Course Syllabus

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BUS 300: Written Communication
for the Business Professional

Section 1: Course Information

This section expands on the following topics:

- 1.1: Instructor Information
- 1.2: Course Information
- 1.3: Textbook & Course Materials
- 1.4: Course Technology


1.1: Instructor Information

- Name: Mary Jae Kleckner, Ph. D.
- **Virtual Office Hours** **(https://wisconsin-edu.zoom.us/j/95506880096?pwd=SmErTDErRXl2WDhBWkl2Wjl5OTV6UT09)** <-- Click link to enter waiting room. Mondays & Wednesdays 12:00–2:00 pm
  Starting Sept. 8. Alternate meeting times available on request.
- E-mail: **mary.kleckner@uwsp.edu (mailto:mary.kleckner@uwsp.edu)** *

* If you require a response within 24 hours, make sure your email's subject line 1) includes "BUS 301" and your specific section number/meeting time, and 2) succinctly indicates your specific area of concern (assignment, event, etc.)

1.2: Course Information

BUS 300: Written Communication for the Business Professional is a 100% online, asynchronous course.

1.3: Textbook & Course Materials
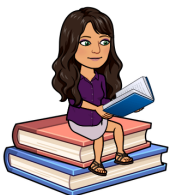
Business Communication Today (14th Ed.), Courtland Bovée & John V. Thill. Prentice Hall, 2016. This text is available through the University Bookstore Text Rental program.

NOTE: If you are living outside the continental U.S. this semester, you might want to consider renting through **Amazon.com (https://www.amazon.com/New-Used-Textbooks-Books/b/?node=465600)** to avoid shipping costs and delays.

1.4: Course Technology

We will use Canvas and Microsoft Word extensively throughout the course. We may incorporate other technology platforms into the BUS 300 coursework as well. Please take the following steps as early as possible, preferably before the semester begins:

1. Confirm your devices meet the **system requirements for Canvas** (https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-the-browser-and-computer-requirements-for-Canvas/ta-p/66).
2. Confirm your devices meet the **system requirements for Zoom** (https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-requirements-for-Windows-macOS-and-Linux).
3. Follow my course guidelines to **install a free student edition of Office 365**.

Whenever you experience technical problems, feel free to let me know; however, try to resolve those issues through the resources below:

	UWSP IT Service Desk	**Canvas Support**
Phone:	• 346.4357 (on campus) • 877.832.8977 (off campus)	• 833.828.9804
Email/chat:	• **itsvdesk@uwsp.edu** (mailto:itsvdesk@uwsp.edu) • **techhelp@uwsp.edu** (mailto:techhelp@uwsp.edu)	• Click the "Help" icon on the left side of this page)
Web resources:	• **Information Technology home page** (https://www.uwsp.edu/infotech/Pages/ServiceDesk/default.aspx) • **IT Service Desk** (https://www.uwsp.edu/infotech/Pages/ServiceDesk/default.aspx) • **IT instruction sheets and support videos** (https://www.uwsp.edu/online/Pages/Student-Support.aspx).	• **Canvas Student Guides** (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701) • **Canvas Video Guides** (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-3891)

Monitor your Canvas courses and UWSP email regularly. Don't rely solely on class reminders – check your email messages and log into your Canvas account at least 2-3 times a week.

If you generally struggle to use the required technology for this or other courses... consider meeting one-on-one with a UWSP technology tutor. To receive assistance through Technology Tutoring services, visit: **https://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/techTutoring.aspx** (https://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/techTutoring.aspx)

If you struggle to use Canvas efficiently... please register for this self-paced **Student Training / Canvas Orientation course** to avoid unnecessary frustration and confusion. Also refer to my **Canvas Resources page** for tips on navigating Canvas.

If you need additional tools for online or hybrid courses, visit:
https://www.uwsp.edu/online/Pages/Online%20Student%20Orientation.aspx (https://www.uwsp.edu/online/Pages/Online%20Student%20Orientation.aspx)

Section 2: Learning Outcomes

This section expands on the following topics:

- 2.1: Course Goals
- 2.2: Course Learning Objectives
- 2.3: Academic Unit

2.1: Course Goals

The goal of this course is to expand your perceptions about good writing beyond the absence of spelling, grammar, structural, and factual errors. It heavily emphasizes writing clarity, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness, and you will focus on communication strategy in addition to composition and delivery. The writing process is integrated directly into the design of the course to help you learn to invest more effort into planning and revising messages and less into writing them. You will also learn to more readily identify faulty logic and biased, incomplete, or inaccurate information.

2.2: Course Learning Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will progress in the following areas:

1. **Plan business messages conscientiously and strategically**.
2. **Write, revise, and edit documents conscientiously through multiple drafts**.
3. **Respond to messages received according to audience interests and needs**.
4. **Interpret information, analyze problems, and base decisions on logic and evidence strength**.
5. **Format professional-looking documents using word processing software**.
6. **Process/provide feedback clearly and comfortably**.

2.3: Academic Unit

SBE Mission

The UW-Stevens Point School of Business and Economics creates career ready graduates and leaders through applied learning. We serve the businesses, economy, and people of the greater Central Wisconsin region. We specialize in preparing students for success by providing professional development experiences, access to employers, and in-demand skills.

The SBE achieves its mission by valuing:

- Talent development
- Lifelong learning
- Career preparation
- On the job experiences
- Community outreach
- Regional partnerships
- Continuous improvement

Accreditation Commitment

SBE is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), a designation earned by only 5 percent of world business schools. Accreditation instills a culture of continuously improving our programs through connections with local business leaders, alumni and the community.

Section 3: Course Expectations and Policies

This section expands on the following topics:

- 3.1: Attendance
- 3.2: Late Work
- 3.3: Etiquette/Netiquette

3.1: Attendance

Physically (or virtually) "showing up" is sometimes enough to receive credit; however, mentally engaging in class material is always critical to *learning*. Several behaviors tell me whether you are actively engaged in the course. Coincidentally, central Wisconsin employers have identified the following ones as critical to career success:

- Listen (and read) actively and attentively
- Consistently and comfortably ask for clarification or feedback
- Employ effective questioning techniques
- Accept constructive criticism without deflection or defensive behavior

Engaging with course materials consistently and attentively *will* be the single most important factor in determining your performance and grade in this online course. Enter the COURSE (do not just access assignments though the "To Do" list) at least 3-4 times a week to

- If you do not log into the course during the first eight days of the regular 16-week term, you may be dropped from the class.
- If you expect to be unable to access the internet/course for more than a few days, talk to me in advance to make sure you keep pace with the course.

- If you cannot reach me or your other instructor(s) in an emergency, contact the Dean of Students Office at 715-346-2611 or **DOS@uwsp.edu (mailto:DOS@uwsp.edu)** .
- If you must miss school for religious reasons or military service, please refer to the "Absences due to Military Service" and "Religious Beliefs Accommodation" as outlined by the **UWSP registrar.** **(https://www.uwsp.edu/regrec/Pages/Attendance-Policy.aspx)**

Changes in class enrollment will impact your tuition and fee balance, financial aid award and veterans educational benefit. If you decide to drop this class, please do so using **accesSPoint** **(https://accesspoint.uwsp.edu/my.policy)** .

3.2: Late Work

Assignment deadlines are closely coordinated with class content and the sequence of drafts for each project. Completing assignments properly and submitting them on time is critical to the relevance and overall pacing of the course. For the occasional case where life gets in the way, my policies and procedures for missed assignment deadlines are as follows:

Type of assignment	Maximum score
First drafts or peer reviews submitted within 60 minutes of deadline:	Up to 74%
First drafts or peer reviews submitted more than 60 minutes past deadline:	No credit or make-up opportunities
Quizzes, Final Drafts, and Participation Assignments submitted within 24 hours of deadline:	Up to 74%, one revision opportunity
Quizzes, Final Drafts, and Participation Assignments submitted more than 24 hours past deadline:	-25% per 24 hours, no revision opportunity

You may receive more than one deadline extension during the semester, but *only* if you request the extension 24 hours in advance. If you realize you need more time on an assignment that is due in less than 24 hours, don't ask for an extension – just submit what you can and plan to receive a revision opportunity for up to 74%.

These policies are meant to help keep students on track... I prefer not to rely on them to coerce cooperation. **If you need an extension, just submit your request via email (mailto:mary.kleckner@uwsp.edu) at least 24 hours in advance**. The policies outlined above will apply to your extended deadline.

3.3: Etiquette/Netiquette

I want to foster a productive and energizing learning environment. Your reaction to others' opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respectful and reflect the spirit of civil discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea -- but you may not attack the individual expressing it (that would be **ad hominem logical fallacy (https://www.txstate.edu/philosophy/resources/fallacy-definitions/Ad-Hominem.html)**).

Working together, we can build a polite and respectful course community. The following classroom and online etiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:

- Do not dominate any discussion -- Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion (we will cover this during Unit 1).
- Using humor is acceptable, but avoid offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
- Avoid using slang -- it relies on shared cultural understanding and language comprehension that increases risk of misinterpretation.
- Never make fun of someone's ability to speak, read, or write.
- Keep an "open-mind" and be willing to express even your minority opinion. Minority opinions must be respected.
- Share tips with other students.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.

Netiquette refers rules for behaving properly online:

- Be mindful of how your writing will be interpreted. For example, using all capital letters suggests shouting. Omitting capitalization and punctuation makes it impossible to tell where one thought ends and another begins.

- Popular emoticons such as ☺ or :-) are sometimes helpful to convey your tone, but inappropriate or overuse can create confusion and erode professionalism.
- Wait, think, and edit before you click any "Send" or "Post" button.

Email Etiquette

Remember faculty can receive as many as 100 emails per day. Yours should be clear, concise, and professional so that your issues can be responded to effectively. Include the entire thread of an ongoing email conversation so that your instructor can recall the history of your issue without searching for other emails you have sent. Sign off with your first and last name.

IMPORTANT: **For obvious reasons, I will not respond to emails that ignore the conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.** In other words, do not send me a text via email. I also will not open attachments sent without an accompanying message. In addition, always submit assignments through Canvas. Never send them to me via email unless I specifically ask you to do so.

Inclusivity

This course is intended to serve students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. In addition, it aims to encourage them to view diversity as a resource that strengthens and benefits both teams and individuals. We must all work to present our ideas, information, and materials in a way that respects a variety of preferences and perspectives, including but not limited to gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture.

Thank you for following these guidelines, as they help create a positive learning community.

Section 4: Grading

This section expands on the following topics:

- 4.1: Grading Scheme
- 4.2: Grading Notes
- 4.3: Points Available

4.1: Grading Scheme

Your final grade in this course is based on the percentage of possible points you earn by the end of the semester:

Grade	Range	Grade	Range
A	100 % to 94.0%	C+	< 80.0 %to 77.0%
A-	< 94.0 %to 90.0%	C	< 77.0 %to 74.0%
B+	< 90.0 %to 87.0%	C-	< 74.0 %to 70.0%
B	< 87.0 %to 84.0%	D+	< 70.0 %to 67.0%
B-	< 84.0 %to 80.0%	D	< 67.0 %to 61.0%
		F	< 61.0 % to 0.0%

4.2: Grading Notes

I provide specific instructions for each assignment. Read them carefully, as you will be accountable for the criteria described in each assignment's instructions (and this syllabus). I am happy to answer questions about grading criteria, so be sure to ask me if you need clarification on the instructions.

Also keep the following in mind, as they will influence your grade in this course:

1. Do your own work.

The *minimum* penalty for academic misconduct in this class is a zero on the assignment. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes academic misconduct -- so please review my guidelines for **Avoiding Plagiarism** and Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, *Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures (https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/UWS%2014-1.pdf)* . "I didn't know" will *not* be a valid excuse

For more information about university policies, review UW-Stevens Point's **Rights and Responsibilities (https://www.uwsp.edu/perkins/Pages/Rights-and-Responsibilities.aspx)** .

2. Meet deadlines.

To keep things simple and organized, students must complete all assignments as instructed and submit them by the deadline in the Canvas calendar. If you need an exception or extension, you must make alternative arrangements with me at least 24 hours in advance to avoid a grade penalty. Review "Late Work" policies above for more specific information.

3. Document your sources properly.

All written assignments should follow the Publication manual of The American Psychological Association (6th ed.) guidelines for documentation. Expect to lose points for citations and references that do not meet APA formatting standards. See **Course Guidelines on Source Documentation** for more information and resources and download my **APA Guidelines handout** ↓ **(https://uwstp.instructure.com/courses/478599/files/43223940/download?download_frd=1)** for specific formatting instructions and examples.

4. Proofread Carefully.

In addition to the specific content and formatting requirements provided for each assignment, all written work must observe basic grammar, spelling, and punctuation rules. Review these **Proofreading Guidelines** to see which errors will cost you points. Any written assignment, including first drafts, that contains a distracting amount of spelling and grammatical errors must be revised and resubmitted before it can receive a grade. Revisions can earn no higher than 74%.

5. Talk to me.

My contact information and office hours are posted at the top of this syllabus for a reason -- if you have questions or concerns, you are welcome to call or stop by during those times and talk them over with me. If they pertain to a specific assignment, please talk to me *before* the assignment is due. You are always welcome to email me if you prefer, but you may wait longer to receive a response.

If you are concerned about your overall performance in the course, please speak with me about your concerns in person – *especially* if you feel confused or overwhelmed. Effective communication works two ways, and I can't help if you don't ask. Don't let a small problem become a major crisis because we didn't talk.

6. Ask for help.

Please take the initiative to seek out Academic Support and Accommodations.

I am always happy to help if you feel confused or have questions about course materials and assignments; however, sometimes you may need additional help. If that applies to you, below are some places to find it.

If you require *Academic Assistance:*

The **Mary K. Croft Tutoring-Learning Center** **(https://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/default.aspx)** located in room 018 of the Learning Resources Center offers a variety of academic support services, including:

- Writing and Reading Consultations if you are struggling with a tough writing or reading assignment
- Technology Tutoring Services if your computer skills aren't up to speed
- Academic Skills Specialists if you are struggling with study skills, time management, or other general academic challenges.

The Writing Center **(https://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/writing-center.aspx)** provides consultants who are successful UWSP students and can discuss any type of writing at any stage of the drafting process, including brainstorming, outlining, and research or citations. They work with experienced writers as well as struggling writers; we believe that everyone benefits from discussions about their writing.

- Writing Center services are available virtually via Zoom
- Consultation sessions are by appointment. Some short notice times may be available
- Written work can be shared with consultants for feedback via **this online form** **(https://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/online-writing-lab-request.aspx)**
- All Writing Center services are FREE

If you have questions or would like to make an appointment, please contact the TLC via email (**tlctutor@uwsp.edu (mailto:tlctutor@uwsp.edu)**) or phone (715-346-3568).

If you require *Academic Accommodations*:

Please speak with me the first day of class if you know or suspect that you have a recognized disability. Although course standards cannot be lowered, appropriate accommodations may be available to you under certain circumstances. **You must make an appointment with the** **Disability and Assistive Technology Center** **(https://www.uwsp.edu/datc/Pages/apply-for-accommodations.aspx) (DATC) as soon as possible to be eligible for accommodations.**

4.3: Points Available

Your course grade is based on the following distribution of points:

- Quizzes: 140 points (18.5%)
- Discussion Posts   90 points (11.5%)
- Participation Assignments: 35 points (4.5%) (includes Pro Events, 20 points)
- First Drafts: 25 points (3.5%)
- Peer Reviews: 105 points (14%)
- Final Drafts: 350 points -- 320 individual (38%), 30 team (4%)

Total: 740 points

Each course Unit contains the following proportion of points:

- Unit 1: Planning Business Documents   120 points (16%)
- Unit 2: Writing Business Documents   210 points (28.5%)
- Unit 3: Conducting Research   120 points (16%)
- Unit 4: Developing Employment Documents   180 points (24%)
- Final: Course Progress Portfolio   100 points (13.5%)

Total: 720 points (+ 20 Pro Events)

Section 5: Coursework Descriptions and Commentary

This section expands on the following topics:

- 5.1: Quizzes
- 5.2: Discussion Posts & Participation Exercises
- 5.3: First Drafts
- 5.4: Peer Reviews
- 5.5: Final Drafts
- 5.6: Smiley/Pro Pointer Events
- 5.7: Extra Credit

5.1: Quizzes

Quizzes are intended to assess your comprehension of material covered by the textbook and in class.

Note about deadline extensions on quizzes: Because all students must complete each quiz before I can post correct responses, I prefer to avoid deadline extensions on quizzes. So if your internet connection, work schedule, or other personal circumstances make your availability somewhat unpredictable, please do not wait until the last day to take your quizzes. If you have a documented medical emergency or a military deployment that requires you to miss the quiz window, however, contact me as soon as you can to discuss an appropriate alternative deadline.

5.2: Discussion Posts & Participation Exercises

Student engagement and participation are critical to the quality of this course. The goal of these formative assessments is to provide you with enough context and understanding to complete graded assignments more effectively. To earn full credit, all you must do is submit them *completely, correctly*, and **on time**... **so please read the instructions carefully!**

In an online environment, many participation exercises require a sequence of discussion posts. In a F2F class, you must complete assigned participation exercises before their corresponding class session meets, so you can refer to them during class.

Because these assignments are interactive and discussion based, late submissions rapidly lose their value. Therefore, in most circumstances, **late participation exercises cannot receive credit.** Please read the instructions carefully to ensure you receive full credit! Also note that if you complete these exercises too early, their value may be diminished by the time lapse between your completion of the assignment and our coverage of the material in class.

5.3: First Drafts

The goal of these formative assessments is to help you prepare for peer reviews and final revisions. They are not graded, so to earn full credit all you must do is submit them *completely, correctly*, and **on time**... **so please read the instructions carefully!**

5.4: Peer Reviews

Local employers have expressed concerns about our graduates' ability to solicit, provide, and receive constructive feedback. Peer Reviews are specific assessments designed to help the SBE address this need in our regional employment market. Similar to participation assignments, all you must do to earn full credit is complete your assigned reviews thoroughly, thoughtfully, and *on time.* **Reviews that provide only sweeping generalizations and/or use vague phrasing/sentence fragments will NOT receive credit.** In addition, reviews that leave one or more comment fields blank in the Canvas rubric will receive only partial credit... **so please review the guidelines for each peer review assignment carefully to ensure you provide thorough, thoughtful feedback!**

Note about deadline extensions on peer reviews: Review feedback is time sensitive. It loses value once a writer has already revised and resubmitted their work. For that reason, I prefer to avoid giving deadline extensions on peer reviews. Therefore, if your internet connection, work schedule, or other personal circumstances make your availability somewhat unpredictable, do not wait until the last minute to complete them.

If you have a documented medical emergency or a military deployment that may interfere with you completing reviews during the 48-hour review window, contact me as soon as you can to discuss our alternatives.

5.5: Final Drafts

After you review and receive peer feedback on the First Draft of an assignment, you have the opportunity to revise and resubmit it as a *Final* Draft. I grade Final Drafts to assess your writing proficiency in the specific areas explained in the assignment instructions and rubric.

Remember this class aims to provide you with opportunities to develop your writing proficiency by editing and revising your work. If I see no evidence of revision between your First and Final Draft, I will return it *ungraded* (unless the writing on the First Draft was already highly proficient). Returned drafts must be revised and resubmitted before they can receive a grade. Revisions can earn no higher than 74%.

5.6: Smiley/Pro Pointer Events

Several UWSP departments and programs, including the School of Business & Economics, sponsor **Smiley Professional Events** (or **Pro Events**).

Pro Events connect you to:

- *Campus* (e.g., academic coaching, student clubs);
- *Community* (e.g., Rotary, Business Council): and
- *Careers* (e.g., internships, networking).

As an SBE student, you will be able to choose from a wide variety of speakers, workshops and special events. With over 300 events per year on the Pro Events calendar, you will have significant flexibility in selecting your events. Whatever you choose, Pro Events will help you to make the most out of your time as a student and to prepare for transitioning into a successful career.

Visit the Pro Events web site (**proevents.uwsp.edu**) for announcements of upcoming events. You can also follow us on social media.

- Facebook: **UWSP School of Business & Economics**   **(https://www.facebook.com/uwspbusiness)**
- Twitter: **@UWSPBusiness**   **(https://twitter.com/uwspbusiness)**

For this course, you must attend two official Pro Events. One event must be before the mid-semester cut-off of **March 18**; a second event must be before the end-of-semester cut-off (**May 13**). If you go to extra events before the mid-semester cut-off, those credits will carry over into the second half of the semester. Attendance at each event will count for 10 points towards your final grade.

As we continue Pro Events during COVID, there will be a variety of ways to earn your credits:

- Attend virtual (Zoom) events in real time; receive attendance credit directly by signing in with your Point card.
- Watch recordings of past events; receive attendance credit after you submit report via Anderson Center Canvas page.
- Attend occasional live events on campus; receive attendance credit directly.
- Attend off-campus live events; take Events Attendance form and obtain signature.

Attendance at Pro Events will be confirmed with automatic emails to you and updated on the Pro Events web site. Please allow a week for confirmation of attendance at events held outside the SBE, such as Career Services events. If you have a question about Pro Events attendance, please email **proevents@uwsp.edu (mailto:proevents@uwsp.edu)** .

> **IMPORTANT:** If you have multiple courses or affiliations with Pro Events requirements, it is your responsibility to make sure you have attended enough events for each course/affiliation. If you have not attended enough events to cover all of your requirements, your attendance will be allocated to your courses in alpha-numeric order followed by any other affiliations.

After the mid-semester cut-off and the end of this semester's events, I will receive reports confirming your attendance. You do not need to do anything else.

Hint: If you are having trouble finding events that fit your schedule, check out the "Create Your Own Event" option on the Anderson Center Canvas page. You can meet with an expert from Career Advising, Financial Coaching or Academic Coaching. We also highly recommend our "Lunch with a Leader" program which allows you to set up a lunch (virtual or in-person) with a business expert to learn more about their industry, company and profession.

5.7: Extra Credit

I usually offer a couple of Extra Credit opportunities each semester -- They have an "EC" in the exercise title and are listed under the module and Workplan to which the exercise most directly applies.

In addition, "Easter Eggs" are sometimes hidden in the course written materials. If you are the first student to notify me **via email (mailto:mary.kleckner@uwsp.edu)** that you have located a typo in one of my course materials, you can receive extra credit. Write "BUS 300

Easter Egg" in the subject line and provide the location and a brief description of the typo in the body of your email. Once I verify the error, you will receive 1 extra credit point.

5.8: Changes to Course Policies/Calendar

Please note that I reserve the right to make changes to this course syllabus as we progress through the semester. Although I prefer to avoid altering our plan, sudden changes to plans happen in the workplace all of the time, so if circumstances arise that require me to adjust our work plan, consider it an opportunity to develop your agility -- that's something my contacts in industry say our graduates lack. You will be notified during class of any changes that arise. I will announce any deadline adjustments at least one week in advance.

5.9: Permission to Use Your Work

I may wish to use a sample of your work in future teaching or research activities. No examples will reveal your identity. If you prefer not to have samples of your work shared, send me an e-mail opting out of this request. Otherwise, your participation in the class will be taken as consent to have portions of your work used anonymously for teaching or research purposes.