



Option A FT MBA ♦♦♦ Summer 2017

GEB 5212: Professional Writing
Section 6388

Syllabus and Course Packet

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 **MANAGEMENT
COMMUNICATION CENTER**

WARRINGTON COLLEGE of BUSINESS

TEXTBOOKS

Alfred, G.J., Brusaw, C. and Oliu, W. (2014). *The Business Writer's Companion*.
 Course Packet at Target Copy on University Ave.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Employer surveys put communication skills at the top of the list of essential employee qualifications. In the old days, managers could rely on assistants to type, edit, and even write their correspondence. Now, you write your own documents and your advancement depends largely on how well you can express your ideas, influence others to trust and follow you, and—to put it simply—make sense.

We'll talk about writing and communication strategies to help you master the politics, technology, and change in your workplace and in a globalized economy.

The **MBA** program goals and objectives that apply to this course are

- Learning Goal 1: Program graduates will be effective communicators.
- 1A. Students will produce professional quality business documents.
 - 1C. Students will recognize and employ a variety of rhetorical styles, written and oral, appropriate to the goal and audience.

ASSIGNMENTS

Internal Written Persuasive Proposal.....	100 points
--OR--	
Executive Summary Recommendation.....	100 points
"Communicating Change" Memo (team).....	100 points
Discussion Boards.....	50 points
Final Exam.....	50 points

GRADING SCALE

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	S
Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0
Total Points	300-279	278-270	269-261	260-249	248-240	239-231	230-219	218-210	209-201	200-189	188-180	<180

ACADEMIC HONESTY

University policy requires that we remind you of the common sense values embodied in the University Honor Code. We assume that you are all familiar with the policy on academic honesty as stated at http://www.reg.ufl.edu/01-02-catalog/student_life/. We assume that the following pledge will pertain to all work you submit in this and all courses at UF: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." Needless to say, plagiarizing the work of others or of online documents is not only a sign of inadequate character, but unnecessary insecurity about one's ideas, writing or speaking ability. **All work must be original work.**

STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

The classrooms used for your class should prove effectively accessible, but please let me know if you require any special accommodations. The official statement on ADA issues states: "Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation." Moreover, please rest assured that your instructors and the MBA program will do everything they can to support your individual needs and concerns.

STUDENT COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Campus resources are available for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals which interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

- UF Counseling & Wellness Center (CWC): (352) 392-1575 for documentation, stress and wellness, mental health screening, concerns about a classmate, self-help, sexual or physical abuse

E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

Consider your email communication as practice for the style you will adopt in business settings. In other words, your communication should be formal in the beginning (*Dear Dr. McCawley*), and can become more informal as we continue our communication. When communicating with your instructors, include your:

- name
- cohort (we teach multiple sections each module)
- purpose for writing, frontloaded (don't forget a concise, yet descriptive, subject line)
- availability: two or three days and times, if requesting an appointment

NOTE: Coaching for writing in person, not via e-mail. Use e-mail to arrange an appointment.

SOFTWARE POLICY

All faculty, staff and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Students are expected to use computers, tablets, and cellphones only when instructed by your professors. At all other times, turn off your devices.

SCHEDULE*

*schedule is subject to change

Date	Topics	<i>Assignments</i>
Week 1 May 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Introduction & Syllabus ◇ Basic Principles ◇ The Writing Process ◇ Persuasion ◇ <i>In-class Exercise</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rank the e-mails 	<p><i>Read before May 19</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ <i>Business Writer's Companion (BWC)</i>: p. xxiii – xxx and Ch. 1, 3, 5 & 10 – 12 ◇ Clampitt, Chapter 4 ◇ SEC Handbook <p><i>Watch before May 19</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Word Choice and Visuals Videos <p><i>Do before May 19</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Draft Persuasive Proposal
Week 2 May 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ <i>Workshop/Peer Review Proposal</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set up individual appointment ◇ Communicating Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Get into teams ○ Schedule/contact info 	<p><i>Read before May 26</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ BWC Chapters 4, 6, 7, 8, & 9 ◇ Clampitt, Chapter 6 & 9 <p><i>Do before May 26</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Discussion Board
Week 3 May 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Electronic Communication ◇ <i>Team Meeting (revise email/review assignment)</i> 	<p><i>Due May 26</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Final version of Proposal <p><i>Watch before June 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Executive Summary Video <p><i>Do before June 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Draft Team Memo
Week 4 June 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ <i>Workshop/Peer Review Team Memo</i> ◇ Negative News Communication ◇ Performance Reviews ◇ Executive Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ICE: Exec Summary 	<p><i>Due June 9</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Final version of team memo
Week 5 June 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Cover Letter ◇ Résumé & LinkedIn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ICE: course evals ○ ICE: LinkedIn 	<p><i>Due Jun 11</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Discussion Board
Week 6 June 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Final Exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ <i>Relax and enjoy your summer break!</i>

Writing Assignments. You must type all assignments in Microsoft **Word**, and upload your to the course website assignment link by the deadline. Use one-inch margins, single spacing (extra line between paragraphs), no indenting, left alignment.

Late Policy. Late assignments will be reduced by **one letter grade** for each 24 hours late.

Re-grade Option. If your grade on an individual assignment is below a B-, you may **e-mail me within three days of receiving your grade on Canvas to request** the option to rewrite your assignment for a potential ten percent increase in grade (remember to be persuasive and professional). You must resubmit your rewrite **within seven days** from making your request. You may use this option only once.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR WRITING

ASSIGNMENT: Individual Proposal (Option 1)

OBJECTIVES

Deploy *persuasive* writing techniques in addition to standard business writing strategies: concise, frontloaded, audience appropriate and clear. Use standard memo formatting.

Situation

You have identified a problem or need for your company or department. Decision makers have agreed to read your memorandum on how to solve the problem or meet the need. Assume you are writing this proposal at work and, as such, the audience is *not* your classmates or your instructor, but your immediate supervisor (and other superiors).

Overview of Assignment

For this assignment you are to persuade the decision makers to support an ***internal*** recommendation that requires approval by someone, or more than one person, in the company you represent. You determine the audience, context, and problem, for the assignment. This proposal could be about a project you are doing for your company or a change you would like to see in your company. Proposals are business related, not policy or politically related. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Incorporate the persuasive principles you have learned, as well as all the writing techniques and strategies.

FORMAT

Your proposal will be in memo format. Use memo formatting on p. 133 of the textbook.

- One-two pages of text
- One (or more) graphics
- One (or more) citations

Use visual elements (headings, bullets, and graphics) to provide interest to your reader and emphasis to key points.

Style. Use the direct style for your message.

FAQs

Question: What if my memo is three pages, once I add the graphics?

Answer: Adding graphics will increase the length of your memo. As long as the text portion is only one-two pages, you are fine. Just make sure the graphics are relevant to your proposal.

Question: May I use the same topic as I am for my Persuasive Presentation?

Answer: Yes! In fact, you are encouraged to write about and present the same topic.

Question: May I use workplace terminology/acronyms?

Answer: Yes, if appropriate for your audience. Just attach a short note to me explaining any terminology or political issues that will help me understand your approach.

ASSIGNMENT: Executive Summary Recommendation (Option 2)

Purpose. You will have a chance to apply summarizing techniques and persuasion using a Clampitt chapter to write an internal business memo.

For this assignment, you will write a recommendation memo to an appropriate senior manager or executive, based on the ideas presented in the Clampitt textbook. Your goal is to incorporate writing principles and strategies we have covered in class so far, particularly focusing on concision principles.

Content. Select and read Chapter 4 **OR** 7. Select some portion of the chapter you choose that is most relevant to your company. Note the points relevant to your audience and purpose. Then summarize these selected key points in a single-page memo, using the guidelines discussed in the executive summary lecture, and recommend some action. You will need to balance the two central components of this assignment: (1) the efficient summary of the chapter's key points and (2) recommendations for changes in practices at your organization, using examples from your workplace.

FORMAT

Your recommendation will be in memo format. Use memo formatting on p. 133 of the textbook.

- One-two pages of text
- One (or more) graphics
- One (or more) citations

Use visual elements (headings, bullets, and graphics) to provide interest to your reader and emphasis to key points.

Style. Use the direct style for your message.

FAQs

Question: How do I fit *all* the ideas from the *chapter* into one page together with a recommendation?

Answer: You don't. Select the information from the article that is most pertinent to the reader's needs and your company's situation. Summarize just that information.

Question: Do I need to mention Clampitt? Must I create footnotes?

Answer: Yes, you must acknowledge the source in the introduction and refer to the author/research/study when you discuss his ideas later in the document to give Clampitt credit and you credibility. No, you don't need to footnote.

Question: I need to save as much space as possible. Can I shrink margins and font, and eliminate subheadings or lists?

Answer: No, don't make the document more difficult to read. Use document design to guide your readers to the main ideas. Professionalism and readability are important aspects of your communication documents and should support the content.

Question: May I go over one page?

Answer: Adding graphics will increase the length of your memo. As long as the text portion is only one-two pages, you are fine. Just make sure the graphics are relevant to your proposal.

Question: May I quote from the chapter?

Answer: While you may, you really should not need to. Quotations are uncommon in business writing, as what someone says is more important than how they say it, so paraphrasing the information is best. You should quote someone only when you think that paraphrasing the information would lose effect or meaning because the idea is expressed so effectively.

ASSIGNMENT: Team “Communicating Change” Memo

Purpose. You will have a chance to apply informative techniques and change strategies from Clampitt text, Chapter 9, to an internal business memo. You will also use collaborative strategies to write an effective document

Choose one proposal/recommendation from your team. Assume the proposal has been approved.

Scenario. You and your team are the Communication Department for your company. Develop a strategic plan to communicate the change, based on the information in Clampitt (see p. 250ff). Keep your strategy simple, but realistic. You are creating a plan to **communicate**, not implement, the plan.

Remember, YOU are the communication experts and your “CEO” is NOT.

CONTENT

You will produce two documents:

1. A memo to the “CEO” explaining the strategy you wish to employ (advisor→boss). Be clear, **educational** (*you may reference Clampitt*), and persuasive. Refer to your attached document as a “sample communication.” Channel: memo. Length: 1-2 pages.
2. An attached document that provides a “sample communication” to selected stakeholders (CEO→all/some employees –OR—you→all/some employees). You may choose the best channel, audience, and purpose for your message. Channel: your choice. Length: maximum of 1 page

For all documents. Effective formatting (headings, bullets, white space), concision and clarity, and proper grammar and mechanics.

FAQs

Question: How will my team write this document?

Answer: You will divide up the responsibilities according to each person’s strength. If someone is skilled at writing, another at formatting, and another at proofreading, then each will act according to his or her skill. You will all receive the same grade (with some adjustment based on the confidential team evaluation)

Question: What is our role?

Answer: You are a communication committee/department. Choose one person to be your leader, and the memo is FROM that person. You may reference your team in the memo. The communication you devise must have one “voice” (sound like one person wrote it).