

FLEX SECTIONS

Comm 390 Section 215 is a Flex Section where approximately one half of classes will be face to face (F2F) and one half will be taken online. Students are expected to be available for all scheduled classes. It is essential that you not fall behind in order to complete the assignments to the level required.

COURSE GOALS

Business Writing is an experiential course that has three major components.

1. *Elements of Effective Written Communication*

You will learn to gather, analyze, synthesize, judge and organize information. You will also investigate audience analysis, effective argumentation, tone, style, and document format.

2. *Observation of Written Communication in Professional Settings*

You will obtain information from working business professionals about current business practices involving written communication. You will have the opportunity to review examples of business writing of professional quality.

3. *Application of the Elements of Effective Written Communication*

You will demonstrate your ability to apply the elements of effective written communication by developing letters, memos, reports, and proposals for business clients, senior managers, business owners, business partners or investors, professional writers, and peers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course focuses on improving your skills in gathering, analyzing, and organizing information, and in communicating that information in effective and persuasive business documents. By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Communicate effectively to different audiences using appropriate tone and style;
 - Collect, judge and synthesize information from a broad range of sources;
 - Prepare a variety of business documents (including memos, letters, emails, and reports) using appropriate headings, layout, and format;
 - Support your claims or arguments with logical and persuasive reasoning and evaluate the arguments of others;
 - Collaborate productively with others to write and edit documents.
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ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

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| Research Assignment/First Nations Proposal | 25% |
| Group Assignment (Ethical Business) | 15% |
| Three-Hour Business Writing Assignment | 25% |
| Class Activities | 25% |
| Class Contribution | 10% |
| Total: | 100% |

PROGRAM GOALS

| BCom |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Analytical Decision-making |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oral & Written Communication |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ethics & Sustainability |

COURSE INFORMATION

Division: Law & Business Communications, Sauder School of Business

Semester/year: Fall 2015—Term 2

Instructor: Elizabeth Bowker

Email: elizabeth.bowker@sauder.ubc.ca

Office hours/location: TBD and by appointment, HA364

Course start/end dates: First Class: January 4, 2016; All Classes End: April 8, 2016

Pre-requisites: None

Course website: Look for COMM 390 Business Writing on Connect

Turnitin ID: TBC

Password: Bowker2016

BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION

Comm 390 provides an opportunity to study and practice the forms of writing you will need for a successful career in business. In this course you learn about the distinctive elements of business writing by reading, critiquing, developing, and designing a variety of documents for various audiences. The course is built around three assignments, all of which require

planning, organizing, and writing a short, professional-quality document. Given the importance of teamwork in business settings, one of the assignments is a group project requiring collaborative planning, research, and writing. In addition, students complete several in-class activities that focus on realistic business communication situations. Techniques for honing your style and editing skills are also covered.

We will use a variety of learning methodologies including lectures, visual aids, case studies, class discussions, self-assessments, feedback, and experiential activities. The most important element, however, is your active engagement and participation. While the passing grade in undergraduate courses is generally 50%, academic regulations for the BCom program stipulate that in order to qualify for the BCom degree, students must complete the Business Writing course with a minimum grade of 60%.

COURSE MATERIALS & REQUIREMENTS

Reading Materials:

Business Writing Essentials, Custom Text for Comm 390, Edited from Business Communication Essentials (2nd Canadian Edition) by Courtland L Bovee, John V. Thill, and Jean A Scribner; plus **The Elements of Style**, 4th Edition, William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White

Other Learning Resources:

Writing Improvement Program (WIP): **Mon to Thurs 1-4pm** (CLC 219). Free tutoring for Sauder students, with preference to those registered in Comm 390, located in the Canaccord Learning Commons in David Lam Library. Advanced Grammar Workshops: **Tues 4:30pm to 6pm and 6pm to 7:30** (HA 296); **Wed 4:30 to 6pm** (HA 339).

Sign up on COOL (or drop-in) for both WIP and AGW.

UBC Writing Centre: Free tutoring and writing support services are offered for currently enrolled students from September through April. Further details and information about online services are found at: <http://www.writingcentre.ubc.ca/tutoring/index.html>

Chapman Learning Commons: The Commons offers learning support services and programs, including tutoring, writing and research support, study skills workshops, academic peers, and access to a variety of technologies. <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/about-us/>

The Canaccord Learning Commons: A combination of online and physical space aimed at providing additional, program specific resources for students in Sauder courses in the David Lam Management Research Library. Access online here: <http://learningcommons.sauder.ubc.ca/>

Electronic Resources: To gain access to UBC's electronic resources, use the following link:

Business-specific databases: <http://resources.library.ubc.ca/branchlist/lam/desc/>

Technology Requirements:

- Access to standard word-processing and PDF software (Microsoft compatible)
- A working email account that you check daily
- Access to UBC Connect course website

ASSESSMENT

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following:

| <u>Assignments</u> | <u>Percentage of Course Grade</u> |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <p>Business Proposal to a BC First Nation 25% <i>You will develop and write a business proposal from your company to a BC First Nation. Considerable research is required in order to help ensure that the final document addresses the primary cares and concerns of the First Nation selected.</i></p> | |
| <p>Group Project – Ethical Business Case 15% <i>You will work as a member of a group to plan, research, and write a business case presenting a proposed new direction for an existing business. The plan will fully consider the ethical implications of the proposed venture or strategy.</i></p> | |
| <p>Midterm (3 Hour Business Writing Assignment) 25% You will be provided with a business communication challenge, and in the role of an employee, you will construct and submit a series of responses to the challenge.</p> | |
| <p><u>Class Activities</u> 25% You will complete several in-class assignments covering specific aspects of business writing.</p> | |
| <p><u>Class Contribution</u> 10% See description below</p> | |
| <p>Total: 100%</p> | |

To receive any credit for **Class Contribution** you must actively contribute to the class by:

1. Attending Classes on a regular basis, and in the event that you must miss a class, by communicating the reason for a valid absence to your instructor in advance.
2. Participating regularly in class discussions;
3. Supporting fellow classmates in their efforts to meet the challenges of the course; and,
4. Volunteering to share your work with classmates and being willing to review and provide feedback on their work.

Note: Unannounced and/or unwarranted absences may result in a reduction of your score for Class Contribution. You may be directed to the Undergraduate Office to discuss the reasons for your absence and to obtain documentation.

Students who go beyond these basic requirements will be eligible for additional points above the class average.

Review the Class Schedule below for the general topics we will discuss and the due dates of assignments.

CLASS SCHEDULE

The Class Schedule is a rough guide for what we will do in class each week. Depending on lecturer preferences and class needs, some topics and activities may occur in different weeks than shown. Assignments and other class documents at Sauder are posted on the UBC Connect course website.

Please see me if you have any questions about the due date of any assignment. If for any reason you will not be able to complete a core assignment before the due date, contact Undergraduate Services. The grade for core assignments submitted late is subject to reduction by 10 percentage points for each day it's late.

****WEEKS (below) begin on Mondays**

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

| WEEK # | WEEKLY TOPICS | READINGS | F2F LESSON (Tuesday) | FLEX LESSON (Thursday) | WHAT'S DUE |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| WEEK 1 Jan 4 (Monday) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Introductions •Course Overview •Expectations •Writing Basics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Course Syllabus •Text: Business Writing Essentials (BWE) •Online Learning – selected readings available on Connect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Introductions •Course Overview •Expectations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Questionnaire & Introductory Essay Online Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Questionnaire & Introductory Essay •Online Learning Assignment |
| WEEK 2 Jan 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Intro to Introduction to Report Writing | | Introduction to Report Writing | Using Assumptions | Practice Questions |
| WEEK 3 Jan 18 | | Readings Formatting & Headings (BWE - Appendix) | Planning Your Report Formatting Headings & Subheadings | | |

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| WEEK 4 Jan 25 | •Peer Review & Revision | | Editing & Proofreading | | |
| WEEK 5 Feb 1 | | Readings, Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility, TBA | | Media Release | Press Release <i>Sunday</i> |
| WEEK 6 Feb 8 | | | Emails Credibility Confidence | Risk Flex Lesson – include in your report | |
| WEEK 7 Feb 15 | <i>READING BREAK</i> <i>Family Day (February 15)</i> | | | | |
| WEEK 8 Feb 29 | •Peer Review & Revision | | Emails | | Major Proposal Report Due TBC |
| WEEK 9 Mar 7 | | | Metlakatla Lesson | Metlakatla pre-reading and Memos | Metlakatla Memo <i>Sunday</i> |
| WEEK 11 Mar 14 | •Business Case Basics <i>Business Case Assignment Released</i> | | Methodology Workplan | Risk Assessment | |
| WEEK 11 Mar 21 | | | Persuasive Messages | | Workplan & Memo <i>Wednesday</i> |
| WEEK 12 Mar 28 | | | Back of the Envelope Letters & Negative Messages | No Flex class – midterm on Friday. | Three Hour Assignment, Friday Mar 25 (TBC) |
| WEEK 13 Apr 4 | | | Status Report | Executive Summaries | Business Case Report – FINAL DUE Friday, Apr 10 |

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Format for written assignments: All documents should be in the following format:

- Font = 12pt. for text in Calibri, Cambria or other business font (because these typefaces are easy to read, are commonly used in business, and everyone has them)
- Pages = one-inch margins and numbered from page 2
- Works cited, bibliography, reference notes, in-text citations, business documents, memos, letters and reports should be in the standard formats as noted in the course text.

Assignments: For each assignment, you will be given specifications for what should be included in the final product. A sample specification is: "Your document must include a cover letter, an introduction, a profile of yourself (and your team), a marketing plan, and a financial forecast." The grade that you receive for the assignment will be based on how well you meet the stated specifications, as well as any additional insight you bring to the assignment.

Therefore, for each assignment, it is important for you to make sure that you understand the objectives and specifications, and ask questions if you need clarification. This is the same approach that you should take in your professional life. **It is your responsibility to fully understand what is expected of you.**

Submission of Core Assignments: Core assignments must be submitted using Turnitin or on the Connect course website (as directed by your instructor) on or before the due date. You may also be asked to submit hardcopies.

Re-Evaluation of Your Work: The expectations for assignments will be made clear before they are due, and assignments will be evaluated as fairly and objectively as possible. If, however, you feel that I have overlooked something when grading any of your assignments, you may (**within one week of the date when the assignment mark is revealed to you**) write a memo to me in which you request that I re-evaluate the assignment and explain fully and carefully why you think the assignment should be re-graded specifying which element of the rubric is in question.

Final Course Grade: You should note that the final grade for the course is not subject to negotiation, but if you believe an error or omission has occurred, you should bring it to my attention immediately. If you are convinced that your final mark should be higher, you may initiate an appeal and request a re-evaluation of your work. You can launch the appeal process through the undergraduate office. There is no guarantee that such re-evaluations will result in a higher mark.

Permission to Show Your Work: I may want to show your work to the class in order to help illustrate positive techniques or concepts that apply to everyone. If, for some reason, you do

not wish to have your work shown, please write a memo to me that provides a brief explanation, and see me immediately.

Attendance: Because this is an *experiential* course, you will only be able to gain the full benefit from this course if you attend all scheduled class sessions. If you are unable to attend a class, you should notify your instructor and ask a classmate to take notes for you, let you know what was covered in class, and make you aware of any additional assignments that are due. You may be asked to provide verification for your absence and/or report to the Undergraduate Office to obtain documentation.

Cell Phones, Texting, and Social Media: Please do not use your cell phone, send or view text messages, or browse social media sites during class. If you must use your phone for an important call, please excuse yourself from the classroom and return when you're finished.

Office Hours: I encourage you to see me whenever you have any questions. This is the main opportunity that I have to work with you on an individual basis. Although you are free to simply drop by during my office hours, it is best to schedule a time in advance. My office hours are in addition to the student-instructor conferences.

Student-Instructor Conferences: We will discuss your work during two formal conferences, one around the middle of the semester and the other before the last 2 weeks of classes. Each meeting will last approximately 15 minutes. You will need to book a time for the meeting. Because the schedule will be very tight, please be on time for the conferences. Participation in the conferences is required and will contribute to your class contribution mark. Conferences may be face-to-face or by video conferencing, depending on each instructor's preference.

Writing Workshops and Peer Reviews: These workshops will occur before the core assignments are due. It is your opportunity to discuss and critique each others' work. You are expected to have a well developed working draft of the required assignment completed for every workshop.

Email Correspondence: Use an email account that you check regularly whenever you email me to ask questions or submit work for review. Please include a description of the contents of the email in the subject field. Make sure you identify yourself by name in both the email and any attachments.

Academic Honesty and Integrity: You are expected to observe the rules of honesty, including plagiarism, which is defined as:

- Using someone else's work, published or unpublished as your own.
- Having someone complete a graded assignment and claiming it to be your own.
- Allowing someone else to use your graded assignment as their own.

For more information on this subject, please consult the University's statement on academic honesty available at: <http://clc.library.ubc.ca/airc.html>.

Documenting Your Work: Please keep all materials related to the production of your work until the course is completed. This includes all of your research, all of your notes, and, especially, every draft of your document. That way, there will not be any doubts regarding your authorship or research.

Students with Disabilities: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with UBC Access and Diversity, who will give you a letter confirming any accommodation. Please be sure that the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. UBC Access and Diversity can be contacted at: <http://www.students.ubc.ca/access/index.cfm>.

Please see me immediately if you need assistance with this matter.

Retention of Student Papers: Paperwork held by me and not returned to you will be retained until the end of the first month of the following semester.

Class Cancellation: Only official notices written on Sauder Business School letterhead will constitute a notice of cancellation of a class session.