Stephen F. Austin State University  
College of Business Administration

Course Syllabus  
BCM 247 Business Communication (BUSI 2304)/Fall 2019  
TTH 8:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

Professor: Lucia S. Sigmar, Ph.D.  
Office: MBB 229-F, Business Communication and Legal Studies Department  
Phone: 936-468-1747 (If no answer, please use D2L Brightspace to email me.)  
E-mail: Please use D2L Brightspace for course questions. Lucia.Sigmar@sfasu.edu

Office Hours:  
Fall 2019 Classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>GBU 550 Executive Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>BCM 450 Leadership Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>BCM 247 Business Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.</td>
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</table>

Fridays and other times by appointment. Allow 24 hours in advance to schedule hours other than those listed.

Required Texts/Other Materials:


Required Supplies:

- Student (SFASU) email account and reliable Internet access
- Proficiency in MS Word
- Proficiency in D2L online learning system (BRIGHTSPACE)

Course Description: 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.  
Prerequisite(s): ENG 131; ENG 132; ENG 133 or 235. 3 Credit Hours.

Course Methodologies: Teaching/learning strategies will include lecture, individual assignments, individual and team projects, and experiential learning exercises. This course is interactive, and students are strongly encouraged to participate in the learning process to achieve maximum results personally, professionally, and academically.
(Note: In this three-credit hour course, you can anticipate spending \textbf{at least} 9 actual hours per week reading assigned chapters, completing assignments, preparing presentations, and completing the final project. Some weeks may require more preparation time than others.)

\textbf{Student Learning Outcomes}: Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Apply critical thinking to business communication strategies and principles to prepare effective communication for diverse business situations. \textbf{Critical Thinking}
- Effectively develop, interpret, and express ideas through written, oral, aural, and visual communication. \textbf{Communication}
- Identify different points of view and work effectively in a team setting. \textbf{Teamwork}
- Participate as a team member in activities that use collaborative work skills. \textbf{Teamwork}
- Identify issues relating to ethical, legal, cultural, and global situations affecting business communication that will result in ethical decision making. \textbf{Personal Responsibility}
- Use analytical and problem solving skills appropriate to business communication when creating business documents. \textbf{Critical Thinking}
- Select appropriate organizational formats and channels used in developing and presenting business messages. \textbf{Communication}
- Compose and/or revise accurate business documents using computer technology. \textbf{Communication}
- Communicate via electronic mail, Internet, and other technologies. \textbf{Communication}
- Deliver an effective oral business presentation. \textbf{Communication}

\textbf{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 \url{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)

**THECB 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.

**General Education Core Curriculum (information provided by the Provost)**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: Communication Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Personal Responsibility, Social Responsibility, and Teamwork. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

BCM 247 is a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the Communication Skills--Written requirement. At one point during the semester, you will receive an assignment that fulfills both the requirements of this course and the needs of SFA's Core Curriculum Assessment Plan with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. When you complete the assignment, you will upload it to both the BCM 247 dropbox and the Communication Skills--Written dropbox. Please note that this only applies to the specific assignment listed in the matrix below. All other assignments should be submitted according to regular class operations.
The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by BCM 247. The assignment that will be used to assess the Communication Skills—Written objective must be uploaded to the Communication Skills—Written dropbox by the date listed on the chart. If you have questions, please see your instructor or call the Institutional Effectiveness Office at (936) 468-1130.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in D2L</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>Informed Blog Assignment</td>
<td>Not assessed in Fall 2019</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>Informed Blog Assignment</td>
<td>Not assessed in Fall 2019</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 Assignment</td>
<td>Not assessed in Fall 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Ethics Situation Assignment</td>
<td>Not assessed in Fall 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance (and participation) at each class meeting is necessary, expected, and evaluated. If you are unable to commit to taking the class, it is advisable to wait until you are able to make the commitment. Attendance will be taken at all class meetings. Absence from class will result in zero credit for that day’s exams, that day’s assignments, and other time-sensitive assignments—with the exception of extreme circumstances (in which case, arrangements for work must be made ahead of time with the instructor.)
Students enrolled in MW or TTH classes are allowed up to four class periods of “grace” absences without penalty. Reserve your “grace” absences for times when you really need them such as required athletic events, accidents, funerals (preferably not your own), and medical issues. Beyond the fourth “grace” absence, 60 points will be docked from the student’s final course total for each day the student has exceeded the absence limit. So if a student has a total of six absences in the course, 120 points will be docked from the student’s final course point total.

Students unable or unwilling to accomplish reasonable attendance (those who will likely exceed the absence limit) are encouraged to enroll during a semester and in a section when they will be able and willing to attend the class. Tardiness or leaving early will count as one-half absence. If a student is tardy, it is his/her responsibility to inform the professor at the end of the class period, or the tardy will be counted as an absence. If you are unable to come to class on time, you are advised to switch sections or take the class in another semester.

Students with perfect attendance (no arriving late; no leaving early) will be rewarded with 10 bonus points at the end of the semester.

2. Timely completion of all course assignments. Due dates and times for all assignments are specified either in the Course Timeline or in class. Late assignments will not be accepted. (See in the event of extreme circumstances in #1.)

Course Assignments

BCM 247 is classified as a writing-intensive course. Required writing assignments include the following:

- Business Research Report
- Direct (Good News or Routine) Message
- Indirect (Bad News) Message
- Persuasive Message
- Résumé and Cover Letter
- Presentation
### Possible Points (Tentative)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>All documents must be typed unless otherwise specified.</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz on 8/26 only</td>
<td>10 bonus points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>14 @ 10 points. each</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messages</td>
<td>Direct Strategy-100 points (Routine/Good News)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indirect Strategy-100 points (Bad News)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persuasive Strategy-100 points</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Project</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Communication</td>
<td>Résumé (50 pts.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cover Letter (50 pts.)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing and Research Activities</td>
<td>5-10 pts. each</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Activities</td>
<td>10-20 points each</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Final Exam</td>
<td>December 12, 2019, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Course Points</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1120</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grade Distribution:**
- 1008 - 1120 points = A
- 896 – 1007.9 points = B
- 784 – 895.9 points = C
- 672 – 783.9 points = D
- 671.9 points or below = F

Grades are based on points only, never on percentages. Point values are firm. Bonus points may be available at the discretion of the instructor.

*The time to challenge a grade is within a week after you have received it, not at the end of the semester. Send your written appeal and include any necessary documentation to Dr. Sigmar at Lucia.Sigmar@sfasu.edu
General Student Policies:

1. **Communication.** In F2F courses, I communicate with students primarily through our classroom time and via email. Check your email account and D2L/Brightspace daily.

2. **Technical Issues.** In the event of an extended “hardware crisis,” you have the option of accessing course resources from another computer or contacting Tech Support (468-HELP) for help in resolving your issue before the deadline (the latter works only if you have not waited until the last minute to complete your assignment). In the event you have technical problems, contact Tech Support and copy me via email at least six hours before the scheduled deadline.

   In the event of D2L Brightspace issues, call 468-1919

   Don’t wait until the last minute. Again, late assignments are unprofessional and are not accepted.

3. **Student Conduct (University Policy 10.4)**
   

   This class will be conducted in a professional manner. This means 1) submit work on time 2) avoid profanity and/or offensive language in your communication, 3) participate fully and courteously with your classmates and team members, and 4) turn off cell phones.

   Classroom behavior should not interfere with an instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. 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, lab, field trips, etc. The instructor has 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 Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed. For more information, see [http://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/earlyalert.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/earlyalert.asp)

4. **Student Academic Dishonesty (University Policy 4.1)**
   

   An act of academic dishonesty, even a first offense, places you in jeopardy of severe forms of disciplinary action, including dismissal from the university. Academic dishonesty includes cheating and/or plagiarism.

   **The work you submit for evaluation in this course must be your own.** Academic dishonesty includes cheating, falsification of information/citations, plagiarism, interference (with another student’s work), and aiding others to commit an act of academic dishonesty.
Avoid even the appearance of cheating. If you are discovered in an act of dishonesty, penalties will be at the discretion of the instructor, up to and including an “F” for the course. In accordance with this policy, I will cooperate with administrators in detecting (Turnitin.com), documenting, and reporting any person committing an act as described above. In this course, emphasis is placed on the following: behaving ethically, conveying honest and accurate information, showing equal treatment through non-sexist and nondiscriminatory writing, exhibiting fair-mindedness, showing sensitivity to the feelings of others, and respecting human rights.

5. **Students with Disabilities.**
   
   [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)

   Individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Disability Services located in the Human Services Building, Room 325, or call 936-468-3004 or 936-468-1004. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

   If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SFASU Office for Disability Services and talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. (Note: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Office of Disability Services.)

6. **Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy.**

   Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose, without penalty. If you must miss class to observe a religious holy day, please notify me by email within the first two weeks of class so that I can make arrangements for you to complete the coursework ahead of the date due.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Class Days</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1      | 8/26-9/12  | Course Introduction  
Chapter 1: Establishing a Framework for Business Communication (Ethics & Comm Skills)  
Chapter 2: Focusing on Interpersonal and Group Communication (Ethics & Comm Skills)  
Chapter 12: Designing and Delivering Business Presentations (Comm Skills & Teamwork) | • Syllabus Quiz (Due In-Class on 8/26 only)  
• Chapter 1 Quiz (Due by 9/2 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Chapter 2 Quiz (Due by 9/2 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Chapter 12 Quiz (Due by 9/4 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Assignments (TBA) |
| 2      | 9/13-9/26  | Chapter 3: Planning and Decision Making (Comm Skills & Critical Thinking)  
Chapter 4: Preparing Written Messages (Comm Skills & Critical Thinking)  
Chapter 5: Communicating Electronically (Comm Skills) | • Chapter 3 Quiz (Due by 9/16 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Chapter 4 Quiz (Due by 9/18 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Chapter 5 Quiz (Due by 9/23 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Assignments (TBA) |
| 3      | 9/27-10/17 | Chapter 6: Delivering Good-News and Neutral Messages (Comm Skills & Critical Thinking)  
Chapter 7: Delivering Bad-News Messages (Comm Skills & Critical Thinking)  
Chapter 8: Delivering Persuasive Messages (Comm Skills & Critical Thinking) | • Chapter 6 Quiz (Due by 9/30 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Chapter 7 Quiz (Due by 10/2 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Chapter 8 Quiz (Due by 10/7 at 11:59 p.m.)  
• Assignments (TBA)  
• Message 1 (Direct (Good News) Strategy) TBA  
• Message 2 (Indirect (Bad News) Strategy (TBA)  
• Message 3 (Persuasive Strategy) (TBA) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4    | 10/18-11/7  | Chapter 9: Understanding the Report Process and Research Methods (Comm Skills, Critical Thinking, & Teamwork Skills)  
Chapter 10: Managing Data and Using Graphs (Comm Skills & Critical Thinking)  
Chapter 11: Organizing and Preparing Reports and Proposals (Comm Skills & Teamwork Skills)  
- Chapter 9 Quiz (Due by 10/21 at 11:59 p.m.)  
- Chapter 10 Quiz (Due by 10/23 at 11:59 p.m.)  
- Chapter 11 Quiz (Due by 10/28 at 11:59 p.m.)  
- Assignments (TBA)  
- Presentation (TBA)  
- Research Report due (TBA) at 11:59 p.m. (Submit to Turnitin dropbox in Brightspace) |
| 5    | 11/8-11/21  | Chapter 13: Preparing Résumés and Application Messages  
Chapter 14: Interviewing for a Job and Preparing Employment Messages  
- Chapter 13 Quiz (Due by 11/11 at 11:59 p.m.)  
- Chapter 14 Quiz (Due by 11/13 at 11:59 p.m.)  
- Assignments (TBA)  
- Resume and Cover Letter (TBA) |
|      | 11/22-12/1  | Thanksgiving Break  
|      | 12/3-12/13  | Comprehensive Final Review & Exam  
December 12, 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. |

NOTE: This schedule is tentative and is likely to change throughout the semester.