



Welcome to Business Communication *Online*!

My name is Cheryl O'Meara Brown and I am very glad to have you in my class. (Please read the "Welcome" News item on the course home page for some info about me.)

**Read this syllabus very carefully, as it is a substitute for the first class meeting -- it contains all of the important information that you need to know for this class.**

You also need to review the Course Schedule and **make note of the important deadlines** for assignments. I recommend printing the course schedule out for easy reference throughout the semester as a backup to the CourseDen calendar and/or any other electronic calendars you use.

To search for something within this syllabus, hit Ctrl+F (Command+F on a Mac) and type in what you're looking for.

## LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: COURSE DEN

- UWG uses CourseDen (a.k.a. Brightspace Daylight Experience) for our learning management system. Since this is an entirely online course, please take a few minutes to review the Online Student Guide:  
<http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php>.
- Our UWG Online team is a FANTASTIC resource. **\*If you need assistance with CourseDen at any time during the semester, please don't hesitate to contact them. Their helpdesk info is below (under Technical Issues), and their website is <https://uwgonline.westga.edu/students.php>.** (This site includes accessibility information for disabled students.)\*

## TECHNICAL ISSUES

### Problems with Computers or Internet on Campus:

Should you encounter problems using any of the computers on campus and are unable to locate a lab assistant, please contact the **ITS Helpdesk**. Their website is:  
<http://www.westga.edu/its/>.

### Problems with CourseDen:

#### UWG Online Help Desk

Monday - Thursday 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

678-839-6248

[online@westga.edu](mailto:online@westga.edu)

or 1-855-933-UWGO (8946)

Chat With Us: <http://uwgonline.westga.edu/chat-with-us.php>

Unfortunately, when taking an online class, **you must assume that some technical problems will occur, and plan accordingly when possible.** (E.g., you should not wait until 11:00 PM to start a quiz; don't put off an assignment until the day it's due; do not purposely skip a quiz thinking that it will be your dropped grade; etc.)

*\*Technical problems (along with serious personal issues) are why the lowest quiz grade and lowest assignment/discussion grade are dropped.\* More on this later.*

## MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE

Ability to navigate CourseDen and use word processing software such as MS Word.

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please visit <https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php>.

Please also read the important information at the following link:

<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php>

Accessibility statements, privacy statements, and technical requirements:

<https://uwgonline.westga.edu/technology-requirements.php>

## INTRO TO THIS CLASS

Online classes are great in that they allow you to work on them at your convenience, which is especially helpful to those who have busy work schedules and family lives. Sometimes, however, students will take an online class assuming that it will be “easier.” You will not find that to be true for this class.

In a traditional (in-class) class, students have the option of taking a passive approach to learning, simply going to class and listening to lectures (*receiving* the information). **\*In an online class, though, students must *actively* take it upon themselves to learn. They must take the initiative to read the material and do the assignments without any outside encouragement.\***

Additionally, in a traditional class, you are expected to spend 3 hours per week IN class and another 6 hours per week outside of class (total of 9 hours per week per course). The same amount of time is expected of you in an online class, which many students fail to realize. (For example, if you spend an hour scanning the material and thirty minutes completing the graded assignment that is due in a particular week, you probably will not receive a very good grade on that assignment.)

**If you are willing to take this class just as seriously as you would a traditional class and you are organized and self-directed, you will absolutely do well in this class. If you are not sure,**

**please read this syllabus carefully and decide for yourself whether you would rather take a traditional class or remain with the online version. I look forward to a great semester!**

### **Summer Course**

Because this is a summer course, we will be covering **16 weeks' worth of material in less than 4 weeks!** (\*One summer weekday is equivalent to one week of fall or spring classes!\*) Do not expect the work to be "easier" or for assignments to be shortened or removed... You will be doing everything that students do in a fall or spring semester, in a much shorter period of time... So, be prepared to work hard!

As long as you are organized and diligent about working on the course every single day, you'll be in good shape.

### **TEXTBOOK, BASIC COURSE INFORMATION:**

**Course:** Business Communication (Online), ABED 3100  
**Instructor:** Cheryl O'Meara Brown, MBA

**Required Text:** BCOM 7, 7th Edition, Lehman / Dufrene

- ISBN-10: 1-305-40193-X
- ISBN-13: 978-1-305-40193-8

*Note: the access code is NOT required for this class. Purchase or rent the book from whomever you would like; just make sure you have it by the first day of class!*

**Prerequisites:** Enrollment in this course requires completion of COMM 1110 or XIDS 1004, and ENGL 1101.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. Develop communication skills essential for career advancement. (LG 1; LO 6, 9)
2. Demonstrate writing techniques using problem-solving activities. (LG 1, 3, 6; LO 4)
3. Develop critical skills of brainstorming, researching, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and formatting various business documents. (LG 1, 3, 6; LO 5, 6)
4. Display oral communication skills through individual and team projects. (LG 1; LO 6)
5. Gain hands-on experience with the technical dimensions of communication and reporting. (LG 1, 3; LO 5, 6)
6. Analyze the communication processes including interpersonal, intrapersonal, and intercultural communications. (LG 1, 5; LO 1, 9)
7. Develop an awareness of ethical and legal aspects for reporting information. (LG 1, 5; LO 9)
8. Analyze and interpret communication channels using primary/secondary research techniques and interactive online computer activities. (LG 1, 3, 4, 6; LO 5)
9. Interact through team projects and evaluations to develop critical-thinking, problem-solving,

and decision-making skills. (LG 2, 3, 5, 6; LO 4)  
[BBA Marketing Learning Outcomes](#) (page 11)

## **COURSE FORMAT AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

This course consists of reading assignments, quizzes, discussion posts & replies, and hands-on written assignments that are presented to you in **Modules** inside the Content link at the top of the course home page in CourseDen.

Within each Module, you will be given the following:

- **A Checklist** to let you know what's expected of you for that Module, including the required reading. You should use the checklists to track your progress and mark off (check) the items that you've completed as you complete them.
- **Learning Objectives** for that Module.
- **PowerPoint slides** to use for taking notes while reading.
- **Self-Check Quizzes** are intended to help you learn the material and prepare for graded quizzes and assignments. They do NOT count toward your final grade.
- **Graded Assignments**, which may include a written assignment, quiz, and/or discussion posting.
  - **\*These assignments are due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the due date for the Module they are in. Refer to the Course Schedule for easy reference. If an assignment is not turned in by 11:59pm on its due date, it will not be accepted under any circumstances and you will receive a zero. There are no exceptions to this rule.**
  - **The GOOD NEWS: the lowest assignment grade will be dropped!\***

## **More information on Graded Assignments...**

### ***Written Assignments:***

Your assignments will be graded according to accuracy (regarding the topic specified), spelling and grammar, and level of effort. You should elaborate, clarify, elucidate, and explain! *Keep in mind that, since this class is completely online, your written assignments are the primary means by which I can assess your learning!* The more effort you put into your assignments, the higher your grade will be.

Note: TurnItIn plagiarism checker will be used.

### ***Discussion Posts:***

Your original discussion posts will be graded according to accuracy (regarding the topic specified), spelling and grammar, and level of effort. You should elaborate, clarify, elucidate, and explain! *Again, keep in mind that, since this class is completely online, your written*

*assignments are the primary means by which I can assess your learning!* The more effort you put into your posts, the higher your grade will be.

*\*When replying to classmates' original posts, really put thought into both what THEY wrote, and how you would like to reply. If they posted something that doesn't make sense to you or you think could be incorrect, tell them... You will help each other learn this way. **If you point out a classmate's mistake and clarify what the correct answer should have been (respectfully, of course), you will earn bonus points!** Also, if you agree or disagree with something they said, you should specify exactly what you agree/disagree with along with WHY. In other words, you should elaborate and ask questions of one another.\**

Review the **General Discussion Rubric** to see specifically how your discussion posts will be graded.

*\*In general, you can expect assignment and discussion grades to be posted within one week of their due dates. (Some assignments take longer to grade.)\**

#### **Quizzes:**

Quizzes will relate to the reading assignments for their respective chapters and will contain 20 multiple-choice and true/false questions. You will have 30 minutes per quiz and one attempt (plus an additional, optional self-check quiz).

*You will need to study for the quizzes because, although they are open book, some questions may be tough and you will not necessarily have time to look up all of the answers.*

**\*There is also one Syllabus Quiz due in the first Module, which has between 20 and 30 questions, a time limit of 30 minutes, and 1 attempt.\***

*A note about quizzes: You may notice that you will not be able to review quizzes in their entirety after you have completed them. However, if you would like to review a quiz, we can arrange (ahead of time) a date/time for you to do so in the Marketing Department.*

All assignments, discussions, quizzes and practice quizzes are open (available to be completed) up until their respective due dates at 11:59pm. Therefore, you ARE ALLOWED to complete any material EARLY if you desire to do so. However, please be aware that written assignments and discussion posts will not be graded until after their due dates.

**\*\*\*Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.\*\*\***

**\*\*\*Also, assignments and discussions will be grouped together, and the lowest grade will be dropped.\*\*\***

*I understand that serious personal problems occur (deaths in family, illness, storm damage, etc.). This (along with technical/computer problems) is why the lowest grades are dropped.*

## **GROUP WORK:**

In the business world, your ability to collaborate and work well with others can mean the difference between your success and wondering why you're never picked for the promotions! These days, collaboration happens virtually (online meetings, Google Hangouts, FaceTime, e-mail, etc.) as often as it happens in person. I completely understand that group work is not always fun, and in an online environment it's even more challenging; however, it is great experience for your future in the business world! There is even an entire chapter of our textbook devoted to group communication -- it is that important.

Many of your written assignments will be completed as a group (designated in the title of the assignment, e.g. "Group Assignment: xyz").

For your groups, you will need to have AT LEAST ONE of EACH personality category from the personality quiz in Module 1. So, you will need at least one person who falls into the **Analysts** category (an Architect, Logician, Commander, or Debater), at least one person who falls into the **Diplomats** category (Advocate, Mediator, Protagonist, or Campaigner), at least one who falls into the **Sentinels** category (Logistician, Defender, Executive, or Consul), and at least one who falls into the **Explorers** category (Virtuoso, Adventurer, Entrepreneur, or Entertainer).

To find your group members, use the Introduce Yourself discussion in Module 1 and either talk to each other there, or use private messages (CourseDen email).

To select a group, click on the Communication drop-down menu at the top of the course page, and then click on Groups. Once there, you'll see a blue box called "View Available Groups;" click on this. Then, you can view the current groups and members of each as well as join the group you want.

There is no maximum on the number of people who can be in a group -- I'm leaving it up to you to decide what's best for you. A "pro" of large groups: more brains, eyes and hands to do the work! A "con:" the more people you have to work with, the more conflicting schedules and work ethics you will have.

You must be in a group in order to be able to submit items to the group assignment areas. If you reach your desired number of group members and do not want anyone else to join, just send me a message and I will "close" it for you.

Once you're in a group, you should designate a specific time two or three days per week during which to meet. Your group meetings can be virtual or in person; as a group, decide what will work best for you for each meeting (e.g., Google Hangouts, Skype, GroupMe, etc.). Also, exchange cell numbers and discuss with each other how you prefer to be contacted (text, CourseDen message, special email address, etc.).

## **CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS, CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR:**

**Announcements:** Any important course announcements from your instructor (e.g. changes to the course schedule, project info, etc.) will be sent via the "Announcements" tool in CourseDen (you should check the Announcements **daily**).

### Contacting the Instructor/Office Hours:

1. During the summer, I do not hold regular, face-to-face office hours. But if you need to schedule a time to speak with me, whether in person or on the phone, send me an e-mail and we will work it out.

2. Email: **For the fastest reply, use [cbrown@westga.edu](mailto:cbrown@westga.edu).** You may also use the course Email within CourseDen, but since these messages do not come to my phone it will take longer to reply. **Most of the time, I will reply within a few hours. Sometimes it may take a day or two (depending on the nature of the question).** I may or may not respond to e-mails on the weekend.

If you ask a question that can be answered by reviewing the syllabus, I will probably reply with "see syllabus." I don't mean to be rude; I receive many, many, MANY emails and since the information is here in the syllabus, it saves a great deal of time not to re-type or locate/copy/paste what is already here.

**Please feel free to contact me if you have a problem! I am here to help you. Please don't wait until the end of the semester (or until final grades have been posted) to discuss any difficulties that you might be having.**

**E-mail Courtesy and General Netiquette:** Remember that e-mailing is not texting, and the use of *good manners and proper grammar/punctuation* are important, to me AND your future boss and co-workers! Also, when corresponding with anyone in the course, it's expected that we will all be respectful and professional at all times.



I strongly encourage you to use Grammarly, a free online grammar and spelling checker. It's a great resource for papers and even emails. <https://www.grammarly.com/>

**It is also very helpful if you'll mention which class you are in when you email me since I teach lots of different classes at a time.**

### ACADEMIC HONESTY:

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual



and academic integrity. UWG, the RCOB and the Department of Marketing and Real Estate assume as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they present for credit only the results of their own efforts. **You are expected to work on ALL assignments individually**; an act of academic dishonesty will result in **\*a grade of zero for the assignment/assessment and possible failure of the course. It is also grounds for dismissal from the College of Business.\***

\*Academic dishonesty (cheating) includes, but is not limited to:

- Looking up ("Googling") answers to quiz questions online
- Searching (online or elsewhere) for assignments that have been done by someone else
- Using someone's materials from a previous semester
- Anything that you wouldn't do with your instructor looking over your shoulder\*

## FINAL GRADE CALCULATION:

All assignments are weighted according to the following scheme in the calculation of your final grade:

Assignments and Discussion Posts (12, lowest dropped) -----60%  
Individual Business Presentation Assignment (not dropped) -----15%  
Quizzes (13, lowest dropped) -----25%

**A = 90.0% and above**  
**B = 80.0% – 89.9%**  
**C = 70.0% – 79.9%**  
**D = 60.0% – 69.9%**  
**F = 59.9% and below**

I encourage you to be responsible for yourself and keep a spreadsheet with your grades and what each assignment/quiz is worth so that you'll know what your grade is – and what you need to make on various assignments to get your desired grade – throughout the semester.

(There are also helpful websites and videos that you can use, such as <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0oinC6ejFI>, <http://www.conquercollege.com/gradecalc/> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaNHV6W1p84>.)

**I'm sorry, but I am unable to respond to students asking what they need to make on a particular assignment to get an A (or B, C, etc.) in the class.**

## GROUP MEMBER EVALUATIONS:

You will have the opportunity to evaluate your group members at the end of the semester. These will significantly impact your group members' group assignment grades AND therefore their final grades in the class; **you should take them very seriously\***.

To complete the evaluation, click on Assessments → Surveys at the top of the page. See Course Schedule for available dates and deadline.

Note: You should NOT evaluate yourself, only your group members.

You will essentially be giving “grades” to your peers based on their level of contribution. The instructor will average the scores given to each student by his/her group members, and then students with less than 100% contribution will have each group assignment grade reduced to reflect his/her contribution.

EXAMPLE: Let’s say that Sally Brown is in Group 01. Group 01 earns the following grades throughout the semester on the project:

Group Roles: 95  
Formal Letter Revision: 100  
Formal Letter: 80  
Reports and Hypotheses: 88

Now, let’s say that Sally’s evaluation from her group members averaged 60% participation. (In other words, most of her group thought that Sally did not pull her weight.) So, Sally’s *individual* project grades would look like this:

Group Roles: 57 (60% of her group’s grade of 95)  
Formal Letter Revision: 60 (60% of her group’s grade of 100)  
Formal Letter: 48 (60% of her group’s grade of 80)  
Reports and Hypotheses: 52.8 (60% of her group’s grade of 88)

I will change student grades at the end of the semester AFTER all group member evaluations have been received; I’ll create an Announcement letting you know when grades have been changed/updated.

I will not, under any circumstances, share your evaluations with anyone, so you can feel free to be completely honest. However, be aware that your groupmates will likely contact others in the group if his/her grades are significantly lowered after evaluations are done.

Because this peer evaluation directly impacts your grade, it is IMPERATIVE that everyone actively participates in the group project.

It is up to YOU to contact your group members (don’t wait for them to contact you).

It is up to YOU to make sure the group is doing what they are supposed to be doing (don’t assume they are taking care of everything).

It is up to YOU to make the grade you want to make (don’t be dead weight, because your group members will make sure that your grade reflects it).

Also, do not wait until the week or day that a group assignment is due to start working or to

contact each other! Look ahead to what's due next, and begin working as soon as possible. **Instead of emailing me at the end of the semester indicating that your peers weren't fair in their evaluations of you, do all of the above so that they will give you a GOOD evaluation!**

\*Several times over the years, I've had students give a very low evaluations of a peer, and later -- after the peer's grade changed and their final grade was lowered -- email me saying they shouldn't have been so harsh. I want you to be honest, but also SURE of the evaluations you are giving your peers. Don't give them more credit than they deserve, but also try to leave emotions out of it and fairly evaluate their levels of effort.

### **AND FINALLY...**

This will be a busy and challenging summer session, but if you do the reading, keep up with the work, and let me know if/when you have questions about the material, I promise you'll do well and learn a great deal about communicating effectively in business!

Let's do this!

