

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

C. T. BAUER COLLEGE of BUSINESS

BAUER ■ MBA

**GENB 6A50 – Business
Communications**

Wednesdays, 6pm to 9pm

Location TBD

Spring 2020 Syllabus

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TA Email: Gabe Ponce - gponce2@uh.edu

“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 through both 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.

If you participate in class, work closely with teammates, and complete assignments on time, you will improve your ability to communicate your ideas and become more effective in representing yourself, your company and its products and services. You also will learn what is necessary to build long-term, profitable relationships with employers, coworkers, classmates, and clients.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To enhance student proficiencies in the following areas:

- Communication skills
- Effective writing
- Presentation skills
- Business acumen and professionalism
- Interpersonal skills

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIAL

- HBR Top 10 Must Reads on Communication:**
- HBR Guide to Better Business Writing**, by Bryan A. Garner

- **Case Study:** “West Jet: A New Social Media Strategy” Harvard Business School case study; Product #: W16363--- PDF---ENG
- **Case Study:** “Henry Tam and the MGI Team” Harvard Business School case study; Product #: 404068---PDF---ENG

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- **Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High**, by Kerry Patterson & Joseph Grenny

Supplementary Materials: Available on Blackboard in Course Content and According Folders

COURSE NOTES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

You will find all additional course material on Blackboard Learn, including PowerPoint presentations that will be used during each lecture.

BLACKBOARD LEARN

This class will use Blackboard Learn as a course supplement. With Blackboard Learn you can view class notes, download class readings, communicate with fellow students, and view grades and course progress at any time. Students are encouraged to log onto Blackboard Learn regularly to stay current with the class.

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

If you need assistance with video access please email the TA, Gabe Ponce gponce2@uh.edu.

Instructions for assignments are outlined in Folders on Blackboard under Course Content. This is provided for you to review and access the material in order to fully understand the guidelines necessary for the course and assignments. Many of the assignments are due via Blackboard and you can attach your assignment utilizing the **Assignments Link**. The Assignments Link will provide 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.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Classes are a combination of presentation, lecture, and 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 exams and 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 important to have everyone fully engaged.

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 exams and 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.

Cell phones, computers, tablets or texting will not be permitted during class. This is a communications course and in order to learn the skills that are imperative to success in any career, we are going to ‘unplug and engage’ in order to better develop the ability to observe, listen and interact with others to ensure we are taking in and sending out the messages we want.

COURSE PROCEDURES

Given the limited number of class meetings, this course will be conducted at an intense pace. Every class meeting has required activities linked to the course objectives. Extensive class participation is expected. Assigned readings, and all assignments should be completed prior to class. Please pay close attention as to whether an assignment is due in class or through Blackboard Learn. Assignments should not be submitted via email unless you have communicated with the professor ahead of time. Late assignments will not be accepted.

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

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The University of Houston Academic Honesty Policy is strictly enforced by the C.T. Bauer College of Business. No violations of this policy will be tolerated in this course. A discussion of the policy is included in the University of Houston Student Handbook which can be downloaded at <http://www.uh.edu/dos/publications/handbook.php>. Students are expected to be familiar with this policy.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The C. T. Bauer College of Business would like to help students who have disabilities achieve their highest potential. To this end, in order to receive academic accommodations, students must register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) (telephone 713-743-5400), and present approved accommodation documentation to their instructors in a timely manner.

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.
CrossDisciplinaryCompetence	Students will demonstrate ability to integrate different functional areas

	in solving business problems through utilizing communication skills to uncover needs of boss and co-workers through simulated role plays, case analysis and presentation to C-Level Executive about business assessment, recommendations based upon case.
Critical Thinking	Students will demonstrate ability to analyze business situations and recommend appropriate actions through utilizing communication skills to uncover needs of boss and co-workers through simulated role plays, case analysis and presentation to C-Level Executive about business assessment, recommendations based upon case.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Executive Summary	5 points
Persuasive Presentation: Video Role Play	10 points
Persuasive Email – Follow Up	10 points
Persuasive Presentation Role Play: Self Assessment	5 points
Crucial Conversation: Video Role Play	10 points
o STATE Method – 5 points	
o Coaching Feedback – 5 points	
STATE Method and Coaching Role Play: Self Assessment	5 points
Team Case Written Report	10 points
Team Case Presentation	10 points
Self-assessment/Self Application: Video Role Play/Presentation	15 points
Peer Evaluation	10 points
Class attendance/participation	<u>10 points</u>
TOTAL	100 points

Grades will be assigned on the following scale:

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

**MBA Business
Communications Spring 2020
Class Schedule***

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment Due
1	1/15	Class Introductions and Syllabus Review Communication and Your Business Career: Verbal, Nonverbal, Communication Styles, Listening	PRIOR TO CLASS: Purchase Required Books and Case Studies, Verify access to Blackboard, Review Syllabus Reading Due Before Class: <input type="checkbox"/> HBR 10 Must Reads --The Power of Talk

2	1/22	Executive Summary Guidelines/Instructions Business Writing: Essentials for Success	Assignments due: - NONE Reading Due Before Class: <input type="checkbox"/> Review HBR Guide to Better Business Writing
3	1/29	Persuasion: Persuasive Presentation/ Analyzing a Communication Situation	Assignments due 1/29 @ 6pm: - Executive Summary Reading Due Before Class: <input type="checkbox"/> HBR 10 Must Reads – Change the Way you Persuade - Harnessing the Art of Persuasion - The Necessary Art of Persuasion Review Assignment Before Class: <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive Conversation Role Play <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive Follow Up Email
4	2/05	Video Role Play: Persuasive Conversation with a Boss	Persuasive Role Play Meet in Room 221---227 MH: Video Labs
5	2/12	Persuasive Conversation Video Role Play Debrief/Feedback Crucial Conversations in Business: Using STATE Method to Effectively Communicate in Stressful Scenarios	Assignments Due 2/12 @ 6pm: <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive Follow Up Email to Marketing VP <input type="checkbox"/> Written Self Assessment of Persuasive Presentation Skills Role Play (watch video) Review Assignment Before Class: <input type="checkbox"/> Crucial Conversation Role Play Reading Due Before Class: HBR 10 Must Reads <input type="checkbox"/> Taking the Stress out of Stressful <input type="checkbox"/> Is Silence Killing Your Company
6	2/19	Video Role Play: Crucial Conversation and Coaching Role Play	Crucial Conversation & Coaching Role Play Meet in Room 221---227 MH: Video Labs

7	2/26	<p>Crucial Conversation & Coaching Video Role Play Debrief/Feedback</p> <p>Powerful Presentations: Enriching the Presentation, Preparing Slides/Other Media and Communicating the Message</p> <p>Guidelines/Instructions for Team Presentation/Paper on Case</p>	<p>Assignment Due 2/26 @ 6pm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written Self Assessment Crucial Conversation STATE Method and Coaching Skills Role Play (watch video) <p>Review Assignment Before Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Team Presentation Guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Team Paper Guidelines <p>Reading Due Before Class: HBR 10 Must Reads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How to Pitch a Brilliant Idea <input type="checkbox"/> The Five Messages Leaders Must Manage
8	3/04	<p>Final Class Meeting:</p> <p>Team Presentations in Class</p> <p>Presentation Debrief/Feedback</p>	<p>DUE IN CLASS @ 6PM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Team Paper/PPTs to be submitted at start of class
3/5-3/13		<p>Review video role plays – Personal Assessment of Communication Skills incorporating: Persuasive Role Play, Crucial Conversation Role Play, and Team Presentation</p>	<p>Blackboard Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Assessment of Presentation Skills & Peer Evaluation – due via Blackboard before midnight TBD

**Any changes to the class schedule will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.*