ENVIRONMENTAL AND BUSINESS ECONOMICS (MBA)
COURSE NUMBER: 22:373:551
COURSE TITLE: Business Communication

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This short, practical, intensive course will strengthen your communication skills and help you develop the ultimate career advantage—being a powerful communicator at work. We'll focus on communicating strategically: A.I.M., i.e., analyzing your audience, aligning with your intent, crafting key messages. Your success criteria in both presentation and written assignments: logical structure, professional style and content-rich substance.

COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook: Daniel, Carter, Reader-Friendly Reports, available at N.J. Books or online.

RECOMMENDED READING:
To help your career, regularly check newspapers around the U.S. and around the world. Seek diversity of opinion. Track critical issues and emerging trends.

• The New York Times
• The Wall Street Journal
• The Economist
• The Financial Times
• RealClearPolitics.com
• Pew Global Attitudes

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: FOR YOUR FUTURE GROWTH

• Appleman, Jack, 10 Steps to Successful Business Writing
• Beckwith, Harry, You, Inc.: The Art of Selling Yourself
• Berkley, Susan, Speak to Influence
• Duarte, Nancy, HBR Guide to Persuasive Presentations
• Garner, Bryan, Garner's Modern English Usage
• Heath, Chip and Dan Heath, Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die, by Chip Heath and Dan Heath
• Koegel, Timothy, The Exceptional Presenter
• Pink, Daniel H., To Sell is Human: The Surprising Truth About moving others.
• The Purdue Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/
• Strunk, William and E.B. White, The Elements of Style
• Ury, William and Roger Fisher, Getting to Yes
LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Here's what our class will do:

- Concentrate on writing skills and oral presentations.
- Strengthen your ability to analyze, persuade and inform.
- Communicate in ways that are clear, concise and compelling.
- Focus on identifying the needs and interests of your audience.
- Develop smart communication strategies for your career.

We'll focus on communicating strategically: A.I.M., i.e., analyzing your audience, aligning with your intent, crafting key messages. Your success criteria in both presentation and written assignments: logical structure, professional style and content-rich substance.

Please fax your paper to me if you have failed to meet a deadline. Or send it in the body of your email--no email attachments.

CLASS MEETINGS

1. Monday, Sept. 8
2. Monday, Sept. 15: podcast opinion piece due
5. Monday, Oct. 6: good, bad or ugly chart
7. Monday, Oct. 20: company research presentations
8. Monday, Oct. 27: Country investment research report due; country investment research presentation

DELIVERABLE/WEIGHT

- Podcast opinion piece: 10 points
- Book analysis: 10 points
- Good, Bad or Ugly Chart presentation: 10 points
- Company investment research report: 20 points
- Country investment research report: 20 points
- Country investment research presentation: 20 points
- Leadership*: 10 points

*Your leadership grade depends on your contribution to the success of our class, including helping others learn.
RULES OF THE ROAD

1. Attendance: Please let me know in advance—and in writing—if you’re going to miss a class. You are responsible for material we cover when you’re absent.

2. Participation: If you are going to be absent more than once, please consider dropping this course. Our class wants you to be a full participant and contribute to our success as a class. And too many absences may result in lowering your grade.

3. Deadlines: Better never than late. I take deadlines seriously. In business, executives are expected to put their thoughts in writing clearly, concisely and convincingly. The marketplace moves fast. To succeed, you must think fast and clearly—and write fast and clearly. Hand papers in on time, please. Or it may result in lowering of your grade.

4. Punctuality: Everyone has last-minute work or family emergencies and runs into traffic and parking problems. Our class will begin exactly on time. Latecomers often cause distractions, and they disrupt class discussions. So please show respect.

5. Academic honesty: Please be careful not to plagiarize: If you're suspected of academic dishonesty, you’ll be sent to the dean's office. Stealing intellectual property undermines our mission—not to mention your personal reputation.


CLASS AGENDAS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Please note: There will be no quizzes, tests or final exam. You will receive feedback from Professor Mach and from your classmates on your oral presentations.

Class No. 1: Sept. 8

- Introduction and course overview
- Learning from history’s most powerful communicators
- The 21st Century organization
- Models of opening/thesis/point-of-view paragraphs
- Paragraph structure; document design; readability;
- Topic and thesis;
- Subheadings that support your thesis; Assignments due Sept. 15:
- Read: Our textbook—all of it. Please bring the text to our next class. Be prepared with questions you have on the reading.
- Listen to a recent program of either "Freakanomics Radio" or "Planet Money." Both podcasts are on National Public Radio. You may choose to download the transcript.
- Write a 250-word opinion piece. Communicate your perspective as an M.B.A. candidate on the issue the podcast focuses on.
• Structure: Bottom line on top. Your first/thesis paragraph will state your opinion on the podcast's issue and tell the reader how you will defend your thesis.
• Substance: Use specific examples, quotes and statistics to support your thesis.
• Style: Your tone should be balanced and professional. Avoid careless mistakes in punctuation, grammar and spelling.

Class No. 2: Sept. 15

• Review and discussion of reading assignment
• Top Tips of Great Presenters
• Your Success Criteria: Written Reports and Presentations
• Due: podcast opinion piece

Class No. 3: Sept. 23

• Business Research: Professor Au. You will receive business research training by a top expert. You will learn how to access the library’s vast resources, including state-of-the-art online databases you’ll use throughout your graduate work—and will prove valuable to your career. Bring your laptops to class.

Assignment due Sept. 29:

Read one of the books below. Write a 500-word book analysis.

• Structure: Your thesis paragraph should state your opinion of the book and tell the audience how you will defend it. Your second paragraph will be a crisp summary. For the rest of the analysis, defend your thesis.
• Style: Provide a balanced and fair perspective on the book.
• Substance: Use quotes from the book to support your thesis.

1. The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon, by Brad Stone.
2. Thinking, Fast and Slow, by Daniel Kahneman
3. The Signal and the Noise, by Nate Silver
4. Re-imagine! Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age by Tom Peters
5. How the Mighty Fall, and Why Some Companies Never Give In, by Jim Collins.
6. Money: The Unauthorized Biography, by Felix Martin
7. The Leading Indicators: A Short History of the Numbers That Rule Our World, by Zachary Karabell
8. Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity, and Branding in the Age of Social Media, by Alice Marwick
9. Flash Boys, by Michael Lewis


13. *How the Mighty Fall, and Why Some Companies Never Give In*, by Jim Collins

14. *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain

Assignment due next class:

- Choose a recent chart or graph--this month--that you think is good, bad or ugly.
- Bring a copy of your chart to distribute to everyone in our class.
- Prepare a presentation in which you educate our class on your graph. Why do you think it's good, bad or ugly?

Class No. 4: Sept. 29

- Presentation of your chart
- Presentation about the book you read
- Secrets of Genius Networkers

Class No. 5: Oct. 6

- Leading today's employees.
- Negotiating to win--and with your integrity intact

Assignment due Oct. 13

- Company investment report: You work in the research analyst group of a major investment bank. Write a well-researched and analytical 10 page, double-spaced investment research report on a company of your choice--not one you have worked for. Should our firm--an investment bank--invest in this company?
- Bring a copy for everyone in our class. Double-sides copies please.
- Structure: Bottom line on top; invest or not? Your thesis paragraph should state your recommendation and tell the reader how you intend to defend your thesis.
- Substance: Include a bibliography with recent, balanced, independent sources. Include an industry overview. Is the industry dynamic, competitive? What are its major issues and trends? Is the company's strategy smart? Is its leadership strong? What about its corporate culture? Is it managing the current economic environment strategically? Are its products/services what customers want? Is it socially responsible? Environmentally responsible? What are the risks of investing in this company? How have technology, globalization and competition affected the country? Document your sources with a bibliography/list of references--at least five objective sources. Use the country's Web site only for background.
- Style: The tone should be professional and balanced. No careless mistakes in punctuation, grammar, spelling.
Class No. 6: October 13

- Building Your Personal Brand
- Developing your unique career communication strategy.
- Company research report due

Class No. 7: October 20

- Presentation on the company you wrote about in your investment research report.  Assignment due Oct. 27:
- You work in the research group of a major investment bank. Please choose a country to write about. Should we invest in it? Write a well-researched and analytical 10 page, double-spaced investment research report defending your recommendation to invest or not to invest. Include a bibliography with recent, balanced, independent sources, not any information source from the country's government.
- Bring a copy of your report for everyone in our class. Double-sided copies please.
- Structure: Bottom line on top; invest or not? Your thesis paragraph should state your recommendation and tell the reader how you intend to defend your thesis.
- Substance: Include a bibliography with recent, balanced, independent sources. Are the country's government and business community managing the current global economic environment strategically? Is it friendly to investment? What is the regulatory arena like?
- Style: The tone should be professional and balanced. No careless mistakes in punctuation, grammar, spelling.

Class No. 8: October 20

- Presentation on the country you wrote about in your investment research report.
- Business card exchange.
- The New Rules for Living