

BUSINESS SCIENCE DIVISION
SADDLEBACK COLLEGE
Syllabus for
BUS 104: Business Communication (Ticket 11715)
Fall 2009 (8/27/09 through 12/17/09)

Instructor: Joe Tinervia
Phone: 949-632-9690 (messages)
Classroom: BGS 232

Semester: Fall 2009
Ticket No.: 11715
Day & Time: Thursday, 6:00–8:50 PM

KEY DATES

First Class Meeting:	Thursday, 8/27
Drop with Refund by:	Friday, 9/4
No Penalty Drop Date:	Friday, 9/25
Last Day to Drop (With W on transcript):	Thursday, 11/5
Final Exam:	Thursday, 12/17

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Business Communication presents the principles and styles of effective written business communications. Students will analyze business case studies to create appropriate documents and compose business letters, memorandums, reports, and employment-related documents. Students will also develop planning, organizing, and outlining skills as well as editing proficiency. They will participate in team and Web activities and will improve ethical and cultural sensitivity. Course evaluates grammar skills and improves writing style. Course may be offered by mediated instruction.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Analyze business case studies to compose a variety of appropriate letters, memorandums, e-mail messages, reports, and employment-related documents.
2. Demonstrate mastery of the writing process, including audience analysis, prewriting, writing, and revising.
3. Compose sentences and paragraphs that effectively build written communications with particular emphasis on improving word skills, language, tone, and style.
4. Apply formal business standards of accepted principles of grammar, punctuation, and style.
5. Edit documents to ensure that they are complete, concise, courteous, correct, and consistent.
6. Relate aspects of business communications covered in textbook.
7. Critique case problems to determine whether participants have adhered to the principles of business ethics and cultural and gender sensitivity.
8. Create documents and reports using Web sources.

TUTORING SCHEDULE & INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Throughout the semester, FREE TUTORING is available from the instructor as follows:

Mondays: 3:30 to 4:30 PM in BGS 244
Tuesdays: 5:45 to 6:45 PM in BGS 232
Thursdays: 5:45 to 6:45 PM in BGS 232

No appointment necessary! (Start times are approximate.)

STUDENT RESOURCES

Text: *Business Communication*, 15th Edition, by Lehman and DuFrene. Thomson Learning, 2008 (ISBN: 0-324-27270-7). [Not "great," but good enough for our purposes.]

Coursepack: *Student Materials for Business Communication (BUS 104)*. [Booklet of lecture handouts. Mandatory for every class except Midterm and Final.]

Optional: *HOW 10: A Handbook for Office Professionals*, by Clark & Clark. Thomson Learning, 2004 (ISBN: 0-324-17882-4). [**Best** business writers' reference manual available.]

The Elements of Style, 4th Edition, by Strunk and White. Pearson Education (Prentice Hall), 2000 (ISBN: 0-205-30902-x). [Superb source of basic writing tips.]

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition. Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2003 (ISBN: 0-87779-809-5). ["America's Best-Selling Dictionary." America's BEST!]

Blackboard: Go to Blackboard for (1) HW assignments (**Assignments** folder), (2) syllabus (**Course Information** folder), and (3) announcements (**Announcements** folder). To access Blackboard:

URL: <http://socccd.blackboard.com>

Your ID: jdoe0@sm.saddleback.cc.ca.us

Your password: last 4 SS digits + 00

For help, contact snelson@saddleback.edu

LEARNING APPROACH STRESSES REAL-WORLD VALUES & BEST BUSINESS PRACTICES

HR professionals' and business executives' top complaints about employees: **(1) Lateness. (2) Absence. (3) Inability to follow instructions.** All communicate *negatively*, both in the office and in the classroom.

BUS 104 stresses developing the communication skills *most valued* in business, the skills employers, managers, and HR professionals seek in successful employees:

Listening Skill: The ability to listen during meetings, discussions, etc.; the ability to exhibit appropriate body language. (Top business complaint: *inability to follow instructions!*)

Speaking Skill: The ability to speak standard English clearly and convincingly. *Monster Technology News* (Monster.com, December 27, 2006) advises employees "To Lead Well, Speak Well." This article continues: "Great managers ... can't get the job done without solid verbal communication and public speaking skills."

Reading Skill: The ability to understand business documents. (Top business complaint: *inability to follow instructions!*)

Writing Skill: The ability to draft, edit, and proofread documents so that the final documents:

1. Are error-free (that is, that they demonstrate standard English spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization principles).
2. Are **complete, correct, clear, consistent, concise,** and **courteous.**
3. Are logically organized.
4. Follow **standard** business-document formats.
5. Apply modern business communication principles (as discussed in class and in the text).
6. Are **original**, not copied or "adapted" from the shells and templates so easily found on the Internet and in textbooks.

Nonverbal Communication Skills: The ways in which we communicate *without words*: positive ways include arriving on time and making eye contact; negative ways include playing with cell phones and not attaching (or properly completing) homework tags.

To develop these skills, students are expected to:

1. Attend all classes and **arrive on time.**
2. Listen to lectures. (Please see "GENERAL LEARNING APPROACH: Listening Skill" above.)
3. Participate in class discussions.
4. Study (not just "read") course materials.
5. Read selected articles on communications.
6. Use standard reference materials (e.g., a dictionary, a thesaurus, *HOW:11*).
7. Draft, edit, and proofread homework assignments.
8. Evaluate in detail the instructor's corrections and comments on HW and test materials.
9. Ask questions to clarify communication principles, grammar and writing errors, formatting standards, etc., on the assignments returned to them each week.
10. Meet with the instructor to discuss any special problems or difficulties.
11. Revise assignments as requested.
12. SUBMIT ORIGINAL WORK.

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Students determine their own final grades based on their efforts, which will be measured using the following evaluation instruments (the actual percent contribution of each category is approximate and may be changed):

Homework, Quizzes, LABs	70%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	<u>15%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Homework assignments, in-school LABs, quizzes, and tests will be graded according to strict business standards and accepted English-language conventions. Documents will be evaluated according to how well they:

1. Follow the **standard** formats for letters, memos, etc., as discussed in class and as illustrated in the text.
2. Apply modern business communication principles (as discussed in class and in the textbook and as practiced in the business world).
3. Display the "**Visual Clarity**" principles discussed in class.
4. Follow logical organization patterns.
5. Address the **reader's** needs.
6. Demonstrate sentence variety and business courtesy.
7. Follow the accepted conventions of spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and idiomatic usage.
8. Achieve the goals of clarity, correctness, consistency, and conciseness.
9. Deliver a **complete message**—"complete" by professional business standards, best practices, and business sense. (Because everyday business letters are often binding contracts, it is important that they confirm specific details! Routine memos mirror the writer's expertise and professionalism!)

Homework: Because practice leads to mastery, *homework is critical to success in this course*. All homework assignments are listed in the Semester Schedule (*see next page*) and are available in Blackboard's "Assignments" folder (<http://socccd.blackboard.com>). Note the following:

1. **Students' Homework.** Points will be deducted for assignments submitted late.

2. **Instructor's Homework.** The instructor will correct all homework assignments *in detail* and will return most assignments at the following class session. (Exception: The resume assignment generally requires more time to correct and return.)
3. **Number Grades.** All assignments are *corrected and quickly returned to students* to help students identify specific writing problems, grammatical errors, format errors, inconsistencies, and so on. With few exceptions, homework assignments will receive a **number grade of "50" or "100."** The number system promotes objective evaluations and enables students to evaluate their own progress on an ongoing basis. The number system allows students to always know precisely what their grades are *at any point during the course.*

Additional points will be deducted (a) when assignments display errors that have been specifically explained in class lectures and in class discussions, (b) when the same errors are repeated assignment after assignment, (c) when any one document contains too many errors, (d) when an assignment has been revised (see #8 below), and (e) when an assignment is submitted late (see #9 below).

4. **Homework Review.** The instructor will return assignments at the following class; every class session begins with a discussion of the assignments that were returned, in an effort to help students master their errors and understand what it takes to improve their papers.
5. **Plagiarism Is Cheating.** Assignments may be submitted to computer-testing systems to detect copying and plagiarism. Any suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of the Business Science Division **and** to the Dean of Instruction.

NOTE: Students are expected to submit **ONLY THEIR OWN WRITING.** Students who seek help from "learning centers" or work in "teams" with other students must ensure that the assignments they submit are THEIR OWN! This class does not require any "group writing" or "team writing" or "collaborative writing." It requires YOUR writing. All assignments must be **YOUR OWN WRITING.**

6. **No Handwritten Assignments.** All homework documents must be printed. The Interdisciplinary Computer Center (in the Library building) has computers that students may use. Only hardcopy will be accepted; assignments cannot be emailed or handwritten
7. **If You Are Repeating the Course ...** Students repeating this course CANNOT complete the same assignments from the prior course. Instead, they must complete the **Alternate Homework Assignments** posted on Blackboard. Assignments will be checked against those submitted in the previous course; *no repeated assignments will be accepted.*
8. **Revised Assignments.** At the instructor's request, students may be asked to revise a homework assignment. Revisions are intended to help students improve a poor grade on a first draft and at the same time to promote learning. In all cases, revisions are *due at the next class meeting* and *must be submitted with the original assignment attached.* **Revisions will receive half credit.** Revisions submitted late will receive no credit.
9. **Late Assignments.** An assignment submitted late will lose 5 points for each class session (10 points for the résumé assignment). Assignments more than two sessions late will not be accepted. A second and a third late assignment will lose additional points. No late assignments will be accepted on the last day of class.
10. **Keep Assignments!** Students are advised to keep all homework assignments until grades are posted at the end of the semester "just in case" grades are entered inaccurately.
11. **"HW Tags."** Each homework assignment must have a **completed** HW tag (available on Blackboard) stapled to the upper left-hand corner. HW will not be accepted without a HW tag; late HW must be clearly identified on the HW tag.

12. **Résumé Assignment.** One HW assignment requires students to develop real résumés. For some students, this assignment may require more time; students are advised to start this project early.

Quizzes & LABs: Quizzes help reinforce learning and contribute to mastery. Quizzes are based on (a) text chapters, (b) lectures, and (c) class discussions. Quizzes are unannounced, and no makeup quizzes will be permitted.

A “LAB” is a test completed using a computer in the BGS computer lab. LABs are specifically intended to ensure that students receive *no outside help* in completing their writing assignments; otherwise, such assignments would be completed at home, not in school. Therefore, students cannot save LAB assignments or email their completed LAB assignments to themselves or to others. No LAB makeups will be permitted.

Note: To access computers in the lab, students must know their logon information:

Username: Student’s Saddleback or IVC e-mail name (for example, sdavis9)

Password: Student’s 6-digit ID number

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

School Policies: Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to all Saddleback College rules and regulations. Examples: **(1) No food and beverages. (2) Cell phones “off” and stored (not on desk) during class time.**

Punctuality and Attendance: This class meets for approximately 50 hours—adequate but not overgenerous, given the scope of coverage. Therefore, both the instructor and the students are expected to *arrive on time* and *remain until class ends*. Generally, the instructor will take attendance twice during each class. (By the way, **consistent lateness is a form of communication!** Remember: Employers’ top three complaints: lateness, absence, and inability to follow instructions.)

Regular absence or regular lateness inevitably influences progress—*negatively*. Not surprisingly, records of past classes show a strong correlation between contact time and grades. Students **will** be dropped for excessive absence. The *Saddleback College Faculty Handbook* (2007–2008) states:

A student may be dropped “when he/she is absent for a total of six (6) cumulative instructional hours.”

Preparation: Each student is responsible for (1) completing all reading and homework assignments before class (see Semester Schedule), (2) submitting assignments and projects on time, (3) participating in and contributing to class discussions, (4) discovering any syllabus changes announced while he or she was absent, and (5) **bringing the Coursepack handouts to every class** (except Midterm and Final).

Special Accommodations: Any student who has specific disabilities and requires accommodations must inform the instructor **at the first class session**, in order to ensure that the student’s learning needs are appropriately met.

Please submit documentation of your disability to the Special Services Office in the Student Services Center (Room 113). Then please share that information with your instructor.

Note: The syllabus above and the Semester Schedule below are subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class; students are responsible for discovering any changes announced during an absence. Any revision of this syllabus will be posted on Blackboard (see **Course Information**).

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

BUS 104 [11715] ... Thurs ... Fall 2009

WEEK	DATE	BEFORE CLASS, STUDY ...	IN-CLASS LECTURE, DISCUSSION, ACTIVITY ...	AT THE END OF CLASS, SUBMIT → ...
1	8/27		<input type="checkbox"/> Course introduction: syllabus, student survey form, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> "Importance of Writing Skills"	→ Student Survey Form (to be completed in class)
2	9/3	Ch. 1 App. A	<input type="checkbox"/> "Study Skills: PQ3R" [H1] <input type="checkbox"/> "Formatting Messages" [H8, H9] <input type="checkbox"/> "Listening Skills" [H2] <input type="checkbox"/> "The Communication Process" [H3]	→ Sample Business Message [HW 1]
3	9/10	Ch. 2 Chs. 3, 6, 7	<input type="checkbox"/> "Verbal/Nonverbal Communication" [H4] <input type="checkbox"/> "NOTES: The Writing Process"	→ Communication Process & Listening [HW 2]
4	9/17	Chs. 3, 6, 7	<input type="checkbox"/> "NOTES: The Writing Process" (cont.)	
5	9/24	Chs 3, 6, 7	<input type="checkbox"/> "NOTES: The Writing Process" (cont.)	→ Announcement to Employees [HW 3]
6	10/1	Ch. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> "ezGrammar: Common Errors" [H6]	
7	10/8	Ch. 4, App. A	<input type="checkbox"/> "ezGrammar: Common Errors" (cont.)	→ "Common Grammar Errors" [HW 4]
8	10/15		<input type="checkbox"/> "Visual Clarity" [H7]	
9	10/22		M I D T E R M E X A M	
10	10/29	Ch. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> "Writing E-Mails & Memos" [H10]	→ Editing project [HW 5]
11	11/5	Ch. 8	<input type="checkbox"/> "Writing Persuasive Messages" [H11, H12]	
12	11/12	Ch. 13	<input type="checkbox"/> "Developing Your Résumé" [H13, H16]	→ Persuasive Sales Letter [HW 6]
13	11/19	Ch. 14	<input type="checkbox"/> "Interviewing Effectively" [H17]	→ Résumé and Cover Letter [HW 7]
	11/26		N O S C H O O L	
14	12/3	Ch. 12	<input type="checkbox"/> "Giving a Presentation" [H20]	
15	12/10	Chs. 1 & 2	<input type="checkbox"/> "Cultural Diversity" [H19] <input type="checkbox"/> "Conducting Business Meetings" [H18]	No late homework accepted.
16	12/17		F I N A L E X A M (7:00 to 9:50 PM)	No late homework accepted.

Legend:	BB = "Blackboard"	→ = "To be submitted"
	Ch. = "Text Chapter"	H = "Handout" (see Course Documents on BB)
	App. = "Text Appendix"	HW = "Homework Assignment" (see Assignments on BB)
	Ex. = "Exercise"	LAB = Unannounced tests completed in BGS 233.

Blackboard:

URL: <http://socccd.blackboard.com>

Your ID: jdoe0@sm.saddleback.edu

Your password: last 4 SS digits + 00

For help, contact snelson@saddleback.edu