

Business and Administrative Communication, GEB3213, section 10584, 3 credit hours

Course Policies and Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Anne H. Southard,
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Office Hours: By appointment, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Office of Technical and Professional Programs, Office 204, Building 320, Niceville campus

Online classroom: <http://d2l.nwfsc.edu/>

COURSE OVERVIEW

Welcome! I hope you will find this course directly applicable to your future career goals; you will develop vital communication skills for any profession. Topics include business communication trends and issues, appropriate methods of communication, communication in a crisis, standard business documents, and presentations and proposals. The course also covers recent technologies for business communications.

This class is hybrid, meaning that much the time we would normally meet in a classroom, you are reading and working alone online. You will note that 40% of your grade depends on your preparatory work and on in-class participation and performance; this is not just a lecture course. Come to class prepared to work, to implement the skills you've practiced and concepts you've studied in the preparatory work at home. Doing leads to learning—in this class, you will “do,” not merely sit and take notes on a lecture. This may be an unusual course model for you, but it is based on research on how people learn.

Preparatory work is due midnight the day before we meet. Note that if you have not completed the preparatory work (worth 20%), you may not be able to participate in the learning activities in class (worth 20%). The preparatory work covers key concepts, and you need to know these, so you will spend the class time making up this work; however, you will not be able to make up the points.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Students will gain a broad understanding of business/professional communications and be able to demonstrate the following:
 - Identify the purpose of written and verbal communications.
 - Assess and “speak to” specific audiences, both orally and in writing.
 - Organize and present business-related information orally and in writing.
 - Understand the decision-making process and the impact it has on oral and written communications.
 - Select and use appropriate wording.
 - Understand the concept of readability and its relevance to professional communications.

2. Students will gain an understanding of various methods of professional communications and be able to demonstrate the following:

- Write business-related messages that are clear, precise, and concise.
- Understand the dynamics of one-on-one and group meetings.
- Give a clear, complete, and comprehensive oral presentation.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Business Communications Essentials: A Skills-Based Approach, 6th edition by Courtland Bovee and John Thill; ISBN# 978-0-13-297132-4
- Pearson Business Reference and Writer’s Handbook, Custom Edition for NWFSC, ISBN# 978-1-269-20580-1
- Pearson’s MyBCommLab

As you read your textbook and other resources, take notes. You will be able to use these in class activities and on quizzes.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADES

All work in this course is individual and must be your own. While you are encouraged to study together, you must complete all assignments yourself unless otherwise instructed. There are six components of the class requirements.

<u>Grade Component</u>	<u>Policy on Late Work</u>	<u>Weight in Final Grade</u>
Class Participation: A significant portion of each class session will entail interactive discussion/activities related to the readings and the completion of preparatory homework.	These activities cannot be made up if you are absent or unprepared. The lowest in-class participation grade, including one due to an absence, will be dropped.	20%
Preparatory homework: News postings in the D2L classroom will fully explain every assignment. <u>Assignments are due at midnight of the day preceding the class meeting.</u>	No late preparatory homework is accepted; nor can this homework be redone after it has been graded without specific—and rare—permission. The exception is the MyBCommLab simulations; you may redo those as many times as you like prior to the due date.	20%
Quizzes: Quizzes may be given with or without advance notice and will cover the preparatory homework/reading due that week.	Quizzes cannot be made up; the lowest quiz grade, including a missed quiz, will be dropped.	10%
Major Projects: You will complete 2 major projects (one social media project and one report) demonstrating your mastery of course objectives.	Late major projects are accepted up to one week late but are penalized 10%.	40% (20% each)
Final Exam: You will be required to take a comprehensive final exam at the end of the course.	Late or rescheduled exams must be requested and are considered for only unforeseen and extenuating circumstances; they are allowed at the discretion of the professor and only within one week of the original exam date.	10%

Grading Scale: The grading scale is as follows:

A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%
F = 59% and below

Grades of “Incomplete”: An incomplete grade (“I”) may be awarded at the instructor’s discretion when the student is unable to finish the required work because of unforeseen extenuating circumstances such as extended hospitalization or TDY assignment. Please note that I rarely issue grades of Incomplete. To receive an “I” grade, the student must have successfully completed nearly all of the required coursework and be able to finish the remaining work without attending class. An “I” grade will automatically convert to a grade of “F” if the student does not complete the remainder of the coursework by the established deadline.

ABSENCES

Attendance is an integral part of the learning process for this course; without your participation, class discussions and activities will not be as rich. Furthermore, much learning occurs as we discuss concepts together. Therefore, you are expected to attend class regularly, as well as to arrive and depart on time. If you miss more than two of the class meetings (note that we meet only eight times), you may receive a one-letter grade penalty on your final course grade. Please note that this class attendance policy does not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences and is neutral with respect to reasons. The policy is designed to provide you with flexibility to accommodate illness and scheduling problems but does not provide “free absences.”

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

This course prepares you for business communication, so all of our communication should follow professional standards. Therefore, when you email me, please consider how you structure your email. In a college or business setting, always begin with “Dear Dr. Southard” or something similar. Starting with “Hey” or diving right into your message is not appropriate. Similarly, sign your full name to your emails (there may be three students named “Tiffany” in a single class). I will extend the same courtesy to you.

Please note that I am diligent in responding to your email correspondence; in fact, you can expect a response from me within twenty-four hours, excluding holidays and weekends. However, since we are modeling appropriate business communication, I do not respond to email that is inappropriate in tone or content, so if you do not get a response from me, please reword your message and resend it.

GETTING HELP

- **Contact your professor** via email or phone.
- **Visit the Academic Success Center** (in the Student Activities Center on the Niceville campus) Students may receive assistance with coursework in the Academic Success Center (ASC) and other tutoring locations (see <http://www.nwfsc.edu/Academics/AcademicSupport/index.cfm>).
- **Use Smarthinking:** Northwest Florida State College provides free tutoring to each enrolled student via Smarthinking.com. To use Smarthinking, access RaiderNet: go to <https://raidernet.nwfsc.edu> > RaiderNet.
- **Contact NWFSC’s Learning Technologies staff:** For assistance with D2L, contact the LTech staff and get an answer within 24 business hours (<http://ltech.nwfsc.edu/forms/studenthelpform.html>).

STUDENT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are responsible for adherence to all college policies and procedures, including those related to academic freedom, cheating, classroom conduct, computer/network/e-mail use and other items included in the *NWFSC Catalog and Student Handbook*. Students should be familiar with the rights and responsibilities detailed in the current *NWFSC Catalog and Student Handbook*. Plagiarism, cheating or any other form of academic dishonesty is a serious breach of student responsibilities and may trigger consequences that range from a failing grade to formal disciplinary action.

TURNITIN

Northwest Florida State College subscribes to *Turnitin*, an online plagiarism detection and prevention service. By enrolling in this class, you are consenting to upload your papers to *Turnitin*, where they will be checked for plagiarism. Papers submitted to *Turnitin* are saved as source documents within the *Turnitin* database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in other papers.

VIDEOS

Some preparatory homework may be online videos, in which case you are required to watch these. These videos can be viewed with a standard Internet connection. If your home Internet connection is not adequate, please remember that any NWFSC open lab is available to you. You need only take your own headphones with you.

TECHNOLOGY PROBLEMS

To avoid losing points because of technology issues, please submit work early. If the college or D2L servers go down, deadlines will be extended. However, problems with student computers or Internet service providers will not result in extended deadlines.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones, pagers, and other such electronic devices must not distract from learning. Courtesy to the professor and other students requires that phones be on vibrate or silent mode during class. No student should initiate conversations, including texts, during class activities. Use of electronic communication devices during examinations or other graded activities may constitute grounds for disciplinary action; such devices must be completely out of sight during exams or other assessments. Where emergency or employment situations *require* access to electronic communication services, arrangements may be made *in advance* with the instructor.

EMERGENCY COLLEGE CLOSURES

In the event of unusual or extraordinary circumstances, the schedule, requirements, and procedures in this course are subject to change. In that case, you will be provided with written notice via email or D2L sufficient to plan for and accommodate the changes. If changes to graded activities are required, you will not be penalized as a result of the adjustments, but will be responsible for meeting revised deadlines and course requirements. In most cases, any exams, presentations, or assignments originally scheduled for the period of closure will automatically be due the first class meeting after the college reopens.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have special needs for which accommodations may be appropriate to assist you in this class, contact the Office of Disability Support Services located in the Student Services Center on the Niceville campus (729-6076, TDD 1-800-955-8771, Voice 1-800-955-8770, email Ms. Fernandez at fernandt@nwfsc.edu). Please be sure to discuss such accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester.

CHILDREN ON CAMPUS

As a courtesy to other students and the learning process, you may not bring children with you to class sessions. If a child-related emergency means you must miss class, contact the instructor as soon as possible to determine your options. Refer to the *College Catalog* and the *Student Handbook* for details on this policy.

MISCELLANEOUS

- According to the *NWFSC Catalog*, <http://catalog.nwfsc.edu/>, students who have not paid their tuition fees by the established deadline are not eligible to attend classes.
- All policies listed in the *NWFSC Catalog* will be observed. Please review the catalog at the beginning of the semester.

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

The professor reserves the right to change the syllabus, including assignments, due dates, number of tests, and test dates. Students will be informed of any changes in advance.

- Each week, read the weekly notes under News in D2L and your blog.
- Each week, all assigned work by midnight before class, unless otherwise specified.
- Submit your assignments via D2L, unless otherwise specified.

Class Meeting	Topics	Reading & Preparatory Homework Due the Night BEFORE Class Meets
8/20	Introduction to the class Business ethics Diversity Communication models	
9/3	Writing skills: Positive tone, active voice, “you” attitude	Reading: Preface and Chapters 1 and 2 Assignments: See D2L News Item.
9/17	Resumes Business messages	Reading: Chapters 3, 4, and 13
10/1	Social media Writing skills: Sentence boundaries Project 1	Reading: Chapters 5, 6, and 7 Resume Other assignments: See D2L News Item.
10/15	Reports and proposals Writing skills: Apostrophes Project 2	Reading: Chapters 10 and 11 Assignments: See D2L News Item.
10/29	Persuasive messages Negative messages Negative personnel communication	Reading: Chapters 8 and 9 Project 1
11/12	Oral presentations Writing skills: Commas, documentation	Reading: Chapter 12 Other assignments: See D2L News Item.
Between 11/13 and 11/30, each student will meet with me individually regarding Project 2. Various times will be available.		
12/3	Apologies Bad news	Reading: Chapter 14 Other assignments: See D2L News Item. Project 2
12/10		Final Exam

Once again, welcome! I hope you find the course useful and enjoyable. Good communication skills are essential in every professional line of work, so this course is designed to make you a success—with your participation, we will meet that goal.