BUS 103: DEVELOPING YOUR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS: FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

Course Information:

Course Title: BUS 103: Developing Your Professional Skills: Foundational Elements
Class Dates/Times:
Location:
Course Webpage: http://courses.gmu.edu

Faculty Information:
Instructor: Cameron J. Harris
Office Hours: Tuesday 2pm-4pm, Wednesday 2-4pm or by appointment
Office: Enterprise Hall, Office 029
Email: charris@gmu.edu

Course Description:
In this course, students will begin to investigate and develop their professional skill set. Topics covered include an introduction to the business school and the business world, what it means to be professional, how to consume the business press, and how to research business issues. Students also will begin to develop professional writing and presentation skills, explore career options and the job search process, and develop personal educational and professional development plans.

Prerequisite Courses:
None

Course Outcomes

Students will:
1. Demonstrate an understanding of skills necessary to be successful as a student.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the job search process.
3. Understand and identify various business functions.
4. Apply knowledgeable about group dynamics and development to team environments.
5. Understand and respect diversity and difference in the context of business.
6. Develop and enhance critical thinking skills.

Undergraduate program learning goals (those in bold will be addressed in this class):

1. Our students will be competent in their discipline.
2. **Our students will be aware of the uses of technology in business.**
3. **Our students will be effective communicators.**
4. Our students will have an interdisciplinary perspective.
5. Our students will be knowledgeable about global business and trade.
6. **Our students will recognize the importance of ethical decisions.**
7. Our students will be knowledgeable about the legal environment of business.
8. **Our students will be knowledgeable about team dynamics and the characteristics of effective teams.**
9. Our students will understand the value of diversity and the importance of managing diversity in the context of business.
10. **Our students will be critical thinkers.**
**Required Online Materials:**
Please download required readings and assignments from our course Webpage, [http://courses.gmu.edu](http://courses.gmu.edu). The course will rely on a combination of readings, online resources, and book chapters.

**Approaches to Learning:**
This course uses a combination of pre-class preparation through reading and online resources 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.

**Assignments:**
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>attendance, peer reviews, in-class activities, homework</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Time Management Activity</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Resume Critique &amp; Reflection</td>
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<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>Informational Interview (Protocol &amp; Analysis)</td>
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<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>Professional Development Plan (Report &amp; Presentation)</td>
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<td>Assignment 5</td>
<td>Course Reflection</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Grading Scale:**

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**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 Statement:**

*Honor System and Code:* The Honor System and Code adopted by George Mason University will be enforced for this class: [http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/](http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/) You will sign a statement on the second day of class certifying that you have read the Code, have asked any questions, and have a complete understanding of all elements of the Code.

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. Please note: Faculty are obligated, without exception, to submit any Honor Code violations or suspected violations to the Honor Committee.

**Attendance & Participation:**
On time attendance in class is expected. If, for some reason you must miss class, you should contact a peer to make sure you do not fall further behind in readings/assignments.

At various points in the course you may need to use electronic devices in class, please limit your use to course related topics. Other use may result in decreased participation points for the day/week.

**Timely Submissions:**
All assignments are due by their due date. If you are absent, please submit your assignment by its due date/time.

**Formatting Guidelines:**
Please follow each assignment’s guidelines for formatting. If unspecified, use *single-spacing*, left alignment, one-inch margins, 12-point font. To cite and reference professional or academic sources, please use APA style. Specific instructions for in-text citations and referencing are found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th Edition or at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)

**Course Communication via Emails & GMU Email Account:**
Email correspondence for this class should be considered professional correspondence. Use this opportunity to practice engaging in professional correspondence, including proper grammar and tone, complete sentences, correct spelling and capitalization, salutation and closing, etc. Generally, I will respond to your e-mails within 24-48 hrs., except on weekends or during travel. University rules preclude me from communicating with you through private email addresses. As such, please use your Mason email addresses for all course communication.

**Peer Reviews, Collaborative Writing, and Group Work:**
Students will engage in frequent small group activities during class time. During peer reviews, other students may be asked to read, review, and respond to your work. You will have the opportunity to evaluate your team members’ performances. This component of the class mirrors several professional workplace situations that require giving and receiving feedback, and this evaluation will count toward your individual participation grade.
Additional Resources:

Accessibility and Accommodations:
If you need academic accommodations for students with special needs, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474 and inform me of any special needs by the first week of classes. More information about ODS is available at [http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc)

Business Library Liaison:
Should you need assistance Library resources, please contact our Business and Economics Liaison Librarian
Jo Ann J. Henson, MLIS  jhenson3@gmu.edu

Fenwick Library Fairfax Campus: [http://infoguides.gmu.edu/business](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/business)

Religion:
Students who will miss class for religious reasons should inform me of their anticipated absences as soon as possible.

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 their events calendar at [http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/](http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/).

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. For more information, please visit [http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdcr/](http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdcr/), call 703-993-2380 or stop by their office at the 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 appointment online, please visit: More information is available at [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/), call 703-993-1200, or stop by Robinson Hall, Room 114A.

Inclement Weather and Campus Emergencies:
Information regarding weather-related changes in the University’s schedule (e.g., closing or late opening) will be provided on the GMU website and via MasonAlert. Students can sign up for the Mason Alert system to provide emergency information of various sorts at [https://alert.gmu.edu](https://alert.gmu.edu). An emergency poster in each classroom explains what to do in the event of crisis. For further information about emergency procedures, please visit [http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert](http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert) or call 703-993-3375.

Upcoming Events:
Part-time Jobs Career Fair  September 2nd, 11am-2pm, Johnson Center, Dewberry Hall
Distinguished Speaker Series  September 15, 6-8pm, Johnson Center, Georges
Fall Career Fair  October 7th & 8th, 11am-4pm, Johnson Center, Dewberry Hall

For a complete listing of School of Business events, please see: [http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/](http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/)
For University Career events, please see: [http://careers.gmu.edu/students/events/](http://careers.gmu.edu/students/events/)

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