BUS 303: Developing Your Professional Skills: Advanced Elements  
Spring 2018

Class Days / Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays / 12:00 - 1:15pm  
Class Location: Innovation Hall, 136

Instructor: Jacquelyn D. Brown  
Contact: jbrown39@gmu.edu (preferred)  
Office: Enterprise Hall, room 028  
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

In this course, you will continue to develop your professional skill set. You will continue to hone your professional writing and presentation skills, prepare for the job search process, and develop professional development plans. Other topics covered include understanding the modern work environment, business ethics and professional responsibilities, and teamwork skills. This is a required course for all undergraduate business students, and the goal is to prepare you to enter the workplace as a professional.

Prerequisite: BUS 103

Course Outcomes

Students will:
1. Increase self-awareness by evaluating their interpersonal skills and the ability to influence the decision-making processes.
2. Evaluate various business trends, issues, and industries to inform their professional perspectives.
3. Research, analyze, and create information to assist with their career readiness.
4. Analyze and improve their ability to effectively organize and communicate ideas through oral and written expression.

School of Business Undergraduate Learning Goals (those in bold will be addressed in this class):

- Our students will be competent in their discipline.
- Our students will be aware of the uses of technology in business.
- Our students will be effective communicators.
- Our students will have an interdisciplinary perspective.
- Our students will be knowledgeable about global business and trade.
- Our students will recognize the importance of ethical decisions.
- Our students will be knowledgeable about the legal environment of business.
- Our students will be knowledgeable about team dynamics and the characteristics of effective teams.
- Our students will understand the value of diversity and the importance of managing diversity in the context of business.
- Our students will be critical thinkers.

Text & Other Course Materials

Required Text:
There is NO designated textbook for this course; instead, all readings will be assigned by the instructor and provided through Blackboard. Please download required readings and assignments from our course webpage at http://courses.gmu.edu. This course will rely on a combination of online resources (articles, videos, and book chapters).

Laptops
All business students are required to have a laptop or access to a laptop. Laptops must be brought to all classes starting the second class.

Recommended Text:
It is highly recommended that if you do not already have a writer’s reference handbook that you purchase one for this course. Diana Hacker’s A Writer’s Reference is always a good choice. Or, if you prefer digital resources, you can use the free, online source, Purdue OWL: Online Writing Lab (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/).

Course Assignments

Synthesis Presentation and Web Publication (Collaborative): Groups will be created at the beginning of the semester and are expected to work together to prepare a presentation and web publication on a given topic related to course material.

Informational Interview (Individual): Students will interview a professional in their chosen field and write a report.

Employment Package: Résumé, Cover Letter, & Job Posting with Analysis (Individual): Students will tailor their résumés and cover letters to specific job postings, complete peer reviews with classmates, and then write a brief analysis.

Training Proposal with Annotated Bibliography and Training Presentation (Collaborative): Students will work in groups to prepare a persuasive proposal and training presentation for two separate audiences.

Reflection and Projection (Individual): Students are expected to complete a reflection on the topics covered in this course and to project based on individual skills.

Participation (Individual): Students are expected to complete the assigned readings, videos, and homework prior to class and to contribute to class discussions. Students’ professionalism in class, and when communicating with classmates and faculty, will also be taken into consideration here.

NOTE: More information will be posted on these assignments throughout the semester.
Grade Breakdown

Assignments | Percentage
--- | ---
1. Synthesis Presentation and Web Publication | 15
2. Employment Package: Résumé, Cover Letter, and Job Posting with Analysis | 20
3. Informational Interview | 15
4. Training Proposal w/ Annotated Bibliography | 15
5. Training Presentation | 10
6. Reflection and Projection | 5
7. Participation (professionalism, in-class activities, discussions, LinkedIn, mock interviews, quizzes, and homework) | 20

TOTAL Possible 100

Grading Scale:

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Note that final grades will NOT be rounded up—please don’t ask.

Course & Institutional Policies

This course uses a combination of pre-class preparation through reading online resources and student collaboration, and active learning approaches during class time. Students are expected to complete all assigned pre-work prior to attending class and are expected to attend and fully participate in all class sessions. Professional behavior is expected throughout the course as defined in classroom discussions.

Teamwork
Students will engage in frequent small group activities in class and work on group assignments outside of class. During peer reviews, other students may be asked to read, review, and respond to your work. In addition, you will have the opportunity to evaluate the work of others. This component of the course mirrors professional workplace situations, so be prepared to work together and to provide constructive feedback to your classmates’ work through peer reviews and collaborative writing practices. For students who do not contribute sufficiently to their group assignment, instructors have the discretion to reduce their grades accordingly.

Professionalism / Attendance / Late / Make-Up Policy
You are expected to be professional and to abide by the class’s definition of what it means to be professional, which will be set the first week of class and posted to Blackboard. Your professionalism will be considered as part of your class participation.

Your on-time attendance is expected. Contact a peer to make sure you do not fall behind if you must miss class. If you are absent, then please submit your assignment by its due date/time. **No late assignments will be accepted.** All assignments are due by the assigned due date. I do not accept assignments through email.

Make-Up Policy will be for those students who have had an emergency, were sick and can show documentation from a doctor, or set up an absence with my approval prior to the missed class (contingent on the reason). Make sure to email me if you will miss class (before the next class period), explaining why.

**Email Policy**
Check course materials before emailing me, as you will often be able to answer your own questions by doing so. I will do my best to get back to each of your emails within 48 hours; however, please note that I do not check email over the weekend.

Students must use their Mason email accounts to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. Consistent with federal privacy laws, I will not respond to non-Mason email addresses.

Remember that emails are formal means of communication, so consider them as extensions of your professional persona and be polite, grammatically correct, include a proper salutation and complimentary close, and show correct capitalization and spelling. Always include your name and class section when emailing.

**School of Business Standards of Behavior**
The mission of the School of Business at George Mason University is to create and deliver high-quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni who participate in these educational programs contribute to the well-being of society. High-quality educational programs require an environment of trust and mutual respect, free expression and inquiry, and a commitment to truth, excellence, and lifelong learning. Students, program participants, faculty, staff, and alumni accept these principles when they join the School of Business community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following standards of behavior:

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

Integrity is an essential ingredient of a successful learning community. Ethical standards of behavior help promote a safe and productive community environment, and ensure every member the opportunity to pursue excellence. School of Business can and should be a living model of these behavioral standards. To this end, community members have a personal responsibility to integrate these standards into every aspect of their experience at the School of Business. Through our personal commitment to these Community Standards of Behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.
**Honor Code**

You are expected to know and follow the GMU Honor Code, which can be found through the website of the Office of Academic Integrity: [http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu](http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu).

Specifically, knowledge of the following is expected:

1. All written assignments will be completed individually unless otherwise specified. Collaboration and group participation will be encouraged in developing ideas, but students shall write papers on their own, unless otherwise stated by the professor.
2. Source citations must be provided for all referenced work in this course. Intellectual property belonging to someone else must be properly cited. Use APA Citation Style on all assignments for this course.
3. Original work is expected for this class. If you are repeating this course, all work must be newly developed material. Materials prepared for other courses are not to be used to satisfy the requirements of this course.
4. All instances of plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, will result in a report sent to the University Honors Committee and a recommendation of a zero for the assignment, and possibly the course. See the School of Business Recommendations for Honor Code Violations (last page in the syllabus).

**Special Accommodations**

Students needing special accommodations for disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at George Mason University and inform me of their needs as soon as possible. Accommodations for an assignment cannot be made after the assignment due date. Consult the ODS website at [http://ods.gmu.edu/](http://ods.gmu.edu/).

Students who will miss class for religious reasons should inform me of anticipated absences by the second class of the semester.

**Additional Resources**

**Business Library Liaison:**
For assistance with Library resources, please contact: Jo Ann J. Henson, MLIS at jhenson3@gmu.edu, Business and Economics Liaison Librarian. Business scholarly resources are also available at: [http://infoguides.gmu.edu/business](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/business). For the InfoGuide developed by the Library to assist you getting started with research for this class, please visit: [http://infoguides.gmu.edu/BUS303](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/BUS303)

**Career Services in the School of Business:**
Call 703-993-1880 to set up a 30-minute appointment for in-depth career questions. Also, please review the events calendar at [http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/](http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/). To learn more about the School of Business Internship for credit, please visit: [http://business.gmu.edu/undergraduate/career-services/bus492/](http://business.gmu.edu/undergraduate/career-services/bus492/)

**University Career Services:**
For University Career events, see [http://careers.gmu.edu/students/events/](http://careers.gmu.edu/students/events/)

**Counseling Services:**
George Mason University’s Counseling and Psychological Services can provide assistance if you find yourself overwhelmed by life, want training in academic or life skills, or just need to talk to a
professional counselor. Please visit [http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csd/c](http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csd/c), call 703-993-2380, or stop by the Student Union, Building 1, Room 3129.

**The University Writing Center:**
The Writing Center provides peer-to-peer writing support. Writers at all levels benefit from sharing their work with a helpful and knowledgeable peer tutor or consultant. For more information go to [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/), call 703-993-1200, or stop by Robinson Hall, Room 114A.

**Upcoming Career Events:**
- Spring 2018 Career Fair, February 21 – 22, 2018, Johnson Center, Dewberry Hall

**Ask the Professionals** career panels and networking series hosted by the School of Business Career Services:
- **Marketing** – Tuesday, February 6 – 10:30am to 12:30pm, Research Hall 163
- **ISOM** – Thursday, February 15 – 3pm to 5pm, Research Hall 163
- **Finance** – Thursday, February 22 – 10:30am to 12:30pm, Research Hall 163
- **Entrepreneurship** – Wednesday, March 7 – 3pm to 5 pm *(Hosted in The MIX, Fenwick Library)*
- **Business Analytics** – Tuesday, March 20 – 10:30am to 12:30pm, Research Hall 163
- **Federal Government** – Monday, April 2 – 3pm to 5pm, Research Hall 163
- **Management** – Wednesday, April 18 – 10:30am to 12:30pm, Research Hall 163
- **Accounting** – Monday, April 23 – 3pm to 5pm, Research Hall 163

*For a complete listing of School of Business events, please see:*
[http://business.gmu.edu/calendar/](http://business.gmu.edu/calendar/)

*For University Career events, including practice interview days, please visit:*
[http://careers.gmu.edu/students/events/](http://careers.gmu.edu/students/events/)
Honor Code Sanctions:

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<th>Type of Violation</th>
<th>First Offense</th>
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<tr>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>1. Failure to cite/attribute sources</td>
<td>An F in the class; referral to Writing Center; and Academic Integrity Seminar completion</td>
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<td>2. Representing someone else’s work as the student’s own (e.g., copying and pasting)</td>
<td>An F in the class; referral to the Writing Center; Academic Integrity Seminar completion; termination from the School of Business; and at least one semester suspension or expulsion</td>
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<td>Cheating</td>
<td>1. On a minor assignment (e.g., homework, quizzes)</td>
<td>An F in the class; and Academic Integrity Seminar completion</td>
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<td>2. Cheating on a major assignment or exam, submitting course work from another course as original work</td>
<td>An F in the class; and Academic Integrity Seminar completion, and at least one semester suspension or expulsion</td>
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<td>Lying (e.g., providing fraudulent excuse documents, falsifying data)</td>
<td>An F in the class; and Academic Integrity Seminar completion, and at least one semester suspension</td>
<td>An F in the class; Academic Integrity Seminar completion; termination from the School of Business; and at least one semester suspension or expulsion</td>
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<td>Egregious Violation (e.g., stealing an exam; submitting coursework from another class as original work across multiple courses; lying to an employer about academic performance, false identification or posing as another, in person or online)</td>
<td>An F in the class, Academic Integrity Seminar completion; termination from the School of Business; and at least one year suspension</td>
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Note: The Academic Integrity Seminar used by Office of Academic Integrity costs $100.  

George Mason University