Business Communication (BUSI 2304-007)  
Fall 2023 Course Syllabus  
9:30 pm – 10:45 am on Tuesday/Thursdays  
R.E. McGee Business 167

Instructor: Dr. Kristen Waddell  
Email: Kristen.waddell@sfasu.edu  
Department: Business Communication and Legal Studies  
Phone: (936) 468-1727  
Office: 229H

Online Office Hours:  
Wednesday 1:00 – 4:00 pm

In-person Office Hours:  
Tues/Thurs  9:00-9:30 am; 11:00-2:00 pm

Other times by appointment – Email me at least 24 hours in advance to schedule an appointment.

Course Description: BUSI 2304 Business Communication – 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 from ENGL 1301/1302 or equivalent with a C grade or better.

Time Commitment: For this three-credit hour online course, you should plan to spend about 9 actual hours per week working on the course. During this time, you will be reading chapters in the textbook and in the online content, taking chapter quizzes and tests, completing assignments from the chapters, participating in online discussions, conducting research, composing messages, and completing oral presentations. For some weeks you may find yourself spending more than 9 actual hours per week.

Required Text:  

BCOM 10th edition OR BCOM 11th edition (available in ebook only)  
Authors: Lehman and DuFrene  
ISBN: 978-0-357-02658-8  
Note: You only need the textbook. You do not need a MindTap access code.
**Required Software:**

- Microsoft Word – All written documents and assignments that are submitted must be Microsoft Word documents. Assignments submitted in Pages, Microsoft Works, WordPerfect, graphics, or zipped files will not be accepted and your score on those assignments will be a 0.
- Microsoft PowerPoint – You will need software to create PowerPoint slides.
- Adobe Reader – You will use this to read PowerPoint slides and to review some documents and graded assignments in PDF format.

As an SFA student, you have access to Office 365 through mySFA. For additional information, please visit [http://www.sfasu.edu/mysfa/o365/student/productivity-apps/](http://www.sfasu.edu/mysfa/o365/student/productivity-apps/)

**Course Procedures:** You will need reliable Internet access to complete this online course. Visit Brightspace, SFA’s learning management system, at [d2l.sfasu.edu](http://d2l.sfasu.edu) regularly to keep up with assignments, contact the instructor, and receive information for your success in the course. All electronic communication from the instructor will be through Brightspace, and it is the student’s responsibility to check Brightspace regularly for instructions and emails.

**Important:** Brightspace email is internal, meaning that messages cannot be sent or received from outside Brightspace. Do NOT try to email someone by typing in their @sfasu.edu or @jacks.sfasu.edu email address in Brightspace. It will not work and you may or may not receive an error message/send failure notice. Use the Brightspace address book to email your instructor/classmates within Brightspace.

**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 in the Curriculum Management Handbook at [http://www.sfasu.edu/academics/colleges/business/welcome/faculty-resources](http://www.sfasu.edu/academics/colleges/business/welcome/faculty-resources)

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.
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)

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

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. One oral presentation will be included in the course. Three examinations will be administered (including a required final exam).

**Participation:** In this class, you will work individually and in a small group. The number of group members will depend on class enrollment. On group assignments, an individual’s grade can be adjusted based on the peer evaluations received regarding the person’s contribution to the team.

**Presentations:** You will be required to deliver a team presentation in person. Failure to participate in the team presentation will result in a 0 on the assignment. The team presentation cannot be completed as an individual assignment.

**Course Methodologies:** The following methods will be used in the course: research-based writing, homework assignments, computer creation and editing of documents, online group work (virtual teams), quizzes, discussions, exams, and presentations.

**Course Calendar:** The tentative schedule appears at the end of this syllabus. Students will be notified of any changes via Brightspace course announcements. Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. All course deadlines are listed in Central Time.

**Grading Policy:** There are multiple opportunities to earn points in the course. Grades can be accessed through Brightspace. You should check your posted grades often and email any questions within 1 week of receiving the grade. You must check your grades prior to the final exam opening 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.

**Grading Scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Points</th>
<th>Points Earned (Out of 1,000 possible points)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 – 100%</td>
<td>900 – 1,000 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 89%</td>
<td>800 – 899 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79%</td>
<td>700 – 799 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 69%</td>
<td>600 – 699 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% or fewer</td>
<td>599 or fewer points</td>
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Tentative Points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Assignment</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Assignments</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Research Report</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume Assignment</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishbowl Assignments</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Assignments</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td>1000</td>
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Exams: The course grade includes three 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.

Assignments: All homework assignments should be submitted in Brightspace by 11:59 pm on the designated due date. It is your responsibility to plan ahead and meet the posted deadlines.

A grade of zero (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 submit work online
- Personal or family emergency (documented appropriately)
- Official school business (with documentation from the appropriate campus representative)

The student must provide documentation for the excused absence. Notes from the school’s Health Clinic must specifically state that the student is unable to complete online work that day to be considered an excused absence.

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. Unless specified by your instructor, you cannot “recycle” any work from other courses you have taken (here or elsewhere) or any previous time you may have attempted this course. Assignments will be subject to TurnItIn verification when submitted to the Brightspace dropbox.

Attendance:
Attendance will be taken before each class. It is expected that you show up on time to class. If you are absent for a university-sanctioned reason or emergency (e.g., serious illness, a death in the family, etc.), you must let your instructor know within forty-eight hours of the absence and provide documentation to justify the missed class. In the case of medical excuses from health care providers, such documentation must also indicate specifically that you were advised not to attend (or were medically unable to attend) class in order for the absence to be excused.

Missed in-class assignments are only eligible to be made up with an excused absence.

**Communication:** The primary contact method will be by email through Brightspace. You should check your email for this class regularly. I make every attempt to respond to students in a reasonable amount of time. When you send an email, if you would like a reply, please ask a specific question. If you send me a message that does not ask a question, I will not respond as I will conclude it was for informational purposes only, not for soliciting a response.

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.

**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 Brightspace. It is your responsibility to keep in touch with your team about team assignments.

You are expected to learn to work together, and everyone is expected to pull their own weight on the assignments, and thus only in exceptional circumstances will I allow a team to split or remove someone from a team. You are highly encouraged to start on your assignments early so that you can work through any team issues well in advance of the assignments being due.

Each member of the group will be required to turn in a peer review form after the project is submitted. Each student in the group may receive a different score (up to and including receiving a zero on the assignment) depending upon how their peers in the group have reviewed their efforts on the project. The peer review forms will be kept anonymous unless extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise. Any member of the group that does not turn in a peer review form via the D2L Dropbox by the time set forth on the course schedule will receive a reduction in their grade.

**Academic Integrity**
The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy. Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework 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. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.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), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 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 promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Student Wellness and Well-Being

SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
936.468.1041

The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:
- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education
Crisis Resources:
- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Other Policies/Procedures

Professional Courtesy: 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.

Submission Policy: All assignments and projects are to be turned in on time by the due date and must be submitted in the file format designated in the assignment (i.e. Word document, PowerPoint, etc.) Assignments are to be submitted by uploading to Brightspace prior to the ending time indicated on the assignment.

Do not make the mistake of submitting a file with the file extension .Ink 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 .Ink 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.

Late Work Policy: Unless otherwise noted, no late work will be accepted. If you are on school business, arrangements should be made before the missed deadline.

A grade of zero (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 submit work online
• Personal or family emergency (documented appropriately)
• Official school business (with documentation from the appropriate campus representative)

The student must provide documentation for the excused absence. Notes from the school’s Health Clinic must specifically state that the student is unable to complete online work that day to be considered an excused absence.

Students must use time management skills to develop their schedules to allow ample time to complete each week’s assignments. Beginning work late in the week and experiencing an unanticipated obligation is not grounds for exceptions to this policy.

Missed quizzes or exams will only be excused and allowed to be made up for university-excused absences or for extreme emergencies that justify missing it. What constitutes an extreme emergency is within the discretion of the instructor. **Note that I am not very lenient with this policy due to the fact that the quiz/exam windows are quite long.** Thus, if you have any expectation that you have some medical or other issue that might conflict with a quiz or exam, make sure you take the quiz/exam early in the time window and do not wait until the last minute. In the case of an extreme emergency that prevents you from taking an exam, contact me before the scheduled examination if at all possible. If it is not possible, contact me as soon as possible after the emergency is resolved. Failure to do so may result in an examination grade of zero. Makeup exams for non-excused absences will be determined at the sole discretion of the instructor. Please see your General Bulletin for a further explanation of excused absences.

**Technology Requirements:** It is your responsibility to acquire a consistent, stable, dependable computer and Internet connection with which to complete the assignments for the course by the deadlines indicated on the Course Schedule. It is not the responsibility of the instructor to provide additional time for assignments or exams or an alternative means of completing the course due to technological issues on your part. Plan ahead!

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** 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. Unless specified by your instructor, you cannot “recycle” any work from other courses you have taken (here or elsewhere) or any previous time you
may have attempted this course. Assignments will be subject to TurnItIn verification when submitted to the Brightspace dropbox.

**ChatGPT/AI:** Using any artificial intelligence (AI) software or tool, such as ChatGPT, to draft materials for an assignment is prohibited unless authorized by your instructor.

**General Education Core Curriculum**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: 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.

By enrolling in BUSI 2304, you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the Communication Skills-Written requirement—plus several others. The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course and the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</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>Individual Report</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>Individual Report</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 Research Presentation</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 – Four Dimensions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 Brightspace.
**BUSI 2304 – Tentative Course Schedule**
* This is a tentative schedule that is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fishbowl Assignment: Chapter 1-4</td>
<td>9/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Memo Assignment</td>
<td>9/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1: Chapter 1-4</td>
<td>9/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad News Letter</td>
<td>10/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive Letter</td>
<td>10/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2: Chapter 5-8</td>
<td>10/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishbowl Assignment: Chapter 9-12</td>
<td>10/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Report Due</td>
<td>11/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 3: Chapter 9-12</td>
<td>11/16</td>
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</tbody>
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**Thanksgiving Break: No Class 11/21 & 11/23**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Project Due</td>
<td>12/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume Final Project Assignment</td>
<td>12/12</td>
</tr>
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