



COURSE OUTLINE

BUS209
Course Number

Business Letter and Report Writing
Course Title

Division of Business & Technology
Division

15 Weeks
Length of Semester

3
Credits

3
Lecture/Laboratory Hours

Catalog description:

Practical strategies for developing a clear writing style: organizing ideas, choosing effective words and composing concise paragraphs that make writing clear and persuasive. Includes letters of inquiry, claim, collection, and adjustment as well as resumes and cover letters. Requires oral and written business report. *3 lecture hours*

Prerequisites: ENG 101 or equivalent background

Corequisites: None

Required texts/other materials:

Required Text: Title: Essentials of Business Communication
Author: Mary Ellen Guffey
Publisher: Thompson Southwestern
Edition: 7

Last revised: August 2007

Professor Ellen A. Benowitz
Course Coordinator

Academic Integrity Statement

“A student who a) knowingly represents work of others as his/her own, b) uses or obtains unauthorized assistance in the execution of any academic work, or c) gives fraudulent assistance to another student is guilty of cheating. Violators will be penalized.” (Student Handbook)

Student Conduct Statement

It is the students' responsibility to attend all of their classes. If they miss a class meeting for any reason, students are responsible for all content that is covered, for announcements made in their absence, and for acquiring any materials that may have been distributed in class. It is expected that students be on time for all their classes. If students walk into a class after it has begun, it is expected that they choose a seat close to where they entered the room so that they do not disrupt the class meeting.

Students are expected to follow ordinary rules of courtesy during class sessions. Engaging in private, side conversations during class time is distracting to other students and to the instructor. Leaving class early without having informed the instructor prior to class is not appropriate. Unless there is an emergency, leaving class and returning while the class is in session is not acceptable behavior. Disruptive behavior of any type, including sharpening pencils during class while someone is speaking, is not appropriate.

The college welcomes all students into an environment that creates a sense of community and pride and respect; we are all here to work cooperatively and to learn together.

BUS 209 TOPICAL OUTLINE

Unit 1 Laying Communication Foundations

Week 1 Building Your Career Success With Communication Skills

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Understand the importance of becoming an effective business communicator in today's changing workplace.
2. Explain the process of communication.
3. Discuss the effects of changing markets, work practices, and workforce diversity and describe method of improving cross cultural communication.
5. Analyze nonverbal communication and explain techniques for improving nonverbal communication.
6. Identify barriers to effective listening and techniques to become an active and effective listener.

Unit 2 The Writing Process

Week 2 Chapter 2 Creating Business Messages Chapter 3 Improving Writing Techniques

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Understand that business writing should be audience-oriented, purposeful and economical..
2. Identify and implement the three phases of the writing process.
3. Create messages that spotlight audience benefits and cultivate a "you" attitude.
4. Explain the need for inclusive language, plain expression, and familiar words.
5. Understand ways that technology helps to improve business writing.
6. Contrast formal and informal methods of researching data and generating ideas for messages.
7. Compare direct and indirect patterns for organizing ideas.
8. Demonstrate the ability to important ideas and unimportant ones.
9. Distinguish components of complete and effective sentences, paragraph coherence composition of a first draft of a message.

Week 3 Chapter 4 Revising and Proofreading Business Messages

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Understand the difference between revision/editing and proofreading.
2. .Revise messages to achieve concise wording by eliminating wordy prepositional phrases, outdated expressions, long lead-ins, and needless adverbs.
3. Revise messages to eliminate fillers, repetitious words, and redundancies.
4. Revise messages to include precise verbs, concrete nouns, and vivid adjectives.
5. Describe effective techniques for proofreading routine and complex documents.

Unit 3 Corresponding at Work

Week 4 Chapter 5 E-Mail and Memorandums

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Recognize functions, characteristics, and kinds of internal messages and their importance.
2. Analyze the characteristics of the writing process for successful email messages and memorandums.
3. Understand how to use email safely and effectively.
4. Write procedure, instruction, and information e-mail messages and memos.
5. Write memorandums and E-mail messages that make requests.
6. Write memorandums and E-mail messages that respond to other documents.

Note: See “Appendix A Reference Guide to Document Format

Week 5 Chapter 6 Direct Letters and Goodwill Messages

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Analyze letter content and select an appropriate writing strategy.
2. Write letters ordering merchandise.
3. Write letters that request information and action.
4. Write letters making claims.
5. Write letters responding to information requests.
6. Write letters responding to customer orders.
7. Write letters granting claims.
8. Write letters of recommendation.
9. Write goodwill messages.

Week 6 Chapter 7 Persuasive Messages

After you have completed the material in this chapter you should be able to:

1. Request favors and action persuasively.
2. Write persuasive messages within organizations.
3. Make claims and request adjustments successfully.
4. Compose carefully planned sales letters.
5. Implement special techniques in writing online sales messages.

Week 7 Chapter 8 Negative Messages

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Describe a plan for resolving business problems.
2. List the four components of a bad-news message.

3. Distinguish between the direct and indirect patterns for business messages.
4. Discuss methods for applying the indirect pattern to bad-news messages, including buffering the opening, presenting the reasons, cushioning the bad news, and closing pleasantly.
5. Identify situations in which the direct pattern is appropriate for breaking bad news.
6. Apply the indirect pattern in refusing requests, refusing claims, and announcing bad news to customers and employees.
7. Explain when the indirect strategy may be unethical.

Unit 4 Reporting Workplace Data

- Weeks 8 Chapter 9 Informal Reports (p. 238 -257)
& 9 & 10 Chapter 10 Proposals and Format Reports (p. 268 - 302)

After you have completed the material in Chapters 9 and 10, you should be able to:

1. Define report problems.
2. Locate information in print and on-line.
3. Use appropriate documentation methods.
4. Analyze data for reports.
5. Organize information effectively in reports.
6. Design and use graphics effectively in a report.
7. Prepare reports in letter and memo formats.
8. Develop your reports in an acceptable format and writing style.
9. Write a formal business report.

Unit 5 Developing Speaking and Technology Skills

- Week 10 Chapter 11 Communicating in Person, in Meetings, by Telephone and Digitally

1. Discuss improving face-to-face workplace communication.
2. Specify procedures for promoting positive workplace relations through conversation.
3. Review techniques for offering constructive criticism on the job, responding professionally to workplace criticism, and resolving workplace conflicts.
4. Identify ways to polish your telephone skills, including traditional phones and cell phones.
5. Discuss procedures for planning and participating in productive business and professional meetings.

- Week 12 Chapter 12 Making Effective and Professional Oral Presentations.

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Discuss two important first steps in preparing an effective oral presentation.
2. Explain the major elements in organizing the content of a presentation, the introduction, body, and conclusion
3. Identify techniques for gaining audience rapport, including using effective imagery, providing verbal signposts, and sending appropriate nonverbal messages.
4. Identify appropriate visual aids, handouts, and electronic presentation materials.
5. Explain effective techniques for adapting oral presentations to cross-cultural audiences.
6. Specify delivery techniques for use before, during, and after a presentation.

Unit 6 Communicating for Employment

Week 13 Chapter 13 The Job Search, Résumés, and Cover Letters

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Prepare for employment by identifying your interests, evaluating your assets, recognizing the changing nature of jobs, choosing a career path, and studying traditional and electronic job search techniques.
2. Compare and contrast chronological, functional, and combination résumés.
3. Organize and format the parts of a résumé to produce a persuasive product.
4. Identify techniques that prepare a résumé for computer scanning, posting at a website, faxing, and e-mailing.
5. Write a persuasive job application letter to accompany your résumé.

Weeks 14 Chapter 14 Employment Interviewing and Follow-up Messages & 15

After you have covered the material in this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Distinguish between screening interviews and hiring/placement interviews.
2. Explain how to prepare for employment interviews.
3. Recognize how to control nonverbal messages and how to fight interview fears.
4. Be prepared to answer favorite interview questions and know how to close an interview.
5. Write follow-up letters and other employment messages.

Evaluation

Homework:

- a. Read assigned material before class meets; turn in all written assignments on the date specified by the instructor.
- b. All assignments must be typed on 8 1/2 by 11 paper.

c. Identify each assignment as follows: name, date, page number, and problem number in upper right-hand corner.

Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Nominal %
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	70-76
D	60-69
F	0-59

Final Grading:

Chapter Quizzes, Letter Tests (in class) and Letters (out of class)	50%
Class Participation	10%
Business Report	25%
Oral Presentation	<u>15%</u>
Total	100%

Note to Instructor: Periodic references should be made to punctuation, grammar and spelling. This is an important area often overlooked. The instructor may give quizzes on the material, may make this a part of the homework assignment, or use the grammar review exercises during the class period.

The quantitative aspects of this course outline may have to be adjusted to serve the needs of the students. This will have no effect, however, on the quality of instruction.

Guidelines for the Business Report

Students are expected to complete a short, formal business report as well as memorandum, proposals, etc. The report will be an abbreviated form of the long business report. Business topics, selected for the report must be approved by the instructor BEFORE you begin your research and writing.

The report should include the following

PREFATORY PARTS (parts preceding the body)

1. Title page
2. Letter of transmittal
3. Table of contents
4. Abstract (no more than one page)

*BODY

1. Introduction or background. After the prefatory parts, begin the body of the report with an introduction that includes any or all of the following items:

- a. Explanation of how the report originated and why it was authorized.
- b. Description of the problems that prompted the report and the specific research questions to be answered
- c. Purpose of the report
- d. Scope (boundaries) and limitations or restrictions of the research
- e. Sources and methods of collecting data
- f. Summary of findings, if the report is written deductively
- g. Preview of the major sections of the report to follow, thus providing coherence and transition for the reader

2. Discussion of findings

This is the main section of the report and contains numerous headings and subheadings. It is unnecessary to use the title *Discussion of Findings*, many business report writers prefer to begin immediately with the major headings into which the body of the report is divided.

Present your findings objectively, avoiding the use of first person pronouns (I, we). Include tables, charts, and graphs if appropriate to illustrate findings.

3. Summary, conclusions, recommendations

If the report has been largely informational, it ends with a summary of the data presented. If the report analyzes research findings, then it ends with conclusions drawn from the analyses. If a

report seeks to determine a course of action, it may end with conclusions and recommendations. The recommendations regarding a course of action be placed as a separate section or incorporated with the conclusions.

SUPPLEMENTARY PART OF REPORT

1. Endnotes. See Appendix C (Documentation Formats p. 443 - 448) for details on how to document sources.

2. Bibliography(References Cited) Most formal reports will include a bibliography that lists sources consulted in the report research--whether they were actually cited in notes or not. See Appendix C

3. Appendix. The appendix contains any supplementary information needed to clarify the report. Charts and graphs, illustrating significant data that are generally part of the report proper. However, extra information that might be included in an appendix are such items as a sample questionnaire, a questionnaire cover letter, correspondence relating to the report, maps, other reports, and optional tables.

*The body of the report should contain a minimum of 5 citation; your bibliography should have at least 5 different reference sources.

NOTE: Use magazines, journals, newspapers, internet sources. etc. (NO TEXTBOOKS)

BUS209

REPORT EVALUATION FORM

Before you turn in your report, study the categories in which it will be evaluated. Turn in this sheet when you submit the report. at that time the statement below.

My report contains no sentences or parts of sentences that are copied verbatim (word for word) from other writing unless it is indicated in quotation marks.

Signed _____

REPORT FORM

Illustrates correct format
Displays headings appropriately
Shows neat overall appearance

20 points _____

REPORT CONTENT

Achieves the purpose of the report
Contains sufficient data, supported by concrete detail
Includes relevant data
Shows evidence of sufficient research
Achieves overall effectiveness

40 points _____

REPORT WRITING STYLE

Shows good organization
Includes coherent and unified sentences and paragraphs
Uses transitions effectively
Attributes sources clearly and correctly

20 points _____

GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS

Uses appropriate grammar
Contains conventional spelling
Shows proper punctuation
Includes correct capitalization

20 points _____

TOTAL POINTS 100 points _____