GENB 6350

Business Communications & Career Development Course Fall 2021 Syllabus

Instructor: Professor Amy Vandaveer Novak

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Office hours: Virtual Office Hours: only by appointment.

Use link provided to schedule meeting: https://calendly.com/avandaveernovak

TA Email: Aisling Lyons - <u>alyons@programforexcellenceinselling.com</u>

RCC Sr. Dir: Erin Reed - <u>eareed@Central.UH.EDU</u>

"Communication is the most important skill any leader can possess."
Richard Branson, English business magnate, investor and philanthropist

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to help you communicate more effectively, both in writing and speaking. It focuses on the practical applications of writing, communicating, and presenting within a professional business setting. It has been developed based upon feedback received from employers, faculty and staff who interact with Bauer MBA students, as well as direct input from the MBA Advisory Board.

This course will introduce you to the importance of effective communication skills and will provide the opportunity for you to put them into practice through in-class discussions, group projects, writing assignments and video role-plays. These projects provide the opportunity to examine and improve in communication areas that could inhibit your ability to be effective in a professional setting.

This course also incorporates a Career Component that allows you to put into practice what is taught in lecture, allowing you to apply it to your own professional development to secure career success. Attendance and assignments for this class are tied to the RCC led Career Lab. This is also aligned with a scholarship that will be awarded to all students who make a B+ in the course. The scholarship is provided by a generous donor and MBA Alumnus who has a passion for helping students understand the necessary communication skills that are essential to professional and personal success.

This class will be conducted both face-to-face and virtually and provides you the opportunity to understand the importance of communicating effectively in both environments, providing opportunities to put it into practice. You are expected to show up to class on-time and prepared. If you participate in class discussions, work closely with teammates, and complete assignments on time, you will improve your ability to communicate ideas and become more effective in representing yourself, your ideas, and ultimately have a greater impact on your career. You also will learn what is necessary to build long-term, profitable relationships with employers, coworkers, classmates and clients, in both face-to-face and virtual environments.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

To enhance student proficiencies in the following areas:

- Communication skills
- Effective writing
- o Presentation skills
- o Business acumen and professionalism
- Interpersonal skills
- Strategic career preparation

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIAL:

Texts: You can find the case at hbr.org and textbooks on Amazon - links provided below:

- REQUIRED HBR's 10 Must Reads on Communication, by Harvard Business Review
 https://www.amazon.com/Communication-featured-Necessary-Persuasion Conger/dp/1422189864/ref=sr 1 2?crid=1SPNCDXQL3001&dchild=1&keywords=hbr%27s+10+must+reads+on+c
 ommunication&gid=1596924311&sprefix=hbr%27s+10+must+reads+on+com%2Caps%2C162&sr=8-2
- REQUIRED Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts., by Brene Brown Link to Amazon:
 https://www.amazon.com/Dare-Lead-Brave-Conversations-Hearts/dp/0399592520/ref=sxts sxwds-bia-wc-p13n1_0?cv_ct_cx=dare+to+lead&dchild=1&keywords=dare+to+lead&pd_rd_i=0399592520&pd_rd_r=64f62001-5ba2-4ed9-b892-67943816168e&pd_rd_w=oCfz3&pd_rd_w=XVB53&pf_rd_p=13bf9bc7-d68d-44c3-9d2e-647020f56802&pf_rd_r=E2D4BS5SJE986E93GFY1&psc=1&qid=1596924343&sr=1-1-791c2399-d602-4248-afbb-8a79de2d236f
- OPTIONAL HBR Guide to Better Business Writing, by Bryan A. Garner Link to Amazon:
 https://www.amazon.com/Communication-featured-Necessary-Persuasion Conger/dp/1422189864/ref=sr 1 2?crid=1SPNCDXQL3001&dchild=1&keywords=hbr%27s+10+must+reads+on+c
 ommunication&qid=1596924311&sprefix=hbr%27s+10+must+reads+on+com%2Caps%2C162&sr=8-2
- OPTIONAL Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High, by Kerry Patterson & Joseph Grenny Link to Amazon:
 https://www.amazon.com/Crucial-Conversations-Talking-Stakes-Second/dp/0071771328/ref=sr_1_2?crid=1D9OOBYFDL9TJ&dchild=1&keywords=crucial+conversations&qid=159 6924461&s=books&sprefix=crucial+%2Cstripbooks%2C170&sr=1-2

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS: Available on Blackboard in Course Content and According Folders

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS:

This course is a comgination of virtual and face-to-face classes. You will be provided clear instructions, videos, guidelines to ensure your success in the course. There will be Virtual Office Hours set aside each week for students to book meetings with the professor and TA regarding class material, quizzes, role-plays, and any other questions or concerns that might need to be addressed.

The format for how to book a time for Virtual Office Hours will be using Calendly. You will book using the link provided, it will populate the professor's calendar and you will be provided a Link to Zoom Meeting to conduct the meeting.

- Calendly Link: https://calendly.com/avandaveernovak.
- If this time does not work for you, please email the professor direction at <u>avandaveer@central.uh.edu</u> to coordinate a time.

BLACKBOARD LEARN:

This class will use Blackboard Learn as the main learning portal to access class lectures and material. Each day will have a Learning Module Folder that contains what will be covered/discussed/due that day. There will also be Content Folders where you can find material for assignments and projects. All assignments will be due via Blackboard in the Assignments Link. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with Blackboard so that you stay current with what is being covered in the course.

All communication on Blackboard will be monitored by the professor and will be responded to in a timely manner. For communication with the professor, email directly at avandaveer@uh.edu.

For communication regarding the Career Development Component of the class, email Erin Reed at eareed@Central.UH.EDU at or your Career Coach directly.

For assistance with video access and Blackboard Grades, email the TA, Aisling Lyons at alyons@programforexcellenceinselling.com.

Instructions for assignments are outlined in BLACKBOARD IN COURSE CONTENT in each of the Learning Modules and provided for you in the corresponding Folders. This is provided for you to review and access the material BEFORE COMING TO CLASS in order to fully understand the guidelines necessary for the course and assignments. Most of the assignments are due via Blackboard and you need to attach your assignment in the **Assignments Link**. The Assignments Link provides the due date associated with each assignment and you can attach your file and upload your assignment here. **Please be aware of the material accessible on Blackboard, as well as any messages that are shared with the class – it has been provided for you and is your responsibility to read and review it PRIOR to class.**

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

One of my favorite quotes is "No deposit. No return." It's that simple. You will get out of this class what you put into it. Classes are a combination of presentation, lecture, discussion, with an emphasis on discussion. You are expected to participate. The more you come ready to participate, the better the class discussion and interaction, the more you learn and easier the assignments will be. We have a lot to cover in a short amount of time and in order for you to benefit most from the class it is imperative that everyone be respectful of their peers and professor, especially in a virtual environment.

Also, in order to allow time to practice your communication skills and prepare for securing a successful career, you will need to review the lecture videos, readings and assignments **BEFORE coming to class**. We will use our time in class to review the material and assignments then facilitate team presentations and class discussions. This allows for a more engaging, educational environment and beneficial learning for all.

Class requirements for the course: PLUG-IN and ENGAGE OR UNPLUG and ENGAGE. Turn OFF Cell phones, MUTE Microphones, Turn ON Video Camera, come ready to participate in discussion and remove all necessary distractions. This is a communications course and in order to learn the skills that are imperative to success in any career, we are going to 'plug-in and engage' in the virtual setting and 'unplug and engage' in face-to-face. This practice provides us the ability to observe, listen and interact with others to ensure we are taking in and sending out the messages we want. This is KEY to success in the world today and requires dedication to stay focused with the material being presented and connected to the people delivering it.

Another component of the attendance and participation will be engaging in outside activities where you will practice and enhance your communication skills. There will be points deducted for missed classes or late attendance.

The following are REQUIRED ATTENDANCE/PARTICPATION with Co-Curricular Activities:

- Approved Resume by Rockwell Career Center
- Approved LinkedIn Profile by Rockwell Career Center
- Approved Elevator Pitch by Rockwell Career Center
- Approved Informational Interviews by Rockwell Career Center
- Attendance to Bauer MBA Alumni Networking Event October 22nd
 - *The dates for these are provided on the Course Schedule outlined below.

<u>Students with Accommodations – UH Student Accessibility Center:</u>

The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students who have a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, the Student Accessibility Center strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a

disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please call the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center at (713) 743-5400 or email them at JDCenter@central.uh.edu.

AVAILABILITY OF COUNSELING SERVICES:

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713---743---5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. Also, there is no appointment necessary for the "Let's Talk" program, which is a drop---in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html

COURSE POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY:

The University of Houston Student Handbook (http://www.uh.edu/dos/publications/handbook.php) presents the University's policy on academic honesty. Students should be aware that anyone who engages in actions prohibited by the University's policy on academic honesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism) will be subject to disciplinary action and may not receive credit for this course.

BAUER CODE OF ETHICS:

- 1. Bauer students shall maintain the standard of academic honesty set forth under the University of Houston's Academic Honesty Policy.
- 2. Bauer students shall respect other students, faculty, staff, and the Bauer environment.
- 3. Bauer students shall maintain individual accountability and integrity.

Learning Goals	Objective
Communication	Students will demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills by writing, presenting and role playing the following: Executive Summary, Personal Introduction, Informational Interview, Written Case Analysis, Presentation to C-Level Executive, Crucial Conversation and Persuasive Conversation video role plays.
Cross Disciplinary Competence	Students will demonstrate ability to analyze business situations and recommend appropriate actions through utilizing communication skills to uncover needs of boss and coworkers through simulated role plays, case analysis and presentations to C-Level Executive about business assessment, recommendations based upon case.
Critical Thinking & Self-Assessment	Students will demonstrate effective self-assessment skills to improve communication skills by reviewing video role plays and presentations and creating improvement process.

EXCUSED ABSENCE POLICY:

Regular class attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework are important contributors to student success. Absences may be excused as provided in the University of Houston <u>Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy</u> and <u>Graduate Excused Absence Policy</u> for reasons including: medical illness of student or close relative, death of a close family member, legal or government proceeding that a student is obligated to attend, recognized professional and educational activities where the student is presenting, and University-sponsored activity or athletic competition. Additional policies address absences related to <u>military service</u>, <u>religious holy days</u>, <u>pregnancy and related conditions</u>, and <u>disability</u>.

RECORDING OF CLASS:

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the Center for Students with DisABILITIES. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

SYLLABUS CHANGES:

Please note that if something occurs throughout the semester, the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email and Blackboard Announcements.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS - Final grades will be determined as follows:

Values, Core Competencies, Vision & Mission Statement	2 points			
Goals, SWOT and Strategies Worksheet				
30 Second Commercial Practice with RCC Coach	2 points			
Company Target List	1 points			
Cover Letter	1 point			
Follow Up Email to Employers	2 points			
Executive Summary	5 points			
Company Research and Personal Value Proposition Presentation	5 points			
Personal Value Proposition Self-Assessment	2 points			
Persuasive Presentation: Video Role Play	5 points			
Persuasive Presentation Role Play: Self-Assessment	2 points			
Persuasive Presentation: Email Follow Up	5 points			
Mock Interview Video Role Play 5				
Mock Interview Video Role Play: Self-Assessment				
Crucial Conversation: Video Role Play	6 points			
 STATE Method – 3 points 				
 Coaching Feedback – 3 points 				
STATE Method and Coaching Role Play: Self-Assessment	2 points			
Team Case Written Report				
Team Case Presentation 7 po				
Self-Assessment/Course Application: Video Role Plays/Presentations 5 points				
Peer Evaluation 2 points				
Co-Curricular Activities	6 points			
 RCC Approved Resume – 0.5 point 	-			

- RCC Approved Resume 0.5 point
- RCC Approved LinkedIn Profile 0.5 point
- o RCC Approved Informational Interview Complete- 3 points
 - 1 point per each Informational Interview
- RCC meeting with your career coach- 0.5 point
- Bauer MBA/MS Virtual Career Fair Sept 1 point
- MBA Alumni Networking Event Oct. 22nd 0.5 point

Lecture Quizzes – 2 points each 12 points **Class Readings Presentation** 5 points

	Class attendance/participation	<u>10 points</u>
	TOTAL	100 points
Poter	ntial Extra Credit Points up to 4 Points:	
•	Bauer Virtual Career Fair – September 17 th	1 point
•	Interviews from NBMBA Conference	1 point

Grades will be assigned on the following scale:

Additional Informational Interviews – 1 point each up to 3

 Please NOTE as a graduate student in the Bauer College of Business you must make a C- or ABOVE to receive credit for the class. If you do not you will have to take the course again.

3 points

Α	93 - 100 points
A-	90 - 92
B+	87 – 89
В	83 – 86
B-	80 – 82
C+	77 – 79
С	73 – 76
C-	70 – 72
D	60 – 69
F	Below 60 points

MBA Business Communications Fall 2021 Class Schedule*

Class	Date	Topic	Assignment Due
M	8/23	FACE TO FACE: Welcome	Prior to Class: Read syllabus Review Blackboard Purchase Textbooks Watch Team Orientation Presentation IF NOT AT ORIENTATION – Review material
w	8/25	FACE TO FACE: Welcome & Career Lab Overview Navigating Your Career & The Importance of Communication to Your Success	Prior to Class: Read "The 2 Hour Job Search" Read "The Job Closer" RCC Approved Resume Career Leader Assessment

M	8/30	VIRTUAL: Lecture & Discussion:	Assignments Due: Value, Vision, Mission Wksht Goals, SWOT, Strategies Wksht Prior to Class: Watch Communication Lecture Videos Take Video Lecture Quiz #1 Review Team Presentationn Guidelines Read D2L: Section 1-1
W	9/1	VIRTUAL: Lecture & Discussion: • Communication Lecture/Discussion Continued D2L: Section 1-2 Discussion HBR Discussion: • HBR: "Power of Talk"	Prior to Class: View Lecture Videos Take Video Lecture Quiz #2 Read D2L - 1:2 Read HBR: Power of Talk Assignments Due: Gateway Profile, Industry & Job Function created
М	9/6	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS	
W	9/8	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: • Personal Pitch – Standing out in 30 Seconds	Prior to Class: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach • 2 Hour Job Search- Review Informational Interview Assignments Due: • Company Target List • Company Reseach Document on 2 companies
FRIDAY	9/10	MBA/MS Virtual Career Fair • Attendance Required	Research companies – Practice personal pitch

М	9/13	FACE TO FACE: Lecture & Discussion: • Business Writing - Essentials for Success D2L: Section 1-3 Discussion Team 1 Presentation: • HBR: "Why Writing is the Most Important Skill in Business"	Prior to Class: • View Lecture Videos • Take Video Lecture Quiz #3 • Read D2L - 1:3 • Read Article: "Why Writing is the Most Important Skill in Business"
w	9/15	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: • Mock Career Fair with Employers	Prior to Class: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach Assignment Due: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach • RCC Approved LinkedIn Profile • RCC Approved Elevator Pitch by career coach
TH-FR	9/16-17	NBMBAA Conference & Career Expo • EXTRA CREDIT Bauer Virtual Career Fair • EXTRA CREDIT	Research companies – Practice personal pitch
М	9/20	VIRTUAL: Assignment Overview: • Executive Summary Guidelines/Instructions Lecture continued: • Business Writing - Essentials for Success D2L: Section 1-4 Discussion Team 2 Presentation: • HBR: "How to Become an Authentic Speaker"	Prior to Class: Read Social Media Report Read Exec Summary Guidelines Review Exec Summary Rubric Read HBR: How to Become Authentic Speaker Read D2L: 1-4
T-W	9/21-22	Virtual NBMBAA Conference & Career Expo ■ EXTRA CREDIT	Research companies – Practice personal pitch
w	9/22	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: • LinkedIn and your Social Media Presence	Prior to Class: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach Assignment Due: • Email Follow up to Mock Career Fair Employer • Informational Interview #1 Complete

М	9/27	VIRTUAL: Lecture & Discussion: • Impactful Presentations — "Adjusting Your Messages to Your Audience" D2L: Section 1-5 Discussion Team 3 Presentation: • HBR: "How to Pitch a Brilliant Idea"	Prior to Class:
w	9/29	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: • Cover Letters that Leave an Impression	Prior to Class: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach • Update Resume Assignment Due: • LinkedIn Profile turned into RCC
М	10/4	VIRTUAL: Lecture & Discussion: • The Power of Persuasion – Win by Giving Others What They Want D2L: Section 2 – Discussion Team 4 Presentation: • HBR: "Necessary Art of Persuasion"	Prior to Class: Watch Persuasive Lecture Videos Take Video Lecture Quiz #5 Read D2L: Section 1 Read HBR: "The Necessary Art of Persuasion"
w	10/6	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: • Interviewing Skills – Mock Interview Guidelines	Prior to Class: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach • Record Interview Stream – Interview Questions Assignment Due: • Cover Letter
М	10/11	VIRTUAL: Persuasive Role Play Overview:	Prior to Class: Read West Jet case Read Persuasive Presentation Guidelines Review Persuasive Presentation Rubric Review Follow-Up Email Guidelines Review Follow-Up Email Rubric Review Self-Assessment Guidelines Read HBR: "Change the Way You Persuade"

W	10/13	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: • Virtual Mock Interviews	Prior to Class: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach • Review company, interviewer, interview questions, & guidelines Assignment Due: • Informational Interview #2 Complete
М	10/18	VIRTUAL: Persuasive Presentation Role Plays ■ Zoom Links Provided	Prior to Class: • Prepare for Persuasive Role Play
W	10/20	FACE TO FACE: • University of Houston Hilton • Etiquette Lunch – STARTS 11:00 AM	Prior to Class: ● LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach
FRIDAY	10/22	Bauer MBA Alumni Networking Event • Attendance Required	
М	10/25	VIRTUAL: Persuasive Video Role Play	Prior to Class:
w	10/27	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: Intern Panel Personal Value Proposition Overview	Prior to Class: LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach Prepare 2 Questions for Panel Self-Assessment: Mock Interview

М	11/1	VIRTUAL: Crucial Conversations Role Play Overview Overview, Logistics, Grading D2L: Section 4 Discussion Team 7 Presentation: HBR: "Taking the Stress out of Stressful Conversations"	Prior to Class: Read Crucial Conversation Case Review Crucial Conversation Role Play Scenario Review Crucial Conversation Grading Review Crucial Conversation Self-Assessment Guidelines Read: D2L Section 4 Read: HBR "Taking the Stress out of Stressful Conversations"
w	11/3	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: • Salary Discussion	Prior to Class: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach Assignment Due: • Informational Interview #3 Due
М	11/8	VIRTUAL: Crucial Conversation Video Role Plays: • Zoom Links Provided	Prior to Class: • Prepare for Crucial Conversation Role Play
W	11/10	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: • Personal Value Proposition Presentations	Prior to Class: ■ LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach
М	11/15	VIRTUAL: Crucial Conversation Debrief & Discussion Final Team Presentation & Proposal Overview D2L: Section 5 Summary & Discussion	Assignment Due: • Self-Assessment: STATE Method and Coaching Skills Prior to Class: • Review Final Team Presentation Guidelines
w	11/17	FACE TO FACE: Career Lab: EQ, Corporate Politics, & Managing with Influence	Prior to Class: • LinkedIn Post – Tag Career Coach

М	11/22	VIRTUAL: • Collaborate with Teams on Final Presentations	
W	11/24	Thanksgiving Holiday – NO CLASS	
М	11/29	FACE TO FACE: Final Video Team Presentations • Judges Panel	Assignment Due: BEFORE Class – ALL TEAMS Team Paper & Team PPT Due
М	12/1	FACE TO FACE: Final Video Team Presentations • Judges Panel Closing Thoughts	Assignments Due: Team Peer Evaluation – Google Form Course Eval Filled Out
w	12/8	Review video role plays Personal Assessment of Communication Skills incorporating: Persuasive Role Play, Crucial Conversation Role Play, and Team Presentation	Assignments Due: • Personal Assessment of Presentation before midnight

^{*}Any changes to the class schedule will be announced in class and posted on Blackboa