BUS 303: DEVELOPING YOUR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS – ADVANCED ELEMENTS

Course Information:
Course Title: BUS 303: Developing Your Professional Skills – Advanced Elements
Class Dates/Times: Tuesdays, 4:30 pm – 7:10 am (Section 19)
Location: Innovation Hall, Room 136
Course Webpage: http://courses.gmu.edu

Faculty Information:
Instructor: Elaine Viccora
Office Hours: 2 pm – 4 pm on Tuesdays; 5 pm – 7 pm on Thursdays: and by appointment
Office: Enterprise, Rm. 034 – on Lower Level within 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 BUS 303: Developing your Professional Skills – Advanced Elements
webpage at http://courses.gmu.edu. The course relies on a combination of readings, online resources, and book chapters.

Assignments
(* Indicates team-based assignments)
Assignment 1: Employment Package 20%
Assignment 2: Informational Interview Memo 15%
*Assignment 3: Facilitation/Business Press 10%
*Assignment 4: Training Proposal and Source Analysis 15%
*Assignment 5: Professional Training Presentation and Visualization 15%
Assignment 6: Reflection and Projection 5%
Participation: In-Class Activities, Homework, Discussion Participation 20%

Total 100%

Grading Scale

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Important Notes:
- Final grades are not rounded up.
- You must earn a C or higher to pass BUS 303.

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:

  o Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
  o Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
  o 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 BUS 303: Developing your Professional Skills – Advanced Elements
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.

Faculty are obligated, without exception, to submit any Honor Code violations or suspected violations to the Honor Committee. See the last two pages 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 use their phones or laptops to record their presence in class via the Qwickly tool on Blackboard. Qwickly sends an automated email to anyone who misses the window to check-in, 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 if there will be absences. Also, consult the PPT posted on Blackboard, contact a peer or check-in with a teammate to determine what was covered. Note: When students repeatedly do not attend class, they are unable to participate in class activities, and their participation grade for the course is affected.

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 class activities. Using electronics at non-designated times results in decreased participation points for the course.

**Timely Submissions**
All assignments are due by midnight of their due date and are submitted electronically via Blackboard. *Late work is penalized.* Students are encouraged to submit assignments at least ten minutes prior to any deadline to avoid Wi-Fi or other technical problems that may delay Blackboard submissions. Blackboard is set-up to allow unlimited submission attempts and does not need to be “re-opened” for late submissions during the semester. Except for the final reflection paper, **ALL course submissions must be turned in by the final day of the semester.**

**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), 12-point font, and correct spelling and grammar. Use APA-style to cite and reference all sources. Specific instructions for in-text citations and referencing are found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*,
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 unprofessional email, I return it to the student and ask the student to resubmit their question or request in a professional manner.

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**

Three BUS 303 assignments rely upon team-based learning. For team projects, you are given the opportunity to evaluate your own and your teammates’ contributions. These evaluations are factored into your individual grade. For students who do not contribute sufficiently to their team’s efforts or behave/communicate in ways that hinder the team’s functioning, instructors have the discretion to reduce their grades accordingly.

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 a problem within your team, please be proactive in your communication and consult the team’s charter to review agreed-upon expectations and problem-solving strategies.

**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.

BUS 303: Developing your Professional Skills – Advanced Elements
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.

Library Resources
Should you need assistance with library resources, please contact Business and Economics Liaison Librarian Jo Ann J. Henson, MLIS: jhenson3@gmu.edu. Also, there is a library InfoGuide for this course: http://infoguides.gmu.edu/busfoundations.

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.

For University Career events, see http://careers.gmu.edu/students/events/.

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, 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/, call 703-993-1200, or stop by Robinson Hall B, Room 213. Schedule appointments in advance; the center gets booked up very quickly each semester.

Inclement Weather and Campus Emergencies
Information regarding weather-related changes in the University’s schedule (e.g., closing or late opening) is provided on the GMU website and via Mason Alert. Students can sign up for the Mason Alert system to provide emergency information of various sorts at https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert. An emergency poster in each classroom explains what to do in the event of a crisis.

If class is cancelled due to inclement weather, I hold an asynchronous online class on Blackboard, and you complete the class on your own timeline. Be sure to consult the PPTs and Readings folder to see the instructions, material and due dates related to that week’s virtual class.

Upcoming Career Services Events

Spring 2019 University Career Fair, February 20 and 21, 2019, 11 am to 4 pm, Johnson Center’s Dewberry Hall
Ask the Professionals (ATP) career panels and networking series hosted by the School of Business Office of Career Services. All panels take place in Research Hall, Room 163.

Spring 2019 ATP Dates

ISOM – Thursday, January 31, 2019 – 10:30 am to 12:30 pm
Marketing – Thursday, February 7, 2019 – 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Management – Tuesday, February 26, 2019 – 10:00 am to noon
Finance – Wednesday, March 6, 2019 – 10:00 am to noon
Entrepreneurship – Thursday, March 28, 2019 – 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Government – Wednesday, April 9, 2019 – 10:30 am to 12:30 pm
Accounting – Tuesday, April 23, 2019 – 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

School of Business Events Calendar: http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/

### Honor Code Sanctions

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<th>Type of Violation</th>
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<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>1. Failure to cite/attribute sources</td>
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<td>2. 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>
<td>An F in the class; and Academic Integrity Seminar completion, and at least one semester suspension</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>
<td>An F in the class; Academic Integrity Seminar completion; termination from the School of Business; and expulsion</td>
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Note: The Academic Integrity Seminar used by Office of Academic Integrity costs $100. George Mason University