



**The University of Hong Kong
Faculty of Business and Economics
School of Business**

**BUSI0081-BUSI1802: Advanced Business Communication Skills
Course Syllabus, Spring 2016**

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course aims at further enhancing students' communication skills for them to succeed in the business world. The course materials are based upon authentic examples of companies currently involved in various aspects of modern business. In order to better prepare students to meet the communication requirements of today's business world, students will undertake the following: reading and analyzing cases, acquiring and incorporating relevant strategies from discussion and simulations, developing accuracy and logic in writing, and presenting their research in terms of business development and growth strategies. Specific areas of communication to be covered include interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, conflict management and negotiation, written communication, and oral communication.

Teaching and learning tools used to achieve better learning outcomes include class readings, case discussion, videos, role-playing, simulations, presentations, as well as lectures and various assessment tools.

Students in this class are expected to be prepared for class discussions regarding readings and cases, ask questions and participate in class activities. A successful learning experience depends on contributions from both the instructor and the students. Your full and active participation is critical for achieving the optimal learning outcome both for you and your fellow students.

II. COURSE MATERIALS:

Recommended Textbook:

Locker, K. O., & Kienzler, D. S. (2008). *Business and administrative communication*. McGraw-Hill Irwin.

Class materials, including Asia Case Research Centre (ACRC) Cases and Videos, will be distributed in class or uploaded on our course website on Moodle.

III. INTENDED COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (CLOs)

Through applying and integrating knowledge in business communication acquired from the above teaching and learning tools, the following *Learning Outcomes* may be expected:

CLO1. The ability to communicate ideas clearly and persuasively by strategic choice of structures, vocabularies, logics, and arguments in various formats of business writings, such as memos, resumes, formal reports and proposals.

CLO2. Knowledge and skills in effective oral communication skills, especially in conducting formal business presentations.

CLO3. The ability to negotiate and support various solutions to complex problems by utilizing relevant research and evidence

CLO4. A global outlook with understanding, comfort and competence in interacting with colleagues, customer, business partners, even competitors from different cultural/country backgrounds in today's global business environment.

CLO5. Improved confidence in handling various kinds of conflict situations with critical coping strategies for conflict and negotiations.

IV. ALIGNMENTS OF INTENDED PROGRAM & COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Program Learning Outcomes	CLOs
1. Acquisition and internalization of knowledge and skills in key functional areas	1, 2, 3, 4, & 5
2. Application and integration of business knowledge	1, 2, 3
3. Inculcating professionalism and leadership	1, 2, 4, & 5
4. Developing global outlook	4
5. Mastering communication skills	1, 2, 4 & 5

V. ASSESSMENT

Case Presentation (Group)	40%
Formal Written Report (Individual)	40%
Class Participation (Discussions, Mini Presentations, etc.)	20%
Total	100%

1. Formal written report. In this class, you will work with a group of your fellow students; apply and integrate your business knowledge with research findings to produce a business report. This report is based on cases analyzed in class and your group's research regarding the corporation, market, and industry. **Please note that although your group will work together on research for the project, the report will be written and assessed on an individual bases**, and is worth 40% of your course grade.

Focus: CLO1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

2. Presentations. You and your group will conduct a presentation regarding a main business case of this class. The presentation takes 20 minutes. All team members need to be involved in the presentation. Use oral communication techniques to deliver your presentation in a logical and organized way. Your speech will be graded on a group basis, as well as on each member's individual contributions. You will also be responsible for providing feedback to other groups' presentations and conduct peer performance review for your team members and your own work. The presentation is worth 40% of your course grade.

Focus: CLO1, 2, 3, 4, & 5

Please note: Detailed instructions for the formal report and presentations will be distributed in class on the days when these tasks are assigned.

3. Class participation. All class members are expected to read the materials (readings or cases) assigned for each class meeting. Participants need to contribute to the class discussion throughout the term: 1) share with the class your ideas, viewpoints, and experiences; 2) ask and answer questions; 3) present results of mini interview; 4) conduct elevator pitch; and so on. The quality and quantity of your discussion participation throughout the term is worth 20% of your course grade.

- a. **Mini Interview:** During the semester, you will conduct an interview with a person who is taking a leader position and interview them on their view and experience on the importance of communication in their job and in their profession. You will need to report on your findings in the last week of class.
- b. **Elevator Pitch:** In this semester, you will need to practice in class on how to effectively present yourself by conducting an elevator pitch. Feedback from your fellow students and your instructor will be provided.
- c. **FBE Writing Center Service:** Every student needs to meet with a FBE Writing Center consultant at least once in the second half of the semester to polish your writing for your CV/application letter writing practice. Please visit <http://www.fbe.hku.hk/writingcentre/> and sign up for a time slot after the reading week.

Focus: CLO1, 2, & 5

VI. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Grade	Course Grade Descriptor
A+, A, A-	Strong evidence of superb ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course at all levels of learning: describe, apply, evaluate and synthesis.
B+, B, B-	Strong evidence of ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course at all levels of learning: describe, apply, evaluate and synthesis.
C+, C, C-	Evidence of adequate ability to fulfill the intended learning outcomes of the course at low levels of learning; such as describe and apply, but not at high levels of learning such as evaluate and synthesis.
D+, D	Evidence of basic familiarity with the subject.
F	Little evidence of basic familiarity with the subject.

VII. STUDY LOAD

Course Teaching and Learning Activities	Expected Contact hour	Study Load (% of study)
T&L1. Interactive lectures	33	33%
T&L2. Group project, case analysis and homework	33	33%
T&L3. Self study	34	34%
Total	100	100%

VIII. COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance: Attendance and participation are vital if you are to do well in this course and enhance your effective business communication skills. Students who miss THREE classes without legitimate documentations will receive a warning letter from the faculty. Not meeting attendance requirement may result in a failure for this course.

Four legitimate excuses for missing class: illness, religious observance, participation in University activities at the request of the University authorities, or compelling circumstances beyond the student's control. Written documentations will not be accepted after the 7th calendar day after the due day, at which time the lateness/absence will be considered unexcused. In the case of an emergency, you are responsible for contacting your instructor as soon as possible.

Late Assignment Policy: Because presentation is conducted in front of the whole class, there will be no make-up presentations. All presentations need to be conducted at their scheduled time slot. For the formal business report, for every calendar day that the assignment is late, 20% of the assignment grade (e.g., lose 6 points for a 30-point assignment) will be deducted. Except for illness or other emergencies, any student expecting to miss a course deadline must have the approval from instructor *prior to* the assignment due date. Failure to turn in an assignment on time without explicit exemption by the instructor may result in a grade of ZERO for the assignment.

Academic Integrity: plagiarism in assigned work will result in a score of zero in that assignment, and a potential failure of the entire course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: quoting scholarly materials without acknowledgement; and turning in work completed by another person but represented to be your own.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Appropriate academic accommodations will be provided to students with documented disabilities. Please provide the official documentation by the end of the second week of class. Academic accommodations will not be provided without official documentation.

Tentative Schedule

ANY NECESSARY CHANGES WILL BE ANNOUNCED AND A REVISED SCHEDULE DISTRIBUTED

DATE	TOPICS	READINGS and ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 1		
	Course Introduction	Syllabus
	Introduction to Business Communication	<i>Crown Case</i>
WEEK 2		
	Coping with Communication Apprehension	<i>Crown Case</i>
	Build Audience Awareness; Crown Video	Group formation; Assign mini interview
WEEK 3		
	Crown Case Discussion	
	Individual Work on Mini-interview	
WEEK 4		
	Public Holiday	
WEEK 5		
	Intercultural Communication	<i>Ocean Park Case</i>
	Intercultural Communication	Assign Ocean Park presentation
WEEK 6		
	Ocean Park Case Discussion	<i>Ocean Park Case</i>
	Presentation Skills	

WEEK 7		
	Presentation Skills	
	Presentation Practice on Elevator Pitch	
WEEK 8		
	Reading Week	
WEEK 9		
	Group Presentation Preparation	
	Group Presentation	
WEEK 10		
	Group Presentation	
	Conflict Management	<i>Luna Pen Case</i>
WEEK 11		
	Public Holiday	
	Negotiation Simulation 1	
WEEK 12		
	Public Holiday	
	Negotiation	
WEEK 13		
	Assertive Communication	Assign Final Paper
	Negotiation Simulation	<i>Negotiation in China Case</i>
WEEK 14		
	Negotiation Simulation Reflection and Discussion	
	Business Writing – Building Goodwill; Writing Positive, Negative, and Persuasive Messages; Writing Proposals and Reports.	
WEEK 15		
	Business Writing – Writing Proposals and Reports	
	Individual Presentation on Mini-Interview Results.	Final Report Due on May 10th.