BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

#### **MESA COLLEGE**

#### **Business 119**

Fall 2017 8/21/17 — 12/16/17

Section 98291 Hybrid Monday/Wednesday 12:45 – 1:45 p.m.

ROOM K109 and Blackboard Online

Instructor: Lisa Shapiro

E-mail: [lshapiro@sdccd.edu](mailto:lshapiro@sdccd.edu)

Office: G228

M/W 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

T/Th 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Required Text: *Business Communication Essentials by Bovee & Thill***

*The online access code is**required for homework*.

You may purchase an e-book + access code, or a package that includes text + e-book + access code. Please make sure you have access to: **MyBCommlab.**

You may purchase materials through the Campus Store, or online at <https://www.pearsonmylabandmastering.com/northamerica/>

#### **Course Description**

#### This course applies the principles of effective and ethical communication to the creation of business correspondence, and written and oral reports for a variety of business situations. The course emphasizes the development, analysis, organization, and composition of various types of professional-level written messages, analytical reports, and business presentations using word processing and presentation-graphics software. Other topics include interpersonal communication, electronic media, and international/cross-cultural communication. This course is intended for students majoring in business and for others working in a business environment.

**Course prerequisites:**

English 101 with a grade of C or better is required for enrollment in this class.

**Business 119: Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Evaluate and apply appropriate communication modes and styles using written, oral, visual, and digital media for a variety of business scenarios.
2. Analyze and understand formal, informal, and persuasive business messages.
3. Understand the application and interview process, and prepare appropriate material, including the resume.
4. Collect and interpret data, and prepare business reports.

**Policies**

*It is the student’s responsibility to drop or withdraw the class by the deadlines published in the class schedule.*

Honest Academic Conduct

Please review the San Diego Community College District’s policy for Honest Academic Conduct:

[http://www.sdccd.edu/docs/procedures/Student%20Services/AP%203100\_03.pdf](http://www.sdccd.edu/docs/procedures/Student Services/AP 3100_03.pdf)

Ethical and Respectful Communication

This course uses best business practices as a guideline for ethical and respectful behavior. Please communicate using professional business conduct, with respect for diversity. Students who do not abide by this policy may be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs. Repeated incidents may result in a student being dropped from the course.

Appropriate Grammar, Research Citations, and Written Communication

This course teaches Business Communications. Students should communicate using appropriate sentence structure and grammar, as taught in required prerequisite English courses. The course grading rubric allows for point deductions for incorrect usage, including research and citations.

Plagiarism

Please refer to the link for Honest Academic Conduct. Students who submit work that is not their own, and/or submit work with incorrectly cited sources, or work that is cut/pasted even if cited, and/or work from another class or business, are subject to a point penalty, and may receive a grade of 0 for the plagiarized assignment.

Course Participation

A**ttendance is required, and assignment changes may be announced in class.**

You must be present for in-class activities. You will be working independently and in groups. Groups receive the same grade on a project, unless an individual participation penalty is applied as described in these policies. Groups are responsible for complete projects, even if one member drops, fails to attend, or fails to complete the work.

*The instructor will not provide reviews for those who miss class.*

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encourage to notify the instructor and contact Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSP&S) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented as soon as possible. On Campus: I4-405 (4th floor); Phone: 619-388-2780; 619-388-2974 (TTY).

Attendance: You may be dropped or penalized for excessive absences and/or tardiness, as detailed below:

Excessive absences and/or tardiness before the drop deadline will result in a drop.

Excessive absences and/or tardiness after the drop deadline will result in a point penalty of two points per absence, one point per tardy. All absences/tardies will be counted for the semester.

If you arrive after the lecture has started, you may be marked absent.

Excessive absences = two weeks of missed class in a regular semester.

For classes meeting once/week, missing two classes is grounds for a drop. For summer classes, missing two class periods is grounds for a drop. In case of reported illness or hardship, the instructor may accommodate students, but this is at the instructor’s discretion.

**Drop policy for the add/drop period: To hold your place in class, you must be in regular attendance for the entire add/drop period, or your place may be given to a student on the wait list.**

Partial or disruptive attendance and class conduct

To avoid being marked absent, please arrive promptly. If you are late, try to take a seat in the back so as not to disrupt the lecture. When students come and go from class, the learning environment can be disrupted, so please try to take bathroom breaks at the beginning or end of class. If you fall asleep, put your head down during lecture, do work for another class during our class time, leave early, or in any other way show that you are not “present” and participating, the instructor may mark you absent for that class.

**Business Communications is Zero-Tech.**

No computers, tablets, phones, or other electronic devices, including but not limited to watches, may be in sight or in use during lecture time. (During group work, some devices may be used with the instructor’s permission.)

Why Zero-Tech? The emphasis in our class is on discussion and dialogue. This is intended to be a dynamic and interactive environment. Your participation is requested, and it is required. That means the multi-tasking that often happens when you have a computer or phone in front of you is off limits. When you come into class, please turn off your electronics and put them away.

A point penalty for failing to abide by the Zero-Tech policy will be assessed at 5 points for each violation. That means that on your next assignment, you’ll see a point deduction.

Class policies are intended to create a learning environment free of distractions for all students and for the instructor. From time to time, students may feel that they have reason to disregard class policies. In case of any disagreement, the instructor will apply the policies according to the instructor’s best interpretation of what is written in the syllabus.

Late Work and Missed Assignments

Late work is not accepted, and the instructor will not reopen missed assignments. This applies to course activities and the homework assigned through MyBCommLab.

Outline Of Topics:

I. Methods and media of communication

A. Forms of written communication

B. Communicating in the electronic office

II. Basic skills and principles

A. Effective style, grammar, and punctuation

B. Conciseness, completeness, readability, and desired emphasis

III. Written communications for special purposes

A. Interoffice memoranda

B. E-mails

C. Goodwill letters

D. Routine and favorable messages

E. Disappointing messages

F. Persuasive messages

IV. Communicating for employment

A. Preparing creative, functional resumes

B. Writing letters of application

C. Interviewing and writing follow-ups

D. Writing thank-you letters

V. Oral communications

A. Effective speaking and listening

B. Making speeches and delivering oral reports

C. Interviewing and conference leadership

VI. Communicating through reports

A. Conducting research and drafting reports

B. Presenting major analytical reports

C. Managing data and using graphics

D. Completing the formal report.

Reading assignments are required and may include course textbook and supplemental readings about business communications from handouts provided in class. Writing assignments are required and may include, but are not limited to:

Essays that examine and compare organizational communications

Essays that analyze and appraise planning and writing techniques to solve business problems, and that analyze business communication situations

Essays that categorize and contrast oral communications styles

Essays that identify and analyze communications methods and techniques used within the electronic office environment

Business letters with appropriate language and style

Analytical reports based on original research with comprehensive documentation

Communications and documents appropriate to the job search process

Outside assignments may include, but are not limited to:

Viewing and analyzing business communications online and media materials

Planning and composing an analytical report

Composing and revising business letters

Composing and revising letters and documents appropriate to the job search process

Critical thinking assignments are required and may include, but are not limited to:

Analyzing and applying letter-writing styles

Comparing report styles within contemporary business situations

Analyzing correct tone and verbage based upon alternative situations

Analyzing and applying oral communication techniques

Illustrating and practicing theories learned through readings and lectures

Methods of Evaluation may include, but are not limited to writing assignments that test the application of business communications theory and practices to real-world situations, class participation and class presentations. Methods of instruction include, but are not limited to lectures, audio-visual material, collaborative learning, discussion and problem-solving performed in class.

Chapter Assignments are completed through MyBCommLab.

Create an account and sign-in: <https://www.pearsonmylabandmastering.com/northamerica/>

This platform works best with Chrome. Allow pop-ups.

Technical Support is available through Pearson: <http://www.pearsonmylabandmastering.com/northamerica/students/support/index.html>

It is the student’s responsibility to set up and use the online platform, and to correct any technical issues. Support numbers are provided in the syllabus and with the textbook/access code. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain hardware and software, and to do the homework by the due date/time. Please refer to the syllabus calendar, and make sure that you are correctly viewing all due dates in the homework platform online. Not all chapters are assigned in order.

**All assignments are due on the indicated date by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time.**

**All Homework Chapters are open on the first day, and closed after the due date.**

**You may work ahead. The instructor will not re-open missed assignments.**

**Missed homework cannot be made-up, and there is no extra credit.**

**Online Homework: 10 Chapters – Video/Quiz, Simulations, Document Makeovers**

**Please see the Calendar for due dates!**

Chapter 1: Communication

Chapter 3: Business Messages

Chapter 4: Business Messages

Chapter 7: Positive Messages

Chapter 8: Negative Messages

Chapter 9: Persuasion

Chapter 10: Reports

Chapter 11: Reports

Chapter 12: Presentations

Chapter 13: Resumes

Each chapter segment (video/quiz, simulation, document makeover) is weighted at 5 points.

The Pearson Platform will award points/percentages based on completed work.

Missed work lowers the final points and overall percentage.

ASSIGNMENTS, DISCUSSIONS, PRESENTATIONS

This class is rated R. Discussions and material may be “edgy” but they should also be respectful of all students. The instructor has the right to ask for changes.

1. Personal Brand – *Post in Blackboard Discussions and Respond to 2 Posts*

Prepare a flyer or brochure designed to highlight who you are. Include specific qualities that make you unique, and a brief overview of your achievements. You may include a photo or logo. Your flyer or brochure may include both text and images. This should be personal to you, and yet professional.

8 Steps to help you discover your Personal Brand:

<https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/build-your-brand>

Examples of brochures may be viewed at this site:

<http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/handpicked-printed-brochures/>

Tip: Stay away from clip art and “silhouette” images – they are usually vague and convey little unique information.

Think about these questions as you work:

* Why did you choose the design, layout, text, images?
* What does this piece convey about you?
* Why is it the best representation of you in the business world?

1. Group Presentation on Effective Media – *In Class*

Working in groups of 3-4 people, select at least 3 distinct pieces of media, such as flyers, ads, posters, billboards.

Prepare a short slide show in which you show each piece and answer these questions:

* What verbal and visual messages are used, and why are they effective?
* Who is the target audience for each piece?
* Why did these media pieces catch your attention?
* Is there a clear brand message?
* Be sure to give a complete analysis.

1. Job Analysis and Resume – *Submit through Blackboard Assignments*

* Research a potential industry and career that interests you.
* Write a report that describes the industry/career, and includes correct citations.

(Do not cut/paste material – use your own writing, and cite your sources.)

* Describe a specific position that you would like to apply for. This should be your next step, feasible by the time you graduate. (Do not cut/paste a job description – do your own writing.)
* Include the experience needed, location of jobs locally, nationally, internationally, salary, etc.
* Research the mission statement of your target company. Why is this the right job for you? Be specific. Refer to your personal brand.
* What are the three most important qualifications a candidate needs for this job?

(Consider things such as education, skills, personality and mindset.)

* What steps will you take to gain the necessary experience?

Visit this website to begin your industry/job analysis:

<https://www.careeronestop.org/>

* Prepare a resume targeted to the job you identified in your Job Analysis.
* Use a detailed and specific objective statement that highlights why you are the best candidate.
* Use categories for work, education, languages, volunteer, community service, military experience, awards, etc.
* Use facts, numbers, specific evidence.
* Review the examples in Chapter 13.

For examples of Objective Statements:

<http://theinterviewguys.com/objective-for-resume/>

1. Resume Clinic – *In Class*

Working in groups of 3-4 people, choose at least 2 sample resumes from your group, and analyze them in class.

* What is effective? What suggestions did you make to improve each resume?
* Show drafts – a before and after analysis.
* Compare the objective statement to the target company’s mission statement.
* This is a comparative analysis of content and structure.

1. Questionnaire – *Post in Blackboard Discussions and Respond to 2 Posts*

Topics

Select one of the following research topics. You will be preparing a questionnaire, conducting primary research, and writing a report on this topic, including tables, charts and graphs.

* Networking in Business
* Student Health
* Practical Finance

Questionnaire Instructions

* Design a questionnaire that will help you learn about your topic.
* Your questionnaire should capture demographic and psychographic information from respondents.
* Use a variety of questions that allow respondents to check categories and select answers on a scale.
* Gather 20 completed questionnaires.

Demographics include: gender, age, income level, education, race/ethnicity.

Psychographics include: values, lifestyle, beliefs.

Example of Survey Strategy:

You may want to find out if your survey respondents are students, and whether they work full-time, part-time, or not at all.

Are you a Mesa Student: \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Do you work: \_\_\_ Full time \_\_\_ Part time \_\_\_ On vacations

\_\_\_ I’m not working right now

Another sample question might try to determine level of savings:

Do you save money from working:

\_\_\_ I save a portion of each paycheck \_\_\_ I save occasionally

\_\_\_ I don’t save much \_\_\_ My expenses exceed my earnings

Follow-up questions might include: What will help you save money (check all that apply)

\_\_\_ earning more \_\_\_living at home \_\_\_cooking for myself

\_\_\_classes in financial planning

On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is *not important at all*, and 10 is *very important*, how important is saving money to achieving your goals?

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Important

Please note that these are just examples. As a guideline, typical surveys may be between 1-2 pages with as many as 10-15 questions.

Here’s a brief primer on demographics and psychographics:

<https://www.allbusiness.com/what-demographics-and-psychographics-mean-for-small-business-marketing-426-1.html>

Here is a tip sheet to help you design questions:

<http://psr.iq.harvard.edu/files/psr/files/PSRQuestionnaireTipSheet_0.pdf>

**Note: for your research, you will need a total of 20 completed questionnaires.**

1. Report with Research and Data Analysis – *Submit through Blackboard Assignments*

Please prepare and submit a comprehensive research report, including:

* primary research and methodology
* secondary research and citations as needed
* tables/charts/graphs and analysis

In the textbook, review Chapters 10, 11.

For more on Citations: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

For page count and structure, use examples in the text, and the following suggested outline as a guide:

1. Introduction and overview of your topic (1/2 - 1 page)

How does this information apply to your career goals? Be specific and use examples.

Narrow the topic to one or two clear points that you will analyze in detail.

1. Background information and secondary source material, with citations (1-2 pages)

Notes for secondary research:

The secondary research that you do should support and expand upon your primary research. Put your topic in context. For example, what are the trends? Who has done research, and what have they found? Summarize or paraphrase in your own words. Do not use long block quotes, and do not cut/paste copied material. Narrative stories taken from the Internet, and single-source websites and articles, do not qualify as appropriate secondary research.

It is recommended that you use the library databases to find peer-reviewed sources and business journals. You must use correct in-text citations as well as a works cited page. Cited work should be current and relevant, for example, local, rather than international.

1. Prepare tables, charts, graphs to visually represent your primary data (collected with your questionnaire).

Use proper captions, label axes, and summarize the content of each chart/graph.

(Approx. 4-6 pages, depending on the number of tables, charts, graphs.)

1. Analyze your findings – what did you learn from the data (2 – 3 pages).

Consider trends and patterns, make correlations and recommendations.

How did your primary findings compare to the secondary reports that you read?

1. Conclusion, including your original thinking on this topic. Based on your research, what new insights can you add to the discussion? (1 page)

*Total page count will vary, but typical reports are usually 10-15 pages.*

1. Group Presentation: Event Planning – *In Class*

Choose a specific environmental cause, such as:

* Climate change in the Arctic
* Changing pH balance of the oceans
* Deforestation
* Micro-grids

Other – please see the instructor

Working in a group of 3-4 people, plan an event to bring awareness to the issue.

(We’re not actually holding the event.)

Your presentation should include:

* Your strategy – what, where, when, etc.
* Who is your target audience? Why will the event be effective?
* Create your own original media to advertise and promote your event, such as a flyer, website, billboard, YouTube video, etc. It must be original material, not something you found on the Internet.

Your grade is based on total points earned. Maximum possible points by category:

Textbook Homework: 100 points

Personal Brand: 30 points (at least 3 posts)

Group Presentation Effective Media: 25 points

Group Resume Clinic: 25 points

Resume & Job Analysis Report: 50 points

Questionnaire: 30 points (at least 3 posts)

Report with Research and Analysis: 100 points

Group Presentation Event Planning: 50 points Course Total: 410 Points

Textbook homework = approx. 25% of your grade.

Reports and Discussions = approx. 50% of your grade.

Group projects = approx. 25% of your grade.

**Scoring Rubric**

Clarity & Comprehension

* Work shows logic and organization
* Demonstrates understanding of concepts
* Uses proper grammar/structure, citations if needed

Creativity

* Work demonstrates original thinking
* Demonstrates strategic and/or creative application of concepts

Depth & Breadth

* Work includes discussion and analysis of issue/topic, including accurate, specific details, relevant examples
* Work demonstrates research (primary and/or secondary, as required by the assignment)

**Grading Standards:**

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F 0-59%

CLASS CALENDAR

* Textbook chapter homework is done through the Pearson MyBCommLab.
* Please set up MyBCommLab, make sure you are correctly logged into the class, and pay attention to due dates in the calendar.
* The instructor is not responsible for technical issues that result in missed homework.
* The instructor will not reopen missed assignments.
* Due dates for chapter homework in Pearson, and Assignments/Discussions through Blackboard are on the date indicated at 11:59 p.m. Set your software to Pacific time.
* Reports and Projects will be submitted through Blackboard Assignments, and/or posted in the Discussion Board. Presentations will be made in class.
* Check the Assignments Tab, Discussions Tab, and Syllabus for details.
* Due Dates are listed in the Calendar.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **WEEK** |  | **DUE DATES** |
| Week 1  8/21-25 | Syllabus and Course Setup |  |
|  |  |  |
| Week 2  8/28-9/1 | Strategies for Communication |  |
|  |  |  |
| Week 3  9/4-8 | *No Monday class on Labor Day* | **Chapter 1 Due 9/10** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 4  9/11-15 |  | **Personal Brand - Post in Discussion by 9/13**  **Chapter 3 Due  9/17**  **Respond to 2 Brand posts by 9/18** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 5  9/18-22 | Strategies for Business Messages | **Chapter 4 Due 9/24** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 6  9/25-29 |  | **Group Presentations In Class: Effective Media** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 7  10/2-6 | Branding and Networking  Strategies for Resumes | **Chapter 7 Due 10/8** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 8  10/9-13 |  | **Chapter 8  Due 10/15** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 9  10/16-20 |  | **Resume Clinic In-Class**  **Chapter 13  Due 10/22** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 10  10/23-27 | Interview Skills | **Resume & Job Analysis Report**  **Due 10/25** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 11  10/30-11/3 | *Begin Questionnaire Design* | **Chapter 9 Due 11/5** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 12  11/6-10 | Preparing Tables, Charts, Graphs | **Post your Questionnaire for Discussion by 11/6.**  **Respond and take at least 2 questionnaires by 11/10.**  **Chapter 10 Due 11/12** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 13  11/13-17 | Preparing Reports | **Chapter 11 Due 11/19** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 14  11/20-24 | *Thanksgiving week – no classes* |  |
|  |  |  |
| Week 15  11/27-12/1 | Review Chapters 10,11 | **Research Report w/Data Analysis Due  11/29** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 16  12/4-8 | Prepare Group Presentations | **Chapter 12 Due  12/10**  **Final Group Presentations In Class** |
|  |  |  |
| Week 17  12/11-15 |  | **Final Group Presentations In Class** |
|  |  |  |