MGT 301: Effective Business Communication

Syllabus Spring 2011, Tuesday 7:00 PM – 9:45 PM

Contact Information

Instructor:	**Heather Bowen Ray, M.S.**
Voice Messages:	816-235-2896 (via Susan Mott at the OLM office)
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Office hours:	By appointment. I'll also make myself available for questions after each class.

Course Materials

Required Text:

1. Guffey, M.E. (2008). *Business Communication: Process and Product* (6th Ed.), Ohio: Cengage Learning. *ISBN: 0-324-54290-9*
2. Additional readings may be made available on the course Blackboard site or by photocopy. These will be announced in class.

Recommended reading:

- Strunk, W. and White, E.B. *The Elements of Style.* (Any edition) *ISBN: 0-205-30902-X*
- Business news publications (online or hard copy), such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, *Business Week*, and trade publications in your chosen field.

Required Materials:

- Computer disks, CDs, or flash drive to maintain a complete record of your work
- Access to reliable printer and computer, including MS Office software and Internet
- Active e-mail address
- High-quality, 100% cotton bond paper for resume, cover letter, portfolio
- Supplies for portfolio (3-ring binder, tabs, clear plastic pockets, paper or CD, etc.)
- Stapler, staples, paper clips
- manila folders

Course Description

Description

Business Writing introduces students to the strategic nature of business communication. By the end of the course, students should be able to analyze business situations and prepare messages that fulfill all of the intended purposes of their communication, meet the needs and expectations of business audiences, and take into account other relevant contextual factors. Students will develop the tools to deliver polished, professional communications in a variety of media.

Goals / Learning Objectives

This course is designed to give you the oral and written communication skills required in business. Students should become competent in the following areas:

1. Message strategies
2. Composition of various business documents
3. Understanding communication effects in the work place (ethics, gender, cultural, group, and digital communication)
4. The writing and revising process

5. The job search processes
6. Preparation and delivery of formal presentations

About your Instructor
Heather Bowen Ray is a marketing and communications consultant serving a variety of organizations and agencies. Heather's experience in integrated marketing communications includes work for advertising and communications firms and stems from a 15-year career in economic development at international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), based in Washington DC. She earned an MS in Marketing from Johns Hopkins University and a BS in Journalism from the University of Kansas. Heather has served on the boards of the American Marketing Association-KC and the Kansas City Direct Marketing Association. She is a founding member of the emerging Global Social Marketing Association, which focuses on using commercial marketing techniques for social good.

Requirements and Policies

Attendance Policy / Participant's Role in the Class.

Attendance is MANDATORY on ALL presentation days. Failure to attend on your presentation day will result in a grade of **ZERO** for that presentation assignment. Absences on presentation days that are not your own will result in a **one letter grade deduction** from your final accumulated point total, unless you have previously communicated with me about an excused absence.

Attendance EARNS POINTS on all non-presentation days. Students are expected to attend class, arrive on time and stay the entire length of class. Your enthusiastic participation is critical to your success in this class—not only for participation points, but to stay current with the material and assignments. You need to be present to develop the skills required to meet the course goals.

If you confront extenuating circumstances beyond your control, such as hospitalization, a death in the family, an accident, or illness, communicate with me about your situation as soon as possible prior to class. If a religious holiday or any other event precludes your class attendance, please notify me in advance and make arrangements with me for retrieving information and turning in class assignments. You are responsible for obtaining class notes and/or assignments for any day that you are absent from class. Find at least two people in the class with whom you can trade notes and information about assignments throughout the semester. While not a substitute for contacting a classmate about assignments and due dates, some information may also be available on Blackboard.

The UMKC website (www.umkc.edu) is the official site for announcements about class cancellations in the case of inclement weather. If storm warnings have been issued for the area, please check the site.

Assignment Policy
All assignments must be typed unless otherwise specified. The required letters and memos must follow the proper format and multi-page documents must be stapled. Presentation, format, spelling, grammar and overall image are important for every assignment. Prepare your written work carefully and apply the concepts we discuss in class. Recall that one of the course goals is a thorough understanding and demonstration of image management. A reader will likely be more positively disposed toward your work when he/she does not have to wade through wordy and obtuse sentences, poor spelling and grammar, messy document appearance, or illogical organization.

You are expected to spend at least three hours outside of class for every hour spent in class.

Late Assignment Policy
Due dates are an important component of this course. All assignments must be completed and turned in by the beginning of class on the assigned date. You can use **ONE** "**late assignment pass**" during the semester. **You may turn in an assignment late and receive 50% of the total points you would have earned, if the assignment is turned in <u>before I have started class at the next class period</u>.** If you are turning something into my mailbox (room 334) make sure it is stamped or signed by the office staff with the official time and date.

Grading / Performance Evaluations
I will assign letter grades and plus grades on the scale below:

A	94-100 %
A-	90-93.99 %
B+	87-89.99 %
B	84-86.99 %
B-	80-83.99 %
C+	77-79.99 %
C	74-76.99 %
C -	70-73.99 %
D+	67-69.99 %
D	64-66.99 %
D-	60-63.99 %
F	0-59.99 %

See "assignments" for breakdown of points.

Communication Policy and Blackboard
To assist you in this class, I make use of the course Blackboard site as well as email. If you are not familiar with Blackboard (often written as "Bb") or do not have an active email account registered with the University, please use the appropriate campus resources. If you have further questions, please contact me. I will periodically send emails you will be responsible for reading and acting upon. Please verify the email address registered on Blackboard is the address at which you wish to receive correspondence.

Academic Honesty – on Plagiarism, Cheating, and Documentation
Plagiarism is the act of presenting other people's work or ideas as your own. Plagiarism exists in multiple forms: using others' ideas as your own, copying someone else's work, copying reference materials, incorrect citations, etc. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to reference materials, please contact me. Cheating and plagiarism **will not be tolerated** in this class. Plagiarism of assignments, projects, and papers is unacceptable, and a **grade of ZERO** will be assigned on any such item where plagiarism has been detected. A student enrolling in any UMKC course is expected to exhibit high standards of academic honesty. **In the case of academic misconduct, I will assess the affected work and report the incident to Bloch School administration** according to the guidelines printed in the University catalog**.** See student conduct policies at:
http://www.bloch.umkc.edu/graduate/emba/current-students/student-resources/academic-honesty/index.aspx (or search the UMKC site for "Academic Honesty").

This class emphasizes your understanding of communication technologies in the business environment. Therefore, using Internet resources for general research in this class is acceptable but is not an adequate substitute for talking with experts and conducting scholarly research through the library system.

All sources must be cited in APA format. This is outlined in the Guffey text (Appendix, page C-5). I will also provide links to online resources on Blackboard. The Bloch Communications Center can also help with this. Please let me know if you have any questions on APA style prior to an assignment due date.

Course Withdrawal
All course withdrawals must be completed through the Registration Center in the UMKC Administrative Center. Students intending to withdraw from the course after the eighth week of class (fourth week in the summer session) are required to obtain a signature of both the instructor and an academic advisor before the course withdrawal is official. *Telling the instructor that you intend to withdraw from the course or ceasing to attend class does not constitute an official withdrawal.* The academic calendar in the class schedule/registration guide lists the official withdrawal dates.

Academic Support

- ***Bloch School Business Communication Center***
  Located in Bloch 201, the Bloch School Business Communication Center is available for assistance with written and oral business communication. The center focuses on brainstorming, writing, and editing for message effectiveness, enhancing public speaking skills. It serves as a resource for the business communication skills that parallel this course. You may earn points by visiting this center—details will be announced in class.

- ***Bloch School Computer Lab***
  The Bloch School Computer Lab is available for your use. It is located in Bloch 110; all lab locations and hours can be found at: http://www.umkc.edu/is/labs/hoursLocations/.

- ***UMKC Writing Lab***
  Students who want assistance in writing basics, conventions, and grammar may contact the UMKC Writing Lab at 5201 Rockhill Road. See http://cas.umkc.edu/writingcenter/ or call 816-235-1146.

- ***Office of Disabled Student Services***
  If you have questions about a disability or need accommodation under the Americans with Disability Act, please contact the Office of Disabled Student Services at 816-235-5696. Access the Office's website at: http://www.umkc.edu/disability/. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in this course and have not contacted the office, please do so as soon as possible. Additionally, please see me in private regarding this matter.

Syllabus Changes

Time and schedule considerations may prompt modifications of this syllabus (deletion of assignments or topics, modification of examination dates, etc.). The instructor will explain any changes; however, it is the student's responsibility to keep up with any modifications that are made throughout the semester.

Final Portfolio

The culmination of this class will be a portfolio of documents you have produced and revised throughout the semester. It will serve as a showcase of your business communication expertise and as a selling point to potential employers. I strongly encourage you to "revise as you go" to avoid both stress and

panic at the end of the semester. You are welcome to consult with me regarding revisions for the portfolio from the time the graded drafts are returned. Please schedule an appointment for such meetings. This will be discussed in more detail during class. You should always **keep an electronic copy of all of your assignments** in at least two places (hard drive, disk, CD, e-mail attachment, etc). Additionally, **keep all graded/evaluated drafts of your work**. These are a required component of the portfolio assignment.

Assignments

ASSIGNMENT	**POINTS**	**YOUR SCORE**
"Who I Am" Memo	100	
Resume and References Final Draft	30	
Cover Letter	150	
Mock Interview	65	
Goodwill-Thank You Letter	50	
Motivational E-Mail	150	
Informational Interview - Written Report	150	
Informational Interview - Oral Presentation	150	
Portfolio	50	
Class Participation: Class discussions, exercises, text quizzes, workshops, and mini-speeches, etc. – 70 Communication Center Visit – 10 Insight Inventory/MBTI – 5 Peer Resume Critique – 5 Draft Resume/References – 10 Blackboard Discussion Posts – 5	105 (total)	
TOAL POINTS	**1,000**	**_____**

Course Schedule

_____ BUILDING BLOCKS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION _____

11-Jan Cancelled due to snow.
Review syllabus, prepare goals for course, preview textbook.

18-Jan Introduction to Course and Assignments (*including Portfolio Assignment)*
Introduction to Personal Communication Styles *(Insight Inventory **Test Online**)*
Intro to "Who I Am" memo
Guffey, Chapter 1

25-Jan Foundational Concepts: Audience Analysis
Business Writing Overview / Document Design & Formatting
Business Writing Workshop
Guffey, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7

_____ COMMUNICATION AND YOUR CAREER _____

1-Feb Networking and Interviewing
"Who I Am" memo due
Intro to Resume/References and Cover Letter Assignments
Guffey, Chapter 15, 16

8-Feb Resumes and References
Cover Letters
First draft Resume due *for in-class peer review*
Intro to Mock Interview Assignment, STAR Model, and Goodwill /Thank You Letter

15-Feb NO CLASS: Individual Meetings for Resume Workshop – 15-minute time slots
Second draft Resume and draft References due *during meeting, by appointment*

22-Feb Responding to Job Postings
Digital Resumes and Portfolios
Social Networks, LinkedIn
Final Resume and References due
Intro to Informational Interview Assignment

_____ MESSAGE STRATEGIES AND COMMUNICATION EFFECTS _____

1-Mar Message Strategies: Positive Message Strategies, You Attitude
Message Strategies: Delivering negative messages

	Management and Communication Styles ***Cover Letter due*** *Intro to Motivational Email Assignment* *Guffey, Chapters 8, 9, 10*
8-Mar	Groups, Teams, and Meetings Persuasive messaging ***Mock Interviews Completed, done by appointment w/career services*** ***Mock Interview Form, S.T.A.R. Answers, and Goodwill/Thank You Letter Due*** *Guffey, Chapters 2, 9*
15-Mar	Digital Communication - Special considerations in email, IM, forthcoming tools Media management and source evaluation *Guffey, Chapter 7*
22-Mar	Communication and Business Ethics ***Motivational Email Assignment Due***
29-Mar	**NO CLASS: UMKC SPRING BREAK**
5-Apr	Gender & Cross-Cultural Considerations *Sign up for Informational Interview Presentations and Portfolio Review Meetings* *Recap Portfolio Assignment* *Guffey, Chapter 3*

_____ POLISHING YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS _____

12-Apr	Public Speaking Fundamentals Using Visuals, PPT/Keynote *Guffey, Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14* *Review Strunk & White* ***Informational Interview In-Class Presentations (2 sample presentations)***
19-Apr	MANDATORY ATTENDANCE: In-Class Presentations (up to 12) ***Informational Interview Reports (written reports) Due*** ***Informational Interview Presentations Due, according to sign-up sheet***
26-Apr	MANDATORY ATTENDANCE: In-Class Presentations (up to 12) ***Remaining Informational Interview Presentations Due***
3-May	NO CLASS: Portfolio Review by Appointment ***Portfolio Due – By Appointment during final exam period***