

SOM 301: Business Models: A Communications Approach – Fall 2015

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Professor Information and Office Hours (OH)/Class Times and Locations

* Please review the email format listed below before contacting your professor.

Lab Professor:

NAME HERE

OH: DAY AND TIME HERE, Location

Email: HANDLEHERE@gmu.edu

Course Description and Overview

SOM 301 is the business communications course for the School of Business, as well as the writing-intensive (WI) course for all business majors. The fundamentals of business models are introduced, communication skills are developed, and writing as a learning tool is emphasized. Students will write at least 3,500 words in total throughout the semester covering a range of writing genres.

Comment [GG1]: Syllabus contains WI statement and students are required to write at least 3,500 words.

A minimum grade of C (73%) is required to satisfy business degree requirements, and students will not be permitted to make more than three attempts to achieve a C or higher in this course. Registration in this course will be prohibited beyond three attempts that resulted in a grade lower than C. If you have questions about this policy, please see an academic advisor in ENT8.

Course Materials

The following course materials are required for completion of SOM 301:

- **Business Communications Today, 12th Edition by Bovee and Thill**
- **Blackboard:** SOM 301 is supplemented with Blackboard (mymason.gmu.edu)
 - All assignments and course documents will be posted to Blackboard
- **Laptop**
 - Bring to ALL labs
- **USB flash drive**
 - Bring to ALL labs

It is *highly recommended* that if you do not already have a writer’s reference handbook that you purchase one for this course. Diana Hacker’s *A Writer’s Reference* is always a good choice.

Course Learning Objectives

After completing SOM 301, students will be able to:

- Communicate orally and in writing in a business context.
- Present ideas in writing in an organized, logical, concise, grammatically correct, and professional manner.
- Communicate and solve problems in a business context.
- Demonstrate the ability to use the library and other resources for research purposes.
- Identify the key aspects of each functional business area.
- Explain how the functional areas are integrated together as part of the business model.
- Demonstrate comprehension and critical thinking skills.

School of Business Undergraduate Programs Learning Goals

The following are the learning goals of the School of Business undergraduate programs:

- Our students will be aware of the uses of technology in business.
- Our students will be effective communicators (both written and oral).
- Our students will have an interdisciplinary perspective.
- Our students will be knowledgeable about global business and trade.
- Our students will recognize the importance of ethical decisions.
- Our students will be knowledgeable about team dynamics and the characteristics of effective teams.
- Our students will understand the value of diversity and the importance of managing diversity in the context of business.
- Our students will be critical thinkers.

Class Policies

Professor Responsibilities and Roles

Lecturer: The lecturer is responsible for providing you with materials presented in the lecture portion of the class. Contact Prof. Yuckenberg about questions related to lecture. Always be sure to review the course email policy before contacting her to ensure that your question should be directed to her.

Lab Professor: Your lab professor is responsible for providing you with all material presented in the lab portion of the class. You should direct all questions regarding lab materials, activities, and assignments (including grades) to your lab professor.

PLEASE NOTE: Your lab professor will be responsible for managing the evaluation of your graded written work. If you are dissatisfied with your grades on written work, please speak to your lab professor about ways to improve on future assignments.

Student Responsibilities

- Students are responsible for carefully following the course schedule and reading all appropriate materials *prior* to attending lecture and lab for the week.
- Students are required to bring a laptop and USB flash drive to every lab.

- Students are responsible for their own time management and completing assignments in accordance with the assignment guidelines while meeting assignment due dates. Students must take responsibility for carefully reading assignments, rubrics, and other resources posted to Blackboard or distributed by their professors.

The University Catalog (<http://catalog.gmu.edu>) is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend every lecture and lab, and to be on time. If you anticipate vacations, work conflicts, childcare issues, etc., this may not be the appropriate time for you to take the class. Professors are unable to work around individual schedule conflicts; exceptions or excused absences are granted *only* in cases of documented illness or emergency, but still must be submitted to your professor for approval (see the late/make-up policy for more information).

Students should be respectful of their professor and fellow classmates by arriving to class on time to avoid distractions. If you miss class, you are still responsible for all material covered during class. You should get class notes or missed information from a classmate. If classes are cancelled, then schedules may be adjusted. Lecture and lab announcements or cancellations will be posted to Blackboard and/or sent via Mason email.

Laptops

All business students are required to have a laptop or access to a laptop with Windows 7 and Microsoft Office 2007 (or more recent versions). **Laptops must be brought to all SOM 301 labs.**

Students without working laptops in lab for the Writing Assessment, In-Class Writing 1, or In-Class Writing 2 will be unable to complete a make-up for the given assignment, that is unless they can provide approved documentation verifying a technical issue with their laptop and it is approved by their instructor.

Forgetting your laptop is **not** an acceptable reason to be unprepared (see late/make-up policy for more information).

If a student misses one of these specific assignments due to a laptop issue, the student must contact their lab professor to discuss the issue *before* the next lab. If the student does not contact their lab professor prior to the next class, an exception will not be made. **NOTE: Simply contacting your professor does not guarantee that the absence will be considered excused.**

Please review the classroom etiquette expectations section for further information about use of laptops in class.

Email Policy

Always refer to resources posted to Blackboard before emailing professors; oftentimes, your question can be answered by simply reviewing the syllabus or assignment directions. If you have reviewed the resources on Blackboard and still have a question, then please follow these guidelines to know who should receive your message:

- Issues related to lecture should be directed to your lecturer,
- Issues related to lab should be directed to your lab professor, **INSERT NAME AND EMAIL**.

Students must use their Mason email accounts to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. Consistent with federal privacy laws, SOM 301 faculty may not respond to non-Mason email addresses.

Assignments emailed to professors will not be accepted unless prior arrangements and approval have been made with your professor.

Remember that email is to be a formal means of communication. Therefore, emails directed toward professors need to be polite, grammatically correct, include a proper salutation and complimentary close, and show correct capitalization and spelling. Emails that do not follow these and the other business writing guidelines presented in this class may not receive a response.

Always include both your lecture and lab section numbers in emails to your professor.

Here are some ways to quickly and easily include the required lecture and lab information in your email:

- **Subject line:** Appointment Request (Lecture 001, Lab 201)

- **In message salutation:**

Dear Professor Brown,

I am in Lecture 001, Lab 201.

- **In message complimentary close:**

Sincerely,

Joe Student

Lecture 001, Lab 201

SafeAssign

In order to develop writing skills and teach students more about academic honesty, SafeAssign will be used in this class for certain assignments.

Please note the slight difference between submitting to SafeAssign for in-class writing and writing completed outside of class.

For SafeAssignments **completed out of class:**

- All SafeAssign submissions are due at the lab start time on the due date. Failure to submit assignments to SafeAssign by the start of lab will result in the assignment being considered late and **marked with a zero**.
- Each SafeAssign submission will be checked for adherence to the Honor Code.

For SafeAssignments **completed in class**:

- SafeAssign submissions that are completed in class are due by the *end* of lab on the due date and before you leave class. Failure to submit assignments to SafeAssign by the end of lab will result in the assignment being considered late and **marked with a zero**.
- The SafeAssign submission will be checked for adherence to the Honor Code.

Citation Style

In this course, you will use APA citation format. Refer to the free citation guide posted at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. Failure to follow this format will result in a grade penalty.

Late/Make-Up Policy

All submission criteria must be met for an assignment to be considered on time (see the SafeAssign policy for more information).

Written work completed out of class can be turned in early if an absence is known/anticipated. Written work completed in class **cannot** be completed early if an absence is known/anticipated and discussed with your professor beforehand.

Late assignments will NOT be accepted in SOM 301.

An exception will be made only in case of illness or emergency and only upon receipt of documentation from a doctor or advisor and approval by the designated professor. For missed lab assignments due to illness or emergency, students must contact their lab professor to discuss the instance before the next lab. If the student does not contact the appropriate professor prior to the next class, an exception will not be made. Simply contacting your professor does not guarantee that the absence will be considered excused. This policy is enforced for all assignments, regardless of point value and whether completed in or out of class.

If you are late to lecture or lab, you risk missing a graded assignment or attendance. Traffic and parking are unpredictable. Plan accordingly, as exceptions for these events are only permitted when a university-wide exception is required.

Feedback on Drafts

Your lab professor is happy to discuss lab concepts and assignments with you during their office hours. Lab professors will also be able to provide feedback on your written work at this time. If you are unable to attend office hours, you are welcome to email your specific questions to your lab professor. However, lab professors will never edit/rewrite/fix your work for you either in person or via email. The School of Business requires that your work be your own. Becoming a stronger writer is a process that requires the writer to think, reflect, and revise his or her own work.

Comment [GG2]: Syllabus indicates writing resources that are available to students, including instructor feedback.

Students must see their own lab professor for questions or feedback on their lab assignments.

Grading of Papers

A rubric will be used to grade major assignments. Rubrics will be posted to Blackboard before the assignment is due.

Honor Code

You are expected to know and follow the GMU Honor Code, which can be found through the website of the Office of Academic Integrity: <http://oai.gmu.edu>

Specifically, knowledge of the following is expected:

1. All written assignments will be completed individually unless otherwise specified. Collaboration and group participation will be encouraged in developing ideas, but students shall write papers on their own, unless otherwise stated by the professor.
2. In-class graded work will be closed book unless otherwise stated by the professor. The use of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information will not be permissible, unless otherwise stated by the professor.
3. Source citations must be provided for all referenced work in this course. Intellectual property belonging to someone else must be properly cited.
4. Original work is expected for this class. If you are repeating this course, all work must be newly developed material (see the FAQ's at end of this document for more information on this issue). Materials prepared for other courses are not to be used to satisfy the requirements of this course.
5. All instances of plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, will result in a report sent to the University Honors Committee and a recommendation of a zero for the assignment, and possibly the course.

Below is the School of Business Recommendations for Honor Code Violations, which will be followed by all SOM 301 faculty members.

School of Business Recommendations for Honor Code Violations <i>Adopted by the faculty May 2012</i>		
UG-Non Freshman Students (including transfer students)		
Type of Violation	First Offense	Second Offense
Plagiarism—failure to cite/attribute sources	An F in the class; multiple visits to the Writing Center required; and Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance	An F in the class; multiple visits to the Writing Center required; Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance; dismissal from the program; and possible suspension or expulsion
Plagiarism—representing someone else's work as the student's own	An F in the class; multiple visits to the Writing Center required; and Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance	An F in the class; multiple visits to the Writing Center required; Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance (at times of hearing and reenrollment if relevant); dismissal from the program; and possible suspension or expulsion
Cheating on an assignment,	An F in the class; and	Expulsion

homework, class participation, or minor project	Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance	
Cheating on a major project, test, or exam	An F in the class; Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance; and at least one semester suspension	Expulsion
Egregious Violation [e.g., stealing an exam; submitting coursework from another class as original work; lying to an employer about academic performance]	Dismissal from the program; at least one year suspension; and attendance at Academic Integrity Seminar at the time of hearing and just prior to reenrollment	Expulsion

Special Accommodations

Disability: Students needing special accommodations must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at George Mason University. The mission of the ODS is to facilitate equal access for students with disabilities to university programs, events, and services. The ODS is committed to upholding the legal, ethical, and philosophical principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by providing reasonable accommodations and services that will help ensure that students with disabilities have equal opportunities to achieve their full human potential. The ODS is located in Student Union Building 1, Room 4205, and the phone number is (703) 993-2474. Consult the ODS web site at <http://ods.gmu.edu/>. Students requiring special accommodations should contact ODS and inform the lecturer and their lab professor of their needs as soon as possible. Accommodations for an assignment cannot be made after the assignment due date.

Religion: Students who will miss class for religious reasons should inform the lecturer and their lab professor of anticipated absences by the second class of the semester.

Classroom Etiquette Expectations

Conduct in SOM 301 should be professional. Students should approach this course as practice for how to behave in a professional environment. This means being punctual and polite, taking notes, showing interest in what is being said, and avoiding distractions. Mobile phones and other personal electronic devices must be silenced, and there should be no texting or electronic chatting in lectures or labs. It is disruptive to everyone for phones to ring during class, distracting to text or chat electronically, and rude to take and make calls during class.

Laptops are to be used for approved SOM 301 activities/assignments only. Students distracting the class because of improper use of laptops or unprofessional behavior may be told to leave the classroom.

Your professors wish to promote a classroom where topics are open for discussion in a rational and nonthreatening manner. With that said, “bashing” of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Conduct and preparedness in lab will directly determine your class participation grade.

Graded Work

Please see the **Course Schedule** posted to Blackboard for due dates and the semester's weekly schedule.

A grade of C (73%) or better in this course is a School of Business admission requirement. To pass the course, students must demonstrate the following:

- Ability to write at a 300 course level,
- Understanding of course concepts,
- Application of course concepts,
- Proficiency in written and verbal communication skills

Writing assignments will be based not only on content, but also on style, format, appearance, and overall professionalism. In addition, grammar and mechanics will be worth 40-50% of assignment grades for most formal assignments, but these concepts will not be taught in SOM 301. Since this is a 300 level course, all students are expected to enter SOM 301 with a strong understanding of American English grammar and mechanics rules.

NOTE: Grades are **never** rounded in SOM 301.

Assignments

Note: Listed alphabetically, not by due date.

1. Cover Letter Draft = **Complete in order to receive full credit on your final.** Written outside of class; submitted in lab.
2. Cover Letter Final = **100** points. Written outside of class; submitted in lab.
3. Elevator Pitch = **15** points. Written outside of class; presented in lab.
4. In-Class Writing 1 = **150** points. Completed in lab.
5. In-Class Writing 2 = **150** points. Completed in lab.
6. Individual & Group Activities & Homework = **50** points.
7. Lab Participation = **75** points. This includes your group's Reading Review and Handout, participation in class, and attendance.
8. Lecture Participation & Quizzes = **75** points.
9. Persuasive Final Reflection = **50** points. Written outside of class; submitted in lab.
10. Persuasive Memo Abstract & Company Profile= **Complete in order to receive credit on your final.** Written and submitted outside of class.
11. Persuasive Memo Draft 1 = **Complete in order to receive credit on your final.** Written outside of class.
12. Persuasive Memo Draft 2 = **Complete in order to receive credit on your final.** Written outside of class; submitted in lab.
13. Persuasive Memo Final = **250** points. Written outside of class; submitted in lab.
14. Persuasive Memo Presentation = **50** points. Presentation given during lab.
15. Plagiarism Quiz = **25** points. Students must bring their own Scantron and pencil to class on day of quiz. Completed in lab.
16. Writing Assessment = **10** points. Completed in lab. **Missing the Writing Assessment for any reason other than documented, pre-approved, excused absence is unacceptable.** Performance on this assignment is an accurate indicator of success on future SOM 301 assignments. Students receiving a grade of no credit on the Writing Assessment should seriously

Comment [GG3]: Syllabus describes grading criteria for all major writing assignments. Students are required to write at least 2 assignments.

consider dropping the course. Grades will be posted to Blackboard before the last day to drop with a 67% tuition penalty (Friday, Oct. 2nd). NOTE: Failure to complete this assignment will result in an automatic grade penalty of 100 points at the end of the semester. Only students with excused and documented absences will be allowed to complete a make-up, which must be completed by Monday, Sept. 21st.

Total = 1000 points

Extra Credit Opportunities

1. University Career Fair Reflection = **10** points. Written outside of class; turned in during lab the week of Oct. 12th (Week 7). Directions will be posted to Blackboard.

Total possible points, including extra credit: 1010

Lab Participation Overview

You should be punctual, prepared, and involved. You are expected to take an active role in class. Students are encouraged to ask questions and respect should be given to fellow classmates regarding their questions and opinions. Participation expectations are outlined below:

- Participation is graded on quality as well as quantity. Participation includes providing recapitulations and summaries, making observations that integrate concepts and discussions, citing relevant personal examples, providing support and feedback to others, and being an active participant in all discussions and activities.
- Participation includes your group's Reading Review and Handout.
- Your attendance is included in your lab participation grade.
- Participation requires preparedness. Students are required to read designated assignments or activities prior to class, and to be prepared with questions or concerns. Some in-class activities will require outside research or preparation prior to class. Unpreparedness will negatively impact the participation grade.
- Participation includes avoiding distractions (texting, web surfing, chatting, etc.). Your participation score will be negatively affected by engaging in these activities.

Final Grading Scale

930-1010 ¹ points = A	900-929.9 points = A-	870-899.9 points = B+
830-869.9 points = B	800-829.9 points = B-	770-799.9 points = C+
730-769.9 points = C	600-729.9 points = D	0-599.9 points = F

Additional Campus Resources

- School of Business Career Services: <http://business.gmu.edu/undergraduate/career-services/>
- Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>
- University Libraries "Ask a Librarian": <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>
- Counseling and Psychological Services: <http://caps.gmu.edu>

SOM 301 Frequently Asked Questions

¹ Includes extra credit.

The following information may be useful to you during your semester as a student enrolled in SOM 301.

Q. Why is there so much writing in SOM 301?

A. SOM 301 fulfills the Writing Intensive (WI) requirement for all School of Business majors. Every Mason undergraduate student is required to take a 300-level WI course before earning their degree. A student must submit approximately 3,500 words of graded writing in their WI course. Because of this requirement, you may be writing much more in SOM 301 than you are used to. Most of your grade will be determined by the quality of the writing you submit.

Comment [GG4]: Syllabus contains WI statement.

Q. How can I pass SOM 301?

A. Great question! First, be sure you are attending all lectures and labs, and taking careful notes during each.

Next, give yourself time to complete out-of-class assignments. The course standards are high, so you should not wait until the last minute to work on your out-of-class assignments. Like your other classes, much of your grade is determined by the quality of the work you submit. Things like grammar, punctuation, and word choice are all important elements of your grade. As your lab professor will discuss with you throughout the semester, writing is a process. Even if you are already a great writer, your first draft is not going to be your best work. When students take time to revise, edit, and proofread, the quality of their work improves and so do their grades. If your goal is to earn a high grade in SOM 301, you will want to be sure you give yourself time to work on a few drafts of your out-of-class assignments before you turn them in.

Comment [GG5]: Writing strategies and tips provided for students.

For in-class assignments, try to be as prepared as possible. Bring the resources you are permitted to use with you to class and arrive on time. Do not rush through the assignment.

Also, it is a good idea to take advantage of the resources provided to you. You may want to consider scheduling an appointment with a tutor in the Writing Center or visiting your professors during office hours.

Finally, other than spending time on the actual writing you submit, the best advice we can offer you is to follow directions. Failure to follow assignment directions is one of the main ways students lose points on their work in SOM 301.

Q. Can you tell me more about how students might lose points in SOM 301?

A. Here is a list of the most common ways that students lose points on their work:

- Failing to submit an assignment to SafeAssign on time
- Failing to cite sources
- Submitting a paper that does not address the assignment scenario
- Submitting a paper that does not include the required number of sources
- Submitting work that has not been proofread or edited
- Submitting work that is not stapled or professionally presented
- Submitting work that does not have the name, lab #, date header

Q. Why are there such specific guidelines in SOM 301?

A. Good question! Part of the reason why we insist that you follow certain guidelines is because we need to have rules that ensure consistent treatment of all students enrolled in the class. It would not be fair if one professor allowed students to turn in late work and another did not. To make sure this does not happen, the SOM 301 faculty agree on a list of guidelines that will be fair to the majority of students. Other policies are determined by School of Business deans.

This class is also to be practice for the scenarios you are likely to encounter in the workplace. Your employer will have specific rules for submitting documents so that things are consistent and aesthetically pleasing. The rules in SOM 301 will force you to consider these kinds of details. Please know that your lab professor will remind you of what they are looking for, so be sure to take notes!

Q. I am repeating the class. Can I resubmit old work?

A. Per the GMU Honor Code, submitted work must be newly developed material, and work prepared for other courses cannot be used to satisfy the requirements of this course, including work prepared during a previous attempt of SOM 301.

However, your lab professor will permit you to re-use your Resume and Cover Letter **only** because these are an overview of your actual work history and would not change significantly from one semester to the next. That said, if you are repeating SOM 301, you should *thoroughly revise* these two assignments regardless (and use a new job posting for the assignment). Again, all other work must be original to this semester.

Q. I have a question about something related to lecture. Whom should I contact?

A. Contact Professor _____ about questions related to lecture. Always be sure to review the course email policy before contacting her to ensure that your question should be directed to her.

Q. I have a question about something related to lab. Whom should I contact?

A. Contact your lab professor about anything related to lab.