BUS 303: Developing Your Professional Skills – Advanced Elements

Course Information:
Course Title: BUS 303: Developing Your Professional Skills – Advanced Elements
Class Dates/Times: Wednesdays, 10:30 am – 1:10 pm (Section 16)
Location: Loudoun campus, Signal Hill, Room 211

Faculty Information:
Instructor: Elaine Viccora
Office Hours: 12 pm – 4 pm on Thursdays in Fairfax and by appointment on other days
Office: Enterprise, Rm. 034 – Lower Level within the Foundations suite
Email: eviccora@gmu.edu

Course Description
In this course, you continue to develop your professional skill set. Topics covered include understanding the modern work environment, business ethics and professional responsibilities, and professional judgment. You also continue to hone your professional writing and presentation skills, prepare for the job search process, and develop professional development plans. This is a required course in the undergraduate Business program.

Prerequisite Course: BUS 103 or its equivalent

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

Undergraduate Business Program Learning Goals
Goal 1: Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the social, global, ethical, and legal contexts of business and will be able to reflect on the role of the individual in business.
Goal 2: Our students will demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to apply knowledge of professional skills necessary for success in business including effective business writing.
Goal 3: Our students will demonstrate technical and analytic skills appropriate for success in business.
Goal 4: Our students will demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to apply knowledge of core business disciplines including accounting, finance, information systems, management, marketing, and operations management.
Goal 5: Our students will demonstrate knowledge and skills appropriate for specialization in their majors.
Goal 6: Our students will demonstrate an understanding of how research in the business disciplines contributes to knowledge and how such research is conducted.

Required Online Materials
There is no designated textbook for this course; instead, all readings are assigned by the instructor and provided through Blackboard. Please download required readings and assignments from our course

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webpage at http://courses.gmu.edu. The course relies on a combination of readings, online resources, and book chapters.

**Major Assignments**

Due dates for the major assignments are posted in (a) the Weekly Schedule, (b) Course Announcements, and (c) the Blackboard folder for that particular assignment. All students should review the instructions and grading rubric for each assignment before beginning work on their assignment.

**Assignments**

(* Indicates team-based assignments)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Employment Package</td>
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<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Informational Interview Memo</td>
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<td>Assignment 3: Facilitated Focus Groups</td>
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<td>Assignment 4: Training Proposal and Source Analysis</td>
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<td>Assignment 5: Professional Training Presentation and Visualization</td>
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<td>Assignment 6: Reflection and Projection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation: In-Class Activities, Homework, Discussion Participation, ProfessionalQuest</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest</th>
<th>Lowest</th>
<th>Letter</th>
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<tr>
<td>100.00 %</td>
<td>93.00 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>92.99 %</td>
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<td>59.99 %</td>
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**Important Notes:**

- Final percentage grades are not rounded up.
- You must earn a C (73%) or higher to pass BUS 303.
- It is challenging to achieve a C or higher in this class if you (a) do not submit a major assignment and/or (b) are repeatedly absent/late for the in-class activities and discussion.

**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, civility, 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

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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. If these Standards of Behavior are violated, then students may be required to complete additional learning activities assigned by the instructor.

**Honor Code Statement**

The Honor System and Code adopted by George Mason University is enforced for this class: [https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/](https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/). Plagiarism is a serious offense and is not be tolerated in the School of Business. In your work on all written assignments, keep in mind that you may not present as your own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement. You also may not borrow the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement. In this course, you are expected to use APA-style citations and reference lists.

*All students-- including those who have taken BUS 303 previously -- must produce new, original work for each activity and every assignment in this class.* It is an Honor Code violation to submit a BUS 303 assignment which is based (in part or in whole) on work completed for any another class.

Faculty are obligated, without exception, to submit any Honor Code violations or suspected violations to the Honor Committee. See the last page of this syllabus for information about Honor Code sanctions.

**Attendance and Participation**

This course requires pre-class preparation (reading and review of online resources) and uses active learning approaches during class time. Students are expected to complete all assigned pre-work prior to class and to attend and fully participate in all class sessions. Students who *repeatedly* do not attend class, arrive late, or leave early are unable to participate in class activities/discussion, and their participation grade for the course is affected.

Students use their phone or laptop to record their attendance via Qwickly, a tool on Blackboard. If you have difficulty connecting to Qwickly, you must advise me in a timely manner via email (i.e., during or right after class). Note: Qwickly sends an automated email to anyone who misses the check-in window, including those who’ve already alerted me about their absence.

If you must miss class, I always appreciate a heads-up email before class; it’s easier for me to adjust in-class activities if I know there will be absences. If you know you must miss class in-advance, you are encouraged to consult the Weekly Schedule (posted on Blackboard) to ensure you are not missing a key instructional day (i.e., worth significant points). Also, consult the PPT posted on Blackboard or contact a peer to determine what was covered.

Students should bring laptops to each class for in-class activities. While electronics are used regularly in class, *cell phones and laptops are to be used only for select in-class activities as assigned by the instructor.* When not in use, phones should be out of sight and laptop lids in the down position so BUS 303 students can be fully present for and participate in class activities/discussions. Using electronics at non-designated times results in decreased participation points for the course.

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Timely Submissions
All assignments are due by 11:59 pm of their due date and are submitted electronically via Blackboard. *Late work is penalized, and the penalty increases as more time passes.* Students are encouraged to submit assignments at least ten minutes prior to the 11:59 pm deadline to avoid Wi-Fi or other technical problems that may delay Blackboard submissions and result in a late penalty. Blackboard is set-up to allow unlimited submission attempts and does not need to be “re-opened” for late submissions during the semester. **ALL course submissions must be turned in by the LAST-CHANCE Deadline of Wednesday, December 11th. There are no exceptions to this final due date.**

Formatting Guidelines
Please follow each assignment’s formatting guidelines and employ good business writing principles -- *clear and concise writing with short paragraphs (generally 4 – 6 sentences), single-spacing, 12-point font, and correct spelling and grammar.* Use APA-style to cite and reference all sources; you do not need to use APA’s other elements (e.g., title page, header) when writing for this class. Specific instructions for in-text citations and referencing are found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th Edition or [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/).

Students should use DOC, PDF or JPG extensions for their submissions. Formats using other extensions (i.e., PAGES or HEIC) are difficult to open within Blackboard and will need to be resubmitted using a different extension.

Course Communication via Email
Email communication for this class is professional correspondence, and students should use proper grammar and tone, complete sentences, correct spelling and capitalization, salutation and closing, etc. We review this aspect of professional writing in class, and the correct format for professional emails is posted on Blackboard. If I receive an incomplete or unprofessional email, I return it to the student and ask the student to revise and resubmit their question or request.

Generally, emails are responded to within 24 hours except on weekends or during travel. University rules do not permit instructors to communicate with students through private email addresses, so use your Mason email address for all course communication. Student emails from non-GMU accounts are returned and will need to be resubmitted.

Collaboration and Peer Reviews
Students engage in frequent small-group activities during class time, which is why class participation is so important. During peer reviews, other students are asked to read, review, and respond to your work; in turn, you evaluate the work of others. This component of the class mirrors the professional workplace where you will be required to give and receive feedback.

Team Assignments and Teamwork
BUS 303 has three major assignments that are done by teams. Students who assume and successfully execute the project management role for their team earn extra points. Students who are obviously unprepared or unfamiliar with the content during their team’s facilitation or presentation will have their individual grade reduced. Otherwise, all team members receive the same grade on team assignments.

For team projects, you are given the opportunity to evaluate your own and your teammates’ contributions. These peer evaluations are factored into the class participation grade. For students who do not contribute sufficiently to their team’s efforts or behave/communicate in ways that hinder the team’s functioning (e.g., “ghosting”), instructors have the discretion to reduce their grades accordingly.

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When teams have difficulty completing a task, making decisions, or communicating, they are not penalized if they raise their concerns in a timely and professional manner; in fact, team members who actively and professionally address team issues receive higher ratings. A key component of this professional skills class is to learn how to effectively communicate and collaborate with colleagues.

When/if there is problem within your team, please be proactive in your communication and review agreed-upon expectations and problem-solving strategies. As needed, the instructor is available to talk with individuals or the whole team to help problem-solve.

**Religious Absences**
If you will miss class for religious reasons, inform me and your teammates of the anticipated absence as soon as possible to develop a plan for missed work.

**Notice of Mandatory Reporting**
As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychology Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing cde@gmu.edu.

**Additional Resources**

**Accessibility and Accommodations**
If you need academic accommodations for special needs, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474 and inform me of any special needs as soon as you have your paperwork. Note that accommodations are not retroactive. More information about ODS is available at [http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc).

**Career Services**
School of Business Career Services is in Suite 042 in Enterprise Hall (lower level). Walk-in appointments are available Monday and Tuesday from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Thursday and Friday from 10:00 a.m. – 12 p.m. You can also call 703-993-2140 or email mycareer@gmu.edu to set up an appointment.

**Counseling Services**
George Mason University’s counseling and Psychological Services can help if you find yourself overwhelmed by life, want training in academic or life skills, or just need to talk to a professional counselor. For more information, please visit [https://caps.gmu.edu/](https://caps.gmu.edu/), call 703-993-2380 or stop by their office in Student Union Building 1, Room 3129.

**The 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. To schedule an in-person or online consultation, please visit [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/), call 703-993-1200, or stop by Robinson Hall B, Room 213.
Upcoming Career Services Events

University Career Services Fall Career Fair 2019
October 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd}
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Johnson Center, Dewberry Hall

School of Business ProfessionalQuest Fall 2019
All BUS 303 students are required to go to at least one of these ProfessionalQuest events.

All events are held in Research Hall, Room 163 on the Fairfax Campus with the exception of the Accounting panel in the HUB Ballroom

Accounting – Wednesday, September 4\textsuperscript{th}, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. (HUB Ballroom)
Consulting – Tuesday, September 24\textsuperscript{th}, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Federal Government/Government Contracting – Monday, October 7\textsuperscript{th}, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Entrepreneurship & Non-Profit – Monday, October 28\textsuperscript{th}, 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Technology in Business – Thursday, November 7\textsuperscript{th}, 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Real Estate & Finance – Tuesday, November 19\textsuperscript{th}, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

School of Business Events Calendar: http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/
School of Business Buzz Blog: http://business.gmu.edu/blog/buzz/
Honor Code Sanctions

Please review the Honor Code posted on the site for Office of Academic Integrity. Infractions of the honor code in BUS 303 will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity for adjudication. The sanctions below apply to any BUS 303 student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violation</th>
<th>First Offense</th>
<th>Second Offense</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>An F in the class; referral to Writing Center; and Academic Integrity Seminar completion</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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<tr>
<td>Failure to cite/attribute sources</td>
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<td>Representing someone else’s work as the student’s own (e.g., copying and pasting)</td>
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<td>Cheating</td>
<td>An F in the class; and Academic Integrity Seminar completion</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>1. On a minor assignment (e.g., homework, quizzes)</td>
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<td>2. Cheating on a major assignment or exam, submitting course work from another course as original work</td>
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<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
<td>An F in the class; Academic Integrity Seminar completion; termination from the School of Business; and expulsion</td>
</tr>
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Note: The Academic Integrity Seminar used by Office of Academic Integrity costs $100.

George Mason University