

# COURSE SYLLABUS

**COURSE TITLE:** POFT 2312-151 Business Correspondence & Communication  
Online

**SEMESTER/YEAR:** Fall 2017  
**FINAL – Monday, December 11 – available all day from 12 AM to 11:59 PM**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Pat Dennis

**OFFICE LOCATION:** Lubbock Center, Room 120F

**OFFICE HOURS:**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	ROOM
1–3 PM	3-4 PM	1–3 PM	3-4 PM	10-12 PM	Lubbock Center 120F
				Other Times by Appointment	

**OFFICE PHONE:** 806-716-4638

**E-MAIL ADDRESS:** [pdennis@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:pdennis@southplainscollege.edu)

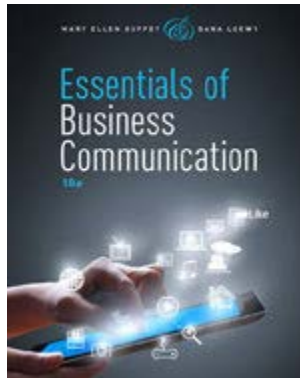
***A student who enrolls in this class who may need classroom accommodations is strongly encouraged to schedule an intake interview with the special services department before enrolling in this class or prior to the add/drop date for this semester.***

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course provides skill development in practical applications which emphasize the improvement of writing skills necessary for effective business communications.

**COURSE GOALS:** After successfully completing this course, the student should be able to apply appropriate communications theory in the writing of

business letters, memos, e-mails, texts, and other business documents. Each student should also be more at ease and knowledgeable about the job-hunting process after he/she watches online mock interviews and hears lectures from various experts in the personnel field.

## TEXT



**ISBN: 9781305699199 with MINDTAP (includes access code)**

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Even though this is an online class, students still have to access the course on a regular basis. The Blackboard software used to manage this online course tracks student logins, tracking when and where the student has been in the course. Accessing this course on a regular basis is extremely important in order to meet the objectives of this course. You will feel more at ease with the materials if you stay in touch with what is going on. You will need to check your SPC e-mail or forward it to another e-mail of your choice. You can do this by clicking the following

link: [https://myspc.southplainscollege.edu/ICS/Students/Information\\_Technology/Email.jnz](https://myspc.southplainscollege.edu/ICS/Students/Information_Technology/Email.jnz)

***Minimum log in for the course is at least three (3) days per week. However, I recommend checking in once a day if possible for announcements. I can see how many times you log in!***

**Always go to BB first and use the MindTap link to access your assignments. The recommended browser is FireFox.**

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through MySPC using his or her student online account. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

If for any reason the student is unable to complete the course requirements, it is the student's responsibility to initiate their own withdrawal by the 1st drop date for the semester. An administrative drop by the instructor in this course will, in most cases, result in the student receiving an "F" (not an "X"). **The last day to drop a class is November 16, 2017. However, always discuss this with your instructor before dropping.**

## ASSIGNMENT POLICY

**MindTap** will be used for most assignments. Reading of each chapter is critical if you want to do well on MindTap assignments. You can set homework reminders on your electronic devices for deadlines. Assignments will open on Monday morning and will be due on Sunday nights at 11:59 PM. MindTap assignments should be done in the order they are presented. Your work may be done at any time from home or by using a SPC computer lab. You can't wait until Sunday to do your work. It MUST be spread throughout the week. **NOTE: Not all of your grades will be in MindTap; your final grade will always be shown in Blackboard. After you finish your MindTap assignments, make sure they flow over to Blackboard. Sometimes this takes a few days.**

## EXAMINATION POLICY

**Eleven chapter exams and three unit exams will be taken online. NO make-up exams are given. ALL students MUST take the final unit exam which counts as the final.**

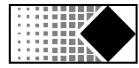
## GRADING POLICY

<b>COURSE CATEGORIES</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Chapter Quizzes (unlimited attempts—highest score recorded)</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Aplia Homework(three attempts—highest score recorded)</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Writing Workshops (five attempts—highest score recorded)</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Video Activities (one submission allowed)</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Writing Assignments (one submission allowed)</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Chapter Exams (one attempt)</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Unit Exams (one attempt)</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**NOTE: Final grades will be based on the following grading scale:**

<b>90-100</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>80-89</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>70-79</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>60-69</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>59 AND BELOW</b>	<b>F</b>

## **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (C1,3,5,6,7,8,9,11,13,14,15,18,19)**



### **Course Learning Outcomes**

During a course using *Essentials of Business Communication*, you will:

- Demonstrate polished grammar, punctuation, and usage skills necessary to create, proofread, and edit typical written business messages and oral presentations.
- Prepare clear, concise, and well-organized e-mails, memos, letters, and reports.
- Implement problem-solving and critical-thinking skills in preparing business messages and presentations.
- Demonstrate professionalism while developing effective listening, nonverbal, meeting, team, and cross-cultural skills.
- Gain hands-on experience in the use of digital tools for researching, reporting, composing, and interacting on the job.
- Create customized, professional résumés, cover letters, and other employment messages.
- Demonstrate superior interviewing techniques when applying for employment.

# COURSE OUTLINE

## **WEEK 1 – Chapter 1 – *Communicating in the Digital-Age Workplace***

### **Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Describe how solid communication skills will improve your career prospects and help you succeed in today's challenging digital-age workplace.
2. Confront barriers to effective listening, and start building your listening skills.
3. Explain the importance of nonverbal communication and of improving your nonverbal communication skills.
4. Explain five common dimensions of culture, and understand how culture affects communication and the use of social media and communication technology.
5. Discuss strategies that help communicators overcome negative cultural attitudes and prevent miscommunication in today's diverse networked workplace.

## **WEEK 2 - CHAPTER 2: *PLANNING BUSINESS MESSAGES***

### **Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Discuss the five steps in the communication process.
2. Recognize the goals of business writing, summarize the 3-x-3 writing process, and explain how it guides a writer.
3. Analyze the purpose of a message, anticipate its audience, and select the best communication channel.
4. Employ adaptive writing techniques such as incorporating audience benefits, developing the "you" view, and using conversational but professional language.
5. Develop additional expert writing techniques including the use of a positive and courteous tone, bias-free language, plain language, and precise words.

## **WEEK 3 – CHAPTER 3: *Organizing and Drafting Business Messages***

### **Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Apply Phase 2 of the 3-x-3 writing process, which begins with formal and informal research to collect background information.
2. Organize information into strategic relationships.

3. Compose the first draft of a message using a variety of sentence types while avoiding sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices.
4. Improve your writing by emphasizing important ideas, employing the active and passive voice effectively, using parallelism, and preventing dangling and misplaced modifiers.
5. Draft well-organized paragraphs that incorporate (a) topic sentences, (b) support sentences, and (c) transitional expressions to build coherence.

#### **WEEK 4 – CHAPTER 4: *Revising Business Messages***

**Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Complete business messages by revising for conciseness, which includes eliminating flabby expressions, long lead-ins, *there is/are* and *it is/was* fillers, redundancies, and empty words, as well as condensing for microblogging.
2. Improve clarity in business messages by keeping the ideas simple, dumping trite business phrases, dropping clichés, avoiding slang and buzzwords, rescuing buried verbs, controlling exuberance, and choosing precise words.
3. Enhance readability by understanding document design including the use of white space, margins, typefaces, fonts, numbered and bulleted lists, and headings.
4. Recognize proofreading problem areas, and apply effective techniques to catch mistakes in both routine and complex documents.
5. Evaluate a message to judge its effectiveness.

#### **WEEK 5 – UNIT 1 TEST**

#### **WEEK 6 – CHAPTER 5: *ELECTRONIC MESSAGES AND MEMORANDUMS***

**Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Understand the professional standards for the usage, structure, and format of e-mails and interoffice memos in the digital-era workplace.
2. Explain workplace instant messaging and texting as well as their liabilities and best practices.
3. Identify professional applications of podcasts and wikis.
4. Describe how businesses use blogs to connect with internal and external audiences, and list best practices for professional blogging.
5. Address business uses of social media networks, and assess their advantages as well as risks.

## **WEEK 7 – CHAPTER 6: POSITIVE MESSAGES**

### **Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Understand the channels through which typical positive messages travel in the digital era—e-mails, memos, and business letters, and explain how business letters should be formatted.
2. Compose direct messages that make requests, respond to inquiries online and offline, and deliver step-by-step instructions.
3. Prepare messages that make direct claims and voice complaints, including those posted online.
4. Create adjustment messages that salvage customers' trust and promote further business.
5. Write special messages that convey kindness and goodwill.

## **WEEK 8 – CHAPTER 7: NEGATIVE MESSAGES**

### **Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Understand the goals of business communicators in conveying negative news.
2. Compare the strategies and ethics of the direct and indirect plans in communicating negative news.
3. Explain the components of effective negative messages, including opening with a buffer, apologizing, showing empathy, presenting the reasons, cushioning the bad news, and closing pleasantly.
4. Apply effective techniques in refusing typical requests or claims, as well as handling customer bad news in print and online.
5. Describe and apply effective techniques for delivering negative news within organizations.

## **WEEK 9 – CHAPTER 8: PERSUASIVE MESSAGES**

### **Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Explain digital-age persuasion and identify time-proven persuasive techniques.
2. Craft persuasive messages that request actions.
3. Write compelling claims and deliver successful complaints.



4. Understand interpersonal persuasion at work, and compose persuasive messages within organizations.
5. Create effective and ethical direct-mail and e-mail sales messages employing the AIDA strategy: gaining attention, building interest, developing desire, and motivating action.

## **WEEK 10 – UNIT 3 TEST**

## **WEEK 11 – CHAPTER 11: PROFESSIONALISM AT WORK: BUSINESS ETIQUETTE, ETHICS, TEAMWORK, AND MEETINGS**

**Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Understand professionalism, start developing business etiquette skills, and build an ethical mind-set—important qualities digital-age employers seek.
2. Use your voice as a communication tool, master face-to-face workplace interaction, foster positive relations on the job, and accept as well as provide constructive criticism gracefully.
3. Practice professional telephone skills and polish your voice mail etiquette.
4. Understand the importance of teamwork in today's digital-era workplace, and explain how you can contribute positively to team performance.
5. Discuss effective practices and technologies for planning and participating in productive face-to-face meetings and virtual meetings.

## **WEEK 12 – CHAPTER 13: THE JOB SEARCH AND RÉSUMÉS IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

**Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Prepare to search for a job in the digital age by understanding the changing job market, identifying your interests, assessing your qualifications, and exploring career opportunities.
2. Develop savvy search strategies by recognizing job sources and using digital tools to explore the open job market.
3. Expand your job-search strategies by using both traditional and digital tools in pursuing the hidden job market.
4. Organize your qualifications and information into effective résumé segments to create a winning, customized résumé.
5. Optimize your job search and résumé by taking advantage of today's digital tools.

6. Draft and submit a customized cover message to accompany a print or digital résumé.

### **WEEK 13– CHAPTER 13 CONTINUED**

### **WEEK 14--CHAPTER 14: *INTERVIEWING AND FOLLOWING UP***

#### **Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

1. Explain the purposes and types of job interviews, including screening, one-on-one, panel, group, sequential, stress, and online interviews.
2. Describe what to do before an interview, including researching the company, rehearsing success stories, practicing responses to potential interview questions, and cleaning up digital dirt.
3. Explain how to prepare for employment interviews, including researching the target company.
4. Recognize how to fight interview fears and control nonverbal messages.
5. Answer common interview questions and close an interview positively.
6. Outline the activities that take place after an interview, including thanking the interviewer and contacting references.
7. Write follow-up letters and e-mails and other employment messages.

### **WEEK 15 – *CHAPTER 14 CONTINUED AND MOCK INTERVIEWS***

#### **Objectives: After studying this chapter you should be able to:**

- Answer typical interview questions.
- Critique others in a similar interview setting.

### **WEEK 16 – FINAL – UNIT 3**

## **CAMPUS GUIDELINES**

### **CHILDREN ON CAMPUS**

Many of the students attending classes at South Plains College are also parents who value the opportunity to participate in higher education. Sometimes students are faced with the decision of whether to remain at home with their children, bring children with them to class, or be absent from class. The following guidelines address concerns for the safety of children on campus and provide for an environment conducive to learning:

1. Students are not allowed to bring children to class and will be asked to leave in the interest of providing an environment conducive for **all** students enrolled in the class. Students are responsible for adherence to the attendance requirements set forth by the instructor in the course syllabus.
2. **Children may not be left unattended.** In order to provide for the safety of children on campus, parents or other guardians are responsible for supervising children while utilizing services or conducting business on campus.
3. **Disruptive children will not be allowed to interfere with college business.** Parents or other guardians are responsible for supervising and controlling the behavior of children they have brought on campus.

#### **SPC Standard Disability Statement**

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Reese Center (Building 8) 806-716-4675, Lubbock Campus 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

#### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College -1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336, 806-894-9611

### **DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

In this class, the teacher will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world, and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

### **GENERAL SAFETY ON CAMPUS**

South Plains College recognizes the importance of safety on campus. The protection of persons and property is a responsibility which we all share. Personal safety begins with the individual. The following guidelines are intended to assist you in protecting yourself and to encourage practices that contribute to a safe environment for our campus community.

- Never leave your personal property unsecured or unattended.
- Look around and be aware of your surroundings when you enter and exit a building.
- Whenever possible, avoid walking alone, particularly after dark. Walk to your vehicle with other class members or request that the Security Guard walk you to your car.
- When approaching your vehicle, keep your keys in your hand; look under your car and in the back seat and floorboard. Lock the doors as soon as you are inside your car.

### **FOOD AND DRINK IN CLASSROOMS**

It is the policy of South Plains College not to permit food or drink in the classrooms or laboratories.

**In case of emergency, contact the following numbers but DO NOT leave a voice mail message:  
894-9611, ext. 2338 - Levelland Campus 747-0576, ext. 4677 – Lubbock Center 885-3048, ext. 2923 - Reese Center (mobile  
893-5705)**