

6100: 230 Business Communication
Fall 2020, 100% Web-Based Course

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM, or by appointment.

Course Description: Students will obtain the knowledge and ability to use writing and oral communication skills in a professional environment to effectively persuade others and to mobilize action among various organizational stakeholders.

Course Goals and Objectives: At the completion of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate effective business communication skills, including:

- Identify the key terms and major concepts relevant to business and professional communication.
- Create a career plan to enhance individual career and/or educational marketability.
- Use effective interviewing skills and techniques.
- Integrate communication and research skills to create audience-centered professional presentations.
- Produce effective business and professional writing (e.g., business letter) samples.
- Demonstrate effective group communication skills while working with teams to accomplish a given task.

Prerequisites: 3300:111, 3300:112, and 7600:105 or 7600:106.

Required Text:

Quintanilla, K. M., & Wahl, S. T. (2018). *Business and professional communication: Keys for workplace excellence* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc. ISBN: 9781506369594

General University Expectations, Guidelines, and Resources

Academic Honesty Statement: It is the responsibility of the student to know of the prohibited actions such as cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, academic, and personal misconduct, and thus, to avoid them. All students are held to the standards outlined in the code of conduct. Please reference the entire code for a complete listing (<https://www.uakron.edu/studentconduct>). Any violation may result in serious academic penalty, ranging from receiving a warning, to failing the assignment, to failing the course, to expulsion from the University.

Office of Accessibility: Every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities (e.g. mental health, learning, chronic health, hearing, vision, neurological, etc.). Students who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Accessibility at 330-972-7928. The office is located in Simmons Hall, Room 105. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of his or her needs.

Stop Sexual Assault & Harassment: The University of Akron is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination, including sexual violence and sexual harassment. This includes instances of attempted and/or completed sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, gender-based stalking, and sexual harassment. Additional information, resources, support and the University of Akron protocols for responding to sexual violence are available at www.uakron.edu/Title-IX.

Resources for Students: The University of Akron has many resources to help students realize a worthwhile and successful academic experience. Examples include the Bierce Writing Commons, Counseling Center, and Career Services, to name a few. See <https://www.uakron.edu/tutoring/> and <https://www.uakron.edu/campus-life/> for more information.

Official Communication Statement: Email is the *official means of communication* with students at The University of Akron. Failure to receive or read official University communications does not absolve you from knowing and complying with the content of the official communication. Further, the Instructor will not be expected to use or respond to non-UA email addresses. Your UA email will be used for general announcements, individual messages, and class cancellations.

Dropping/Withdrawing from the Class: If a situation arises for which you feel you must withdraw from this class, please refer to the University's Withdrawal Policy website (<https://www.uakron.edu/registrar/dates/falldropwd.dot>). The website lists final dates for dropping a course or withdrawing from a course along with impacts and associated policies to consider.

General Course Expectations, Policies, and Procedures

Late Assignments and Make-up Quizzes: By definition, late assignments are below average, and are unfair to those who are prepared. As a general rule, if you do not submit an assignment on the scheduled day and time, **you will receive a zero** for a grade on that assignment. Excused absences are those that are approved by the University and deemed acceptable by the instructor (e.g., medical, legal, military, religious) and are the only reason a late assignment is accepted. You **MUST** inform the instructor prior to the due date of the assignment, if possible, to be permitted to make-up the assignment. If you come to the instructor late and it was possible for you to talk to the instructor beforehand, you will receive a zero.

Brightspace Policy: Students' regular use of Brightspace is a *requirement* for this course. You cannot successfully pass this course without accessing, using, and fully reading and comprehending the Brightspace platform. Course content, assignment due dates, grades, and other important course information will regularly be updated on the Brightspace platform.

Assignment Submissions: Students are required to submit all written assignments in .doc/.docx/PDF format (*all other formats (e.g., .rtf, .pages) will receive a zero*) by **11:59 p.m. on the due date listed on the syllabus to Brightspace, unless otherwise instructed**. Assignments emailed directly to the instructor will receive a zero.

Contacting the Instructor: If you have questions about the course or would like to set-up an appointment to meet with the instructor outside of posted office hours the best way to contact the instructor is via email at alm133@uakron.edu. The instructor will answer email during **regular business hours (Monday-Friday 8:00AM – 5:00PM)**. Please allow 24 hours for email responses. Emails sent during non-business hours (e.g., evenings, weekends) will be answered the next business day (e.g., an email sent at 7:00PM on Friday may not be answered until Monday).

CBA Tutoring Resource: Students looking for additional assistance outside of the classroom are advised to consider working with a peer tutor through Knack. The University of Akron CBA has partnered with Knack to provide students with access to verified peer tutors who have previously aced this course. To view available tutors, visit uakron.joinknack.com and sign in with your student account.

Online Classroom Civility: Students are expected to be respectful of their peers and the instructor. Each person in the classroom has had different experiences and, thus, offers a unique perspective. Being open to listening to different perspectives is a valuable experience for all individuals. Students are expected to demonstrate respect in all course communication (e.g., online discussions, emails).

Disclaimer: The information provided in this syllabus constitutes a list of basic class policies and procedures. The instructor reserves the right to modify this information when deemed necessary for any reason. You will be notified if/when any changes occur.

Assignments, Examinations, and Grading Policies

Assignments and Examinations: The following list provides brief descriptions of all course requirements:

- **Mock “Skype” Interviews:** Students will take part in a mock interview by video conferencing with a classmate. Following the interview, students will complete a reflection on the experience. **[25 points]**
- **Sales Pitch Presentations:** Students will prepare a short “sales pitch” to persuade peers and the instructor to consider purchasing an item, making an investment, etc. **[75 points]**
- **Business Communication in the News Group Presentations:** Students will work in small groups to identify and investigate a recent example of business communication covered in the news (e.g., organizational crises, business mergers). The group will examine key elements of the event (i.e., who, what, when, where, why, how) and present an overview of the event to the class. **[50 points]**
- **Career Planning Assignments:**
 - **Business Letter:** Students will write a business letter detailing what career they would like to explore over the course of the semester through rigorous research, why they have chosen that career, and how they feel the concepts in this course will help them prepare for a life in their chosen profession. **[25 points]**
 - **Career Plan:** Students will complete a report detailing their chosen career (e.g., qualifications, salary, daily life). As part of this report, students will locate and interview an individual who *currently* works as a professional in their chosen career (e.g., if the student is interested in pursuing a career as an accountant, they will interview an accountant). Students will provide a current version of their résumé using the techniques outlined in the course. **[100 points]**
- **Content Quizzes:** This course will have content quizzes administered via Brightspace throughout the semester. Each quiz is worth 10 points. **[150 points]**
- **Online Discussion Boards and Activities:** Students are expected to regularly interact with each other through participation in online discussion and/or complete assigned activities (i.e., pre-test and post-test). Please see “Online Discussion Board Instructions” document for more information on the discussion board expectations. Online discussion boards and class activities are generally worth 5 points each. **[75 points]**

Grading Criteria: Your grade in this course is a function of the following:

Assignment	Points Possible	Grade	Percent	Points
Business Letter	25 points (5%)	A	93%-100%	465-500
Mock “Skype” Interviews	25 points (5%)	A-	90% - 92.99%	450-464
Sales Pitch	75 points (15%)	B+	87% - 89.99%	435-449
Business Communication Group Presentation	50 points (10%)	B	83% - 86.99%	415-434
Career Plan	100 points (20%)	B-	80% - 82.99%	400-414
Content Quizzes	150 points (30%)	C+	77% - 79.99%	385-399
Online Discussion Boards and Activities	75 points (15%)	C	73% - 76.99%	365-384
Total	500 points	C-	70% - 72.99%	350-364
		D+	67% - 69.99%	335-349
		D	60% - 66.99%	300-334
		F	Less than 60%	< 300

Tentative Schedule

**All assignments must be submitted via Brightspace at 11:59 p.m. of the date posted.*

Week	Content	Readings	Assignment Due Dates
1 August 24 – August 30	Introduction to the Course; Business and Professional Excellence in the Workplace	Syllabus; Chapter 1	Syllabus Quiz: August 28
			Class Introductions Discussion Board: August 30
			Business Communication Pre-Test: August 30
			Chapter 1 Quiz: August 30
2 August 31 – September 6	Verbal and Nonverbal Communication	Chapter 2	Chapter 2 Quiz: September 4
			Nonverbal Communication Discussion Board: September 6
3 September 7 – September 13	Types of Business Writing; Crafting Effective Messages and Common Writing Mistakes	Chapter 9; PDFs available on Brightspace	Chapter 9 Quiz: September 11
			Business Writing Discussion Board: September 13
4 September 14 – September 20	Editing for Business Writing; Listening	Chapter 3	Chapter 3 Quiz: September 18
			Listening Discussion Board: September 20
5 September 21 – September 27	Interviews and Negotiation	Chapter 4	Chapter 4 Quiz: September 25
			Negotiation Discussion Board: September 27
6 September 28 – October 4	Getting to Know Your Diverse Workplace	Chapter 5	Chapter 5 Quiz: October 2
			Business Letter: October 4
7 October 5 – October 11	Interpersonal Communication at Work; Mock “Skype” Interviews	Chapter 6	Chapter 6 Quiz: October 9
			Mock Skype Interview Reflections: October 9
			Mock Skype Interview Discussion Board: October 11
8 October 12 – October 18	Informing and Persuading; Speech Design	Chapter 11; Chapter 12	Chapter 11 Quiz: October 16
			Chapter 12 Quiz: October 18
9 October 19 – October 25	Delivering a Speech with Professional Excellence; Data Visualization	Chapter 13; PDFs on Brightspace	Chapter 13 Quiz: October 23
			Sales Pitch Topic Discussion Board: October 25

10 October 26 – November 1	Strengthening Teams and Conducting Meetings	Chapter 7	Chapter 7 Quiz: October 30
			Self-Reflection of Sales Pitch Practice Presentation: November 1
11 November 2 – November 8	Sales Pitch Presentations		Sales Pitch Presentations: November 8
			Sales Pitch Response Discussion Board: November 8
12 November 9 – November 15	Technology in the Workplace	Chapter 8	Chapter 8 Quiz: November 13
			Technology at Work Discussion Board: November 15
13 November 16 – November 22	Leadership and Conflict Management	Chapter 10	Chapter 10 Quiz: November 20
			Providing Feedback Discussion Board: November 22
14 November 23 – November 29	Work-Life Balance	Chapter 14	Chapter 14 Quiz: November 29
			Work-Life Balance Discussion Board: November 29
15 November 30 – December 6	Group Presentations		Group Presentations: December 6
16 December 7 – December 13	Career Plan		Business Communication Post-Test: December 7
			Career Plan: December 8