Business Communication (BCM 247)  
Spring 2018

Course Title: Business Communication  
Number/Section: BCM 247-008

Instructor: Dr. Ashley Hall  
Email: D2L email (hallaa@sfasu.edu only if D2L is unavailable) 
Phone: 936-468-2968 (Answered during campus office hours. If you can’t reach me, please send an email.)

Office: McGee Business Building, Room 229J  
Department: Business Communication and Legal Studies

Office Hours:  
Monday 8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. (online)  
Tuesday 9:15 – 11:30 a.m. (office)  
Wednesday 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. (office)  
Thursday 9:15 – 11:30 a.m. (office)

Other times by appointment – Email me at least 24 hours in advance to schedule an appointment. Virtual appointments are available upon request.

Class meeting time & place: Tuesdays & Thursdays 8 – 9:15 a.m.  BU 237

This is a web-enhanced class. You will need to visit D2L regularly to keep up with assignments, contact the instructor, and receive supplemental information for your success in the course. Classroom activities, homework assignments, other instructional materials, and grades will all be posted in D2L.

All homework will be posted in D2L. In the case of an absence from class, it is the student’s responsibility to check D2L for any homework assigned, and the assignment will still be due on the same due date as the rest of the class.

Technical support in the use of D2L is available at (936) 468-1919. All electronic communication from the instructor will be through D2L, and it is the student’s responsibility to check it regularly for instructions and emails.

Text and Materials  
BCOM  
Business Communication, Edition: 9  
Authors: Lehman & Dufrene  
ISBN 9781337384445
Supplemental resource: BCOM Online. Do not follow the directions in your bundled software on how to access BCOM Online. I will provide you with instructions via D2L.

All written assignments will be typed and submitted as a .doc or .docx files for grading (Microsoft Word). You will also need software to read PowerPoint slides, as well as create them for presentations. As a student, you have access to Office 365 through your mySFA account. For additional information, please visit http://www.sfasu.edu/mysfa/o365/student/ productivity-apps/

Course Description
BCM 247 Business Communication (BUSI 2304) – Application of business communication principles through creation of effective business documents and oral presentations. Includes study and application of team communication and use of technology to facilitate the communication process. Prerequisites: six hours with a C grade or better from English 131, 132, or 133.

Program Learning Outcomes
Program learning outcomes define the knowledge, skills, and abilities students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of an academic program. These learning outcomes are regularly assessed to determine student learning and to evaluate overall program effectiveness. You may access the program learning outcomes for your major and particular courses at http://www.sfasu.edu/cob/ug-plo.asp.

1. The student will demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills by (1) composing a professional quality business document, and (2) preparing and delivering a professional presentation on a business topic. (Written Communication, Oral Communication)
2. The student will demonstrate knowledge of fundamental information technology tools and concepts. (Technology)
3. The student will exhibit an understanding of ethics and social responsibility. (Ethics)
4. The student will apply critical thinking skills by solving problems requiring quantitative and/or qualitative analysis. (Critical Thinking)
5. The student will demonstrate multicultural and diversity understanding. (Diversity)
6. The student will demonstrate an understanding of teamwork as it occurs in business situations. (Teamwork)
7. The student will effectively apply knowledge and skills in the functional areas of business. (Business Knowledge)
8. The student will demonstrate career readiness through completion of a structured field-based work internship experience. (Career Readiness)
General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes

1. **Critical Thinking.** Students will be instructed in and will apply critical thinking skills to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

2. **Communication Skills.** Students will be instructed in and will apply communication skills to include development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.

3. **Teamwork.** Students will be instructed in and will apply, practice, and demonstrate Teamwork to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.

4. **Personal Responsibility.** Students will be instructed in and will apply, practice, and demonstrate Personal Responsibility to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences of ethical decision-making.

Student Learning Outcomes

In general, SLOs in a course that support the PLOs are specific and include the exact knowledge, skill or behavior taught in the course that supports the more global PLOs. For additional information on meaningful and measurable learning outcomes see the assessment resource page [http://www.sfasu.edu/assessment/index.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/assessment/index.asp)

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

1. Apply critical thinking to business communication strategies and principles to prepare effective communication for diverse business situations. *Critical thinking.*
2. Effectively develop, interpret, and express ideas through written, oral, aural, and visual communication. *Communication.*
3. Identify different points of view and work effectively in a team setting. *Teamwork.*
4. Participate as a team member in activities that utilize collaborative work skills. *Teamwork.*
5. Identify issues relating to ethical, legal, cultural, and global situations affecting business communication that will result in ethical decision making. *Personal Responsibility.*
6. Utilize analytical and problem solving skills appropriate to business communication when creating business documents. *Critical Thinking.*
7. Select appropriate organizational formats and channels used in developing and presenting business messages. *Communication.*
9. Communicate via electronic mail, Internet, and other technologies. *Communication.*
**Course Requirements**
This course will require writing assignments that will include: a bad news message, a persuasive message, and research based writing. Coverage will also include employment communication and team building activities. At least two oral presentations will be included in the course. Four exams will be administered (including the final exam).

**Course Methodologies:** The following methods may be used in the course:
- Online discussions and email
- Research based writing
- Oral presentations, both individual and team
- Homework assignments
- Exams and quizzes
- Computer creation and editing of documents
- Group work
- In-class assignments

**Course Calendar:** The Tentative Schedule appears at the end of this syllabus. Students will be notified of any scheduling changes via D2L email and course announcements.

**Final Exam:** The final exam is scheduled for Tuesday, May 8 at 8 a.m.

**Attendance Policy:** Regular and punctual attendance is expected and attendance will be taken. Attendance may be taken at any point in the class and you will only be counted present if you are in the class at that time. Excessive tardies will not be accepted, as it is disruptive to the class. Material may be covered in class that is not included in the text material. Each student is responsible for all information and instructions covered in class.

**Grading Policy:** All grades will be posted in D2L. There will be a total of 1,000 points possible in the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>240 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research based assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>150 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written messages</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>265 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>150 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes and other assignments</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>195 points</td>
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**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>895 – 1,000 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>795 – 894 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>695 – 794 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>595 – 694 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>594 or fewer points</td>
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</table>
Grades can be accessed through D2L. You should check your posted grades often and email any questions. To compute your current grade at any point in the semester, add up all the points you have earned and divide by the total points possible at that time in the semester.

You must check your grades prior to final exam week and email your instructor with any questions. Unless you email prior to this time, you indicate that you are in agreement with the grades posted. This means you need to check for ERRORS (for example, a missing grade for an assignment that you think you completed on time). This does NOT mean asking for assignments to be accepted late or for extra credit opportunities to make up for missed deadlines.

Exams: The course grade includes four exams based on information presented in the textbook and the lecture. These exams may consist of true/false, multiple choice, matching, and short answer questions. Exams will be given via D2L during class time on the scheduled day.

Assignments: Assignments can be given as classroom activities or as outside work. Students must be present to complete in-class assignments and these cannot be made up. All homework assignments with instructions and due dates will be posted in D2L. Students may also be instructed to submit assignments in D2L. In this case, a student will not be given credit for the assignment unless it is submitted according to the instructions given. This includes completing the assignment in the proper format and turning it in at the proper time.

All out of class assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the day it is due, unless otherwise noted. In the case of an absence the day an assignment is due, it is the student’s responsibility to ensure the assignment is handed in by the due date and time. Late work is not accepted unless arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the deadline.

Communication: The primary contact method outside normal class time will be by email through D2L. You should check your email for this class regularly. I make every attempt to respond to students in a reasonable amount of time. My policy is to answer emails within 48 hours. You can usually expect to receive a response within 24 hours; however, please remember that I am not on call 24 hours a day. If you wait until shortly before assignments are due to address questions to me on the assignment, you may or may not get an answer before the deadline arrives.

Important: D2L email is internal, meaning that messages cannot be sent or received from outside D2L. Do NOT try to email someone by typing in their @sfasu.edu or @jacks.sfasu.edu email address in D2L. It will not work and you may or may not receive an error message/send failure notice. Use the D2L address book to email your instructor/classmates within D2L.
**Teams:** Students will be assigned to teams for part of the course. Teams will have three to six members depending on class enrollment. Your involvement in the team is important and not optional. Team members will participate in team activities for a grade. The official channel of team communication will be the team discussion board on D2L. It is your responsibility to keep in touch with your team about team assignments.

A team member who is not performing effectively in the team may be fired from the team in consultation with the instructor. The team member may be fired by the team or by the instructor. The primary causes for firing include invisibility (no one has communicated with or heard from the person) or nonperformance (person does not do his/her work in a timely manner). The technology channels (such as the D2L discussion boards) will be examined to see what contributions the team member has made to the team. A fired team member will not receive credit for group assignments and may not complete group work individually.

**ProfessionalCourtesy:** This class will be conducted in a professional manner. This means 1) submit work on time – no excuses, 2) avoid profanity and/or offensive language in your communication, and 3) participate fully and courteously with your team members. In regards to courtesy to others in the class and on your team, do not send harassing emails, texts, or messages using offensive language. Such communication may result in a reduction of the sender’s grade. Students should show respect to the instructor and other students and refrain from any behavior that may distract others.

“Joke” assignments, using inappropriate or questionable content for oral presentations or written assignments, may result in no credit for that assignment. If you have questions about what might be professional conduct, please contact me before submitting the assignment.

**Submission Policy:** All written assignments will be typed and submitted as a .doc or .docx files for grading. Handwritten documents, or documents of different file types, will not be accepted. Assignments submitted in Pages, Microsoft Works, WordPerfect, or as PDF, graphics, or zipped files will not be accepted. Your grade on those assignments will be a zero.

Do not make the mistake of submitting a file with the file extension .lnk or a file with the document name beginning with a $ replacing the first letter of the file name. Look at the file name you have uploaded. If it has either of these problems you need to delete the file you have uploaded and upload again. The .lnk usually occurs when you have placed a link to a file on your desktop and uploaded from there. The $ in front of the file name usually means you have the file open and instead of choosing the file, you have chosen the temporary file. In either case, the
file will not open when submitted meaning I will have nothing to grade, and you will receive a zero.

All writing assignments will be graded on both content and mechanics. Your work is a representation of you, and soon to be of the company for which you will be working. You need to avoid spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors in your writing in order to project a professional skill level. Therefore, these aspects will be included along with the content when determining your grade on each assignment.

**Make-up Policy:** If you are on school business, arrangements should be made before the missed class. You must contact the instructor within one class day of the absence in order to make up the assignment. A grade of “0” will be assigned for missed work, except in the following situations: Serious illness verified by a doctor’s note with a statement of inability to attend class, personal or family emergency (documented appropriately), or official school business (with documentation from the appropriate campus representative).

Makeup exams will be allowed only if arranged prior to the date of the test. The student must provide documentation for the excused absence. Notes from the school’s Health Clinic will not be accepted as excused unless the note specifically states that the student is unable to attend. Please see your General Bulletin for a further explanation of excused absences. Makeup exams for non-excused absences will be determined at the sole discretion of the instructor and, if allowed, will usually consist of an essay-type exam.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** An assignment where plagiarism exists will receive a zero. See the SFA website for the university policy on cheating and plagiarism. All incidents will be reported to the Dean of the College of Business.

**Academic Integrity:** Unless designated a group assignment, all work is to be individual work and collaboration with other students or individuals is not allowed. **Collaborating with others on the quizzes or exams is considered cheating and a violation of SFA’s academic dishonesty policy, which will result in appropriate consequences.**

All work submitted in this course must be completed by **you, this semester, for this section of the course.** You cannot “recycle” any work from other courses you have taken (here or elsewhere) or any previous time you may have attempted this course. If it is discovered that you have turned in any part of an individual or team assignment from a previous semester/course, you will receive a zero (0) for the assignment. Assignments will be subject to TurnItIn verification when submitted to the D2L dropbox.
**Student Academic Dishonesty (University Policy 4.1)**

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any assignment or exam; (2) falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one's own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and/or (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author credit. Penalties may include, but are not limited to reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university. Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf)

**Withheld Grades – Course Grades (University Policy 5.5)**

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy related to active military service. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. Please refer to the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades.pdf).

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Room 325 in the Human Services Building, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).
Student Conduct (University Policy 10.4)
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the
class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the
full Student Conduct Code at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-conduct-code.pdf.) Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and
may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to
all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups,
field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is
appropriate/ inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class
regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the
iCare Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations
for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

General Education Core Curriculum (information provided by the Provost)
This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s
core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six
objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills,
Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social
Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core
curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core
curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L through LiveText, the
assessment management system selected by SFA to collect student work for core
assessment. LiveText accounts will be provided to all students enrolled in core
courses through the university technology fee. You will be required to register your
LiveText account, and you will be notified how to register your account through
your SFA e-mail account. If you forward your SFA e-mail to another account and
do not receive an e-mail concerning LiveText registration, please be sure to check
your junk mail folder and your spam filter for these e-mails. If you have questions
about LiveText call Ext. 1267 or e-mail SFALiveText@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the
assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and
uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be
uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be collected for assessment every
semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for
assessment in LiveText this semester.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>Blog Assignment (Week 7)</td>
<td>Not assessed in LiveText this semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Blog Assignment (Week 7)</td>
<td>Not assessed in LiveText this semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.</td>
<td>Not assessed in this course</td>
<td>Not assessed in this course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td>Team presentation (Week 15)</td>
<td>Not assessed in LiveText this semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Ethical dimensions of business behavior assignment (Week 1)</td>
<td>Not assessed in LiveText this semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Not assessed in this course</td>
<td>Not assessed in this course</td>
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</tbody>
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This syllabus represents a “best” plan for the course; but, as with most plans, it is subject to change. Any necessary changes in this syllabus will be announced via D2L.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics/Related Textbook Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>• Course Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/18</td>
<td>• Establishing a Framework for BCM (Ch. 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/23</td>
<td>• Planning and Preparing Messages (Ch. 3 &amp; 4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>• Letters and Memos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>• Exam 1 (Ch. 1, 3, and 4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>• Delivering Persuasive Messages (Ch. 8)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>• Major In Class Writing Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/13</td>
<td>• Delivering Bad News Messages (Ch. 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>• Major In Class Writing Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>• Delivering Good/Neutral News Messages (Ch. 6)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2/22</td>
<td>• Focusing on Interpersonal and Group Communication (Ch. 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2/27</td>
<td>• APA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>• Communicating Electronically (Ch. 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>• Designing and Delivering Business Presentations (Ch. 12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/8</td>
<td>• Exam 2 (Ch. 2, 5, and 12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/20</td>
<td>• Individual Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/22</td>
<td>• Managing Data and Using Graphics (Ch. 10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3/27</td>
<td>• Understanding the Report Process &amp; Research Methods (Ch. 9)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>• Easter Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>• Team Working Session</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>• College of Business College to Career Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4/10</td>
<td>• Organizing and Preparing Reports and Proposals (Ch. 11)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/17</td>
<td>• Exam 3 (Ch. 9, 10, and 11)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>• Preparing Resumes and Application Messages (Ch. 13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4/24</td>
<td>• Interviewing for a Job and Preparing Employment Messages (Ch. 14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>• Team Working Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>5/1</td>
<td>• Team Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5/3</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics/Related Textbook Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam (Ch. 13 and 14) – 8 a.m. on Tuesday, May 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>