

BUS 360: BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Spring 2009, T TH, Room BUS 107

Patricia Kalman, Instructor

Office hours: By appointment

Email: pakalman@comcast.net

Course Description

The core of BUS360 involves writing a variety of business materials (reports, proposals, letters, memos, emails) that adapt to diverse audiences and integrate business communication principles. Students learn to analyze their intended audience and understand the different purposes and goals of communications as well as standards, methods, and issues that are important for writers in the workplace. Students also have the opportunity to revise their work and create professional portfolio pieces.

Prerequisites

C- or better in SPCH 150 (ENG 210), ENG 214 (ENG 310), and pass JEPET or equivalent (ENG 410/411/414).

Textbooks

Required: Writing That Works, Ninth Edition, by Walter E. Oliu, Charles T. Brusaw, Gerald J. Alred

Course Objectives

- Tailor written and oral communication skills to specific business audiences
- Develop critical thinking strategies
- Integrate communication techniques to make written and oral communications goal-oriented, clear, direct, and ethical
- Use business communication principles and graphic tools to organize and present written and oral reports
- Become an active listener and observer
- Develop an understanding of small group dynamics and strategies
- Understand how culture and diversity affect communication and identify specific ways to build bridges among varied workplace audiences

Policies

Participation and Preparation

- PLEASE CHECK YOUR SFSU EMAIL THE NIGHT BEFORE EACH CLASS FOR OCCASSIONAL UPDATES.
- The class is designed for maximum participation, so it is very important that students attend each session in its entirety. It is very important that you get to class on time—tardiness can hurt your grade.

Format of Work

All graded written assignments must be word-processed. Use white paper and black ink. Students should put their name and date in the upper right corner. Papers should have 1-inch margins on all sides and text of legible type. For multiple page submissions, staple pages together.

Deadlines and Extensions

All assignments and exercises must be submitted to me, in class, on the day that they are due. Extensions must be cleared in advance of the due date. Late assignments without approved extensions will be penalized by one-third of a letter grade for each day that they are late (for example, an A- will become a B+ for an assignment that is one day late).

Plagiarism

All work must be original and not used for a concurrent or previous course. Plagiarism is not tolerated at San Francisco State University.

Students with Disabilities

“Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester. The Disability Programs and Resource Center is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process.”

Evaluation

Grades are based on the following criteria. Please note that you need a grade of “C-“or better to proceed to the next level. Grading standards correspond (as nearly as the classroom setting will allow) with what would be expected of students or employees in an actual business setting. Work you submit for grades should be:

- **Word processed.** All out-of-class assignments must be typed or word processed and presented on good-quality paper. Handwritten memos, letters, and reports are not acceptable in a professional setting and are acceptable in the classroom.
- **Clean.** Appearance and format count toward your grade. The proper use of headings, white space, margins, and other visual devices all contribute to readability and accessibility of information, and handling them skillfully is extremely important.
- **Error-free.** Simple mechanical and grammatical accuracy is absolutely necessary. Nothing destroys an author's credibility faster than spelling or grammatical errors.
- **Audience-appropriate.** Readability, a style and tone chosen for clarity of expression and suitable to the target audience, also play a significant role in determining the grade on an assignment.
- **Purposeful and well supported.** Whether intended to explain, analyze, or persuade, students' documents should have a clear purpose that is supported by appropriate facts and details. Visuals should be incorporated where useful, and research should be properly documented.

An **“A” paper** follows *all* of the assignment guidelines. It is well written, organized, focused, interesting and free of or has few spelling and other grammatical problems. In general, it is polished and professional in tone and appearance. ***In other words, an employer would be impressed with the professionalism and clear understanding of purpose, audience, content, expression, organization, style, and mechanics.***

A **“B” paper** is strong and shares most of the requirements of an “A” paper but may lack organization, weaker tone and is uneven. Some sentences may be awkward or don’t flow well. The document may have a few spelling and grammatical errors. Although the majority is well written, it may lack some of the polish an “A” document possesses. ***In other words, a document is geared toward an intended audience and is well organized but the content could be more specific without stylistic problems.***

A **“C” paper** just meets the assignment, but is weak and less organized/focused. It doesn’t flow well and reads like you started it the night before it is due. Sentences contain pertinent information but do not flow or have any polish. Proofreading is sloppy and uneven. ***In other words, there is a deficiency in content, arrangement, concept of audience, mechanics, and style, and the employer has to take time out of his or her schedule to correct the work and send it back for revision.***

A **“D” paper** is careless and inaccurate in places. Organization and tone are weak. Sentences are sometimes incomplete and in there are many problems with spelling and grammar. ***In other words, the work is poor and the employer will be looking for someone to replace the employee.***

Grading

5 points	Memo
10 points	Bad Newsletter
20 points	Cover letter and resume
5 points	Group Research assignment
10 points	Extemporaneous speech
20 points	Group Presentation
30 points	Business Report

100 points total

NOTE: Points will be taken for work that is submitted late. If you know that you will miss more than 3 class sessions it is recommended that you do not take this course. Attendance is taken.

NOTE: If you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate, learn what you missed and make it up.

BUS360 Assignment Schedule

Tentative and subject to change

Jan. 27	Introduction to course; review of syllabus; diagnostic writing; discussion; Ch. 1. “Assessing Audience and Purpose” Read Ch. 8 “Understanding the Principles of Business Communications—especially pp. 282-91
Jan. 29	Memos discussed. Read Ch. 2. “Organizing your Information”; Ch. 3. “Writing the Draft” Memo Assignment introduced
Jan. 31	DUE: Memo Assignment ; Read Ch. 9. “Writing Business Correspondence”, “Letter formatting” p. 276; Ch. 4. “Revising the Draft”; Bad News Letter Assign. introduced ; bring 2 copies to next class
Feb. 3	No Class—Check email on Feb. 4 for update
Feb. 5	Peer Review discussed; peer review drafts. At home revise and bring 2 copies of best draft to next class
Feb. 10	Final peer review
Feb. 12	DUE: Bad News Letter ; general writing issues; Read Ch. 16. “Finding the Right Job”
Feb. 17	Resume/Coverletter Assignment introduced; Draft resumes and bring 2 copies to next class
Feb. 19	Peer review resumes and draft coverletters. Bring 2 copies of revised resumes and coverletters AND your AD to the next class for peer review
Feb. 24	Final Peer Review
Feb. 26	DUE; AD, Coverletter and resume assignment; research assignment discussed p. 585 #1
Mar. 3	Work on Group Research assignment.
Mar. 5	Work on Group Research assignment.
Mar. 10	Present findings to class
Mar. 12	Extemporaneous speeches
Mar. 17	Extemporaneous speeches
Mar. 19	Collaborative Oral Presentation Assignment introduced ; Read Ch. 5 “Collaborative Writing” and Ch. 14. “Giving Presentations and Conducting Meetings”; Read Ch. 6. “Researching your Subject”
Mar. 24	No Class--Spring Break
Mar. 26	No Class--Spring Break
Mar. 31	No Class--Cesar Chavez Day
Apr. 2	Work on presentations—stay on schedule
Apr. 7	Work on presentations—stay on schedule
Apr. 9	Final meeting for presentations
Apr. 14	Presentations
Apr. 16	Presentations
Apr. 21	Presentations
Apr. 23	Research Report Assignment introduced; begin research; take notes and make sure that you develop a bibliography as you go along. Bring all research to class on 4/24.
Apr. 28	Analysis discussed; we will work on this in class; consider where you might place a graph, table or chart; Introduction discussed; HOMEWORK: Refine what you worked on in class; write draft of Intro
April 30	Peer review; parts of report discussed HOMEWORK: Revise and bring 2 copies for peer review
May 5	Peer review; parts of report discussed HOMEWORK: Revise and bring 2 copies for peer review
May 7	Peer Review Executive Summary, Appendices (if necessary) and Bibliography HOMEWORK: Revise entire paper; pay particular attention to Format, Grammar and Mechanics
May 12	Final Peer Review of entire paper
May 14	Final Draft Due; Include a SASE if you would like it returned. Make sure that you include the correct postage. NOTE: Late papers <i>will not</i> be accepted