

Saint Leo University
GBA 321
Essential Business Skills

Course Description:

This course will focus on the practical application of business skills needed by the emerging college graduate. Course contents include such topics as active listening, interpersonal communications, interviewing, intercultural awareness and sensitivity, presentation skills, assertiveness, coaching, written communications, barriers to effective management, office politics, PowerPoint applications, nonverbal communication, business etiquette, impromptu speaking, decision making, career planning, job-seeking activities, creation of typical business documents, working in a team/group environment, coaching/mentoring, conducting meetings, and self-assessment.

Prerequisite:

ENG 122 and Junior standing

Textbook(s):

The textbook information which appears on our Saint Leo Bookstore ordering site is as follows: Saint Leo University. Excellence in Business (Custom). ISBN: 9780135891896

Your custom textbook was created from the following National text(s):

Excellence in Business Communication: Thill, J. V., & Bovée, C. L. (2020). Excellence in business communication (13th ed.). Boston: Pearson. ISBN: 9780135227831

(The access you are purchasing for this class is part of the negotiated discount pricing in our Direct Digital Program. The access includes your MyBCommLab and the eBook with the print upgrade option. With Direct Digital there are no access codes to receive or redeem. Once you pay for the materials you access your course in D2L and automatically access the materials from the links in the course.)

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Prepare and present effective presentations.
2. Write powerful and effective business documents in plain English.
3. Understand and practice the basic concepts of business communication.
4. Develop self-confidence while communicating.
5. Demonstrate strengthened English speaking, writing, and presentation skills.
6. Demonstrate an ability to write effectively and speak persuasively.
7. Prepare and deliver effective business presentations.
8. Demonstrate significant improvement in interpersonal communication skills.
9. Initiate a framework for career-long professional development pursuits.
10. Demonstrate responsibility and behavior expected of a business professional.
11. **Values Outcome:** GBA 321 emphasizes the Benedictine value of excellence as it relates to the creation and implementation of professional written and oral communications practices. Excellence will be continually assessed through quizzes, the critical review of actual written documents, and critical feedback of oral presentations.

Core Value:

This course will emphasize the Saint Leo University core value of excellence.

Excellence: Saint Leo University is an educational enterprise. All of us, individually and collectively, work hard to ensure that our students develop the character, learn the skills, and assimilate the knowledge essential to become morally responsible leaders. The success of our University depends upon a conscientious commitment to our mission, vision, and goals.

Evaluation:

Points and grades for this course will be distributed as follows:

Graded Item:	Weight
Discussions (8)	10%
MyBCommLab assignments (30)	10%
Electronic messages	
Blog Post	5%
Email	5%
Memo	5%
Informal Report	10%
Formal Report	10%
Oral Presentation	10%
Exams (4)	10%
Employment Portfolio	25%
Total	100%

Grading Scale:

The following distribution will be used in assigning grades (decimal points will be rounded to the nearest whole number at term's end):

Grade	Description	Percent	Workplace Description
A	Exceptional	94-100	Your supervisor would send this communication without any changes; he/she would be impressed and remember the work when a promotion or raise is discussed.
A-	Superior	90-93	Your supervisor would send this communication out with minor editing and remember the superior work at promotion or raise time.
B+	Excellent	87-89	Your supervisor would send this communication with minor editing; it will get the job done.
B	Very Good	84-86	Your supervisor would send this communication with some editing; he/she would be satisfied.
B-	Good	80-83	Your supervisor would send this communication after some editing. He/she may talk to you about ways to strengthen your work and sees promise in your work.
C+	Above Average	77-79	Your supervisor would be disappointed and ask you to revise and resubmit before allowing others to see the message.
C	Average	74-76	Your supervisor would be disappointed and ask you to revise before allowing those outside the department to see it.
C-	Satisfactory	70-73	Your supervisor would be troubled by the poor quality of work or the sloppiness of the work. He/she would not consider you for promotion or look for you when opportunities in the organizations came up.
D+	Below Average	67-69	Your supervisor would be disappointed by your work. The document would need to be completely rewritten before he/she would send it.
D	Marginal	60-66	Your supervisor would be disappointed by the lack of competency in your work. He/she would not let the document be shown outside the department. He/she would need the document rewritten.

Grade	Description	Percent	Workplace Description
F	Fail	0-59	Your supervisor would start looking for someone to replace you. The document does not indicate an understanding of the assignment/task.

Assessment of the Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcome	Assessment Methods
1	Oral Presentation
2	Electronic messages, Informal Report, Formal Report, Employment Portfolio
3	MyBCommLab assignments, exams, electronic messages, Informal Report, Formal Report, Oral Presentation, Employment Portfolio, discussions
4	Electronic messages, Informal Report, Formal Report, Oral Presentation, Employment Portfolio, discussions
5	Exams, electronic messages, Informal Report, Formal Report, Oral Presentation, Employment Portfolio, discussions
6	Exams, electronic messages, Informal Report, Formal Report, Oral Presentation, Employment Portfolio, discussions
7	Oral Presentation
8	Oral Presentation, discussions
9	Employment Portfolio
10	MyBCommLab assignments, exams, electronic messages, Informal Report, Formal Report, Oral Presentation, Employment Portfolio, discussions
11	Employment Portfolio

Employment Portfolio: Students are required to prepare a sample portfolio with: (1) résumé, (2) application letter, (3) request for recommendation letter, (4) thank you letter, and (5) job offer acceptance letter. The Employment Portfolio is the GBA 321 core value assignment, in that it is the goal to strive for excellence when creating the best, most effective portfolio that will reflect who you are as a candidate to potential employers (**due Module 8**).

Electronic Messages: Students are required to create a blog entry, an effective business email message, and an effective business memo (**blog is due Module 3; email and memo are due Module 4**). Instructions are provided in the modules.

Informal/Formal Report: All students must write both an informal report and a formal business report (**due Module 5 and Module 6 respectively**). Instructions are provided in the modules.

Oral Presentation: Students are required to demonstrate their presentation competency in developing an outline and accompanying audio-narrated PowerPoint presentation (**draft due Module 6, and final presentation due Module 7**). Instructions are provided in the course.

MyBCommLab assignments: Each module will contain 2-6 short activities which students will complete in MyBCommLab.

Exams: There will be four exams throughout the term (**Modules 2, 4, 6, and 8**). Each will contain four short essay questions.

Discussions: Students are required to participate in the eight (8) online threaded discussions. Participation includes posting and responding to classmates' postings. Interaction is essential to online learning. Students are expected to respond to the question **no later than Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT** of each module. Students must also respond to at least two (2) classmates **no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT** of each module. Should you paraphrase or use a direct quote from our text or another source, please cite it appropriately.

It is expected that responses will be cogent in nature to support the premise you are suggesting. Responses are expected to be of the same nature. A one- or two-line answer to the question or responses is not considered sufficient.

Additional Guidelines for Online Discussions:

- Comments from all students are welcome and demand our respect. Feel free to express your thoughts. Disagreements and discussion are encouraged, but personal comments are not allowed.
- Keep responses relative to the posted discussion question. Other comments and responses should be posted to the “Instructor Q and A” board or sent in a private email.
- Make certain that your comments are clearly stated and understandable; after all, this is a course on business communication.
- **Participate, participate, and participate.** A discussion is an exchange of ideas and opinions and not just a single posting. Your instructor has no way to tell if you are lurking (reading the responses of others without adding your own voice) so, even if you log on daily, unless you post to the discussion, your instructor can only assume you are not participating. Participating also means that you contribute to the discussion on more than one day.
- **Note:** Discussions are a vital component of this course. To receive full credit for a discussion, you need to have contributed on **at least two different days**.

Criteria for Evaluating Discussions:

Discussion postings should:

- Show that you have read and responded thoughtfully to others' ideas as well as offered your own.
- Show your ability to apply the vocabulary and basic concepts of communication theory to the discussion.
- Needs to include **at least two** substantive comments throughout the discussion time (not all at one time).
- Be timely (within the timeframe of the particular module unless otherwise instructed).

To view the rubric for discussions, click the Resources link under the Start Here, and then click the Discussion Guidelines link.

Course Schedule:

Module 1 Foundations of Business Communication

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Explain what must occur for an audience to successfully receive, decode, and respond to the sender’s message.
- Discuss the importance of recognizing cultural variations and ways to improve intercultural communication skills.
- Provide recommendations for writing clearly in a multi-language business environment.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Register in MyBCommLab	
Post an introduction to the class	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Read the assigned materials	
Complete the self-assessment	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the MyBCommLab assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 2 The Three-Step Writing Process

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of audience analysis in determining the best medium for the message and for adopting a message to the audience’s needs and expectations.
- Discuss the importance of applying the “you” attitude and bias-free language in all messages.
- Plan effective documents using concise language and appropriate design elements.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Complete the self-assessment	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the MyBCommLab assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Exam 1	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 3**Brief Messages: Electronic, Routine, and Positive****Objectives**

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Determine if print or electronic is the best medium for a specific message.
- Explain the role of blogging in business communication.
- Apply the three-step writing process to develop routine and positive messages.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Complete the self-assessment	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the MyBCommLab assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit the Blog Post	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 4**Brief Messages: Negative and Persuasive Communication****Objectives**

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Explain how and when to use the direct and indirect approaches to negative messages.
- Determine how to establish credibility and use the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model in persuasive messages.
- Apply the three-step writing process to negative and persuasive messages.

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Complete the self-assessment	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the MyBCommLab assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit the Email	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit the Memo	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Exam 2	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 5**Longer Messages: Planning and Writing Reports and Proposals****Objectives**

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Explain how and when to use visuals in support of written work.
- Select the appropriate organizational strategy for informational reports, analytical reports, and proposals.
- Apply the three-step writing process to an informal report.

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post option choice in Formal Report Forum	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the MyBCommLab assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit the Informal Report	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 6**Designing and Delivering Presentations****Objectives**

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Get and keep an audience's attention when delivering a spoken message.
- Summarize the role of visuals in presentations and the steps needed to guarantee readability and design consistency of slides.
- Adapt the three-step writing process to develop a presentation.

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Post a draft of the Oral Presentation	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post feedback on at least two classmates' presentations	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the MyBCommLab assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit the Formal Report	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Exam 3	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 7**Applying and Interviewing for Jobs****Objectives**

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Explain the role of application letters and how to apply the AIDA organizational approach to persuasive messages.
- Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the chronological, functional, and combination résumé formats and select an appropriate résumé format for a given individual.
- Apply the three-step writing process to a résumé and an application letter.

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the self-assessment	
Complete the MyBCommLab assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit the final version of the Oral Presentation	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 8**Completing Formal Reports and Writing Collaboratively****Objectives**

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Discuss how teams can be successful in collaborative writing.
- Summarize the tasks involved in completing business reports and proposals.
- Apply the three-step writing process to completing a formal report for a proposal.

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit the Employment Portfolio	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the MyBCommLab assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Exam 4	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT