



Aston American University

Business English Communication (BUS205)

Syllabus

Course Overview

In order to succeed in a technological and global business environment, individuals must be equipped with effective oral and written communication skills. This course is designed to provide business students with an opportunity to learn about and develop communication skills that are critical to success in the workplace. The emphasis of this course is the development of effective communication in business; however, students will be able to apply these communication skills to a variety of settings.

Course Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of effective communication in the workplace.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamentals of business writing.
- Apply principles of effective business writing to course assignments.
- Explain different types of business correspondence.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the essentials of business report writing.
- Describe and identify the various forms of oral communication and nonverbal communication.
- Explain the components of effective public speaking and business presentations.

Instructor Availability and Response Time

Interaction with the course instructor will take place online, by e-mail or via a web conference meeting. If at any time you have specific questions or something of a personal or sensitive nature, send emails directly to the instructor via personal email and the instructor will respond within 48 hours. Please be mindful that some instructors are on different time zones.

Attendance Policy

Failure to participate during the first week of the course will result in automatic withdrawal. Participation consists of assignments, quizzes and exams.

Face-to-Face Meetings with Your Instructor

You will be required to meet your instructor online for face-to-face meetings via a web conference meeting for personalized instruction, feedback on previous activities/assignments, and a discussion of your progress.

You will have eight sessions scheduled to meet with your instructor online. Each meeting is a mandatory requirement. Your instructor will provide scheduling information through the online classroom. Only one student can be scheduled in each time slot available for one-on-one personalized sessions.

If you need to reschedule a meeting, you must contact your instructor **at a minimum of 24 hours in advance** before the session should begin. If your instructor must reschedule your appointment for any reason, you will also be contacted in advance.

Your one-on-one sessions will be **30 minutes (maximum)** and scheduled for each module on a weekly basis.

It is your duty to keep up with the weekly assignments to be able to attend. Many of the written assignments are needed to attend the sessions. If you have not done the written assignments, you may lose the session in question if the instructor feels it is a problem. In that case, you will lose the session and it will count towards your eight sessions. You will also not gain any credit for the session.

Grade Distribution

Assignment	Number of Graded Assignments
Assignments	9
Voicethread topics	8
Skype Sessions	8

*All graded assignments for the course are equally counted (4% each)

Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent Grade
A	100 - 93
A-	92 - 90
B+	89 - 87
B	86 - 83
B-	82 - 80
C+	79 - 77
C	76 - 73
C-	72 - 70
D	69 - 60
F	59 - 0
I	Incomplete
IF	Incomplete/Failure
W	Withdrawn

*Incomplete and Incomplete/Failure: Any student requesting an “I” grade must complete a Student Petition and Contract for a Grade of Incomplete and submit it to the Chief Academic Officer prior to the final day of the term/semester. The petition will specify a deadline by which the coursework must be completed. The incomplete automatically becomes an “IF” if work has not been completed and a grade has not been submitted by the specific deadline.

Academic Integrity

Aston American University emphasizes the ethical responsibility of all its members to seek knowledge in an honest manner. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind simply will not be tolerated. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or misrepresentation of information in oral or written form. Such violations will be dealt with in accordance with university guidelines by the instructor as well as the dean. Plagiarism means utilizing someone else’s idea or writing as if it were your own. If you use someone else’s idea or writing, be sure the source is clearly documented according to the APA Manual 6th Edition.

SCHEDULED ASSIGNMENTS

Module 1 – Communication in Workplace

Module One will provide an overview of communication in business, including formal and informal communication methods, a business communication model, and ethical considerations for communication in the workplace.

Assignments

Review the Module One Presentation

View the Videos

- Communication in the Workplace
<https://youtu.be/ZQ4D2R-Xzf8>
- Ineffective Communication in the Workplace
<https://youtu.be/1l6xASs7uO0>

Module One Assignment One:

- Voicethread topic: What would you do if you heard a fellow employee talking bad about your place of work?

Module One Assignment Two:

- Talk about a time you heard gossip in the workplace and the gossip hurt the company. Think about all of the areas which the gossip affected. What happened in the end? How did it all work out? What could have been done to prevent the gossip from spreading? Was it handled appropriately by superiors? Write a minimum of 250 words for your assignment.
- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module One Assignment**. (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module One Assignment Three:

- You should schedule a one-on-one appointment with your instructor. This is a mandatory session and will be conducted via a web conference meeting

Module 2 – Business Writing Basics

Module Two will explore business writing basics, which includes making a first impression, developing a message that fits the intended audience, avoiding bias in communication, and managing the mechanics of what is written.

Assignments

Review the Module Two Presentation

View the Videos

- Business Writing Fundamentals
<https://youtu.be/Io7g6tUkFZM>
- Introduction to Business Writing: Rules v. Guidelines
<https://youtu.be/IbaGxB2Q3h4>
- Business Writing Basics: Part 1
https://youtu.be/DvAbW_4CIHY

Module Two Assignment One:

- **Voicethread topic:** Discuss the importance of writing with good grammar in business communication. What are the negatives when people do not write properly? How can it affect business?

Module Two Assignment Two:

For this writing assignment, you will need to write 4 emails. Each email shouldn't be more than 150 words. You have these topics to choose from:

- An email to a real-life company about a product or service you are interested in.
- An email to an existing customer about a product or service your company provides.
- An email to a potential customer who wants information on a product or service your company provides.
- An email to a colleague from your department about a recent problem you are experiencing.
- An email to a colleague from another country about a recent problem you are experiencing.
- An email complaining about a product or service (as you being the customer).
- An email replying to a complaint from a customer.
- An email asking for travel and/or hotel information.

- An email setting up or canceling a meeting.
- An email to your line manager (or similar) about a problem in production.
- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module Two Assignment**. (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module Two Assignment Three:

- You should schedule a one-on-one appointment with your instructor. This is a mandatory session and will be conducted via a web conference meeting.

Module 3 – Effective Business Writing

Module Three will examine what is required to develop effective business writing skills, including the use of positive language, using a you-viewpoint, being sensitive to cultural differences, what it means to create a conversational style, and building goodwill.

Assignments

Review the Module Three Presentation

View the Videos

- "You Attitude" Tutorial
<https://youtu.be/DQaE5fFWDd0>
- International Business - Cross-Cultural Communication <https://youtu.be/at7srdUiRfM>

Module Three Assignment One:

- **Voicethread topic:** You have been given the task of letting your long-time colleague Bill go after 10 years of service to the company. The company has been having a tough time making a profit in the past 2 years. You and Bill are good friends and this is the reason you were given the task. How are you going to deliver the news to Bill? What will you say to him? Where and when will you deliver the news? If you have experience having to let someone go in the past, draw on this experience and how you felt while talking about what you did to soften the blow of losing a job for your former colleague

Module Three Assignment Two:

- Your assignment is to reformulate an email located in your course and make it better. What can be changed? What would you add? What would you take out? If you were this person seeking a new job, what would you write. You can write it so that it fits your requirements with your name, real job, experience, etc.
- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module Three Assignment.** (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module Three Assignment Three:

- Take a look at a cover letter to a CV located in your course. What can be changed? What would you add? What would you take out? If you were this person seeking a new job, what would you write on your cover letter. You can write it so that it fits your requirements with your name, real job, experience, etc. Improve this cover letter to draw the attention of the reader so they are interested in your CV which follows it.
- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module Three Assignment.** (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module Three Assignment Four:

- You should schedule a one-on-one appointment with your instructor. This is a mandatory session and will be conducted via a web conference meeting.

Module 4 – Developing Effective Business Messages

Module Four will examine positive and direct business communication, along with negative and indirect business communication.

Assignments

Review the Module Four Presentation

View the Videos

- Writing a Persuasive Message
<https://youtu.be/3tdCt2cJxco>
- How to Have Difficult Conversations
<https://youtu.be/9-xmbBSeu-s>

Module Four Assignment One:

- **Voicethread topic:** What are some rules that you can come up with for delivering a bad message?

Module Four Assignment Two:

- For this assignment, you are going to write a long-time supplier of goods whom you have had business with for 10 years. You can make up the facts yourself but the message needs to be about 1 page in length breaking the news to your supplier. How are you going to deliver the message? What will you say?
- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module Four Assignment**. (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module Four Assignment Two:

- You should schedule a one-on-one appointment with your instructor. This is a mandatory session and will be conducted via a web conference meeting.

Module 5 – Business Report and Memo Writing

Module Five will address how to develop and write effective business memos and reports.

Assignments

Review the Module Five Presentation

Module Five Assignment One:

- **Voicethread topic:** Add at least 3 more tips for writing better business reports that were not included in the online PowerPoint for Unit 5.

Module Five Assignment Two:

- You are going to write 4 one-page memos:
 1. Information memo
 2. Problem-solving memo
 3. Persuasion memo
 4. Internal memo proposal

The content of each memo is up to you.

- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module Four Assignment**. (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module Five Assignment Three:

- You should schedule a one-on-one appointment with your instructor. This is a mandatory session and will be conducted via a web conference meeting.

Module 6 – Oral and Nonverbal Communication in Business

Module Six will explore oral communication in the workplace and includes conducting meetings, developing proper telephone techniques, and the development of effective listening skills, along with nonverbal communication in the workplace.

Assignments

Review the Module Six Presentation

View the Videos

- How to Run a Successful Business Meeting <https://youtu.be/eFY8BNGZB4U>
- Phone Etiquette Training <https://youtu.be/54xYxV1SoaU>
- Julian Treasure: 5 ways to Listen Better <https://youtu.be/cSohjIYQI2A>
- Body Language at Work and in Business: Tips for Better Communication <https://youtu.be/LVeOLIWbnMk>

Module Six Assignment One:

- **Voicethread topic:** Come up with 5 rules for effective virtual workplace meetings and share them. Explain why you think these rules are important.

Module Six Assignment Two:

- Explain why non-verbal communication is important when communicating with someone. Write at least 500 words for this assignment.
- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module Six Assignment**. (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module Six Assignment Three:

- Talk about and explain the similarities as well as differences between virtual and face-to-face meetings when it comes to communicating with someone. You should write at least 500 words for this assignment.
- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module**

Six Assignment. (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module Six Assignment Four:

- You should schedule a one-on-one appointment with your instructor. This is a mandatory session and will be conducted via a web conference meeting.

Module 7 – Public Speaking and Presentations

Module Seven will explore the development of effective public speaking skills and presentations for meetings or other business needs.

Assignments

Review the Module Seven Presentation

View the Videos

- How To Prepare A Business Presentation Quickly
<https://youtu.be/3GqxEFPh2YQ>

Module Seven Assignment One:

- **Voicethread topic:** Do you get nervous when you speak in public? What can you do personally to become a better speaker?

Module Seven Assignment Two:

- You have 2 options for this assignment:
 1. You can make a PowerPoint presentation about the company your work in currently explaining the products and/or services you provide. Make sure this presentation will last at least 15-20 minutes if one were to give this presentation themselves.
 2. If you do not have PowerPoint, you are to make a speech where you are running for President of your country. Be sure that this speech will take at least 15-20 minutes when reading it.
- Write your response in essay format in a Word document and upload it for the **Module Seven Assignment.** (Use the sample paper template provided.)

Module Seven Assignment Two:

- You should schedule a one-on-one appointment with your instructor. This is a mandatory session and will be conducted via a web conference meeting.