

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities from BUS 302 “Gateway”

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[updated: Sunday, May 25, 2008]

“The four traditional disciplines are 1), personal mastery, 2), mental models, 3), shared vision, and 4), team learning. The fifth discipline is systems thinking.” (paraphrase)
---Peter Senge (1947-)

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to articulate how the learning outcomes and associated tasks in the pre-requisite course BUS 302 (only for business majors) are linked and used in MGT 360. In the work environment, a skill is “something you do,” knowledge is “something you know,” and ability means “demonstrated capacity.”

General Work Habits

In BUS 302, you learned the importance of strong work habits, both in- and out-of-class. This includes attendance, punctuality, active listening, and effective reading strategies. It is beneficial to take some time and reflect on your own learning approach and how you can synthesize your approach with the approach of the instructor.

From Deliberate Groups to Emergent Teams

In BUS 302, much of the in-class and out-of-class work is done in groups and further, each student has no choice regarding which group they are in. In MGT 360, little of the classwork will be done in groups and in any case, there are no requirements to be in a specific group. However, strong students have learned a valuable lesson from BUS 302-- that is, “teams outperform individuals” on difficult and important tasks. One difficult and important task is studying for key exams. In MGT 360, self-managed study teams are optional, but valuable. In the work environment, you will need to be successful with both kinds of teams.

Superb Communication Skills

In BUS 302, you build upon and demonstrate your oral and written competencies. In MGT 360, you will continue to enhance your communications skills. There are no formal oral presentations, however, the “challenge questions” (i.e., each question has to be one of “clarification,” “difference of opinion,” or “extension”) are useful in that they promote reflective learning and streamline in-class discussion. There are several written assignments, all of which are short relatively compared to most other college coursework (including BUS 302). However, management writing is about clarity, not about length *per se*. Also, MGT 360 explores the affective, or non-verbal, aspects of true, interpersonal communication. This is especially difficult in a virtual work environment.

Also, learning to conform to established requirements for writing is important. In the work environment, writing conventions may be considered synonymous with the “brand image” of the organization.

Cross-Disciplinary Thinking

“Cross-Disciplinary Thinking” concerns the integration of other courses, especially the lower-division core courses. In BUS 302, we called this “interdisciplinary.” That is, students evaluate cases using the tools from at least two different academic disciplines. In MGT 360, we call this “systems thinking.” We extend interdisciplinary thinking to include (or “synthesize”) perspectives from all of the functional areas in the organization and stakeholders. Although we touch upon the behavior of individuals and the behavior of societies, our prime focus is on the behavior of organizations.

Leverage Lower-Division Core Material

In the lab part of BUS 302, mastery of specific concepts is evaluated directly via exams. In the lecture part of BUS 302, mastery of specific concepts and tools are evaluated indirectly in the form of case presentations and write-up’s. In MGT 360, we utilize concepts from other general education courses, especially psychology and sociology. None of those courses are formal pre-requisites for success and we will discuss the relevant theories as needed.