



RUTGERS-CAMDEN
School of Business

Course Syllabi for Spring 2025

Business Communication

Course: 52:135:250 **Section:** 01 **Location:** BSB 116

Class Times: Monday (M)/Wednesday (W) @ 8:00–9:20 AM

Instructor: Dr. Rachel Tomlinson

Office Phone: (856) 225-6723

E-mail: rt562@camden.rutgers.edu

Preferred Contact Method: Canvas Inbox

Office: BSB 248

Office Hours: Mondays from 12:00 – 1:00 pm
or by appointment

**This course will be delivered synchronously (together at the same time). We will primarily meet in-person in BSB 116 with occasional sessions conducted virtually through Zoom.
Be sure to check Canvas for Announcements regarding any changes.**

**This syllabus is a guideline. There will be schedule updates throughout the semester.
You will be notified in class and via Canvas/email about changes to deadlines or virtual sessions.**

Course Description

This course focuses on developing your ability to communicate effectively in the professional environment; and in emphasizing the production of written documents that are concise, accurate, and appropriate in style, tone, and format for the intended reader. This course is designated as writing intensive, focusing on both business and professional writing and oral communications. Assignments for the course will include revised drafts of prose/written assignments and the delivery of oral presentations, as well as quizzes and homework exercises.

Course Objectives

- Introduce the student to the art and science of communicating successfully in an organizational environment.
- Provide the student with "hands-on" experience composing clear, concise, and meaningful business memoranda, e-mails, written reports, oral presentations, and other forms of business-related communications.
- Familiarize the student with using collaborative tools, such as Excel, Word, and PowerPoint, for producing written reports and oral presentations.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, you will be able to raise your awareness and develop your skill levels in the following areas:

- Enhance basic language arts and basic grammar
- Understand the core concepts of communication
- Learn writing methods for various types of business documents
- Gather information for the writing of reports and presentations
- Develop oral and employment communication skills
- Analyze and problem-solve
- Identify business etiquette
- Boost work ethic

Course Materials

Required: McLean, S. (2021). *Effective Business Communication*, 3rd Ed. Boston: FlatWorld

For student purchase, go to: <https://students.flatworldknowledge.com/course/2611506>

Required: Additional materials will be posted online (such as PowerPoint files, cases, exercises, as well as assignment instructions). It is your responsibility to keep up with the activities that we will cover in class. You will be expected to read them **BEFORE** class.

How to Succeed in this Course

The material presented in class provides the essential backbone of the course. You are expected to:

- Read all text material assigned for each class.
- Follow instructions in all assignments.
- Start assignments early and get feedback from the instructor.
- Consult/meet with the professor immediately when you need help.
- Ensure that you can access and use Canvas appropriately.

Communication with the Professor: Note that during the work week from Monday until Friday, I will try to reply to all e-mails within 24 hours. Please do not expect an immediate response. If you do not hear from me within 48 hours, please send the email again. I will do my best to adhere to these guidelines. I also ask that you do the same if I contact you directly. While I will make every effort to be responsive to your needs, please be respectful of my availability.

Class Communication

- All class communication will be sent via Canvas Announcements, discussion forums, other tools in Canvas, and your Rutgers e-mail.
- Please turn on course notifications in Canvas – [how to video](#). To access this system, go to <http://canvas.rutgers.edu>, log in, and click on the course on the dashboard. For technical support 833-648-4357 or help@camden.rutgers.edu.
- You are expected to check your Rutgers e-mail at least two or three times every week.
- **Not checking your Rutgers email is not an excuse for missing any communications.**

Course Assessments and Grading

Type of Assignment	Sum of Points	Percentage by Activity	Count of Activities
Written Assignment	186	37%	7
Quizzes	146	29%	15
Presentation	105	21%	3
Participation	26	5%	1
Homework	37	7%	5
Grand Total	500	100%	31

Grade Ranges	
Your final grade will be determined using the following scale:	
A	= 90 – 100%
B+	= 84.5 – 89.9%
B	= 79.5 – 84.4%
C+	= 74.5 – 79.4%
C	= 69.5 – 74.4%
D	= 60 – 69.4%
F	= less than 60%

Academic honesty and integrity are requirements for passing this course.

Class Engagement

- a. **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend class; **attendance and active participation is one of the best indicators of a student's performance** in this course as it is meant to be interactive – allowing students to reflect on their own experiences and work on improving their career competencies in an environment where open discussion and feedback is encouraged.
 - **Promptness is expected.** Habitually arriving late or departing early is disruptive and exhibits poor etiquette. Students are expected to arrive on time and remain until the class concludes.
 - **For an excused absence,** students must provide documentation – this can be done in confidence via the Dean of Students Office (deanofstudents@camden.rutgers.edu or 856-225-6050). If approved, a make-up assignment may be granted. This must be discussed with the course instructor.
- b. **Verbal Engagement:** When you come to class prepared, think about the material in advance, and share your thoughts and experiences, everyone learns more. Therefore, part of your grade comes from thoughtful and constructive comments and verbal engagement with the class material. This does not mean dominating the class discussion, and it does not mean having a dialogue with the instructor. You are expected to listen to your peers, comment on their comments, and contribute to the learning climate in class.
- c. **Hands-on Engagement:** In each class, we will have at least one experiential exercise. In groups, you will work on questions, case studies, simulations, or role-plays. Your participation in these activities will determine your “participation in activities” grade. This means coming to class, being prepared to take part in the activity, and discussing your outcomes in the class.

Exam Make-up Policy: If, for a university approved reason, you cannot take an exam or complete an in-class assignment at the scheduled time, you must give the professor written notice **at least one week** in advance so that other arrangements can be made. If the situation does not allow for advance notification (for example, emergency hospitalization), contact the professor as soon as possible after a missed exam/assignment. Make-up exams/assignments for non-university approved reasons are not guaranteed. The professor reserves the right to request written documentation to support your absence (such as a doctor's note, an obituary, or military orders).

Late Work Policy: All work must be completed and uploaded to Canvas by the specified due date (with the exception of a university-approved, documented, and professor or Dean of Students verified reason; see Make-up Work Policy above). Any work submitted after the due date and time will receive a reduction of one full letter grade for each day that it is late.

Incompletes: "Incompletes" will only be given through prior consultation, under extreme circumstances, and when completion of the course requirements in question would substantially improve your grade. In the rare event when an “incomplete” is given, you must submit all the agreed-upon work to the professor by the Rutgers registrar deadline to avoid the “incomplete” converting to an “F”:

<https://registrar.camden.rutgers.edu/gradeinstruction#incomplete>

Use of Artificial Intelligence: Neither the university nor the school has a standard policy on the use or non-use of artificial intelligence (e.g., Chat GPT, etc.). Below are some language samples depending on your self-determined policy of AI use in the classroom.

The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas.
- Fine tuning your research questions.
- Finding information on your topic.
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts.
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is NOT permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts assigned to you or content that you put into a Zoom chat.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty. Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways based on guidelines in this syllabus, will be subject to report of a violation of Academic Integrity and thus the appropriate adjudication. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification.

Key Dates

Classes Begin	Tuesday, January 21
Last Day to Drop/Add a Class	Thursday, January 30
Last day to withdraw from an individual class with a “W”	Monday, April 21
Spring Recess	Saturday, March 15 – Sunday, March 23
Regular Classes End	Monday, May 5
Reading Days (no testing)	Tuesday & Wednesday, May 6-7
Final Exam Period	Thursday, May 8 – Wednesday, May 14

The academic calendar is subject to change and can be found at:

<https://camden.rutgers.edu/registrar/catalogs-calendars/2024-2025>

Student Resources

For more information on Student Resources at Rutgers–Camden, please see the RUC Student Resources link in Canvas.

COURSE OUTLINE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Week #	Date	Topic	Required Readings	Homework Assignments
1-W	1/21	Business Communication Soft Skills	Chapter 1	Student Information Form
2-M	1/27			Ch. 1 Quiz 30-Second Student Introductions
2-W	1/29	Perception, Audience, and Message	Chapter 2	Ch. 2 Quiz
3-M	2/3			In-Class Writing Assessment
3-W	2/5	Business Writing Process	Chapter 3	Ch. 3 Quiz
4-M	2/10	No Class – Grammar Skills		Review Grammar Skills #1 and Complete Skills Worksheet
4-W	2/12	Guest Speaker – Terri Smith, Campus Recruiter, BDO		
5-M	2/17	Revision, Proofreading, Format, and Design	Chapter 4	Ch. 4 Quiz Review Grammar Skills #2
5-W	2/19	Business Writing in Action	Chapter 5	Ch. 5 Quiz In-Class Proofreading Assessment
6-M	2/24			Grammar Skills Quiz
6-W	2/26	Business Presentations, Topics, and Stage Fright	Chapter 6	Ch. 6 Quiz Topic Selection Stage Fright Exercise
7-M	3/3	Non-Verbal Communication	Chapter 7	Ch. 7 Quiz
7-W	3/5	Research Article Presentations		
8-M	3/10	Presentation Organization and Outlines + Review of Grammar Quiz	Chapter 8	Ch. 8 Quiz
8-W	3/12			In-Class Paragraph Writing
9-M	3/17	Spring Recess – No Class		
9-W	3/19			
10-M	3/24	Informative Presentation	Chapter 9	Ch. 9 Quiz
10-W	3/26	Persuasive Presentation + Writing Effective Claims Skills Sheet	Chapter 10	Ch. 10 Quiz Business Memo Draft
11-M	3/31			
11-W	4/2	Business Presentations in Practice	Chapter 11	Ch. 11 Quiz Business Memo Final
12-M	4/7			In-Class Paragraph Editing
12-W	4/9	Business Communication and Conflict	Chapter 12	Ch. 12 Quiz Business Report Draft
13-M	4/14	Negative News, Crisis Communication, and Change	Chapter 13	Ch. 13 Quiz
13-W	4/16			
14-M	4/21	Intercultural and International Business Communication	Chapter 14	Ch. 14 Quiz
14-W	4/28	Business Presentations		
15-M	4/30	Business Presentations		
15-W	5/5	Semester Wrap-Up		Post-Assessment Business Report Final

RUTGERS–CAMDEN POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Diversity Statement

This class strives to be an inclusive community, learning from the many perspectives that come from having differing backgrounds and beliefs. As a community, we aim to be respectful to all. We reject all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including but not limited to those based on age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status. Faculty and students are expected to commit to creating an environment that facilitates inquiry and self-expression, while also demonstrating diligence in understanding how others' viewpoints may be different from their own.

Our goal as a learning community is to create a safe environment that fosters open and honest dialogue. We are all expected to contribute to creating a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment. To this end, classroom discussions should always be conducted in a way that shows honor, respect, and dignity to all members of the class. Moreover, disagreements should be pursued without personal attack and aggression, and instead, should be handled with grace and care. This will allow for rigorous intellectual engagement and a deeper learning experience for all.

Chosen Name (Preferred Name): If you have a chosen name or preferred name other than what is listed on the roster, kindly let me know. If you would like to have your name changed within the rosters officially, go to: <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/chosen-name-application>

Pronouns: This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Disability Services/Accommodations

The University is committed to supporting the learning of all students and faculty will provide accommodations as indicated in a Letter of Accommodation issued by the Office of Disability Services (ODS). If you have already registered with ODS and have your letter of accommodations, please share this with me early in the course. If you have or think you have a disability (learning, sensory, physical, chronic health, mental health or attentional), please contact <https://success.camden.rutgers.edu/disability-services>

Accommodations will be provided only for students with a letter of accommodation from ODS. Their services are free and confidential. Letters only provide information about the accommodation, not about the disability or diagnosis.

Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity policy can be found at <https://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/processes/academic-integrity>

Students are responsible for understanding the principles of academic integrity and abiding by them in all aspects of their work at the University. Students are also encouraged to help educate fellow students about academic integrity and to bring all alleged violations of academic integrity they encounter to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

Academic Integrity means that you (the student) must:

- Properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others.
- Properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work.
- Make sure that all work submitted as your own in a course activity is your own and not from someone else.
- Obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately.
- Treat all other students fairly with no encouragement of academic dishonesty.

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that:

- Everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments.
- All student work is fairly evaluated, and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others.
- The academic and ethical development of all students is fostered.
- The reputation of the University for integrity is maintained and enhanced.

Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students.

Code of Student Conduct

Rutgers University–Camden seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community, including in classroom space. As a student at the University, you are expected adhere to the Code of Student Conduct. To review the code, go to: <https://camden.rutgers.edu/deanofstudents/community-standards>

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

Expectations of Classroom Civility (Source: Association of College and University Educators)

The following protocols on the codes of behavior reflect professional business norms on manners, courtesy, and respect. ***In general, you should treat others as you would like others to treat yourself. Be mindful that what is acceptable in a text or chatroom with friends may not be appropriate in a classroom or in an online conversation with an instructor.***

- Classroom attendance is a necessary part of this course.
- You are expected to do your own work. Cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in appropriate consequences.
- Meaningful and constructive dialogue is encouraged in this class and requires a willingness to listen, tolerance for different points of view, and mutual respect from all participants. All course members will be expected to show respect for individual differences and viewpoints at all times.
- The use of electronic devices can be disruptive to those around you. As a result, the use of such devices should be **limited to class-related tasks**.