

**GRADING**

Attendance/Class Participation

**100 Points**

*Being present and participating in class regularly allows you to directly engage with course material and concepts.*

Packback Questions–

**240 Points**

*Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. (150 Points)*

Assignments

**370 Points**

Quizzes

**200 Points**

Final Project

**130 Points**

*Assessments on the understanding of course material*

**GRADING SCALE**

A	90.0% - 100%
B	80.0% - 89.9%
C	70.0% - 79.9%
D	60.0% - 69.9%
F	59.9% or below

**REQUIRED E-BOOK**

Speak, Write, Succeed: A Practical Guide to Business Communications and Career Readiness - Kendall Hunt (ISBN: 9798765783122)

**REQUIRED SOFTWARE**

Packback Questions

**COURSE INFORMATION***Course Description*

Fundamentals of oral, written, and visual communication essential to prepare students for upper division coursework, internships, and careers in business disciplines. Focus on the creation of business documents and oral presentations, use of inclusive communication techniques and styles, interpretation of results for basic data analysis, appreciation of communication differences across cultures and backgrounds, and application of technology to facilitate communication.

*Course Learning Outcomes*

1. Demonstrate effective communication skills when listening, writing, speaking, and making presentations in business settings.
  - Produce clear and concise written business documents.
  - Employ proper speaking techniques for professional settings.
  - Associate and apply the use of visuals that enhances a message.
  - Analyze business communications for cultural, ethical, and legal implications.
  - Formulate and articulate ideas.
  - Adapt messages to the diverse needs of individuals, groups, and contexts.
2. Develop interpersonal communication skills required for social and business interaction.
  - Identify nonverbal communication that is effective and culturally appropriate.
  - Analyze barriers to effective interpersonal communication and choose appropriate strategies to overcome these issues.
  - Utilize emotional and social intelligence to contribute to a positive, high-functioning workplace.
  - Exercise active listening.
  - Identify, evaluate, and synthesize information in a collaborative environment.
  - Exhibit critical thinking by understanding a situation, knowing the audience, and effectively communicating recommendations.
  - Identify conflict and use tools to negotiate a resolution.
3. Build life-long skills to seek internships, jobs, and make career changes.
  - Articulate values, interests, strengths, and skills.
  - Utilize communication skills to effectively market themselves through written documents, online presence, and skillful interviews.
  - Complete a comprehensive interview portfolio.

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION - Robert Unseld** Email: [robert.unseld@wku.edu](mailto:robert.unseld@wku.edu) Phone: (304) 919-2255

Office Hours: By appointment or via zoom

Office: Grise Hall 219

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Modules	Assignments
<b>Module 1</b> – Introduction to Business Comm Fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Syllabus Quiz</li><li>• Packback 1: Effective Communication</li><li>• Packback 2: Communication Styles</li><li>• Assignment – Logical Fallacies</li><li>• Module 1 Quiz</li><li>• Arguments Assignments</li></ul>
<b>Module 2</b> – Effective Written Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assignment – Using Plain Language</li><li>• Packback 3: Career Preparation</li><li>• Assignment – Email Conversation</li><li>• Assignment – Using Positive and Bias-free Language</li><li>• Assignment – Executive Summary</li><li>• Module 2 Quiz</li></ul>
<b>Module 3</b> – Effective Verbal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Packback 4: Inclusive Language</li><li>• Assignment – Tell Me About Yourself</li><li>• Module 3 Quiz</li></ul>
<b>Module 4</b> – Effective Nonverbal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Packback 5: Verbal Communication Skills</li><li>• Assignment – Cultural Competency</li><li>• Module 4 Quiz</li><li>• Packback 6: Non-Verbal Skills</li><li>• Elevator Pitch</li></ul>
<b>Module 5</b> – Effective Visual Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final Project / Scoring– Crisis Communication</li><li>• Module 5 Quiz</li></ul>

This course outline is subject to change.

**Required Software: Packback Questions**

Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications.

**Packback Requirements:**

There will be a regular deadline (Saturdays at midnight) for submissions. To receive full credit, you should submit the following: **1 question and 2 responses along with a minimum Curiosity Score of 65 points**

**How to Get Help from the Packback Team:**

If you have questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at [help.packback.co](https://help.packback.co). If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at [help@packback.co](mailto:help@packback.co).

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV7QmkrD68>

**Required Textbook**

Strom (2023). Speak, Write, Succeed: A Practical Guide to Business Communication and Career Readiness. Kendall Hunt.

The e-book for this course can be accessed through Blackboard and is being provided by the Big Red Backpack program.

To access the e-book, follow these instructions: 1. Login to Blackboard and select this course. 2. Down the left side, click on "Tools." 3. From the Tools icons on the right side, select "Course Materials." 4. You will see the icon for the e-book allowing you to access it.

**Important:** Opting-out of the Big Red Backpack will cause you to lose access to the e-book in Blackboard. This will happen a few days after the opt-out deadline passes for the term. If you decide to opt-out, please be prepared to purchase the e-book. To purchase it from The WKU Store, you can visit them in-store or purchase through their website at [wku.bncollege.com](https://wku.bncollege.com). (Be sure to select the term labeled as "opt-out" on their website.) You can also purchase the e-book directly through [www.khpcontent.com](https://www.khpcontent.com) (click "Purchase" at the bottom right of the page.)

For more information regarding the Big Red Backpack program, please visit the university's landing page for the program: <https://www.wku.edu/bigredbackpack/>

## COURSE POLICIES

### Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

### Late Submission Policy

Late work is not accepted. Only exception is for an excused absence.

All coursework (including, but not limited to, assignments, quizzes, and final project) must be submitted no later than the due date unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor and a new due date is established.

### Use of Generative AI Tools

Within this class, you are only allowed to use foundation models (ChatGPT, DALL-E, Scribe, Bard, etc.) when indicated in the assignment or by the instructor. Note that all large language models still tend to make up incorrect facts and fake citations.

**You will be responsible for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or otherwise unethical content you submit, regardless of whether it originally comes from you or a foundation model.** If you use a foundation model, its contribution must be acknowledged as a source; **you will be penalized for using a foundation model without acknowledgment.**

Direct copy and paste from AI without significant personal contribution is considered plagiarism. The university's policy on plagiarism still applies to any uncited or improperly cited use of work or submission of work by other human beings as your own.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### ADA Accommodations

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at [sarc.connect@wku.edu](mailto:sarc.connect@wku.edu). Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

### Inclusion Statement

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to ensuring all members of our campus community have access to equitable and inclusive learning, working, and living environments. At the heart of our mission, we seek to provide holistic education and employment experiences that prepare students, faculty, and staff to become effective scholars, contributors, and leaders in our diverse and evolving communities. Consistent with our campus purpose statement and creed, this classroom will be a respectful space, welcoming all sexes, races, ages, national origins, ethnicities, gender

identities/labels/expressions, intellectual and physical abilities, sexual orientations, faith/non-faith perspectives, income levels and socio-economic classes, political ideologies, educational backgrounds, primary languages, family statuses, military experiences, cognitive styles, and communication styles. If at any time during this course you are excluded or feel a sense of alienation from the course content, please feel free to contact me privately without fear of reprisal.

## Pregnant or Parenting Students

Western Kentucky University does not discriminate against any student or exclude any student from its educational programs or activities, including classes or extracurricular activities, on the basis of pregnancy and/or pregnancy-related conditions such as, but not limited to, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom. Students who seek pregnancy or pregnancy-related accommodations should make their requests as soon as possible via WKU's Title IX Website at [www.wku.edu/titleix/](http://www.wku.edu/titleix/) under the heading, "Pregnancy or Pregnancy-Related Conditions." Students can also contact the Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir, via email at [ena.demir@wku.edu](mailto:ena.demir@wku.edu) or by phone at (270) 745-6867 to request accommodations or seek assistance. We encourage students and faculty to work together to establish a plan that allows the student to complete the class and coursework without jeopardizing academic integrity and course standards. The Title IX Coordinator can help facilitate conversations between students and faculty regarding appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

If you are a WKU student and believe that you have experienced an incident(s) of discrimination or harassment based on pregnancy (or pregnancy related conditions or issues), please report it to the Title IX Coordinator via email at [ena.demir@wku.edu](mailto:ena.demir@wku.edu) or by phone at (270) 745-6867.

Additional resources for pregnant and parenting students can be found on WKU's Title IX Website at [www.wku.edu/titleix/](http://www.wku.edu/titleix/).

## Title IX/ Discrimination & Harassment

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (#0.070) and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Executive Director, Office of Institutional Equity/Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir, 270-745-6867 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.