



## BUS 103: DEVELOPING YOUR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS – FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

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Course Title: BUS 103-K02: Developing Your Professional Skills – Foundational Elements  
Class Dates/Times: Tuesday/Thursday 4:30pm-5:45pm  
Location: G207  
Course Webpage: <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/courses/bus103>

Instructor: Kimberlie Fair  
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 5:45pm-6:15pm and by appointment  
Office: G554  
Email: [kfair2@gmu.edu](mailto:kfair2@gmu.edu)

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### Course Description

In this course, students will begin to investigate and develop their professional skill set. Topics covered include an introduction to the business school and the business world, what it means to be professional, how to consume the business press, and how to research business issues. Students will also develop professional writing and presentation skills, explore career options and the job search process, and develop personal educational and professional development plans.

### Prerequisite Courses

None

### Course Outcomes (highlights emphasize Mason Impact)

1. Students will increase self-awareness by evaluating their intrapersonal skills and decision-making processes.
2. Students will **work collaboratively in teams** to explore and identify various business functions, and the opportunities at GMU and the School of Business.
3. Students will research, analyze, and evaluate information **from multiple perspectives** to assist with their academic and career planning.
4. Students will analyze and improve their ability to effectively **organize and communicate ideas through oral and written expression.**

### Undergraduate Business Program Learning Goals

- Goal 1: Our students will demonstrate an understanding of the social, global, ethical, and legal contexts of business and will be able to reflect on the role of the individual in business.
- Goal 2: Our students will demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to apply knowledge of professional skills necessary for success in business including effective business writing.
- Goal 3: Our students will demonstrate technical and analytic skills appropriate for success in business.
- Goal 4: Our students will demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to apply knowledge of core business disciplines including accounting, finance, information systems, management, marketing, and operations management.
- Goal 5: Our students will demonstrate knowledge and skills appropriate for specialization in their majors.
- Goal 6: Our students will demonstrate an understanding of how research in the business disciplines contributes to knowledge and how such research is conducted.

## Mason Impact Distinction

This course is designated as one of the Mason Impact courses, as part of George Mason’s Undergraduate Education Program, preparing “students to tackle significant global questions and challenges by investigating meaningful questions, engaging multiple perspectives, and creating new knowledge within the context of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity, Civic Engagement, Entrepreneurship, and Global Activities.”

More specifically, BUS 103: Developing Your Professional Skills – Foundational Elements, encourages students to be introspective, discern their professional identity, and explore how to use their knowledge, skills, and values to engage with and impact the broader professional world. For one of the main assignments – Business Functions paper and formal presentation – students work in teams to investigate one of the core business functions (accounting, finance, marketing, management, or IT), explore the opportunities in that function, and teach their peers about that particular function. BUS 103 students also complete a professional development plan, in which they articulate professional goals, identify knowledge and skill gaps, explore how their values affect their pursuits, identify a specific plan for developing their skills/knowledge. The course culminates with students sharing these plans with their peers and discussing how they will implement the plan so they can capitalize on their talents and have an impact in the broader world.

## Grading Scale

Highest	Lowest	Letter
100.00 %	93.00 %	A
92.99 %	90.00 %	A-
89.99 %	87.00 %	B+
86.99 %	83.00 %	B
82.99 %	80.00 %	B-
79.99 %	77.00 %	C+
76.99 %	73.00 %	C
72.99 %	70.00 %	C-
69.99 %	60.00 %	D
59.99 %	0.00 %	F

\*Note that final grades will NOT be rounded up—please don’t ask.

## Required Online Materials

There is no designated textbook for this course; instead, all resources will be assigned by the instructor and provided through the Blackboard course site at <http://courses.gmu.edu>. The course will rely on a combination of provided readings, online resources, and book chapters.

## Approaches to Learning

This course uses a combination of pre-class preparation through reading and online resources and active learning approaches during class time or virtual class meetings. Students are expected to complete all assigned pre-work prior to attending class or virtual class meetings and are expected to attend and fully participate in all class sessions. Professional behavior is expected throughout the course as defined in course discussions.

## Assignments

Assignment 1: Time Management Log and Reflection	10%
Assignment 2: Business Functions: Team paper and presentation	20%
Assignment 3: Résumé Critique and Reflection	15%
Assignment 4: Professional Development Plan	25%
Course Weekly Activities: Readings, Videos, Discussion Board, Journals	25%
Professional Development Activities (2 required): ProfessionalQuest, Community Involvement	5%

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TOTAL	100%
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## **School of Business Standards of Behavior**

The mission of the School of Business at George Mason University is to create and deliver high-quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni who participate in these educational programs contribute to the well-being of society. High-quality educational programs require an environment of trust and mutual respect, free expression and inquiry, and a commitment to truth, excellence, and lifelong learning.

Integrity is an essential ingredient of a successful learning community. Ethical standards of behavior help promote a safe and productive community environment and ensure every member the opportunity to pursue excellence. The School of Business can and should be a living model of these behavioral standards. To this end, community members have a personal responsibility to integrate these standards into every aspect of their experience at the School of Business. Through our personal commitment to these Community Standards of Behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

Students, program participants, faculty, staff, and alumni accept these principles when they join the School of Business community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following standards of behavior:

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

If these Standards of Behavior are violated, then students may be required to complete additional learning activities assigned by the instructor.

## **Commitment to Inclusion and Anti-Racism**

As a member of the George Mason University community, the School of Business plays an integral role in building an educational environment that is committed to anti-racism and inclusive excellence. An anti-racist approach to higher education acknowledges the ways that individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural manifestations of racism against Black individuals and other people of color contribute to inequality and injustice in our classrooms, on our campuses, and in our communities, and it strives to provide our community members with resources to interrupt cycles of racism so as to cultivate a more equitable, inclusive, and just environment for all of our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends, regardless of racial background.

To be anti-racist means:

- To make constant, conscious decisions to interrupt racism and cultivate equity, inclusion, and justice for people of all racial backgrounds, and in particular those from Black communities and other communities of color, who are most likely to bear the direct and indirect costs of systems of white supremacy;
- To interrogate histories of white supremacy and white-dominant culture, and to examine the ways in which these histories have impacted our individual beliefs, our interpersonal relationships, our institutional and structural policies and processes, and our entire society;
- To make a commitment to being responsible for our own relationships to, and actions within, systems of white supremacy; and
- To cultivate a practice of self-awareness and self-reflection that allows us to critically evaluate our own role in upholding white supremacy and identify the ways we can interrupt cycles of racism at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels.

We believe that the work of anti-racism starts with each individual, and that in cultivating an anti-racist approach to research, scholarship, and practice, our students will build a skillset rooted in principles of equity, inclusion, and justice that they will carry with them throughout their lives. (Commitment statement prepared by Dr. Charles Chavis, Assistant Professor in the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School of Peace and Conflict Resolution.)

## **Name and Pronoun Use**

If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and how best to address you in class and via email. I use she/her for myself, and you may address me as “Professor Fair” in written and verbal communication.

## **Honor Code Statement**

The Honor System and Code adopted by George Mason University will be enforced for this class:

<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated in the School of Business. In your work on all written assignments, keep in mind that you may not present as your own the words the work or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement. You also may not borrow the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement. You may not submit work you have also submitted in another course. In this course, you are expected to use APA style citations and reference lists.

Faculty are obligated, without exception, to submit any Honor Code violations or suspected violations to the Honor Committee. See the last two pages of this syllabus for information about Honor Code sanctions.

## **Attendance, Participation, and Make-up Work**

It is expected that you will attend class at the designated time regardless of format. You participate in class by completing the weekly activities and communicating and interacting professionally with your classmates and instructor. During synchronous online sessions, you are encouraged to use both video and audio in your communication in addition to the chat feature.

If, for some reason, you must miss class, you should contact a peer to assess what was covered. Please limit your use of electronic devices in class to course-related topics. Other use may result in decreased participation points for the course.

If course attendance becomes impacted by prolonged illness or other circumstances, inform the instructor as soon as possible in order to assess options.

## **COVID-19 Protocol**

A letter from Office of Disability Services (ODS) is needed to accommodate all COVID-19 related classroom accommodations. The letter should state what accommodation is necessary. (See Additional Resources-Accessibility and Accommodations)

If you cannot attend face-to-face class due to COVID related incidents, you are still required to make up the work. Be sure to communicate with a course mate and view the course material posted to Blackboard after class. (See Attendance, Participation, and Make-up Work)

## **Technology for the Class**

School of Business Undergraduate Students must have access to a computing device that meets [minimum standards](#), including video/audio streaming capability. Students are required to use a laptop or desktop for coursework; phones of any sort are not acceptable in place of a laptop. Students are required to use the word processing software available through Office ProPlus which is for free for students at <https://its.gmu.edu/service/microsoft-365-apps-for-enterprise/>. Chrome or Firefox are the recommended browsers. Students need reliable access to the Internet to use Blackboard and to be successful in the course.

## **Timely Submissions**

All assignments are due by their due date/time and should be posted to Blackboard unless otherwise specified. If you are absent, you are still expected to submit your assignment by its due date/time. *Late work will be penalized.*

## Course Material and Student Privacy

All course materials posted to Blackboard or other course site are private; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

- Video-recordings of class meetings that include audio or visual information from other students are private and must not be shared
- Live Video Conference Meetings (e.g. Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household
- Some or all synchronous meetings in this class will be recorded to provide necessary information for students in this class. Recordings will be stored on Blackboard and will only be accessible to students taking this course during this semester.

## Formatting Guidelines

Please follow each assignment's guidelines for formatting. Use APA style to cite and reference all sources. Specific instructions for in-text citations and referencing are found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition or at <https://apastyle.apa.org/>.

## Course Communication via Email

Email communication for this class is *professional correspondence*. Use this opportunity to practice professional writing, including proper grammar and tone, complete sentences, correct spelling and capitalization, salutation and closing, etc. Generally, emails will be responded to within 24-48 hours except on weekends or during travel. University rules preclude instructors from communicating with students through private email addresses; use your Mason email address for all course communication.

## Peer Reviews, Collaborative Writing, and Group Work

Students will engage in frequent small-group activities during class time. During peer reviews, other students may be asked to read, review, and respond to your work. In addition, you will have the opportunity to evaluate the work of others. This component of the class mirrors professional workplace situations that require giving and receiving feedback, and these evaluations will count toward your individual grade. For students who do not contribute sufficiently to their group assignment, instructors have the discretion to reduce their grades accordingly.

## Religious Absences

If you will miss class for religious reasons, inform the instructor of the anticipated absence as soon as possible.

## Inclement Weather and Campus Emergencies

If the campus closes or class is canceled due to weather or other concern, students should check Blackboard for updates on how to continue learning and information about any changes to events or assignments.

**Mason Korea Student Services:** <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services>

### Accessibility and Accommodations

If you need academic accommodations for special needs, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform the instructor of any special needs as soon as you have your paperwork. Note that accommodations are not retroactive. <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services/disability-services>

### Library Resources

Should you need assistance with library resources, please contact Business and Economics Liaison Librarian Kayla Gourlay: [kmorrow7@gmu.edu](mailto:kmorrow7@gmu.edu). The library InfoGuide for this course can be found at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/busfoundations>.

### Mason Fairfax Career Services in the School of Business

Visit the website to set up an appointment with the Fairfax Center: <https://business.gmu.edu/current-students/career-services>

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### **Mason Korea Career Development Center**

Visit <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/career-services>, Director Sangyong Lee, [slee232@gmu.edu](mailto:slee232@gmu.edu)

### **Mason Korea Counseling and Wellness**

Mason Korea's Counseling and Wellness services can provide assistance if you find yourself overwhelmed by life, want training in academic or life skills, or just need to talk to a professional counselor. For more information, please visit <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services/counseling-and-wellness>

### **The Mason Fairfax Writing Center**

The Writing Center provides peer-to-peer writing support. Writers at all levels benefit from sharing their work with a helpful and knowledgeable peer tutor or consultant. To schedule an appointment, please visit <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>. Asynchronous Online Written Feedback appointments can be scheduled here: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/consulting/written-feedback>

### **Mason Korea Academic Resource Center**

The Academic Resource Center provides tutoring for academic writing and communication and other subjects taught on campus. Visit the website to schedule an appointment: <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services/academic-resource-center>

### **Professional Engagement**

- ProfessionalQuest: School of Business Career Services will host a series of employer panels. BUS 103 students must attend at least one of these events during the semester and complete a writing activity per their professor's instructions. <https://business.gmu.edu/career-events/>
- Community Involvement: BUS 103 students also must participate in a civic, community, club, educational, or business event of their choosing during the semester and complete a writing activity. These resources may help with choosing an event:
  - School of Business Events Calendar: <http://business.gmu.edu/component/eventcalendar/>
  - Business Buzz Blog: <http://business.gmu.edu/blog/buzz/>
  - Today @ Mason Calendar: <https://www2.gmu.edu/today-mason>
  - Mason360 Student Organizations: [https://mason360.gmu.edu/home\\_login](https://mason360.gmu.edu/home_login)
  - University Career Services: <https://careers.gmu.edu/events>
  - Learning Services Academic Workshops: <https://learningservices.gmu.edu/academic-success-workshops/>

## Honor Code Sanctions

Please review the Honor Code posted on the site for [Office of Academic Integrity](#). Infractions of the honor code in BUS 103 will be referred to [Mason Korea's Office of Academic Integrity](#) for adjudication. The following recommended sanctions apply to any BUS 103 student.

<b>School of Business Recommendations for Honor Code Violations</b> <i>Approved November 2021</i>	
<b>UG-Freshman Students</b>	
<b>Type of Violation</b>	<b>Sanction</b>
Plagiarism 1. Failure to cite/attribute sources  2. Representing someone else's work as the student's own (e.g., copying and pasting)	A 10% reduction in the final course grade; referral to the Writing Center; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion  An F in the class; referral to the Writing Center; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion
Cheating 1. On a minor assignment (e.g., homework, quizzes)  2. Cheating on a major assignment or exam, submitting course work from another course as original work	A 10% reduction in the final course grade; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion  An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion
Lying (e.g., providing fraudulent excuse documents, falsifying data)	An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion
Egregious Violation (e.g., stealing an exam; submitting coursework from another class as original work across multiple courses; lying to an employer about academic performance, false identification or posing as another, in person or online)	An F in the Class; relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion; and at least one semester suspension

### **Notes:**

**1. The School of Business reserves the right to initiate termination proceedings for any student found guilty of an Honor Code violation by the Office of Academic Integrity.**

**2. The Office of Academic Integrity may increase these sanctions (up to and including expulsion from the university) for repeated offenses.**

**School of Business Recommendations for Honor Code Violations**  
**Approved November 2021**

**UG-Non Freshman Students (including transfer students)**

Type of Violation	Sanction
Plagiarism 1. Failure to cite/attribute sources 2. Representing someone else's work as the student's own (e.g., copying and pasting)	An F in the class; referral to Writing Center; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion
Cheating 1. On a minor assignment (e.g., homework, quizzes)  2. Cheating on a major assignment or exam, submitting course work from another course as original work	An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion  An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion, and at least one semester suspension
Lying (e.g., providing fraudulent excuse documents, falsifying data)	An F in the class; and relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion, and at least one semester suspension
Egregious Violation (e.g., stealing an exam; submitting coursework from another class as original work across multiple courses; lying to an employer about academic performance, false identification or posing as another, in person or online)	An F in the class, relevant Academic Integrity seminar/training completion; and at least one year suspension

**Notes:**

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**2. The Office of Academic Integrity may increase these sanctions (up to and including expulsion from the university) for repeated offenses.**