

Tips for Contracts – *By Students, For Students*

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Course: BUS 302
Title: The Gateway Experience (3 units)

“All business depends on men fulfilling their responsibility.”

--*Mohandas Gandhi (1867-1948)*

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to help students understand the complexity of the “team contract” that is required in the BUS302 course. These tips were written by BUS 302 students upon reflection after two-thirds of the class had been completed. All of the tips below are intended for future students of BUS 302. In some cases, the tips have been edited and/or combined by the instructor for conciseness.

“If I could go back change one thing about the ‘team contract’, what would it be?”

“I would make it clear how many points a member will lose when a team member doesn’t do what they are supposed to do. Also, put in times that are set aside to help bring up the performance [of a poorly performing team member] in order to help the overall performance of the group.”

“I would not tolerate any excuses for late assignments. At the beginning of the semester, each team member should let everyone know their vacation plans, family events, etc.”

“If I could change one thing about the contract it would be to actually enforce it.”

“I would make a lack of editing the primary reason for a team member to lose evaluation points and get fired.”

“I would allow more time for group meetings.”

“I would make a mandatory meeting day and time each week, so everyone knows right from the beginning when the meeting will be.”

“I would try to understand the scope of what is being asked of each member. Also, I would be more tolerant of human needs sometimes.”

“I would change the evaluation points, especially for team members who don’t take the cases very seriously.”

“At the mandatory weekly meeting, I would have everyone share their concerns and take a positive correction in attitude.”

“I think we should make class attendance mandatory. This helps make everyone understand what is going on and also make meetings flow faster.”

“I would be clearer about what each person is supposed to do on each case.”

“I would put more emphasis on communication. In the beginning, we were very informed, but towards the end, we only communicated through email and class.”

“I would deduct many points from the team evaluation for late work and missed attendance.”

“I don’t think we need to meet as often as we said in the contract. I like this, because it makes us more prepared the meetings we do have.”

“I would report the person who doesn’t do anything to the instructor as soon as possible, because that person affects my grade as well.”

“I would make anyone turning in late work suffer the most, including receiving no points on the evaluation.”

“We should have strictly enforced the rules instead of giving team members a second change. The second chances were abused.”

“Make the section on punishment and consequences [for inadequate performance] clear.”

“It would nice if people contacted others a bit more often. Sometimes, just using one person as the [main contact] person in the team doesn’t work.”

“The only thing that I wished we would included was that each member was to take constructive criticism as just constructive criticism and not as a personal attack. Team are to encourage one another and act in the best interest of the group.”

“I would make sure that each team member does some piece of work. Make the punishment for not doing it severe. If someone doesn’t do their fair share of work, make it hurt.”

“We should have come up with a more precise meeting schedule. A mandatory meeting should take place if class is dismissed early (to take advantage of the available time with our time and with the professor.”

“I would clarify the compiling duties up front. I would also clarify that the compiler is not the person who rewrites your part of the paper; he/she just makes everything

consistent and format the document. Editing and compiling are major parts of this class and could increase or decrease the score.”

“During our initial group meeting, many of our team members suggested that if we worked together, we should [be able to] achieve an A grade. [However,] I knew that all team members would not be committed and do their share of the work.”

“I would have stricter rules and harsher penalties for breaking the rules.”

“I would change the meeting times. The projects in this class took a lot more time to complete than we anticipated.”

“Feedback within the team MUST BE ON TIME.”

“Sometimes, not all of the group has to meet together [to be effective.] Sometimes, only the team members who work on related parts of the case need to meet together. This is, essentially, specialization.”

“I would make the final draft of each case due no later than forty-eight hours before the due date. This would ensure cases being turned in on time and the opportunity for those who completed their section to add or make any changes necessary.”

“We should have had more meeting times each week.”

“If I could change one thing on the contract, it would be to take it more seriously.”

“Roles within the group should be more clearly defined.”

“We should have more mandatory meetings each week.”

“I would put into the contract that all members are responsible for the final product. If it is not satisfactory, none of the members has a right to blame the others. We had a lot of fights at the beginning just because people did not realize that we had to work in a team.”

“I would go back and put in more descriptions of what is expected from each team member. If you were to look at it like a negligence case, what would be the duty [of care] of each member? What, specifically, would be a breach of those duties? Detail is very important.”

“I would add more teeth to the commitment and participation portions. We did not have solid consequences for showing up late and therefore, people do not always take team commitments as seriously as they should.”

“I would add a clause on work ethics and expectations. Detail what is expected of each team member and how everyone is an integral part of the team—basically, ‘you are only as strong as your weakest link’.”

“I would everyone review each other’s work and grade each other. This would have helped to improve everyone in all aspects of the subject [matter].”

“I would add a part about trying to have ‘more fun’ with the team [for example, like having dinner together]. The stress level can be high, and it is important alleviate the stress.”

“I would like to have a discussion of the accomplishments each week.”

“I would change the number of lates one person can have and also specify how long it can be until a member [returns an email message].”

“I would punish team members who would not obey the terms of the contract by excuses that are really not emergencies. As adults, team members should value their own time and efforts spent during the semester by doing what they agreed to do.”