Monday. Participate online as instructed on Monday before 11:59 PM.
Wk #12	Mon	30-Mar	ASSIGNMENT: Begin working on 3 LinkedIn Learning Certifications.
	Wed	1-Apr	<i>Work on 3 LinkedIn Learning Certifications.</i>
	Fri	3-Apr	Due: Individual Purchase Recommendation Report (before 11:59 PM, Friday, 3-Apr)
	Sun	5-Apr	Due: 3 LinkedIn Learning Certifications (NOTE: Certifications have a courtesy extension to Sunday, 5-Apr before 11:59 PM.)
			Watch eLearning video lectures on Monday. Participate online as instructed on Monday before 11:59 PM.
Wk #13	Mon	6-Apr	ASSIGNMENT: Begin working on Individual Executive Summary.
	Wed	8-Apr	<i>Work on Executive Summary & take part in the online Think-Cell webinar if you indicated interest</i>
	Fri	10-Apr	Due: Executive Summary
			Watch eLearning video lectures on Monday. Participate online as instructed on Monday before 11:59 PM.
Wk #14	Mon	13-Apr	ASSIGNMENT: Groups Create Handout & Visual Aid for Presentation
	Wed	15-Apr	Online: Groups Create Handout & Visual Aid for Presentation
	Fri	17-Apr	Due: Individual or Team Status Report (10 Pts) – In a table, report work completed, time spent and detailed, well-organized list of work left to complete with estimated amount of time to complete each task, completion dates and individual responsibilities.
			Watch eLearning video lectures on Monday. Participate online as instructed on Monday before 11:59 PM.
Wk #15	Mon	20-Apr	DUE: Online conversation, "What does it mean to be a professional communicator in your field?"
			ASSIGNMENT: Students begin/develop Email #3.
	Wed	22-Apr	Online: Groups Finish Creating Handout & Visual Aid for Presentation Groups

	Fri	24-Apr	Online: Groups film & work on final group presentation (video).
Wk #16	Mon	27-Apr	Watch eLearning video lectures on Monday. Participate online as instructed on Monday before 11:59 PM. DUE by 11:59 PM: VIDEO LINKS to Individual or Team Recommendation Presentations
	Wed	29-Apr	Due: Email #3, "Based on your experiences this semester, what does it mean to be a professional communicator in your field?"

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.