

# UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

---

C. T. BAUER COLLEGE of BUSINESS  
BAUER ■ MBA

**GENB 6A50 – Business  
Communication  
Monday 6pm to 9 p.m. ONLINE  
Fall 2021 Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Dalia Pineda  
**Phone:** 713.240.7410  
**Email:** [dpineda@children.org](mailto:dpineda@children.org)  
**Office hours:** By Appointment

**“Communication is the real work of leadership.”**

*Nitin Nohria*

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to help you communicate more effectively through both writing and speaking. It focuses on the practical applications of writing, communicating, and presenting within a professional business setting. It has been developed based upon feedback received from employers, faculty, and staff who interact with Bauer MBA students, as well as direct input from the MBA Advisory Board.

This course will introduce you to the importance of effective communication skills and will provide the opportunity for you to put them into practice through in-class discussions, group projects, writing assignments and video role-plays. These projects provide the opportunity to examine and improve in communication areas that could inhibit your ability to be effective in a professional setting.

If you participate in class, work closely with teammates, and complete assignments on time, you will improve your ability to communicate your ideas and become more effective in representing yourself, your company and its products and services. You also will learn what is necessary to build long-term, profitable relationships with employers, coworkers, classmates, and clients.

**\*any changes to syllabus will be communicated as soon as possible via Blackboard announcements and email from professor\***

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

To enhance student proficiencies in the following areas:

- ☐ Communication skills
- ☐ Effective writing
- ☐ Presentation skills
- ☐ Business acumen and professionalism
- ☐ Interpersonal skills

## **REQUIRED COURSE MATERIAL** (3 books- easy to find on Amazon)

- ☐ **HBR Top 10 Must Reads on Communication (Vol. 2)** [Amazon.com: HBR's 10 Must Reads on Communication, Vol. 2: HBR's 10 Must Reads Series \(Audible Audio Edition\): Harvard Business Review, Janet Metzger, Rich Miller, Gildan Media: Audible Audiobooks](#)

- **HBR'S 10 MUST READS On Public Speaking and Presenting** [https://www.amazon.com/HBRs-Reads-Public-Speaking-Presenting/dp/B087KV3BQM/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?dchild=1&keywords=hbr+guide+to+public+speaking+and+presenting&qid=1628970986&sr=8-3](https://www.amazon.com/HBRs-Reads-Public-Speaking-Presenting/dp/B087KV3BQM/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=hbr+guide+to+public+speaking+and+presenting&qid=1628970986&sr=8-3)
- **HBR Guide to Better Business Writing**, by Bryan A. Garner [Amazon.com : HBR Guide to Better Business Writing \(HBR Guide Series\) by Garner, Bryan A. : Audible Audiobooks](https://www.amazon.com/HBR-Guide-to-Better-Business-Writing-HBR-Guide-Series-by-Garner-Bryan-A-Audible-Audiobooks/dp/B087KV3BQM/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=hbr+guide+to+public+speaking+and+presenting&qid=1628970986&sr=8-3)

#### **RECOMMENDED READINGS:**

- **Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High**, by Kerry Patterson & Joseph Grenny

**Supplementary Materials:** Available on Blackboard in Course Content and According Folders

#### **COURSE NOTES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL**

You will find all additional course material on Blackboard Learn, including PowerPoint presentations that will be used during each lecture.

##### **BLACKBOARD LEARN**

This class will use Blackboard Learn as a course supplement. With Blackboard Learn you can view class notes, download class readings, communicate with fellow students, and view grades and course progress at any time. Students are encouraged to log onto Blackboard Learn regularly to stay current with the class.

Blackboard will be monitored by the professor for turning in assignments and posting any immediate updates. **For immediate communication with the professor, send her an email directly at [dpineda@children.org](mailto:dpineda@children.org), not through Blackboard.**

##### **Pre-recorded lectures and Live Zoom Classes**

Class lectures will be delivered live during class times, with some days having pre-recorded lectures, and ALL class sessions having a LIVE Zoom during class time, Mondays 6pm to 9pm. **The expectation is that you will be present, with your camera on during this time, engaged just as you would be during class.** Due to some assignments, pre-recorded videos or pre-work, the online format of class may not last until 9pm each Monday. The Zoom link for class will be provided through Blackboard in an announcement at the start of the semester.

##### **Recording of Class**

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the [Center for Students with DisABILITIES](#). If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

##### **Syllabus Changes**

Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through Blackboard and email from the professor.

##### **Resources for Online Learning**

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our [Power-On](#) website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources,

tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, and Blackboard; requesting a laptop through the Laptop Loaner Program; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact [UHOnline@uh.edu](mailto:UHOnline@uh.edu).

### **Assignments**

Instructions for assignments are outlined in Folders on Blackboard under Course Content. These are outlined by weeks, and include everything you need to do during that week. Deadlines for assignments are outlined in the syllabus below. Deadline time is 6pm on the date due. All assignments are due via Blackboard and you can attach your assignment utilizing the **Assignments Link**. The Assignments Link will provide the due date associated with each assignment and you can attach your file and upload your assignment here. Please be aware of the material accessible on Blackboard, as well as any messages that are shared with the class. Assigned readings, and all assignments should be completed prior to class. Assignments should not be submitted via email unless you have communicated with the professor ahead of time. Late assignments will not be accepted. PLEASE READ THE ASSIGNMENT TITLE CAREFULLY WHEN SUBMITTING AND ATTACH TO THE CORRECT ASSIGNMENT!

### **Professor 1 on 1 Meetings**

I strongly believe in the value of 1 on 1 communication and feedback. While I know we have our 3 hour class weekly, there will be 1 time during the semester that I request you set a 15 minute time with me for feedback and discussion. This is graded (5 points for timely scheduling and completion) and the intention is for me to connect with you personally and discuss your journey around communication and particular goals for this course. I look forward to connecting with each of you! I will email the class with available dates and times over several days, and there will be morning and evening times available—I'm aware you are working adults and flexibility is crucial.

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE, EXPECTATIONS AND PARTICIPATION**

One of Professor Vandaveer Novak's, lead faculty for MBA Communications, favorite quotes is **"No deposit. No return."** It's that simple. You will get out of this class what you put into it. Classes are a combination of presentation, lecture, and discussion, with an emphasis on discussion. **You are expected to participate**. The more you come ready to participate, the better the class discussion and interaction, the more you learn and easier the exams and assignments will be. We have a lot to cover in a short amount of time, and in order for you to benefit most from the class, it is important to have everyone fully engaged. Please note that participation is a large part of your grade.

**In a face to face setting, cell phones, computers, tablets or texting would not be permitted during class. Class time on Zoom is not a time to be checking texts, emails, other work or activity. Please note this is usually noticeable, and will negatively impact your participation grade.** This is a communications course and in order to learn the skills that are imperative to success in any career, we are going to 'unplug and engage' in order to better develop the ability to observe, listen and interact with others to ensure we are taking in and sending out the messages we want. Due to the virtual nature of this course, you will "plug in and engage."

Given the limited number of class meetings, this course will be conducted at an intense pace. Every class meeting has required activities linked to the course objectives.

### **AVAILABILITY OF COUNSELING SERVICES**

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS ([www.uh.edu/caps](http://www.uh.edu/caps)) by calling 713---743---5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. Also, there is no appointment necessary for the "Let's Talk" program, which is a drop---in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. [http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets\\_talk.html](http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html)

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The University of Houston Academic Honesty Policy is strictly enforced by the C.T. Bauer College of Business. No violations of this policy will be tolerated in this course. A discussion of the policy is included in the University of Houston Student Handbook which can be downloaded at <http://www.uh.edu/dos/publications/handbook.php>. Students are expected to be familiar with this policy.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The C. T. Bauer College of Business would like to help students who have disabilities achieve their highest potential. To this end, in order to receive academic accommodations, students must register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) (telephone 713---743---5400), and present approved accommodation documentation to their instructors in a timely manner.

#### **BAUER CODE OF ETHICS**

1. Bauer students shall maintain the standard of academic honesty set forth under the University of Houston's Academic Honesty Policy.
2. Bauer students shall respect other students, faculty, staff, and the Bauer environment.
3. Bauer students shall maintain individual accountability and integrity.

#### **MEASURES OF SUCCESS/ GRADING**

**Final grades will be determined as follows:**

1. Professor 1 on 1 meeting #1	5 points
2. Written Assignment: Executive Summary	10 points
3. Persuasive Role Play	10 points
4. Written Assignment: Persuasive Role Play Self- Assessment	5 points
5. Crucial Conversation Role Play	5 points
6. Written Assignment: Crucial Conversation Role Play Self -Assessment	5 points
7. Written Assignment: Team Case Written Report	10 points
8. Team Case Presentation	10 points
9. Written Assignment: Final Overall Self- Assessment	15 points
10. Peer Evaluation	10 points
11. Class attendance/participation	<u>15 points</u>
TOTAL	100 points

**Grades will be assigned on the following scale:**

A	93---100 points	C+	77---79
A-	90---92	C	73---76
B+	87---89	C-	70---72
B	83---86	D	60---69
B-	80---82	F	Below 60 points

**MBA Business Communications Fall 2021 Class Schedule\***

Week	Date	Topic	Class Prep/Readings To Do Prior To This Class
1	8/23	<p>Class Introductions and Syllabus Review</p> <p>The pillars of communication in business</p> <p>Business Writing – Executive Summaries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Purchase required materials, verify access to Blackboard</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Watch Communication Model video in Blackboard under Week 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading Due Before Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>HBR 10 Must Reads Vol.2</u> - <i>The Surprising Power of Questions</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ch. 1-2 in <u>HBR Guide to Better Business Writing</u></li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Due On This Class Day</b></p> <p><b>NONE</b></p> <p><b>Make sure you have scheduled your 1<sup>st</sup> 1 on 1 meeting - Blackboard announcement/email will give details</b></p>
2	8/30	<p>Introduction to Crucial Conversations in Business</p> <p>Introduce teams for role plays and team presentations</p>	<p><b>Class Prep/Readings To Do Prior To This Class</b></p> <p><b>Reading Due Before Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>HBR 10 Must Reads Vol.2--</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Find the Coaching in Criticism</i></li> <li>- <i>How To Preempt Team Conflict</i></li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <u>HBR Public Speaking and Presenting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>The Organizational Apology</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Due On This Class Day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit Executive Summary by 6pm</li> </ul>
3	9/06	<p>LABOR DAY HOLIDAY NO CLASS MEETING</p>	<p><b>Class Prep/Readings To Do Prior To This Class</b></p> <p>NONE</p> <p><b>Assignments Due On This Class Day</b></p> <p>NONE</p>

4	9/13	<p><b>Video Role Play: Crucial Conversation And Introduction to Persuasive Conversation</b></p> <p>There is no live class tonight, only your scheduled team crucial conversation role play.</p> <p>Therefore, you will watch a recorded lectures this week to cover the beginning of persuasive conversation.</p> <p><b>VIRTUAL LECTURE to watch week of 9/13</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Persuasive Conversations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class Prep/Readings To Do Prior To This Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Crucial Conversation Role Play!</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check Blackboard announcements for Crucial Conversation Play Schedule</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Due On This Class Day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Crucial Conversation Role Play in Class</li> </ul>
5	9/20	Persuasive Conversations	<p><b>Class Prep/Readings To Do Prior To This Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Watch Persuasive Conversation Video from previous week 9/13 BEFORE CLASS</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> From <u>HBR Public Speaking and Presentations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The Necessary Art of Persuasion</li> <li>- Structure Your Presentation Like a Story</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Due On This Class Day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Submit Crucial Conversation Role Play Self Assessment by 6pm</li> </ul>
6	9/27	Persuasive Conversation Role Play	<p><b>Class Prep/Readings To Do Prior To This Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Persuasive Conversation Role Play</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check Blackboard for Role Play schedule</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Due On This Class Day</b></p> <p><b>NONE</b></p>
7	10/4	Presentation Skills	<p><b>Class Prep/Readings To Do Prior To This Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> From <u>HBR Public Speaking and Presenting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Get The Boss To Buy In</li> <li>- Visualizations that Really Work</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Due On This Class Day</b></p>

			<input type="checkbox"/> Submit Persuasive Conversation Role Play Self Assessment by 6pm
8	10/11	Team Presentations in Class	<div><b>Class Prep/Readings To Do Prior To This Class</b></div> <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for team presentations! <div><b>Assignments Due On This Class Day</b></div> <input type="checkbox"/> Team Paper (emailed to me by 6pm) <input type="checkbox"/> Team Presentation (emailed to my by 6pm) and presented in class
DUE ON 10/18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>REVIEW TEAM PRESENTATION VIDEO</li> <li>SUBMIT FINAL COURSE SELF ASSESSMENT ASSIGNMENT</li> <li>SUBMIT PEER EVALUATION</li> </ul> <b><u>BY 6PM ON 10/18/2021</u></b>	

*\*Any changes to the class schedule will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.*