Business Communication (BCM 247) – Spring 2016

Course Title: Business Communication
Course Number and Section: BCM 247-010

Name: Ms. Ashley Hall
Email: D2L email (hallaa@sfasu.edu if D2L is unavailable)
Phone: 936-468-2968
Office: McGee Business Building, Room 229R
Office Hours

T 8 – 11 a.m. (office)
    1:30 – 3:30 p.m. (office)
W 12 – 1 p.m. (online)
    5 – 7 p.m. (online)
R 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. (office)
Other times by appointment – Please email me at least 24 hours in advance to schedule an appointment.

Department: Business Communication and Legal Studies
Class meeting time: TR 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.

Course Description
BCM 247 Business Communication (BUSI 2304) – Application of business communication principles through creation of effective business documents and oral presentations. Includes study and application of team communication and use of technology to facilitate the communication process. Prerequisites: six hours from English 131, 132, 133, or 235.

Program Learning Outcomes
Program learning outcomes define the knowledge, skills, and abilities students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of an academic program. These learning outcomes are regularly assessed to determine student learning and to evaluate overall program effectiveness. You may access the program learning outcomes for your major and particular courses at http://www.sfasu.edu/cob/ug-plo.asp.

1. The student will demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills by (1) composing a professional quality business document, and (2) preparing and delivering a professional presentation on a business topic. (Written Communication, Oral Communication)

2. The student will demonstrate knowledge of fundamental information technology tools and concepts. (Technology)

3. The student will exhibit an understanding of ethics and social responsibility. (Ethics)

4. The student will apply critical thinking skills by solving problems requiring quantitative and/or qualitative analysis. (Critical Thinking)

5. The student will demonstrate multicultural and diversity understanding. (Diversity)
6. The student will demonstrate an understanding of teamwork as it occurs in business situations. (Teamwork)

7. The student will effectively apply knowledge and skills in the functional areas of business. (Business Knowledge)

8. The student will demonstrate career readiness through completion of a structured field-based work internship experience. (Career Readiness)

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes
1. Critical Thinking. Students will be instructed in and will apply critical thinking skills to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills. Students will be instructed in and will apply communication skills to include development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
3. Teamwork. Students will be instructed in and will apply, practice, and demonstrate Teamwork to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
4. Personal Responsibility. Students will be instructed in and will apply, practice, and demonstrate Personal Responsibility to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences of ethical decision-making.

Student Learning Outcomes
In general, SLOs in a course that support the PLOs are specific and include the exact knowledge, skill or behavior taught in the course that supports the more global PLOs. For additional information on meaningful and measurable learning outcomes see the assessment resource page http://www.sfasu.edu/assessment/index.asp

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Apply critical thinking to business communication strategies and principles to prepare effective communication for diverse business situations. Critical thinking.
2. Effectively develop, interpret, and express ideas through written, oral, aural, and visual communication. Communication.
3. Identify different points of view and work effectively in a team setting. Teamwork.
4. Participate as a team member in activities that utilize collaborative work skills. Teamwork.
5. Identify issues relating to ethical, legal, cultural, and global situations affecting business communication that will result in ethical decision making. Personal Responsibility.
6. Utilize analytical and problem solving skills appropriate to business communication when creating business documents. Critical Thinking.
7. Select appropriate organizational formats and channels used in developing and presenting business messages. Communication.

9. Communicate via electronic mail, Internet, and other technologies. *Communication.*


**Text and Materials**

BCOM7 with CourseMate, 1 term 6 months Printed Access Card  
Business Communication, Edition: 7  
Author: Lehman/Dufrene.  
ISBN number for ordering is 9781305401938

DO NOT follow the directions in your bundled software on how to access Coursemate. I will provide you with the instructions that will work at this moment as I am working with the textbook publisher.

You will need to visit Desire2Learn, SFA's course management system, at [d2l.sfasu.edu](http://d2l.sfasu.edu) regularly to keep up with assignments, contact the instructor, and receive supplemental information for your success in the course. Classroom activities, homework assignments, other instructional materials, and grades will all be posted in D2L. **In the case of an absence from class, it is the student’s responsibility to check D2L for any assignments and turn them in by the posted due date.**

All written assignments will be typed and submitted as a .doc or .docx files for grading (Microsoft Word). You will also need software to read PowerPoint slides, as well as create them for presentations. If you do not have Microsoft Word or Microsoft PowerPoint on your computer, plan to use the software in an on-campus computer lab or some other location where you have access to such software.

**Course Requirements**

This course will require writing assignments that will include:

- The good news or positive message  
- The bad news or negative message  
- The persuasive message  
- A research-based report

Coverage will also include employment communication and team building activities. At least two oral presentations will be included in the course. Five objective examinations will be administered (including a required final exam). Other assignments may include secondary research, primary research, and additional assignments as determined by the instructor.

**Course Methodologies:** The following methods may be used in the course:

- Online discussions and email  
- Documented report/proposal and oral presentation  
- Online homework assignments  
- Online exams and quizzes
- Computer creation and editing of documents
- In-class assignments
- Group work

**Instructional Technique:** Students will be expected to read and study assigned material and complete a quiz over the material prior to attending class. The class time will be used for discussions, application and expansion of material utilizing a variety of resources, articles, exercises, videos, cases, quizzes, small individual and team projects, and other various activities. Each student is expected to attend every class session having prepared for that day’s topic prior to class. Many of the class assignments will be completed in class only and students will not have the opportunity to complete these at another time.

**Course Calendar**
The Tentative Schedule appears at the end of this syllabus. Students will be notified of any scheduling changes via D2L email and course announcements.

**FINAL EXAM:** Thursday, May 12, 2016 at 1:00 p.m.

**Attendance Policy**
Regular and punctual attendance is expected and attendance will be taken. Excessive tardies will not be accepted, as it is disruptive to the class. Material may be covered in class that is not included in the text material. Each student is responsible for all information and instructions covered in class. It is the responsibility of the student to determine what was covered in class and complete and turn in any assignments when due.

**Grading Policy:** All grades will be posted in D2L. There will be a total of 1,000 points possible in the course.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written messages</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documented report</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes and other assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200</td>
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</table>

**Grading Scale**

A: 900 – 1,000 points  
B: 800 – 899 points  
C: 700 – 799 points  
D: 600 – 699 points  
F: 599 or fewer points

Grades can be accessed through Desire2Learn (D2L). You should check your posted grades often and email any questions. To compute your current grade at any point in the semester, add up all the points you have earned and divide by the total points possible at that time in the semester.
You must check your grades prior to final exam week and email your instructor with any questions. **Unless you email prior to this time, you indicate that you are in agreement with the grades posted. Please do not contact the instructor during exam week asking to make up an assignment or be allowed extra credit.**

**Exams:** The course grade includes five objective exams based on information presented in the textbook and the class. These exams may consist of true/false, multiple choice, matching, and short answer questions. Exams will be given via D2L.

**Assignments:** Assignments can be given as classroom activities or as outside work. All homework assignments with instructions and due dates will be posted in D2L. Students may also be instructed to submit assignments in D2L. In this case, a student will not be given credit for the assignment unless it is submitted according to the instructions given. This includes completing the assignment in the proper format and turning it in at the proper time.

All out of class assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the day it is due, unless otherwise noted. In the case of an absence the day an assignment is due, it is the student’s responsibility to ensure the assignment is handed in by the due date and time. **Late work is not accepted unless arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the deadline.**

**Communication:** The primary contact method outside normal class time will be by email through Desire2Learn. You should check your email for this class regularly. I make every attempt to respond to students in a reasonable amount of time. Just as I tell you that you should check your email at least once a day, I will do likewise. My policy is to answer emails within 48 hours. You can usually expect to receive a response within 24 hours; however, please remember that I am not on call 24 hours a day. If you wait until shortly before assignments are due to address questions to me on the assignment, you may or may not get an answer before the deadline arrives.

**Teams:** Students will be assigned to teams for part of the course. Teams will have three to six members depending on class enrollment. Your involvement in the team is important and **NOT optional.** Team members will participate in team activities for a grade. The official channel of team communication will be the team discussion board on D2L. It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to keep in touch with your team about team assignments. A team member who is not performing effectively in the team may be fired from the team in consultation with the instructor. The team member may be fired by the team or by the instructor. The primary causes for firing include invisibility (no one has communicated with or heard from the person) or nonperformance (person does not do his/her work in a timely manner). The technology channels (D2L, Wikis, etc.) will be examined to see what contributions the team member has made to the team. Attendance in class (or lack thereof) may also be grounds for firing a team member since some class time is given to work on group projects. A fired team member will not receive credit for group assignments and may not complete group work individually.

**Professional Courtesy:** This class will be conducted in a professional manner. This means 1) submit work on time —no excuses, 2) avoid profanity and/or offensive language in your
communication, and 3) participate fully and courteously with your team members. In regards to courtesy to others in the class and on your team, do not send harassing emails, texts, or messages using offensive language. Such communication may result in a reduction of the sender’s grade. Students should show respect to the instructor and other students and refrain from any behavior that may distract others.

“Joke” assignments, using inappropriate or questionable content for oral presentations or written assignments, may result in NO CREDIT for that assignment. If you have questions about what might be professional conduct, please contact me BEFORE submitting the assignment.

The class will often meet in the lab to work on assignments. Violations of lab policies will result in the loss of points from the total semester points. These violations include checking social online networks, playing games, accessing offensive web sites, working on unrelated assignments, and printing documents unrelated to class work.

**Submission Policy:** All written assignments will be typed and submitted as a .doc or .docx files for grading. Handwritten documents, or documents of different file types, will not be accepted. Assignments submitted in Microsoft Works, Pages, WordPerfect, or as PDF, graphics, or zipped files will not be accepted. Your grade on those assignments will be a zero.

DO NOT make the mistake of submitting a file with the file extension .lnk or a file with the document name beginning with a $ replacing the first letter of the file name. Look at the file name you have uploaded. If it has either of these problems you need to delete the file you have uploaded and upload again. The .lnk usually occurs when you have placed a link to a file on your desktop and uploaded from there. The $ in front of the file name usually means you have the file open and instead of choosing the file, you have chosen the temporary file. In either case, the file will not open when submitted meaning I will have nothing to grade, and you will receive a zero.

All writing assignments will be graded on both content and mechanics. Your work is a representation of you, and soon to be of the company for which you will be working. You need to avoid spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors in your writing in order to project a professional skill level. Therefore, these aspects will be included along with the content when determining your grade on each assignment.

**Make-up Policy:** If you are on school business, arrangements should be made before the missed class. You must contact the instructor within one class day of the absence in order to make up the assignment. A grade of “0” will be assigned for missed work, except in the following situations: Serious illness verified by a doctor’s note with a statement of inability to attend class, personal or family emergency (documented appropriately), or official school business (with documentation from the appropriate campus representative).

Makeup exams will be allowed only if arranged prior to the date of the test. The student must provide documentation for the excused absence. Notes from the school’s Health Clinic will
not be accepted as excused unless the note specifically states that the student is unable to attend. Please see your General Bulletin for a further explanation of excused absences. Makeup exams for non-excused absences will be determined at the sole discretion of the instructor and, if allowed, will usually consist of an essay-type exam.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** An assignment where plagiarism exists will receive a zero. See the SFA website for the university policy on cheating and plagiarism. All incidents will be reported to the Dean of the College of Business.

**Student Academic Dishonesty (University Policy 4.1)**

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any assignment or exam; (2) falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when it is at least partly the work of another person; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and/or (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author credit. Penalties may include, but are not limited to reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf

**Course Grades (University Policy 5.5)**

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy related to active military service. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. Please refer to the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades.pdf.

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Room 325 in the Human Services Building, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once
verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Student Conduct (University Policy 10.4)**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the full Student Conduct Code at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-conduct-code.pdf.) Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/ inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**General Education Core Curriculum (information provided by the Provost)**

This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L through LiveText, the assessment management system selected by SFA to collect student work for core assessment. LiveText accounts will be provided to all students enrolled in core courses through the university technology fee. You will be required to register your LiveText account, and you will be notified how to register your account through your SFA e-mail account. If you forward your SFA e-mail to another account and do not receive an e-mail concerning LiveText registration, please be sure to check your junk mail folder and your spam filter for these e-mails. If you have questions about LiveText call Ext. 1267 or e-mail SFALiveText@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be collected for assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in LiveText this semester.

This syllabus represents a “best” plan for the course; but, as with most plans, it is subject to change. Any necessary changes in this syllabus will be announced in class and/or via D2L.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>Blog Assignment</td>
<td>Not assessed in Spring 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Blog Assignment</td>
<td>Not assessed in Spring 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.</td>
<td>Not assessed in this course</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td>Team assignment</td>
<td>Not assessed in Spring 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Not assessed in Spring 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Not assessed in this course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Before Class</td>
<td>In-Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/19</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>Establishing a Framework for BCM (Ch. 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ch. 1 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>Planning and Preparing Messages (Ch. 3 &amp; 4)</td>
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<td>Ch. 3 &amp; 4 Quiz</td>
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<td>1/28</td>
<td>APA</td>
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<td>2/2</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Understanding the Report Process &amp; Research Methods (Ch. 9)</td>
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<td>Ch. 9 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Organizing and Preparing Reports and Proposals (Ch. 11)</td>
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<td>Ch. 11 Quiz</td>
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<td>2/11</td>
<td>Team Work Day</td>
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<td>2/16</td>
<td>Managing Data and Using Graphics (Ch. 10)</td>
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<td>Ch. 10 Quiz</td>
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<td>2/18</td>
<td>Team Work Day</td>
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<td>2/23</td>
<td><strong>Exam 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Focusing on Interpersonal and Group Communication (Ch. 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ch. 2 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>Communicating Electronically (Ch. 5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ch. 5 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>Designing and Delivering Business Presentations (Ch. 12)</td>
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<td>Ch. 12 Quiz</td>
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<td>3/8</td>
<td><strong>Exam 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>Presentation Preparation</td>
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<td>3/15</td>
<td>Spring Break!</td>
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<td>3/22</td>
<td>Individual Presentations</td>
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<td>3/24</td>
<td>Holiday</td>
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<td>3/29</td>
<td>Letters and Memos</td>
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<td>3/31</td>
<td>Delivering Good and Neutral News Messages (Ch. 6)</td>
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<td>Ch. 6 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Delivering Bad News Messages (Ch. 7)</td>
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<td>Ch. 7 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/7</td>
<td>Delivering Persuasive Messages (Ch. 8)</td>
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<td>Ch. 8 Quiz</td>
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<td>4/12</td>
<td><strong>Exam 4</strong></td>
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<td>4/14</td>
<td>Preparing Resumes and Application Messages (Ch. 13)</td>
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<td>Ch. 13 Quiz</td>
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<td>4/19</td>
<td>Career Services</td>
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<td>4/21</td>
<td>Interviewing for a Job and Preparing Employment Messages (Ch. 14)</td>
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<td>Ch. 14 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>Team Work Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Team Work Day</td>
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<td>5/3</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>5/5</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/12</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
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