# Business Discourse for the 21st Century Professional

# CSUCI Martin V. Smith School of Business and Economics

"The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary" ~ Vidal Sassoon

**Spring 2025**

**Course Modality:** This course is fully online with no asynchronous meetings required.

## Welcome to Business 310-002!

I look forward to working with you as you prepare for your professional life!

Advances in communications and information technologies in the 21st century have had an impact on how business conversations are carried on in the professional world. Contemporary business discourse makes written and oral communications a necessity on various platforms to carry out daily tasks and provide informative, analytic, and persuasive content to support business decision-making.

This course is designed to help you explore and practice face-to-face and various online communications to convey technical, analytical, and business-related information in written or oral formats that best fit the appropriate medium.

Total units: 3 Prerequisites: Junior or Senior standing in the Business major.

**NOTE:** The syllabus may change due to unforeseen events and to promote students' learning advancement during the semester. Changes will be announced in class and updated on our Canvas site.

**Disabilities Accommodations.** Cal State Channel Islands is committed to equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The mission of Disability Accommodation and Support Services is to assist students with disabilities to realize their academic and personal potential. Students with physical, learning, or other disabilities are encouraged to **contact the Disability Accommodation and Support Services office at (805) 437-8510** for personal assistance and accommodations. All requests for accommodations require appropriate advance notice to avoid delays in services. I want to support your learning, so please discuss approved accommodations with me as soon as possible. https://www.csuci.edu/dass/

# Your Instructor

**Jocelyn Marie, MVS Business Lecturer**
jocelyn.marie@csuci.edu

**Virtual Office Hours** are **Tuesdays, 5:00 - 6:00 PM PST**. If you are not available during my office hours, I can meet with you on Zoom as your schedule allows. Send me an email or a text to let me know your availability. Zoom
Link: https://csuci.zoom.us/j/85462533709 Passcode: writewell

# Student Learning Outcomes

**With the successful completion of this course, you will be able to do the following:**

- Distinguish and implement critical characteristics of advanced, effective business communication, including written and verbal.
- Plan and create impactful internal and external business documents, such as letters, emails, reports, and
- Convey analytical results relevant to organizational decision-making in written and oral reports.
- Determine the appropriate voice and style for various professional communication.
- Differentiate purposes and audiences in business writing.
- Use correct writing mechanics in all written work.
- Effectively revise written work.
- Design and deliver professional oral presentations.

# Course Requirements

- Junior or Senior standing in the Business major.
- Access to a reliable computer and internet connection, a computer or cellphone camera and microphone, access to your CSUCI Google Drive, MS Word or Google Docs, and PowerPoint or Google Slides.
- *Business Communication Skills for Managers* from Lumen Learning.

## Virtual Textbook

*Business Communication Skills for Managers* is a virtual "text" that is embedded in the study plans of our Canvas course. There is no separate book to purchase, although there is a $39.38 fee to access course support. **Please purchase the access code before the end of the 2nd week of class**. Here is a link to link that provides the purchase details and options.

**Here is the information you'll need if you choose the option to purchase the access code from the Cove Bookstore.**

**Publisher: Lumen One: Business Communication**
ISBN: **978-164087-402-2**
Format: **Lumen One Courseware with eText embedded**

To use the access code, please open a Business 310 study plan and enter the code when a prompt appears. **Note: If you do not purchase and apply the code, you'll be prevented from working on the study plans and taking the quiz.**

### Suggested

- *Rules for Writers,* Diana Hacker
- *HBR Guide to Better Business Writing*, Bryan A. Garner
- *The Culture Code*, Daniel Coyle

### Drop Policy

Your attendance is essential to your success in this (any!) course. Please be prepared to login and participate throughout each week. And while the hours you choose to do that are entirely up to you, it remains that regular and consistent work is your key to doing well.

What that means in practical terms, especially in an online course such as this, is your participation tells me you are "present" in class. Without your visible efforts to complete assignments each week, I must assume you are "absent." Students who are "absent" regularly should not expect to pass this class. In fact, if you do not participate at all in the first week of class (January 17 - January24), you will be dropped as a "no-show."

To avoid being dropped, please be sure to not only read through the introductory material (I know, there's A LOT, but it's all important as we work to build a strong foundation), but be sure to complete both your Grading Contract in the Welcome Module and the discussion in Module 1.

It is not my desire to drop students; I want as many as possible to find success here and will do whatever I can to help you achieve that. The reality is, though, this is a *fast paced* class and not one of us can afford to fall behind.

# Course Design

"Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is hard work." ~ *Stephen King*

### Deliverables

This course covers the principal forms of business writing (memos, cover letters, proposals, PowerPoint presentations, and analytical reports) and will guide you in crafting clear sentences, coherent paragraphs, and structurally sound, professional documents.

You'll become proficient in employing business rhetoric and skilled in using strategies for persuading readers. Each of you will craft written, visual, and oral work in a workshop environment that will provide valuable feedback for strengthening skills. Assignments will

include drafting and revising written work, researching and writing reports, crafting resumés and cover letters, and creating visual presentations and an ePortfolio.

**"Doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment." ~ Oprah Winfrey**

## Assignments and Homework

## The Facts

- Complete assignments by the due date to elicit feedback and avoid late penalties.
- Late assignments will lose 10% of the overall score and feedback points; no feedback will be given.
- No points will be given to assignments posted three days past the due date.

## To avoid late submissions...

- Read the assignment instructions early in the week.
- Sketch out a reverse plan to ensure you hit the target date.
- Come to tutoring sessions or join me during my Office Hours if you have questions about assignments.
- Create a schedule and work consistently (see below).
- Work with a study partner. Schedule virtual meetings to share and discuss your work.
- Work ahead if you anticipate a change in your schedule.
- Email or text me immediately if Canvas or your internet isn't working. Attach the assignment or share a link in your email if possible.
- **IMPORTANT** If you are using Google Docs, change the share settings so I can view and comment. Work that is not shared is missing and/or late. A late penalty will apply. Here's a link that describes How to share Google Docs

## A typical schedule for completing work in this course:

Of course, as a fully online class, you get to decide some of when you'll interact with the material and your colleagues. But to give you an idea of a successful schedule (and one that will keep you on track without becoming too overwhelming) I offer this example outlined below.

Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday

- Review assignments and begin preparing first drafts.
- Read the Module Study Plans and do the Self Check and quizzes.
- Post first drafts and do peer reviews

Thursday and Friday

- See Tutors
- Post First Drafts
- Give Peer Feedback

Saturday

- Submit Final Drafts

**Note: Study Plans, Quizzes, and Assignments are due before midnight (11:59 pm). Discussion Posts are due at 10 pm. Peer reviews are automatically assigned immediately after Discussion due dates.**

## Using Rubrics to Meet Assignment Goals

All assignments will have a rubric attached. Use criteria in the rubrics to guide the quality of your work and the depth of your engagement in discussions, writing exercises, peer responses, and visual and oral presentations.

- Before you begin an assignment, check out the rubric. Which criteria will you focus on in developing your assignment?
- Recheck the rubric after you've completed a draft or are preparing your finished assignment. Reflect on your progress and make adjustments as needed.

The Business 310 Writing Rubric is an essential and universal guide to use in assessing the effectiveness of your written work. The Course Writing Rubric is Linked Here and Posted in Canvas.

**We think, mistakenly, that success is the result of the amount of time we put in at work instead of the quality of time we put in. ~ *Ariana Huffington***

## Planning, Writing, *and* Revising

The writing you do in this course is sequential and necessary for you to understand how good business writing is developed. Planning, writing, and revising your work are part of the sequence. You'll want my feedback and your peers' insights to guide your revisions. Therefore, you must complete and submit your assignments on time to pass the course.

Your peers and I will give you feedback on your initial drafts to help you develop your writing. When you receive our feedback, incorporate it into your final draft. No additional points will be given if revisions are not incorporated.

Please submit your work in the relevant assignment folder or discussion post in Canvas before *or on the due date.* All work is due before midnight. Save your work on a flash drive, in Google Docs, or attach it to an email to yourself.

## Contract Grading

Business 310 will be assessed using a **contract grading system** (described in the Welcome Module). You will choose the grade you want to receive by reviewing the Labor Assessment ChecklistLinks to an external site., reviewing the Contract Details, signing the contract, providing status updates, and soliciting guidance from your peers and me. You'll also submit a Grade Defense letter to me at the close of the semester.

Due to university requirements, **your final grade in the class will be posted as a traditional letter grade.** However, **assignments will be assessed using the "Credit / No Credit" (CR/NC) system**. This represents a significant shift from traditional point-based grading methods that you may be familiar with. If you are uncomfortable with the CR/NC system, this class may not suit you well. That said, consider that this approach offers numerous benefits, fostering an environment that prioritizes learning, growth, and engagement over arbitrary numerical scores. Please review the Credit / No Credit System page in the Welcome Module.

### Grade Definition Policy

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  - Grade Definition Policy - Senate Policy 12-007 clarifies each letter grade's level of performance, and all MVS School faculty are encouraged to ensure awarded grades match a student's given level of performance. Although you will determine your grade, I reserve the right to assess your work using the +/- system and the following CSUCI'S grading criteria:
    - "A": Student performance is outstanding and indicates an **exceptional degree of academic achievement** in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements.
    - "B": Student performance is at a high level and indicates **solid academic achievement** in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements.
    - "C": Student performance is adequate and indicates **satisfactory academic achievement** in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements.
    - "D": Student performance is **less than adequate** and indicates deficiencies in meeting the learning outcomes and/or course requirements.
    - "F": Student performance is **unacceptable** and indicates a failure to meet the learning outcomes and/or course requirements.

***"Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage.***

***If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy." ~ Dale Carnegie***

# Participation

Your success in this course is linked to your engagement with the work and your willingness to share ideas. Engaging in online class discussions and peer reviews will advance your learning

and give you opportunities to practice business communication. Just as in the business world, sharing your insights is crucial in creating meaningful dialogue with your peers and allows you to practice skills that are essential to your success in the business world.

- If you have difficulty with online access, please let me know within the first two weeks of the semester.
- I will provide make-up coursework with advance arrangements unless circumstances make it impossible to provide advance notice.

# Academic Integrity and the Use of AI Tools

CSUCI's Honor Code states, "Academic integrity is the responsibility of all members of the CI community. All university community members should be familiar with the Honor Code." Please use this link to find more information about Academic Integrity and CI's Student Conduct and Health Policies

**Plagiarism:** Don't do it. Plagiarism results in failing assignments and potentially the course. If you are wondering about a paper or have questions regarding citations and summary, please see me for guidance. I'm happy to help!

## Use of AI Tools

I'm committed to promoting the development of 21st-century information literacy skills for learning, so I encourage the effective and responsible use of AI tools such as ChatGPT, Bing Chat, Bard, and Grammarly, among others, to assist with your coursework.

However, it is vital for you to understand that these tools are to be applied to **augment** your own intellectual work, **not replace it**. Any verbatim copying and pasting of these tools' output and presenting it as your original work is considered plagiarism and violates the CSUCI Academic (Dis)honesty Policy. **Any assignments submitted without attributing outside sources will be automatically failed without redress.**

### Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tool Guidelines

Click on the links below to learn more about my guidelines and suggested ways to responsibly use AI.

**Learn About My Policy on the Use of AI Tools for College-Level Writing Assignments**

**Discover Ways to Use AI Tools to Support Your Academics**

# Assignment Formats

Please adhere to the APA style format linked here. 12pt., Times New Roman, 1" margins, single-spaced. Use heading titles for new sections. No Running Header Required. Sample Paper is linked here.

# Expectations

- Workload Expectations - Students should expect to spend 10 - 14 hours per week studying material, taking quizzes, drafting assignments, and providing peer feedback.
- Deliverables - This is an a**dvanced college-level course** that is focused on training you for professional life. Therefore, I will focus on helping you develop critical thinking and specific business-related skills. I will not focus on correcting grammar and spelling issues. **I expect you to craft polished, error-free, formal business documents in the correct formats.** Instructions on formatting (memo, letter, report) are given in the modules and specified in assignments. **I expect all work, including Discussion Posts, to reflect advanced college-level writing skills and formatting.** You will use APA format for the research report.

- See the following modules for support:
  - Revising Written Work
  - WRITING TUTOR SUPPORT | WRITING & MULTILITERACY CENTER
  - LOOK HERE FOR MORE WRITING SUPPORT! (You'll find APA formatting guides here)

## The "Big Three"

1. FORMAT YOUR WORK. IT'S GOOD PRACTICE. Use bullet points, bolded text, titles, and paragraph breaks. This includes Discussion Posts and Assignments.
2. CHECK FOR GRAMMAR AND SPELLING ERRORS. I will not accept or give feedback on submissions with more than three spelling and grammar errors. You will have to revise and resubmit your work to redeem your points. A late penalty will apply. See a WMC tutor to review your work.
3. LATE WORK. Due to the design of this course (peer feedback and fast pace), I will not give feedback on late work and 20% of overall points will be deducted.

## I'm Afraid of Failure!

Yes! You, me, and everyone else fear failure. I've failed so many times, it hurts to remember. You will see my errors on these pages, my weaknesses as a teacher, and my fallibility as a human. But I will show up and participate with you every day of the week! And I will learn lots of things from you. Failure is one of the most important ways we learn.

So, your participation is required so you can fail and learn some things. And so you can triumph and learn how awesome you can be. Please check in frequently during the week to engage in discussions, read the material, and participate in the quizzes and assignments to test and practice your learning. Your success depends on consistent interaction with the course. Gaining skills through practice is the goal.

Are you a perfectionist procrastinator who freezes up at the site of new tasks? You'll learn more from your mistakes than from not getting started. Don't let performance anxiety prevent you from getting started. Are you a who waits until the last minute? You may work well under pressure. Go ahead and put off the work but at least read assignments ahead to plan how much time you'll need for your cram session.

## STUDENT SERVICES

### Campus Tutoring Services

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) offers free one-on-one peer tutoring for all MVS School undergraduate courses. The LRC tutors will help students with study skills, fundamental concepts, comprehension, homework, test preparation, and much more. The Peer Tutor Schedule is available via the LRC webpage.

### Writing & Multiliteracy Center

The Writing & Multiliteracy Center (WMC) provides all CSUCI students with free support services and programs that help them address the 21st Century challenges of creatively thinking about and composing in written, oral, visual, and digital forms of communication. Peer consultants help students at any stage of the composition process via one-to-one or group consultations, online consultations, and workshops. Students can make an appointment to work with a consultant or learn more by visiting the WMC webpage.

### Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

CAPS is pleased to provide a wide range of services to assist students in achieving their academic and personal goals. Services include confidential short-term counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and 24/7 phone and text support. CAPS is located in Bell Tower East, 1867, and can be reached at 805-437-2088 (select option 2 on voicemail for 24/7 crisis support); students can also email CAPS at caps@csuci.edu or visit the CAPS website.

### Emergency Intervention and Basic Needs

If you or someone you know is experiencing unforeseen or catastrophic financial issues, skipping meals, or experiencing homelessness/housing insecurity (e.g., sleeping in a car, couch surfing, staying with friends), please know that you are not alone. There are resources on campus that may assist you during this time. The Dolphin Pantry is currently located in Arroyo Hall and offers free food, toiletries, and necessities for current CI students. For additional assistance, please get in touch with the Dean of Students Office at (805) 437-8512 or visit Bell Tower 2565. Please visit the website for the most up-to-date information on the Basic Needs Program.

### Title IX and Inclusion

Title IX & Inclusion manages the University's equal opportunity compliance, including the areas of affirmative action and Title IX. Title IX & Inclusion also oversees the campus' response to the

University's nondiscrimination policies. CSUCI prohibits discrimination and harassment of any kind on the basis of a protected status (i.e., age, disability, gender, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, medical condition, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion or religious creed, sexual orientation, and Veteran or Military Status). This prohibition on harassment includes sexual harassment, as well as sexual misconduct, dating, domestic violence, and stalking. For more information regarding CSUCI's commitment to diversity and inclusion or to report a potential violation, please contact Title IX & Inclusion at 805.437.2077 or visit the Title IX webpage.