

MGT 303-01W, (Online) Business Communication
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Spring 2024
Course Syllabus

Instructor: Jacinta Dyck, Instructor
Scheduled: **(Weekly Live/ Recorded Sessions)****E-Mail:**
jacinta.dyck@tamuc.edu [Use D2L Communication Tools](#)
Office: Employee Services Bldg, 121
Office Number: (903) 886-5975
Please leave a clear message when leaving a voice mail.
Office Hours: By appointment. I am on campus M-F 7:30-5:00. Please do not drop by without an appointment. Email anytime. Simple questions can be resolved with email; more complex issues may require a call or a Zoom meeting. Your email needs to be PROFESSIONAL.

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES:

A study of the fundamentals of business writing and speaking, both formal and informal, on a variety of media. Imbedded in this course is the study of life-long skills related to interpersonal communication, personal branding and intercultural business communication.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to develop the following professional skills:

- Students will understand how business professionals communicate through formal and informal communication networks as well as in groups. (Weeks 1-3)
- Students will improve the ability to express themselves in writing, understanding how business writing differs from other types of writing, including positive, negative, neutral and persuasive messages. (Weeks 4-6 and Week 14)
- Students will begin to develop skills related to personal branding including social media, resume writing, interviewing, personal selling and persuasive writing/presentation. (Weeks 4, 9, 10 & 12)
- Students will understand the ethical goals of business communication and tools for communicating ethically in business. (Week 14)

REQUIRED TEXT AND LICENSES:

NO COST:

[Business Communication for Success](https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/business-communication-for-success): a **free textbook** in either .PDF or EBOOK formats. It is available at <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/business-communication-for-success>

NO COST:

Big Interview comes with a pre-paid prescription from the College of Business for each of you. (I will send you the live link when we begin those assignments.)

LinkedIn Learning – every student has full access to LIL through myLeo/Apps.

COURSE FORMAT:

This course is an internet course, with regular live/recorded sessions. As an online course, you are not required to attend, nor is attendance checked. Most classes will be recorded as they happen live, and will be made available to all students via Zoom. You will find the material and information we cover posted on D2L as the semester progresses. The course does require access to additional web tools, listed above, and requires a great deal of independent work.

SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE STATEMENT:

The course will probably follow the schedule outlined in this syllabus, but may be subject to adjustments based on what actually happens in class and on campus. This includes the possibility of a change in the course grade basis if circumstances dictate the need to add or eliminate an assignment or something of that nature. If this happens, students will be informed in writing.

COURSE POLICIES AND INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS:

Students are required to meet the expectations listed below.

- **Professional Behavior:** It is important that you maintain a professional demeanor at all times, including during “electronic communication”. This is especially so in a Business Communications class! Texas A&M University-Commerce expects this from you, as do current and future employers.
- **Assignments:**
 1. **Submitted assignments must be correctly formatted and free of grammatical and stylistic errors.** Students in MGT 303 should have at least some skill with software for word processing, graphics, and presentations, and with web browsers and search engines. **Spelling and grammatical errors will detract from your grade!**
 2. **Assignments must be turned in on time.** Assignments are due at the date listed. Start working on each assignment as soon as you can and make sure that you have the all assignments submitted by the specified due dates. You **MUST** turn in all written assignments **ON TIME**. I will accept late assignments. However, there will be a significant penalty. *For each day that your assignment is late, I will deduct 10 POINTS from your grade. If you do not meet the posted deadline (even by one or two seconds), I will deduct 10 points. If you do not turn the assignment in by that due time the next day, I will deduct an additional 10 points, and so on. Saturdays and Sundays do count towards the total days late, and **after 10 days, you shouldn't bother because it is a zero. I am constantly hearing harrowing stories of lost electricity, lost internet, web upload issues, file compatibility problems, and a host of personal issues that preclude making the deadline.*** Things happen, which why I suggest you start early, and is also why I allow for late work. However, none of the reasons listed above, nor any others I have ever heard add to the time frame or due date of the assignment.
 3. **Assignments must be complete.** You must complete and submit all components at the specified due date and time to receive credit for the assignment. Work that is only “half-finished” gets a “half grade”.
 4. **Regular and timely attendance and participation:** Because the exam content comes partially from the material we cover in class, and because attendance and participation are graded, you need to be in class. *Attendance here does not*

mean “roll check”, it means logins to view the material posted. Failure to attend will result in failure or administrative drop from the class. Participation means participating with our online discussions, which usually occur weekly, and make up a portion of the grade as shown below. It is the responsibility of each student to keep up with the scheduled readings, discussions, and assignments/exams.

5. Online Discussion (Participation) Grades

The “Discussions” option from the “Activities” dropdown menu on D2L is where these will take place. I will post topics, cases and/or questions to generate discussion among you. You are encouraged to respond to your classmates’ questions and comments. In grading these I am more interested in quality than quantity, but there is a quantity component. Students should respond to the questions directly and should expand the dialogue by responding to postings from other students. I read them all and in doing so, I first categorize them into general quality:

- ✓ (Poor/Average) “Me too” and “I agree” responses, or hollow responses that miss the point or express an uninformed opinion; or responses that merely echo what another student has already expressed. Since our discussions generally relate to the assigned reading, **my least favorite are those responses where a student obviously hasn’t reviewed the material, and is trying to “wing it”**.
- ✓ (Good/Excellent) Responses that communicate an understanding of course concepts, or a unique example that relates to the discussion question. Responses that provide cogent analysis, evaluation or examples that characterize a point of view; Responses that demonstrate exceptional insight. In other words, those who read the assigned material, and listened to the lecture (if applicable).

The second part of discussion assessment involves the timing of your participation. I like to see students that check and write and check again throughout the week to respond to other students and to monitor reactions to their own posts. Expected participation is writing your own response and responding to at least three other student posts. **A student who logs onto the discussion once, posts all four times as required and logs out never to be heard of again is graded poorly. Those who do this all on the last day are my least favorite and are graded accordingly.**

6. **E-mail:** Routinely check your Texas A&M University-Commerce email account. This is my primary mechanism for communicating outside of the class. Additionally, I check my e-mail several times a day, so this is the best way to reach me. I strive to respond to any email within 24 hours (even if it just to acknowledge receipt of the email while I continue to work on the request). Most are returned within a much tighter response time.

7. **Plagiarism:** This course makes liberal use of TurnItIn, a software package that tracks sources and gives an originality score. If your score on any assignment exceeds 20%, it affects your grade. Above 40% is a zero on the assignment. Above 50% and the instructor involves the provost's office to record the instance and/or to fail you from the course. In these cases, the student has the option to appeal the finding through the university, to the standing University Discipline Committee.

Loaning your paper to someone for guidance so they can "see how to do it" also results in a score reduction. For details, See 13.99.99.R0.03

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

- **Make-up Exams or Late Assignments** will only be accepted without point reduction if you **obtain university-approved documentation** for your excuse. There are no make-up assignments for poor performance on a previous assignment. Email nikki.barnett@tamuc.edu to accomplish this.
- **Changes to Schedule:** While I plan to stick to the class schedule, there might be occasions to modify the schedule. In these cases, all changes will be announced in class and e-mail. It is your responsibility to become aware of any such changes.

GRADING SCALE:

A	90 – 100%
B	80 – 89%
C	70 - 79%
D	60 - 69%
F	Below 60%

Incomplete - Must be previously agreed upon by student and instructor.

Withdrawal - Must be initiated by the student administratively.

GRADE COMPONENTS:

Component	Type	Value
Two Exams, including midterm and final	Online	20%
Introductory Assignment	Presentation	5%
Strengthsfinder Assignment	Written	5%
Social Media Assignment	Written	5%
Elevator Pitch Assignment	Presentation	5%
Cover Letter	Written	5%
Resume Assignment	Written	5%
Big Interview Assignment	Presentation	5%
Persuasive PPT/Video Assignment	Presentation	5%
DUH Assignments	Written	5%
LinkedIn Learning	Online	20%
Attendance and Participation/Discussion	Written	15%
Course Total		100%

WEEK # & DATE	CHAPTER Reading & Exams	Notes
#1. January 8 Official Start Wednesday, Jan 10	Course Introduction; Syllabus Review; Course Schedule and Rules of the Road. Chapter 1: Effective Business Communication	Sign in to LinkedIn Learning LIL: Communication Foundations
#2. January 15 Monday, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day off	Chapter 2: Delivering Your Message	Introductory Task DUE LIL: Communicate with Confidence
#3. January 22	Chapter 3: Understanding Your Audience Career Resilience	StrengthsFinder DUE Discussion 1: How Many Times Will You Change Jobs
#4. January 29	Chapter 4: Effective Business Writing Chapter 5: Writing Preparation	Social Media DUE LIL: Rock Your LinkedIn Profile
#5. February 5	Chapter 6: Writing Chapter 7: Revising and Presenting Your Writing	Elevator Speech DUE Discussion 2: Learn to Love Networking LIL: Elevator Pitch
#6. February 12	Chapter 8: Feedback in the Writing Process Chapter 9: Business Writing in Action	LIL: Tips for Writing Business Emails LIL: Business Writing Principles Discussion 3: Impact of Bad Writing
#7. February 19	Off Book: Business Etiquette and Cover Letters	Cover Letter Due Discussion 4: Professionalism in Small Business
#8. February 26	Chapter 11: Nonverbal Delivery	Resume DUE Discussion 5: Resume Gaps LIL: Writing a Resume
#9. March 4	EXAM, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 11 Class Material, LinkedIn Learning Content	Midterm
#10. March 11	Spring Break	
#11. March 18	Chapter 10: Developing Business Presentations	Big Interview DUE

	Chapter 12: Organization & Outlines	Discussion 6: Star Interview Questions
#12. March 25	Chapter 13: Presentation to Inform Chapter 14: Presentation to Persuade	Persuasive Presentation Due LIL: Designing a Presentation
#13. April 1	Chapter 15: Presentation in Action Chapter 16: Intrapersonal & Interpersonal Business	LIL: Interpersonal Communication LIL: Communicating Tips
#14. April 8	Chapter 17: Negative News & Crisis	DUH Due LIL: Having Difficult Conversations
#15. April 15	Chapter 18: Intercultural & International Business Communication	LIL: Communicating on Culturally Sensitive Issues Discussion 7: The 30 Biggest Cultural Mistakes Americans Make Abroad
#16. April 22	Chapter 19: Group Communication, Teamwork and Leadership	LIL: Learning to be Approachable LIL: Building Trust
#16 April 29	NO Class	
#17. May 6-10	EXAM, Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, Class Material, LinkedIn Learning Content	Final Exam

AI software will not be allowed in this class. Students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit. This also includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

[13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty](#)

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-Zoom-system-requirements-Windows-macOS-Linux>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>.

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please visit the webpages below.

[Attendance, https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx](https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx)

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the following procedures:

Undergraduate Students Academic Integrity Policy and Form

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

Graduate Students Academic Integrity Policy and Form
[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Services
Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5930

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Website: <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-disability-services/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

Counseling Center Services

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel