BUS 103: DEVELOPING YOUR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS – FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

Course Information:
Course Title: BUS 103: Developing Your Professional Skills – Foundational Elements
Class Dates/Times: MW 3 p.m.–4:15 p.m.
Location: Music/Theater Building 1002
Course Webpage: http://courses.gmu.edu

Faculty Information:
Instructor: Colleen Reynolds, PhD
Office Hours: MW 1:20 p.m.–2 p.m., Tues 12 p.m.–2 p.m., Thurs 2 p.m.–2:40 p.m.
Office: Enterprise 032
Email: creyno10@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 will also 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:
1. Students will increase self-awareness by evaluating their intrapersonal skills and decision-making processes.
2. Students will explore and identify various business functions, and the opportunities at GMU and the School of Business.
3. Students will research, analyze, and evaluate information to assist with their academic and career planning.
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 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](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. Professional behavior is expected throughout the course as defined in classroom discussions.

**Assignments:**
Assignment 1: Time Management Log and Reflection 10%
Assignment 2: Business Press Paper (informal presentation) 10%
Assignment 3: Business Functions Paper (formal presentation) 15%
Assignment 4: Résumé Critique and Reflection 15%
Assignment 5: Professional Development Plan (formal presentations) 25%
Participation: (Ask the Professionals, In-Class Activities, Peer Reviews, Readings, Homework) 25%

**Grading Scale:**

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

**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

BUS 103: Developing Your Professional Skills – Foundational Elements
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. The 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 will be enforced for this class: [https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/](https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/). Plagiarism is a serious offense and will 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:**
On-time attendance in class is expected. If, for some reason, you must miss class, you should contact a peer to assess what was covered. 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 course.

**Timely Submissions:**
All assignments are due by their due date/time and should be posted to Blackboard unless otherwise specified. If you are absent, you are still expected to submit your assignment by its due date/time. Late work will be penalized.

**Formatting Guidelines:**
Please follow each assignment’s guidelines for formatting. 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*, 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 Email:**
Email communication for this class is professional correspondence. Use this opportunity to practice professional writing, including proper grammar and tone, complete sentences, correct spelling and capitalization, salutation and closing, etc. Generally, emails will be responded to within 24-48 hours except on weekends or during travel. University rules preclude instructors from communicating with students through private email addresses; use your Mason email address 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. In addition, you will have the opportunity to evaluate the work of others. This component of the class mirrors professional workplace situations that require giving and receiving feedback, and these evaluations will count toward your
individual grade. For students who do not contribute sufficiently to their group assignment, instructors have the discretion to reduce their grades accordingly.

**Religious Absences:**
If you will miss class for religious reasons, inform the instructor of the anticipated absence as soon as possible.

**Notice of Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Assault, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking:** 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 the instructor 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).

**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](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/busfoundations).

**Career Services in the School of Business**
Career Services is located in Suite 038 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. Review the career events calendar at [http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/](http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/).

**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. 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 appointment, please visit [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/), call 703-993-1200, or stop by Robinson Hall A, Room 114. 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) will be 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.

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:

**Spring 2018 ATP Dates**

- **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

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

Business Buzz Blog:
http://business.gmu.edu/blog/buzz/

Mason Diversity Statement

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

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**Honor Code Sanctions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School of Business Recommendations for Honor Code Violations</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Approved May 2016</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UG-Freshman Students</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Type of Violation</th>
<th>First Offense</th>
<th>Second Offense</th>
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<td>Plagiarism</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Failure to cite/attribute sources</td>
<td>A 10% reduction in the final course grade; referral to the Writing Center; and Academic Integrity Seminar completion</td>
<td>An F in the class; referral to the 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; 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>
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<td>Lying (e.g., providing fraudulent excuse documents, falsifying data)</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>
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*Note: The Academic Integrity Seminar used by Office of Academic Integrity costs $100.*
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