

BA324

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Spring T/Th 2024 1935	Section 11:00 am	Classroom CBA 2.564	Grader Venkat Sundaram & Zach Grossenbacher
1985 2000	3:30 pm 5:00 pm	CBA 4.322 CBA 4.330	Nolan Watson Avi Patel LEAD TA

No amount of money can buy back good health —please be wise in guarding **your** health

McCombs Health Center is **YOUR** place to Thrive and Be Well. [Visit them here.](#)

COVID-19 is still a thing. And so is the flu. And so is RSV. Test and masking preferences:

Be sure you are COVID and flu-free by testing prior to classes starting. If you are sick, STAY HOME. Get to know [Student Emergency Services](#) as a resource for attendance and health management.

[Student process for positive COVID-19 test](#)

Self-reporting process and additional guidance for students if they have a positive COVID-19 test

[COVID-19 health information and resources](#)

Useful information and best practices to protect yourself and our community from COVID-19 infection

[What to do if you have symptoms](#)

Guidance on what to look for and instructions on what to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms

[University Health Services COVID-19 information](#) Student portal for all university health information, processes, and guidance related to COVID-19.

[University's mask guidance](#)

Make sure your recommended protective face mask covers your nose and mouth.

[Proactive Community Testing](#)

Will be available throughout the semester and remains an important part of the university's efforts to protect our community. Tests are fast and free.

Visit utexas.edu for all university COVID-19 updates and information.

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COURSE OVERVIEW

The mission of BA 324 is to provide McCombs School of Business undergraduates with a conceptual framework and specific tools for communicating in complex environments and accomplishing strategic academic and professional business goals. This core course provides writing, oral, and collaborative skills necessary for future business courses, internships, and professional positions.

TEXTBOOK ACCESS

Essentials of Business Communication, 12th edition
by Mary Ellen Guffey and Dana Loewy.

<https://provost.utexas.edu/initiatives/longhorn-textbook-access/>
<https://www.universitycoop.com/longhorn-textbook-access>

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Restricted to students in the McCombs School of Business. Theory and practice of effective communication, using models from business situations. Students practice what they learn with a variety of in-class activities, written assignments, and oral presentations. Teamwork and use of interpersonal skills are included. Three lecture hours a week for one semester. Only one of the following may be counted: Communication 324M, Communication 324C, Communication 324H, Business Administration 324, and Business Administration 324H. Offered on a letter-grade basis only. No pass/fail option.

Prerequisite: English 303C or 603A, or Rhetoric and Writing 306 or 306Q or 309K, or Tutorial Course 303C or 603A; and credit or registration for Business Administration 101H or 101S or 101T.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

BA 324 focuses on writing, speaking, and interpersonal communication. Although differences in instructors' presentation styles are a natural and valuable part of a multi-section course, all sections of BA 324 have the same objectives. These objectives specify that business students, at the conclusion of the course, should be able to:

1. Analyze communication situations to make choices about the most effective methods of delivery.
2. Analyze audiences to make choices about the most effective methods of communicating messages.
3. Conduct research using electronic library and Internet resources.
4. Write and orally deliver research-based reports.
5. Use extemporaneous and/or impromptu oral presentations skills effectively.
6. Provide, accept, and incorporate feedback to improve written and oral communication.
7. Write business documents that are grammatically correct and use appropriate business style and format.
8. Develop and demonstrate effective interpersonal communication skills.
9. Use communication technology appropriately and effectively.

Instructor Communication

Instructors use email and Canvas to communicate with students. **Students must use their UT email for all assignments and correspondence in class. Email requests from non-university email accounts will be ignored.** Students are responsible for checking their university-registered email accounts regularly. Emails from instructors can contain important information about the course. When emailing, please **use proper business etiquette**; include a greeting, subject line, clear request, and closing. Emails are typically answered within 24 hours during the business week. Do not expect a reply after-hours.

PROFESSOR INFO & OFFICE HOURS

Elizabeth Hanson Smith, PhD she/her/hers
Email: Elizabeth.HansonSmith@mccombs.utexas.edu
Office: GSB 4.126 F | **Office Phone:** 512.232.3796
Cell Phone: 830.237.7231
Office hours: T/Th 12:30p-1:30pm
and by appointment

PING PONG: Thursdays 1:30-3:00pm @ The Greg Stage



COURSE MODE and COMMUNICATION POLICIES

BA324 teaches developmental business writing and presentation skills. Assignments scaffold and build on each other and are framed using the 3x3 writing process from your text.

We meet in person two days a week *unless you are notified otherwise*. Occasionally a class will be held virtually via Zoom. Notice will be sent, and an announcement posted on Canvas, when/if class mode changes.

VERY IMPORTANT ABOUT COURSE MODE

You are expected to adhere to the course modes. Though this is an in-person course, we may meet online on some days. Some days will be lectures, and others will be presentations. There may be days that you will be assigned to work with your group on specific projects or to watch a recorded lecture/presentation and respond in a discussion posting or another form of response. Your presence, regardless of course mode, is required to be counted Present.

Getting Help with Zoom—Assuming the use of Zoom is necessary

Students needing help with Zoom should refer to the [McCombs Student Instructional Wiki](#) for a set of comprehensive instructions. All McCombs Canvas course pages have this link on the left menu bar for quick and easy reference.

UT Zoom Account

All students must use a UT Zoom account to participate in classes, office hours if remotely scheduled, and any UT affiliated events. For detailed instructions on how to sign up for a UT Zoom account, see [Getting Started with Zoom](#). You will be denied access to Zoom sessions if you attempt to access without a valid UT account.

Joining a Class or Office Hours in Zoom

The preferred method of joining a class or office hours is through Canvas using your UT email account. Students, using their UT email account, must log into their Canvas course site and click on Zoom on the left menu bar to locate links to join the class in Zoom in the calendar on Canvas. Zoom links for a class or office hours may also be emailed by the instructor. Regardless, students must use their UT Zoom account to participate. For information, see [How to Join Class or Office Hours](#).

TA GRADER CONTACT INFO

Venkat Sundaram
Email: VSundaram@utexas.edu
Office Hours: Wed 3-4pm
Zoom link: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/9838189611>



Avi Patel
Email: AviAPatelo5@utexas.edu
Office Hours: Fri 4-5pm
Zoom link: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/94378088391>



Nolan Watson
Email: NJWatson@utexas.edu
Office Hours: Mon 5-6pm
Zoom link: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/93931484471>



Zach Grossenbacher
Email: zack.grossenbacher@mba.utexas.edu
Office Hours: Tues 2-3pm
Zoom link: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/8790498202>



Zoom Professionalism and Etiquette

Following are some best practices for making sure we are working together to create an efficient, effective, respectful, and ultimately enjoyable classroom when accessing remotely:

- Always keep your video on.
- Dress professionally.
- Be mindful of your surroundings when on camera to minimize distractions.
- Avoid display of inappropriate materials or expressions, either visual, textual, or otherwise. Such displays may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Turn your camera off when leaving the meeting temporarily and use the away feedback icon.
- Include a professional photo of yourself for your Zoom profile picture. This photo will be visible during class sessions when you take brief breaks and turn off your video.
- Mute yourself unless you are speaking. This will reduce background or feedback noise and limit distractions.
- Pose questions or comments using the “raise” your hand feature or typing in the chat window.
- Restart your computer if the video or audio is choppy. Here are some other tips: [Internet Connection Tips](#).
- Use the most reliable WIFI you can access. If you experience problems with your connection, check the above tips.

For more information, please see [Zoom Etiquette](#).

AI Use in Coursework

Artificial Intelligence applications are quickly evolving as useful business tools. As with any tech tool, we must consider how to use AI appropriately and ethically. The university has created an acceptable use policy, found [here](#). See COURSE POLICIES below for specific information about this section of BA324.

Notetaking

Use your text-based resources for preparing for class. Enter Mindtap within Cengage to access an abundance of student tools including flashcards and slides. In class, **please either type or handwrite your notes**. Do **not** use your camera or phone as a replacement for taking notes. No instructor notes and/or PPTs will be shared.

Cell Phones and Laptops

This is a very interactive and collaborative course; thus, I will not allow cell phone use during class. I will give you a warning, and if you persist, you could be counted as absent for the day. If there is a compelling reason for you to have your cell phone available during class (family emergency or the like), please let me know before class and keep the phone on vibrate.

I will also restrict the use of laptops to exams, class activities, and note-taking. If I see that you are using your laptop for other purposes during class, I will give you a warning. If you persist after a warning, you could be counted as absent for that day. It's important to remember that if you are watching YouTube videos of kittens during class, everyone behind you is, too.

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. Any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

Class Recordings

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

CORE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

BA 324 focuses on a core set of communication skills and requires assignments that support students in their learning of these skills. Students can expect to work on this core set of skills in all sections of BA 324, although individual sections may add or substitute specific assignments that teach the same skills and fulfill the same course objectives.

These communication skills and the types of assignments that teach those skills are:

Written Communication: Students take notes, keep a journal, write emails, letters, memos, proposals, formal and informal reports, work plans, and evaluation reports. Students practice writing and grammar.

Oral Communication: Oral presentations from 1-30 minutes long use informative, persuasive, and extemporaneous methods of delivery. Some oral presentations require the use of visual aids such as handouts and presentation software such as PowerPoint, Canva, and Prezi.

Time Management: Assignments are varied, integrated, and overlapping, and students must focus on multiple issues, projects, and demands. Students must, therefore, take responsibility for planning and pacing their own work as well as developing time management skills. USE AN ELECTRONIC CALENDAR WITH REMINDERS TO STAY ON TRACK.

Group Management: Students work on group projects to develop and practice interpersonal skills by communicating with group members, other groups, and peers outside the group. Much of this work is done OUTSIDE of class.

Project Development: Groups of approximately four to six students develop projects, complete research, schedule meetings, write team papers and reports, and deliver a 20-30-minute oral presentation using visual aids. These projects build on and use the skills developed in other class assignments. Much of this work is done OUTSIDE of class.

Evaluation/feedback: Assignments that require students to learn and develop evaluation and feedback skills are included throughout the course. These assignments may involve editing one's own writing and doing self-critiques, self-evaluations, or analyses of one's own presentations, interpersonal communication, and other class activities. These assignments may also involve peer-editing as well as providing evaluations and critiques of the work of other class members.

Interpersonal Skills: Students are part of a network in class and regularly work in teams. Skills developed are collaboration, teamwork, and effective conflict management. Much of this work is done OUTSIDE of class.

Meeting Management: As part of the projects, groups meet on a regular basis. Skills include developing project plans, goals, and agendas, providing feedback, and synthesizing and prioritizing tasks and information. Much of this work is done OUTSIDE of class.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: "As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity." **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT.** Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in a previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise, you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT's Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address:

<https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/standardsofconduct.php>

Policy on scholastic dishonesty

The McCombs School of Business has no tolerance for acts of scholastic dishonesty. The responsibilities of both students and faculty with regard to scholastic dishonesty are described in detail in the BBA Program's Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty at <http://my.mccombs.utexas.edu/BBA/Code-of-Ethics>. By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe all faculty responsibilities described there. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all student responsibilities described there. If the application of the Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty to this class or its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, the integrity of the University, and the value of our academic brand, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

You should refer to the Student Judicial Services website at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/> to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty as well as further elaboration scholastic dishonesty.

Q drop policy

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you'll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution. For more information, see:

<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/csacc/academic/adddrop/qdrop>

CLASS SUCCESS, GRADING POLICIES, & REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS INFO

I sincerely want everyone to be successful in this course. However, **BA324 is not an easy class**, especially since you are learning new skills which often require that you first *UNlearn* habits. If, at any time, you are struggling with the course, please set up a time to meet with me so that we can come up with a plan of action. I am a resource for you; make a habit of visiting my office hours or checking in with me after class with questions.

The textbook is a valuable and necessary resource for success in BA324. However, I do NOT lecture over the reading; classroom time is usually spent *implementing* lecture material. What this means is **Do Your Reading in Advance**. On the occasions when I lecture, material will come from various places including the text and any other assigned readings.

You are expected to TAKE NOTES during class. Instructor PPTs and notes are NOT provided. **Successful students** use resources and follow the 3x3 writing process, including Phase 1: PREWRITING, Phase 2: DRAFTING, and most especially Phase 3: REVISING.

The following figure frames the writing and presentation process in BA324 and is worth memorizing:

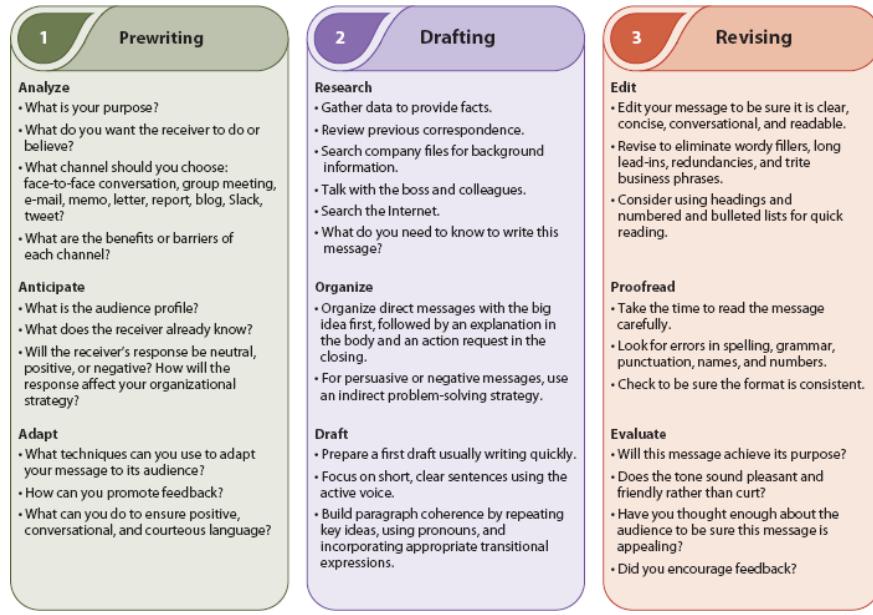


Figure 2.2 Guffey & Loewy 12th edition

Class Success = Preparation & Participation

Throughout the semester, you are expected to participate, be prepared and professional during class and discussions. What this means is be active in answering questions, contributing your ideas, completing activities, and reading the assigned chapters. Your success depends on your engaged effort.

The following behaviors will be considered evidence of your interest in success:

- Having an attitude of learning (more than grade-orientation)
- Attending class and group meetings
- Taking notes during class
- Attending TA office hours
- Completing assignments in preparation for class
- Participating in class discussion and exercises
- Contributing information and ideas that add to the value of class
- Communicating courteously and respectfully to faculty, staff, guest speakers, and peers

- Respecting and celebrating the diversity of others
- Encouraging others by asking questions, allowing others to complete their ideas, and responding appropriately
- Sharing supportive and critical feedback
- Being honest and ethical (i.e., if you do not know something or have not yet completed an assignment, say so!)
- Behaving consistently with expectations (i.e., be on time, stay until end, be prepared, offer constructive feedback)
- Communicating timely notice about absences to peers and instructor via email
- Limiting side-conversations

Class Success = Following McCombs Classroom Professional Standards

The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the undergraduate program experience hinges on this. Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all aspects. The classroom and online experience are enhanced when:

- **Students arrive on time.** On time arrival ensures that classes can start and finish at the scheduled time. On time arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
- **Students minimize unscheduled personal breaks.** The learning environment improves when disruptions are limited.
- **Students are fully prepared for each class.** Much of the learning in the undergraduate program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared, they cannot contribute to the overall learning process. This affects not only the individual, but their peers who count on them, as well.
- **Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues.** Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.

Grading Policies: Total Point Breakdown

Your final grade will be determined based on the following components:

Exams (2) and Quizzes (10)	15 %	150 points
Written Assignments*	45 %	450 points
Oral Presentations *	40 %	400 points
Total	100 %	1000 points

*Capstone Final Project – *total value* 30% 300 points
(this assignment has both an oral and written component that are embedded in the categories above)

NOTE: All grades are posted on Canvas. Grading is based strictly on mastery of the course material.

There is No Curve in this course

Grading Policies: Grading Scale

The following plus/minus scale will be used to determine final course grades in all BA 324 and BA 324H sections (Please note that an 89.9 is still a B+. There is NO rounding up):

Grade	Cutoff	Standard
A	94%	Excellent
A-	90%	
B+	88%	
B	84%	Good
B-	80%	
C+	78%	
C	74%	Satisfactory
C-	70%	

D	65%	Unsatisfactory
F	>65%	

Required Assignments, Point Values, and General Schedule

Course Assignments & Point Value (Dates subject to change; please check Canvas regularly)		
Exams and Quizzes: 150 pts	Pts	Due Week of:
· Exam 1	50	8
· Exam 2	50	15
· Mindtap Grammar Quizzes	50	13
Written Communication: 450 pts	Pts	Due Week of:
· Info Email Assignment	50	3/4
· Letter Turning Down the Job (Thanks but No Thanks)	50	6
· Executive Summary Assignment	100	8
· Capstone Project Plan *	50	8
· Capstone Written Reports and VA*	100	14
· Memo to Self	50	15
· Writing Practice Exercises	50	weekly
Oral Communication: 400 pts	Pts	Week of:
· What's My Story Elevator Pitch	50	1 & 2
· Team Teaching Presentations *	50	weekly
· Impromptu Presentation	50	10 thru 13
· Capstone Individual Group/Oral Grade	50	14
· Capstone Formal Group Oral Presentation *	100	12 & 13
· Business Ted Talk Informational Presentation	100	15
Total	1000	

* = GROUP GRADE

All major assignments must be completed to pass this course!

General Grading Criteria for Written Assignments

Specific criteria for each assignment describing the nature of the assignment and the purpose of the assignment are found in your assignments on Canvas. Aside from assignment-specific criteria, the TAs or graders and I evaluate your letters, memos, and reports on your ability to write:

- clearly, cohesively, emphatically, and concisely, employing Bottom Line on Top.
- effectively in different situations.
- tactfully, positively, credibly, interestingly, and without bias.
- accurately and include all and only relevant content material.
- using appropriate formatting.
- without errors in spelling, mechanics, grammar, and punctuation.

General Grading Criteria for Oral Presentations

To receive a C – SATISFACTORY-- on your speeches, you must meet the following standards:

1. The speech must be original.
2. The type of speech presented must be appropriate to the assignment.
3. The topic must be appropriate for the audience and sufficiently focused.
4. The speech must fit the time requirements of the assignment.

5. The speech must be presented on the day assigned.
6. Main ideas must be supported with facts and figures, appropriate testimony, examples, or narratives.
7. The speech must have a clear sense of purpose.
8. The speech must have a clearly identifiable structure, complete with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
9. The speech must be presented extemporaneously.
10. The speech must satisfy specific requirements, such as number of references, formal outline, or use of visual aids.
11. The speaker must use language correctly.

To receive a B on your speech, you must meet the following standards:

1. Satisfy all requirements for a C speech.
2. Select a challenging topic and adapt it appropriately to your audience.
3. Reflect a greater depth of research.
4. Clearly identify sources of information and ideas.
5. Create and sustain attention throughout the speech.
6. Make effective use of transitions, previews, and summaries.
7. Use good oral style.
8. Present the speech with poise and confidence.

To receive an A on your speech, you must meet the following standards:

1. Satisfy all requirements for a B speech.
2. Demonstrate imagination and creativity in topic selection and development.
3. Develop and sustain strong bonds of identification among the speaker, audience, and topic.
4. Consistently adapt information and supporting material to be relevant to your audience.
5. Reflect an even greater depth of research.
6. Demonstrate artful use of language and stylistic techniques.
7. Make a polished presentation that artfully integrates verbal and nonverbal communication skills.

A D speech does not meet one or more of the standards for a C speech or:

1. **Is obviously unrehearsed.**
2. Is based entirely on biased information or unsupported opinions.

An F speech does not meet three or more of the standards for a C speech, reflects either of the problems associated with a D speech, or:

1. Uses fabricated supporting material.
2. Deliberately distorts evidence.
3. Is plagiarized.

ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

Exams (2 @ 50 pts each)

You will be examined during Weeks 8 and 16 over the textbook material. USE YOUR e-book resources, including study guides, practice quizzes, and student PPTs to prepare for these multiple choice, t/f, and fill-in-the-blank 50 question exams.

MindTap Grammar Quizzes (10 @ 5 pts each)

You will access Grammar Quizzes on Canvas under Modules. I recommend that you take the quizzes as soon as possible and complete all of them in the first few weeks of class since grammar and format are a large part of grading. **MindTap quizzes are all due no later than Week 13.** You will have THREE attempts at each quiz but be sure to NOT submit until you have taken all three tries to achieve the required 89% for passing. In other words, anything less than 89% is a zero; 89% or greater scores at 100%. If you have any questions, please contact either your grader or Dr. Hanson Smith.

MindTap Information

Course Link URL: <https://startstrong.cengage.com/mindtap-canvas-ia-yes/>

Writing Assignments:

Writing assignments follow the 3x3 writing process explained in your text. All assignments are submitted in Canvas and include both a DRAFT and REVISED version of the assignment. See more detail in each assignment in Canvas.

1. **Info email assignment** (50 pts). Draft and revise a mock email requesting more information from a human resources employee about a job posting you are interested in.

2. **Thanks but No Thanks** (50 pts). Draft and revise a professional letter turning down the job you were offered while also leaving open the door for future opportunities with a company of your choice.
3. **Executive Summary Assignment** (100 pts). Draft and revise a concise yet complete summary of a lengthy article for your busy supervisor.
4. **Capstone Project Plan *** (50 GROUP pts). Create a comprehensive, detailed schedule of tasks to complete the Capstone Project.
5. **Capstone Written Reports *** (100 GROUP pts). Draft and revise an analytical report (~15 pages) for a company in crisis. Your team will research the problem and provide recommendations.
6. **Memo to Self** (50 pts). Draft and revise an interoffice memo to future BA324 students detailing lessons you learned during the semester.
7. **Writing Assignments** (50 pts). Practice writing during the semester to strengthen skills introduced in the textbook.

Speaking Assignments:

Though spoken, **successful students begin the speaking process by WRITING!** Consider your audience, purpose, and adapt your message as needed to be effective (Ph 1). Research, organize, and draft a logical outline (Ph 2). Edit, proof, and evaluate to ensure that your message is received as intended (Ph 3; note the similarities to our 3x3 WRITING process!)

Many of the class speeches will be recorded. Successful students record themselves during their practice sessions, so they are fully prepared for the classroom presentations. Use resources such as Bongo and the Speaking Center to get feedback.

1. **What's My Story Elevator Pitch** (50 pts; <2 mins). Practice in Bongo (25 pts). In-class presentation (25 pts). Sell yourself to future employers and classmates. *Extemp.*
2. **Team Teaching Presentations** (50 GROUP pts; 12-20 mins). In teams of 3-7, research and teach course concepts including an application exercise at least 3 times during the semester. *Extemp.*
3. **Impromptu Presentation** (50 pts; <2 mins). Be prepared to answer a short prompt with no practice. *Impromptu.*
4. **Capstone Individual Group/Oral Grade** (50 pts). Teammates and Dr. HS will assess your collaboration, interpersonal communication, and participation in the Capstone project. *Extemp.*
5. **Capstone Formal Group Oral Presentation *** (100 GROUP pts; ~25 mins). Your team will present findings from the analytical report to the Board of Directors of the company your researched for Capstone. *Extemp.*
6. **Business Ted Talk Informational Presentation** (100 pts; 5 mins) Research and present an informative Ted Talk on an innovation in the business place. *Extemp.*

BA 324: Writing Flag Designation (Substantial Writing Component Course)

This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor and your TA to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to **revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work.** You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work.

Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Writing Flag faculty committee also provides statements on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity, Plagiarism Detection Software, and the use of Artificial Intelligence:

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Using someone else's work in your own writing without giving proper credit is considered plagiarism, a serious form of academic dishonesty that can result in severe penalties. Copying someone else's work, buying a paper and submitting it as your own, copying and pasting text (even with changes), or borrowing images from an online source, are some examples of plagiarism. Even if you plagiarize accidentally, you can be held responsible and penalized.

Learning to cite sources appropriately is an important part of becoming a professional. When you are unsure about citation, you are encouraged to ask your instructor (who is already an expert in the discipline) what is appropriate in the context of your assignment. Consultants at The University Writing Center can also help you determine whether you are citing sources correctly—and they have helpful guides online for using direct quotations and paraphrasing. Reviewing those skills will help you feel confident that you are handling sources professionally in your writing.

You can read the University's definition of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty in Sec. 11–402 of the Student Conduct Code. For more information, visit the Dean of Students' site.

Artificial Intelligence

You can find the Writing Flag faculty committee's statement on use of Artificial Intelligence in Writing Flag courses [here](#). See Dr. HS's policy below.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Assignment Progression

All BA 324 assignments build on one another. What this means is that the assignments will become increasingly difficult during the semester, and you may not master one skill before being introduced to another. The psychology of becoming “unconsciously competent” (knowing your material so well you don’t have to think about it), takes time, practice, and correction. Be patient with yourself and do not expect to be good at something you are just learning. I promise you will get lots of feedback this semester to improve your writing and speaking. In other words, EXPECT to be satisfactory (which translates to a C on assignments)!

AI Use in Coursework

Artificial Intelligence applications are quickly evolving as useful business tools. As with any tech tool, we must consider how to use AI appropriately and ethically. The university has created an acceptable use policy, found [here](#).

In this section of BA324, we will use AI tools such as ChatGPT to conduct routine research queries and generate first drafts of writing projects. The end goal of using a tool such as ChatGPT is to brainstorm ideas, pull existing data, and organize ideas into logical order. Used this way, AI tools are excellent resources that optimize time management and idea generation.

However, AI use is limited to what exists in unvetted databases and is unable to critically evaluate its output. YOUR VALUE is that you are human and capable of higher order thinking. The HUMAN element of the writing process is CRITICAL THINKING and REASONING. Being the ‘human in the loop’ means considering some questions:

- Is the information accurate?
- Is the information current?
- Where is the source of information?
- Does the information answer the questions I have?
- What biases drive the responses?
- And many others..... 😊

All submission must be in your own writing. When you use AI during the production of your work, you must upload your transcript. Include the prompts you used to query the tool. Save all material generated by AI tools (BA324.Section_AI-use_AssignName_YourLastName), which you will **submit** as part of your draft process. You are fully responsible for all work submitted, including content and resources generated by AI that may be fabricated or invented. **CHECK YOUR WORK and SOURCES carefully.**

Students are not permitted to use AI to generate answers to exams. Violations of this policy will be treated as academic misconduct. If you have any questions about this policy or if you are unsure whether a particular use of AI is acceptable, please do not hesitate to ask for clarification.

Assignment Submission/Late Work Policy

All BA 324 assignments are due before the beginning of class (unless otherwise posted). Assignments submitted later than fifteen minutes after the deadline will be assessed a 20-percent deduction. Late assignments will only be accepted until the beginning of the next class meeting. In other words, if an assignment is due by class Tuesday, you have until class begins Thursday to submit with a 20% deduction from your total score.

File Naming Conventions and Following Instructions

Name all your submissions using the following format: **PLEASE FOLLOW the instructions given!**

BA324.InsertSection#_AssignmentName_YourLastName (OrTeamName)

If you improperly name your file, one warning will be given before penalty points are assessed. Likewise, if you fail to follow submission instructions for an assignment (e.g., Canvas, TurnItIn, hard copy, etc.), your grade may be reduced.

Grade Questions

You are welcome to raise questions about potential data entry or calculation errors with me. If you do not understand the reason that you received a specific grade on any assignment, carefully review all the feedback given. If you would like to discuss your grade further, wait 24 hours after receiving your grade, but **no more than one week**, and schedule an appointment to discuss grading questions. A tone of inquiry (e.g., “help me understand....”) is the most successful approach. While I am happy to listen to your viewpoint or perception of an assignment or exam question, do not expect this to change your grade since a major course objective is for you to learn how to understand and respond to other's viewpoints. Remember that you are a student, learning new skills, and therefore, should not expect to be excellent.

Should the course teaching assistant initially evaluate the assignment, your first inquiry is with the teaching assistant.

Re-grading Policy

If you believe that your graded work received too little credit, you may submit it for a re-grade under the following specific restrictions:

1. All requests must be submitted with a clear, written statement explaining why you believe the grade was incorrect.
2. All requests must be submitted **within one (1) calendar week** of when the graded work was returned.
3. The entire work will be regraded; if the initial grade was incorrect, points may be deducted. Thus, consider the risk of regrading.

Final Grades

The final grade assigned in the course is an informed and final evaluation and is not open for discussion or negotiation. Any lobbying efforts (e.g., asking for a higher grade because you want one, need one, my poor GPA, it should be rounded up, etc.) will be perceived as grade grubbing. Lobbying does not demonstrate an audience-centered approach to management and will not be successful. Except for what is listed in the syllabus, no additional assignments or extra credit are offered. To make your desired grade in this course, you must produce consistent work that is of excellent quality to earn the points tied to the grade-level standards indicated above. Please note that grades reflect your outputs and outcomes, not effort or improvement.

Grades in BA 324 are based on a student's work in three key content areas: writing, speaking, and exams. These content areas reflect the mission of the course, the course objectives, and the core communication skills that students are expected to learn. Each of these content areas represents a fixed percentage of the course's content. In two of these areas, there is a minimum number of specific assignments required for all sections of the course. Students should review the required assignments for their particular BA 324 section.

ATTENDANCE

Be advised that attendance policies may vary across professors in BA324. Attendance in this section is taken every class period. You are responsible for tracking your attendance through Canvas and notifying me **within one week** of any potential errors.

Class Absences

Since BA 324 teaches both conceptual knowledge and skills, daily attendance and active participation in the class are required. Students should view class attendance as they would work attendance and communicate to their peers and instructor in an appropriate manner. Students with personal or family emergencies should register their situation with UT's Student Emergency Services (SES) by logging onto <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/> or calling 512-471-5017. Requests for assignment extensions, modifications, or emergency leaves must be approved by SES.

I strictly adhere to the McCombs attendance, assignment submission, and late work policies described. If you are experiencing a problem that may cause multiple absences and/or missed deadlines, please register your case with UT's Student Emergency Services (SES) by calling (512) 471-5017. In addition, **contact me ASAP** so we can discuss the best course of action. Even if it feels challenging to communicate with me about these situations, I can only help you if I know what's going on and the sooner you tell me, the more options we have.

Be strategic with your absences; don't use them in the beginning of the semester! You'll likely get sick, have priorities in other classes and organizations, or just need a personal day at some point over the next three months.

You are granted one week of ‘vacation’ to use as you see fit. This means you have 2 days off from this course. If your absences exceed two days, your final grade is reduced by **ten points per absence (10 points off the total 1000 points)**.

This means you can quickly drop from an ‘B’ to a ‘C’. *Instructors reserve the right to fail students whose absences exceed five classes.* Please register with Student Emergency Services if you must miss class for an approved emergency.

If this class converts to an online only format, attendance will still be taken on Zoom. [It is important that you have your camera on all the time and in attendance the full class time. Using just a Zoom photo is not accepted and you may be counted absent.](#) You cannot leave class early unless pre-arranged and you are expected to be on time to class, whether online or in person. All students must be present unless an absence is excused through student emergency services.

Excused Absences

The only absences that will be considered excused are for religious holidays or extenuating circumstances registered with SES due to an emergency. If you plan to miss class due to observance of a religious holiday, please let me know at least **two weeks** in advance. You will not be penalized for this absence, although you will still be responsible for any work you may miss on that day, if applicable. Check with me for details or arrangements.

Late Arrivals

If you arrive 5 minutes after the class has begun, you are considered late. **After two late arrivals**, you will receive a ten-point deduction from your overall 1000 points (10-points equals one-point deduction per late arrival from your final grade...a 90 goes to an 89). For example, if you are late four times, and you have a 91-final grade (910) you will have two points deducted from your final grade with a new final grade of 89 (your A- will now be a B+). If this class converts to an online only format, the late arrival policy only applies to mandatory online meetings. **Bottom line:** be on time.

Communicating Absences to Professor and Team

Regardless of the reason for your absence(s), and especially in the case of group work, notify those impacted by your absence. You are responsible for what you missed and must provide your team with the necessary information to compensate for your absence. *If you have to be absent, use your resources wisely.* Ask your team and other classmates to get information and notes on any information you missed.

Notification Regarding BBA Recruiting Conflicts (from the BBA Career Recruitment Office)

Conflicts occasionally arise between classes and the search for employment. We understand how important the job search process is to you, and McCombs provides many resources in support of career exploration and search. However, UT is first and foremost an educational institution and your BBA degree will be the credential that certifies your education. As such, education will take precedent whenever such a conflict arises.

All companies that recruit at McCombs are informed of this fact. Should a conflict arise, we recommend the following steps:

1. Check the syllabus to see if an exception is provided that would allow you to satisfy class obligations while still attending the job event (e.g., paper instead of quiz, allowed quiz drops, etc.).
2. Note that a job-related conflict, whether a current job or a potential one, is usually not an acceptable reason for missing an exam or taking a make-up and may not be acceptable in other circumstances either. If any doubt exists, check with your professor.
3. If no exception is provided, inform the company that an academic conflict exists and request an accommodation.
4. If no accommodation is provided by the company, and you have done everything within your power to resolve the situation, contact BBA Career Services and request their assistance in resolving the situation.

Note that while we do have influence with the companies that recruit at McCombs, not all conflicts can be resolved, and we have little or no influence with companies that do not recruit through the Recruit McCombs system.

Finally, be aware that it is not unreasonable for an employer to expect you to go to some lengths to show your interest in them. In a recent example, several students completed an exam at 9 pm and were expected to attend an on-site interview in Houston the next morning at 8 am. A 5:30 am flight from Austin was available and the students were expected to be on it. This is reasonable, and such sacrifices are expected in the current job market.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence **at least fourteen days prior** to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.
- You have a right to respect.
- You have a right to be assessed and graded fairly.
- You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- You have a right to meaningful and equal participation, to self-organize groups to improve your learning.
- You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people.
 - No student shall be isolated, excluded or diminished in any way.

With these rights come responsibilities:

- You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, and communicating with the teaching team and with others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
- You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others.
- Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of your peers' experiences.
- You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and for speaking up when someone is excluded.
- You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team accountable as well.

Personal Pronoun Use (She /He /They /Ze /Etc) and Preferred Names

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "preferred name" with the Gender and Sexuality Center (<http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/>). I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the gender pronouns you use (she/he/they/ze, etc.). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. **Please update your profile within Canvas to your preferred name as soon as possible.**

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL (not only online): "Keep Learning" Resources

This course may be offered in a format to which you are unaccustomed. If you are looking for ideas and strategies to help you feel more comfortable participating in our class, please explore the resources available here:

<https://onestop.utexas.edu/keep-learning/>

Disability and Access (D & A; formerly Students with Disabilities office): This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, or if you need specific arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact D & A as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. For more information, visit the D & A website at <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

Counseling & Mental Health Services: Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, I strongly encourage you to seek support. <http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html>

The Sanger Learning Center: Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slcc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Libraries: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

ITS: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

BeVocal: BeVocal is a university-wide initiative to promote the idea that individual Longhorns have the power to prevent high-risk behavior and harm. At UT Austin all Longhorns have the power to intervene and reduce harm. To learn more about BeVocal and how you can help to build a culture of care on campus, go to:
<https://wellnessnetwork.utexas.edu/BeVocal>.

CAMPUS SAFETY

Please note the following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation, provided by the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>:

- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation should inform the instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention.

COVID-19 Update: While we will post information related to the contemporary situation on campus, you are encouraged to stay up-to-date on the latest news as related to the student experience.

<https://coronavirus.utexas.edu/students>

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call the **Behavior Concerns Advice Line** (BCAL): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: www.utexas.edu/emergency

TITLE IX reporting

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms.

When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's relevant policies.

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be reported. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct, including the types of sexual misconduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

Emergency evacuation procedures

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

UNIVERSITY HEALTH INFORMATION

- **Protect Texas Together:** [Protect Texas Together](#) will continue to serve as the hub for all university COVID-19 information.
- **Accessible Testing:** Throughout the fall, the university will continue to make testing accessible by providing rapid antigen self-test kits at [distribution sites](#) throughout campus. Staff, faculty and students can receive up to four at a time. You are encouraged to keep a supply of self-test kits in your residence so that you have them available when you need them. Look for the Healthyhorns QR code sticker on the self-test kits provided by the university that links to important information related to testing.
- **Off-Campus Testing:** Staff and faculty members who are symptomatic can test at a local pharmacy or can contact their primary care provider. Self-testing is accurate and encouraged. As a reminder, self-test kits are also available for free through the [federal government](#), and coverage is available under the UT SELECT prescription drug program for FDA-approved COVID-19 self-test kits at no cost to members.
- **Possible Exposure:** The [exposure action chart](#) offers guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19 or if you test positive. If you experience symptoms, stay home and isolate and follow the instructions in the chart for symptomatic people.
- **Leave/Return to Work:** If you test positive or have symptoms, consult the [HealthPoint Occupational Health Program](#) for guidance on leave of absence and returning to work.

COURSE DAILY SCHEDULE (Subject to change—Canvas lists current dates)

Tentative Class Schedule (Subject to Change) Check Canvas Regularly for Due Dates				
WEEK	Week of	Topic or Activity	Reading & <i>Suggested Practice Quiz</i>	Assignment Due
1	16Jan	Class procedures & basics Introduce <i>What's Your Story</i> and Team Teaching	Chap 1 & 12 See Video Practice Chap 1 Writing 1	BA324 PRETEST Bongo WYS feedback What's Your Story presentations
2	23Jan	Communication & professionalism Introduce Info email assignment and 3x3 writing	Chap 2 & 5 Writing 2	What's Your Story presentation Team 1 teaching
3	30Jan	Basic business writing Using the 3x3 process--Peer edit draft Info email	Chap 3 See Chap 5 for email tips Writing 3	Draft Info Email Team 2 teaching Last day to add/drop: Sep 6
4	6Feb	Revise Revise Revise	Chap 4 Writing 4	Final Info Email Team 3 teaching Attendance tracking
5	13Feb	Introduce TbnT Letter Research basics (library databases)	Chap 6 & 7 Review Chap 5 Writing 5	BRING LAPTOP Team 1 teaching
6	20Feb	Peer edit draft of TbnT emails	Chap 9 & 10 Review Chap 12 Writing 6	Draft and final Thanks Email Team 2 teaching
7	27Feb	Introduce Capstone Project Creating the project plan	Chap 11 Read Capstone materials Writing 7	Team 3 teaching Attendance tracking
8	5Mar	Introduce Executive Summary EXAM 1 (1-6)	Review Capstone materials	Executive Summary Project Plan DEL #1 E1
11-15Mar		Spring Break		
10	19Mar	Introduce Impromptu Presentation	Review: Chap 9-12 Writing 8	Impromptu Presentations Team 1 teaching Checkpoint #1
11	26Mar	Persuasive writing and outlining	Chap 8 Review: Chap 9-12 Writing 9	Impromptu Presentations Team 2 teaching Checkpoint #2 Last day to Q-drop: Oct 23
12	2Apr	VA best practices Introduce Final Projects: Business Ted Talks/ Memo to Self	ADVISING Writing 10	Impromptu Presentations Team 3 teaching Attendance tracking
13	9Apr	Delivery best practices Capstone presentations	ADVISING Grammar Quizzes due :)	Impromptu Presentations Capstone DEL #2 and #4 All Grammar Quizzes due
14	16Apr	Capstone presentations	All extra credit due	Capstone DEL #2, #3, and #4 Impromptu Presentations
15	23Apr	Business Ted Talks EXAM 2 (7-12)	Complete final course evaluations	BA324 POSTTEST Business Ted Talks E2 Memo to Self