BUS 315: INTRODUCTION TO THE GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING INDUSTRY

Course Information:
Course Title: BUS 315 Section 001: Introduction to the Government Contracting Industry
Class Dates/Times: Distance Learning via Asynchronous with Occasional Meetings
Location: Virtual

Faculty Information:
Instructor: Sophia Marshall, MHR, Business Foundations
Office Hours: TBA and By Appointment (via WebEx, Zoom, Collaborate Ultra)
Office: Enterprise 133
Email: smarsha@gmu.edu

Course Description:
Billions of dollars are spent annually on contracts that supply goods and services in support of the U.S. government. As the government contracting (govcon) sector continues to grow, so will the need for capable professionals who can illustrate and apply their knowledge of unique govcon concepts immediately when entering this dynamic industry. This course combines foundational govcon concepts and career readiness competencies, providing students with a blueprint to enter and build a successful career in the govcon industry. By understanding these key concepts and competencies students will be able to remain competitive throughout their career.

Programs:
Required course for Government Contracting Minor

Prerequisite Course(s):
MGMT 303, Principles of Management
BULE 303, Legal Environment of Business

Course Outcomes:
Students will be able to
1. Discuss the past and present landscape for the government contracting industry
2. Recognize the differences being part of the govcon workforce vs. non-govcon workforce
3. Identify potential career paths within the govcon industry
4. Produce evidence for individual skills and competencies for industry success
5. Build knowledge of how to secure a government contract for products and/or services
6. Research industry resources for remaining current in the govcon industry

Undergraduate Business Program Learning Goals:
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.
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.
3. Our students will demonstrate technical and analytic skills appropriate for success in business.

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.**

5. **Our students will demonstrate knowledge and skills appropriate for specialization in their majors.**

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 required text for this course. Readings will be placed on Blackboard and will come from a combination of readings, online resources, and book chapters providing a broad perspective of the govcon industry and career development. Please download required readings and assignments from our course webpage at [http://courses.gmu.edu](http://courses.gmu.edu).

**Approaches to Learning:**
This course is divided into three sections that will provide an overview of the entire industry. The course will also utilize different formats including lecture, seminar, and discussion. This course will make use of student interactive involvement through research of, relation to, and application of each class topic. Guest speakers specific to topics will provide students with direct exposure to professionals currently involved with the industry.

**Course Projects:**
There are four projects in the course. Each project serves as a culmination of concepts learned throughout each unit.

| Project 1: Mission Alignment (Research, Essay) | 10% |
| Project 2: GovCon Career Portfolio (Source Document; Accomplishment; Interview) | 20% |
| Project 3: Entrepreneurship (Product/Service Overview) | 10% |
| Project 4: Industry Compilation (Group Project) | 30% |
| Midterm & Final | 10% |
| Activities (Discussion Board, Journals, Speakers, etc.) | 20% |
| **Total** | **100%** |

**Grading Scale:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest</th>
<th>Lowest</th>
<th>Letter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100.00 %</td>
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<td>92.99 %</td>
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<td>86.99 %</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>59.99 %</td>
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</table>

This course requires a minimum of a C to satisfy School of Business degree requirements. Please see the Office of Student and Academic Services for academic policies and procedures.
Grading Policy & Timely Submissions:
Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the assigned due date, as found in the schedule. All work should be posted to Blackboard unless otherwise noted. Submissions posted within 24 hours after that time (i.e. 11:59 pm on the day after the due date) are subject to an immediate decrease in half the points of the assignment, if the instructor should choose to review it. After the 24-hour period, assignments will not be accepted. Policy is subject to change based on the assignment type.
Exceptions may be granted by the instructor, but only on a case-by-case basis and, in general, that meet the following criteria:
1. I have been made aware of your situation/reason within a realistic amount of time prior to the original due date and
2. you have received an acknowledgement from me prior to the original due date.

Safe Return to Campus
In accordance with University Policy 1415, all faculty, staff, students, guests, vendors, and visitors must wear face coverings on campus and in university buildings including during class. Students without masks will be asked to leave the classroom and may return once they are wearing a mask.

All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to take Safe Return to Campus Training prior to visiting campus. Training is available in Blackboard (https://mymason.gmu.edu). Students are required to follow the university’s public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-plan).

Similarly, all students in face to face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check daily, seven days a week. The COVID Health Check system uses a color code system and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, or Red email response. Only students who receive a “green” notification are permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty members are allowed to ask you to show them that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.

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.

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.

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

Commitment to Inclusion and Anti-Racism
As a member of the George Mason University community, the School of Business plays an integral role in building an educational environment that is committed to anti-racism and inclusive excellence. An anti-racist approach to higher education acknowledges the ways that individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural manifestations of racism against Black individuals and other people of color contribute to inequality and injustice in our classrooms, on our campuses, and in our communities, and it strives to provide our community members with resources to interrupt cycles of racism so as to cultivate a more equitable, inclusive, and just environment for all of our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends, regardless of racial background.

To be anti-racist means:
- To make constant, conscious decisions to interrupt racism and cultivate equity, inclusion, and justice for people of all racial backgrounds, and in particular those from Black communities and other communities of color, who are most likely to bear the direct and indirect costs of systems of white supremacy;
- To interrogate histories of white supremacy and white-dominant culture, and to examine the ways in which these histories have impacted our individual beliefs, our interpersonal relationships, our institutional and structural policies and processes, and our entire society;
- To make a commitment to being responsible for our own relationships to, and actions within, systems of white supremacy; and
- To cultivate a practice of self-awareness and self-reflection that allows us to critically evaluate our own role in upholding white supremacy and identify the ways we can interrupt cycles of racism at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels.

We believe that the work of anti-racism starts with each individual, and that in cultivating an anti-racist approach to research, scholarship, and practice, our students will build a skillset rooted in principles of equity, inclusion, and justice that they will carry with them throughout their lives. (Commitment statement prepared by Dr. Charles Chavis, Assistant Professor in the Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter School of Peace and Conflict Resolution.)

Name and Pronoun Use
If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and how best to address you in class and via email. I use she, her, hers for myself and you may address me as Professor Marshall or Ms. Marshall in email and verbally.

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/. 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. It is expected that all students in BUS 315 will submit new and original work. Work that has been submitted for other class assignments is not acceptable and will be submitted as an honor code violation.

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, Participation, and Make-up Work
It is expected that you will attend class at the designated time regardless of format. You participate in class by completing the weekly activities and communicating and interacting professionally with your classmates and instructor. During
synchronous online sessions, you are encouraged to use both video and audio in your communication in addition to the chat feature.

If course participation becomes impacted by prolonged illness or other circumstances, inform the instructor as soon as possible in order to assess options.

Technology for the Class
As of summer 2020, School of Business Undergraduate Students must have access to a computing device that meets minimum standards, including video/audio streaming capability. Students are required to use a laptop or desktop for coursework; phones of any sort are not acceptable in place of a laptop. Students should use the word processing software available through Office ProPlus (which is for free for students at https://its.gmu.edu/service/microsoft-365-apps-for-enterprise/). Chrome or Firefox are the recommended browsers. Students need reliable access to the Internet to use Blackboard and be successful in the course.

On-time attendance in class is expected, even in the virtual environment. If class is in-session and you are late, avoid disrupting the session by entering quietly. This is especially important during lecture, guest speakers, and student presentations.

As this course does utilize readings as the basis for discussion, it is expected that students will read assignments in order to participate in the discussion board. Failure to illustrate proficiency based on interaction with the material will result in a loss of participation points for the exercise.

Formatting Guidelines:
Please follow each project’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, 7th Edition or at 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. Emails originating from a non-GMU address will be returned and will need to be resent.

Course Material and Student Privacy
All course materials posted to Blackboard or other course site are private; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

- Video-recordings of class meetings that include audio or visual information from other students are private and must not be shared
- Live Video Conference Meetings (e.g. Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household
- Some/All of our synchronous meetings in this class will be recorded to provide necessary information for students in this class. Recordings will be stored on Blackboard [or other secure site] and will only be accessible to students taking this course during this semester.

Peer Reviews, Collaborative Writing, and Group Work:
Students will engage in interactive activities. During peer reviews, collaborative writing, and group work, 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 reflects the government contracting environment which often requires giving and receiving feedback in order to solve key problems.

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

**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](mailto:jhenson3@gmu.edu).

**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. 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/](https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/). An emergency poster in each classroom explains what to do in the event of a crisis.

**Career Resources:**

**Career Services in the School of Business**
Career Services is located in Suite 042 in Enterprise Hall (lower level). Please call the office or email to make an appointment during Fall 2020 semester. You can call 703-993-2140 or email [mycareer@gmu.edu](mailto:mycareer@gmu.edu).

**Business Buzz Blog:**
[http://business.gmu.edu/blog/buzz/](http://business.gmu.edu/blog/buzz/)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violation</th>
<th>First Offense</th>
<th>Second Offense</th>
<th>Third Offense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>A 10% reduction in the final course grade; referral to the Writing Center; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class; referral to the Writing Center; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and expulsion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An F in the class; referral to the Writing Center; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and at least one semester suspension, and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and expulsion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating</td>
<td>A 10% reduction in the final course grade; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and at least one semester suspension, and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and expulsion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and at least one semester suspension, and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and expulsion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lying (e.g., providing fraudulent excuse documents, falsifying data)</td>
<td>An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and at least one semester suspension, and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and 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; relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion; and at least one semester suspension.</td>
<td>An F in the class and expulsion.</td>
<td>An F in the class and expulsion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The School of Business reserves the right to initiate termination proceedings for any student found guilty of an Honor Code violation by the Office of Academic Integrity.
Honor Code Sanctions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School of Business Recommendations for Honor Code Violations</th>
<th>Approved February 2020</th>
<th>UG-Non Freshman Students (including transfer students)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plagiarism</strong></td>
<td>First Offense</td>
<td>Second Offense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Failure to cite/attribute sources</td>
<td>An F in the class; referral to Writing Center; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion</td>
<td>An F in the class and at least one semester suspension, and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Representing someone else's work as the student’s own (e.g., copying and pasting)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheating</strong></td>
<td>First Offense</td>
<td>Second Offense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. On a minor assignment (e.g., homework, quizzes)</td>
<td>An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion</td>
<td>An F in the class, Academic Integrity Seminar completion; and at least one semester suspension or expulsion, and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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 relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion, and at least one semester suspension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lying (e.g., providing fraudulent excuse documents, falsifying data)</strong></td>
<td>An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion, and at least one semester suspension</td>
<td>An F in the class and at least one semester suspension (and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion) or expulsion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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)</strong></td>
<td>An F in the class, relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion; and at least one year suspension</td>
<td>An F in the class and expulsion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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