

Business 5305-01
Business Communication
SAMPLE SYLLABUS

TEXTBOOKS

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition.

The Ready Reference Handbook: Writing, Revising, Editing, by Jack Dodds, Third Edition, Pearson Education, 2002.

Presentation Skills for Managers, by Jennifer Rotondo and Mike Rotondo, Jr., McGraw-Hill, 2001.

Students must subscribe to either the on-line and/or paper-based editions of the *Wall Street Journal*. For special rates go to: <http://info.wsj.com/college/jumppage> The 13-week student subscription is as little as \$39.00

The following articles are available in the bookstore:

- 1 HBS The 10 Commandments of Writing, *Harvard Management Communication Letter*, 2000, Article Reprint No. C0011C
- 2 HBS The Ten Principles of Good Business Writing, by John Clayton, *Harvard Management Communication Letter*, 2000, Article Reprint No. C0009F
- 3 HBS How to Frame a Message: The Art of Persuasion and Negotiation, by Lyle Sussman, *Business Horizons*, July-August 1999, Reprint No. BH028
- 4 HBS What Do You Mean You Don't Like My Style? by John S. Fielden, *Harvard Business Review*, 1982, Reprint No. 82306
- 5 HBS The Necessary Art of Persuasion, by Jay A. Conger, *HBR OnPoint*, May-June, 1998
- 6 HBS Presentations that Appeal to All Your Listeners, *Harvard Management Communication Letter*, 2000, Article Reprint No. C00068.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course students will develop the skills required for effective business communications through reading, analysis, and practice. The skills include conducting secondary research, writing papers with different purposes, and developing and making presentations. The class is designed to prepare students with the communications tools they will need in many of the other courses in the MBA program, including the use of APA (American Psychological Association) publication guidelines. The class includes brief lectures, prepared class discussions based on the assigned readings, exercises, and assigned papers and presentations designed to provide the opportunity to demonstrate effective business communications skills. *The Wall Street Journal* will be the source of the topics used for some papers and presentations.

Current syllabus for this course may be obtained from professor. This is a sample syllabus and should not be used by students enrolled in this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Write a variety of business communications, including a persuasion paper, a research paper, a business proposal, a lessons learned report, an email, an abstract, a memo, and an executive summary.
2. Prepare and present business presentations using PowerPoint. These should include managing question and answer periods.
3. Perform basic secondary business research.
4. Apply St. Edward's University Graduate School of Management and American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines to written work.
5. Use acceptable English grammar and usage in written papers and in oral presentations.

ASSIGNMENTS**1. Persuasion Paper and Email**

- a. Write a paper persuading your audience of the business significance of an event or situation that is reported in the Wall Street Journal. Use two sources for content. (2-3 pages)
- b. Write an email inviting your audience to your presentation and explaining your purpose. (1 page)
- c. Make a presentation of your paper (**no** PowerPoint slides). (5 minutes)

2. Research Paper and Abstract

- a. Identify an event or driving force discussed in the Wall Street Journal that might effect your industry or organization. Using five secondary research sources, write a paper summarizing your research and analyzing the possible impact of that event or driving force on your organization. (6-7 pages)
- b. Write an abstract, not to exceed 120 words, of your research.
- c. Make a presentation on your research with PowerPoint slides. (10 minutes)

3. Business Proposal and Executive Summary

- a. Write a paper persuading the senior management of your organization to initiate a change in processes, procedures, products, people, or structure based on events that are currently happening in your business environment. The paper should have three references, at least one from the Wall Street Journal. (6-7 pages)
- b. Write an executive summary of your proposal for your CEO. (1 page)
- c. Make a presentation on your proposal with PowerPoint slides. (10 minutes)

4. Lessons Learned Paper and Memo

- a. Write a report on a project, product introduction, or problem solution that has already been implemented in your organization. Write a summary of the initiative including the "what, when, who, why, and how" elements. Then write a section that identifies successes and failures of the initiative and recommends actions for the next similar initiative. (6-7 pages)
- b. Write a separate memo to people who were involved in the initiative about a meeting to discuss the findings in report and approve a final version. (1 page)
- c. Make a presentation on the report with PowerPoint slides. (10 minutes)

Note: All page requirements are exclusive of title page, reference list page, and second written assignment.

GRADES

Persuasive paper	50 points	Due week 4
Email	10 points	Due week 4
Persuasion presentation	50 points	Due week 4
Research paper	50 points	Due week 6
Abstract	20 points	Due week 6
Research presentation	50 points	Due week 6
Proposal paper	100 points	Due week 9
Executive Summary	20 points	Due week 9
Proposal presentation	100 points	Due week 9
Lessons Learned paper	100 points	Due week 12
Memo	10 points	Due week 12
Lessons Learned presentation	100 points	Due week 12
Attendance/Participation	<u>90</u> points	

Total **750 points**

ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is important. To stimulate a cooperative learning environment, some class time will involve providing feedback to classmates on written work and presentation outlines. If a student must miss a class because of work commitments or illness, work should be emailed to the professor before class. The student is responsible for the material and/or exercises covered in the class missed. In the case of the first and second excused absence, a student must complete a make-up assignment in order to maintain the possibility of an A grade.

CLASS PHILOSOPHY

My goal is to increase your knowledge and skill level so that you can apply what you learn to your professional work. I will act as teacher to facilitate the assimilation learning of concepts and theories, and as coach for the accommodation learning that occurs when you apply the concepts and theories.

APA GUIDELINES

Double spacing, 12 point serif font, 1 inch margins, page numbers, manuscript page header, cover page, reference citations in text, reference list, and correct English grammar and usage are minimum requirements for the four major assignments.

ACADEMIC ETHICS

Should you believe at any point in the semester that a student has committed plagiarism or some other form of academic dishonesty please let me know at the earliest opportunity so that an investigation can be conducted. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation. You should consult the 2003-2004 Student Handbook for appropriate conduct and consequences of inappropriate conduct, such as plagiarism. This handbook is also a good reference for available resources at St. Edward's University.

ASSISTANCE

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please consult with me. I will do my best to help you address the concerns you have, and I may be able to direct you to other resources in the department or school. Additionally, SEU provides a variety of services to support you in meeting course requirements and achieving academic success.

Academic Planning and Support (Moody Hall #155, x8660) offers study skills workshops, individual consultation, and tutor referrals, and other services for students who need assistance

with academic problems. Psychological Services (Moody Hall #102, x8538) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to mental health resources in the community. Student Disability Services (Moody Hall #155, x8660) offers technical and practical support for students with medical, psychological, or learning disabilities. The staff provides counseling, referrals and services to ensure that students receive appropriate accommodations. If you have a medical, psychiatric or learning disability and require accommodations in this class, please let me know early in the semester or as soon as you are eligible. You will first need to provide documentation of your disability to the Student Disability Services Office located in the office of Academic Planning and Support.

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

1. Week 1

Introductions: Purpose and learning objectives for the course; a few words on the texts, and assignments; individual introductions
Mini-lecture: Audience and Purpose; Organizing a Paper
Exercise: Two-page diagnostic paper
Homework: “A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift (Blackboard link); HBS 3, HBS 5 and HBS 6; Dodds—Parts 1, and XI

2. Week 2

Mini-lecture: Referencing and plagiarism
 Developing Topics: Summary, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation
Exercise: Framing a message
Homework: HBS 1, HBS 2, HBS 4; Dodds—Part VIII, Chapters 62, 63

3. Week 3

Mini-lecture: SEU library research; Conducting secondary research
 Communicating efficiently through emails, memos and voice message
Exercise: Research Using APA Manual, 3.94-3.103, 4
Homework: Persuasive paper and email; persuasion presentation

4. Week 4

**PERSUASIVE PAPER AND EMAIL DUE; PERSUASION PRESENTATION DUE
 (TURN IN PRESENTATION NOTES)**

Homework: Rotondo and Rotondo, Chapters 1-11; APA Manual 2.01-2.05, 2.13-2.17

5. Week 5

Mini-lecture: Using PowerPoint as a Tool
 Using PowerPoint presentations as outlines for papers
Discussion: Homework readings
Exercise: Developing a PowerPoint presentation
Homework: Research paper and abstract; research presentation

6. Week 6

**RESEARCH PAPER AND ABSTRACT DUE; RESEARCH PRESENTATION DUE
 (TURN IN POWERPOINT NOTE PAGES)**

Homework: WSJ article

7. Week 7**CONTINUE RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS****Homework:** WSJ article**8. Week 8****Mini-lecture:** Business proposals and executive summaries**Discussion:** Homework readings**Homework:** Business proposal and executive summary; Proposal presentation**9. Week 9****BUSINESS PROPOSAL AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY DUE; BUSINESS PROPOSAL PRESENTATION (TURN IN POWERPOINT NOTE PAGES)****10. Week 10****CONTINUE BUSINESS PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS****Homework:** WSJ article**11. Week 11****Mini-lecture:** Lessons Learned documentation**Exercise :** Logical Argument; Homework readings**Homework:** Lessons learned paper and Memo; Lessons learned presentation**12. Week 12****LESSONS LEARNED PAPER AND MEMO DUE; LESSONS LEARNED PRESENTATION (TURN IN POWER POINT NOTES PAGES)****13. Week 13****CONTINUE LESSONS LEARNED PRESENTATIONS**