

**Course Syllabus**  
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[ updated: Saturday, May 22, 2021 ]

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

“I just want to know God’s plans. Everything else is just simply details.”  
---Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

**Program:** Bachelors of Science, Business Administration (all options)  
**College:** CSUN College of Business and Economics

**Semester:** Fall, 2021  
**Class:** 13693  
**Day/Time:** Mon/Wed 11:00am - 12:15pm  
(Mon 8/30 - Mon 12/13, 16 weeks)

**Location:** Zoom

**Delivery Format:** online

**Lead Student:** Wayne Smith, Ph.D.

**Office Room:** Zoom

**Office Hours:** Mon//Wed 12:15pm – 12:45pm  
(and by appointment)

**Office Phone:** +1 818.677.4524

**Email:** [wayne.smith@csun.edu](mailto:wayne.smith@csun.edu) (Subject Line = “[CSUN Bus302 11:00am]”)

**Public Web:** <https://ocw.smithw.org/2021fall/bus302-13693/>

**Private LMS:** <https://canvas.csun.edu/> (will be used later in this course)

**Tentative Exams:** *Midterm* (n/a), *Final* (n/a)

**Required Materials (Bookstore):**

1. Course Pack for BUS 302. Spring, 2012 ed. (pale green) (the materials in this course pack are also available online)---<http://www.csun.edu/bus302> (select “Materials”)
2. Two (2) “Green Books” (or “Blue Books”) (large format)

**Recommended Materials:**

1. Hacker, D., and Sommers, N. (2018) *A Writer's Reference* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.), Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston:MA. ISBN-13 978-1319057442
2. Help with statistics (generally) and Excel (specifically) – [LinkedIn Learning](#) (login with your CSUN account and password)
3. Wall Street Journal (20-30 minutes daily, in printed or online form)  
[ <https://r.wsj.com/PROFcag2> ]

You must bring your required materials, including any instructor-supplied name tag, with you to each class. Use of electronic devices to access class content is permitted, although there may be times when the instructor will require you to turn off all electronic devices.

**Description:**

This course integrates concepts from the lower-division core courses by using case studies. Students learn how to build an effective team and to become a valued team member as well as develop written and oral communication skills. This course includes team analyses of case studies, exams and quizzes to review and integrate lower-division core material, and individual writing assignments including a project aimed at helping students develop an effective, customized path to their desired career.

This course is *not* an online course. Attendance in class is required. This course is designed on a traditional university schedule. This course requires, at a minimum, three times the number of hours per week outside of class as the number of hours in class.

Also, students who wish to add must attend each class and submit all assigned work.

Each class will begin promptly. The clock in the classroom will be used as the reference.

**Course Prerequisites:**

This course requires the completion of all lower-division business core courses. None of the prerequisites can be taken concurrently. All of the prerequisites will be strictly enforced.

**Common BUS 302 Web page:**

The College of Business and Economics maintains a special web page for BUS 302. The materials on this web page serve as a general guide for all sections of this course. There are also materials posted here for future reference. See (upper-left hand corner):

<http://www.csun.edu/cobaessc/gateway-course-business-302>

**Common BUS 302L Web page:**

Students enrolled in BUS 302 must also enroll in the “lab” portion of this course, BUS 302L (“ell”), at some point. The overwhelming bulk of students will choose to take BUS 302L concurrently with BUS 302. You cannot enroll in 400-level courses until you have passed *both* courses. (Note that receiving a passing grade in BUS302L also requires a passing score on the upper-division writing proficiency exam.)

The College of Business and Economics maintains a special web page for BUS 302L. The materials on this web page serve as a general guide for all sections of BUS 302L. There are also links to review materials to assist students in passing the exams. See (lower-left hand corner):

<http://www.csun.edu/cobaessc/gateway-course-business-302>

## Learning Objectives:

There are four specific learning objectives for this course:

- Learn to build and work effectively in teams
- Enhance written and oral communication, and practice foundational skills
- Understand the cross-functional nature of business problems and strategies
- Use strategic thinking and ethical decision-making to address business issues.

## Approach:

The course will use a variety of approaches including lectures, videos, class discussions, assignments, analyses of business news and cases, and in-class, experiential exercises.

The course is designed to develop critical skills that you will need to succeed in today's business environment. This course will review and expand your proficiency in the lower division business core (financial and managerial accounting, micro and macro economics, business law, and statistics) by integrating and applying these disciplines and tools to solve business problems. It is designed to give you an appreciation for how these business disciplines work together in a business environment.

## Skills:

The class will be conducted in an **active learning format** where you will be asked to participate. The role of the instructor is to help you develop critical business skills. These include:

- *Teamwork* Students will work on several assignments (cases and team exercises) in teams of no more than six people and will be scored on both on the quality of the final output as well as their team contribution.
- *Develop writing skills* Student teams will collaborate on written assignments and editing for a number of case studies. In addition there will be other individual writing assignments.
- *Effective oral presentation skills* Each team will formally present *one* of the cases to the class. Each team will receive the case assignment from their instructor. Members of the team may or may not be graded individually on their part of the case presentation. You will have many opportunities to contribute to class discussion.
- *Review Lower Division Core* You will work in teams on several cases that will require you to integrate materials across the lower division core.
- *Strategic, critical, cross-functional and ethical thinking* Many of the exercises and the cases in the class will require you to apply strategic, cross-functional, or ethical thinking. You will be required to demonstrate mastery of such thinking skills on both individual and team assignments.

**Learning Rhythms and Patterns:**

I tend neither to read nor summarize the required materials in class. I tend to offer clarifications, differences of perspectives, or explorations of the core material. Students will need to have mastered necessary skills in reading comprehension, retention, and recall. Each class session will generally begin with an opportunity to ask various questions regarding the required reading materials or topics from the previous class session. Each class session is generally oriented around one or more learning themes. The textbook materials support the core ideas of those themes, the peer-reviewed and other materials support key theories of those themes, and the non-peer-reviewed and other materials support key ideas in practice or working examples.

**Additional Materials:**

Please procure two large-format green books. The quizzes and/or exercises may require a green book. You must bring 1), a blue or black pen and 2), a number 2 pencil to each class session.

**Test Material:**

There will be at least three quizzes (all of which will be unannounced ahead of time). Each quiz will cover general material from the lower-division core courses, assigned readings, cases, or classroom discussions. Due to time constraints, we may not be able to cover each and every aspect of the chapter readings or assigned readings in class. Regardless, you are responsible for all the chapter material (i.e., it is “fair game” for the quiz) unless explicitly directed otherwise by the instructor. Each class session will likely begin with an opportunity to ask questions about specific topics in the reading material, including vocabulary. **No make-up quizzes** will be given. *Please bring a green-book with you to class each day.*

Individual and team assignments will generally be graded on a simple point scheme (“scoring rubric”) enumerated within each assignment. Both individual and team assignments are due immediately at the beginning of the class. I will make a “last call” announcement at the beginning of class. Any individual or team assignments that are submitted after the beginning of class are assessed a 50% point penalty. No individual or team assignments will be accepted late after one day without a signed note from a medical doctor or public safety official.

*Important!:* Be sure to keep a copy of all quizzes and papers (in other words, anything you turn in) so that in the unlikely event that it becomes misplaced, you can show it to the instructor as proof of completion.

**Team Evaluations:**

After each case, each student will evaluate (objectively and subjectively) the performance (including improvements from prior team assignments) of each of the other members of her or his team.

**Grading System:**

The contribution of each component to the final letter grade will be based on the following breakdown:

| Category                              | Component Description                                   | Relative Weight  |            |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------------|------------|
|                                       |   | Individual-level | Team-level |
| Problem Solving and Critical Thinking | Average of content scores for all written cases         |                  | 15.0%      |
|                                       | Ethics Essay (content)                                  | 10.0%            |            |
| Written and Oral Communication        | Average of writing scores for all written cases         |                  | 15.0%      |
|                                       | Options Presentation                                    |                  | 5.0%       |
|                                       | Case Presentation                                       |                  | 5.0%       |
|                                       | Case Discussion   |                  | 5.0%       |
|                                       | Ethics Essay (writing)                                  | 10.0%            |            |
| Work Habits and Participation         | Evaluation by Instructor (in-class)                     | 5.0%             |            |
|                                       | Evaluation by Team (out-of-class)                       | 7.5%             |            |
| Quizzes                               | Pop quizzes on basic skills, case content, and lectures | 22.5%            |            |
| <i>Total</i>                          | 100%  | 55.0%            | 45.0%      |

As to work habits and participation, individual performance is measured by my observations of your behavior (and your team's behavior) in class (e.g., attendance, punctuality, attention to detail, active listening, wearing a name tag, doing in-class work, etc.); similarly, team performance is measured by your team members' observations of your behavior within your team (e.g., contributing to the team, interacting with teammates, keeping the team on track, expecting quality, having relevant skills, etc.). Individual performance refers to work completed individually, such as essays and quizzes. Team performance refers to work completed as a team, such as written case reports and presentations.

However, "Evaluation by the Instructor" also includes observations of your team members' work; all the members of a team can lose participation points at the individual-level even if only one student has not participated. As a team member, you are responsible for helping your team members so that you don't lose individual participation points. It is particularly important for a team to address possible areas of misunderstanding or conflict so that these do not reoccur.

The relative weights for multiple, individual components (such as quizzes) are apportioned evenly. The BUS 302 faculty strive for some uniformity in final letter

grading distributions. Therefore, students are ranked in class by weighted points. For most assignments, I will strive to provide not only descriptive statistics, such as the mean and standard deviation, but also the percentile distributions that correspond to the approximate letter grades. These quantitative measures can be used as a guide as to help assess your relative performance as you progress and develop through class.

Statistically, the scores for individual-based components exhibit more variation than the scores for team-based components. Also, my observation of student work in prior semesters indicates the scores for writing exhibit more variation than the scores for technical content. Each student has the same opportunity to earn high marks on all components. Students should study diligently and strive for high marks on a persistent basis. All of your work matters. There is no “non-important” work in this course.

Grades will be assigned based on the following (plus/minus suffixes may be used):

| <b>Letter grade you earn</b> | <b>University interpretation</b> | <b>“Real World” interpretation</b>               |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| A                            | Exceptional                      | Promote early                                    |
| B                            | Very Good                        | Retain and provide merit pay increases           |
| C                            | Average                          | Retain and provide cost of living increases only |
| D                            | Barely Passing                   | Let go when replacement is found                 |
| F                            | Failure                          | Fire immediately                                 |

There is both intrinsic value and extrinsic value to volunteering in class. Additionally, if I call on you in class to discuss an issue and you are neither present nor ready, I will drop your final grade by one letter grade.

I have minor hearing loss in my right ear. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand and wait until I call on you. It helps me to be able to see you before you begin your question. Thank you in advance. All audio or video recording of class is prohibited.

**Classroom Disruptions:**

Please ensure that the audio portion (“ringtone”) of your cell phone is off during class. No interaction with your cell phone, including texting, is permitted during class. Also, if you wear a hat with a bill on it (e.g., a baseball cap), please either turn it around or take it off; I need to be able to see your face and your eyes at all times.

**Academic Integrity:**

Any cheating in or out of class will result in a failed exam, an “F” in the course, and a letter the Associate Vice-President of Student Affairs recommending that the student be expelled from the University.

Additional classroom behavior requirements for this class are listed at:

<http://ocw.smithw.org/general/behavior.pdf>

**At the start of the semester:**

My class roster identifies students by name, CSUN ID, class level, and major. On the first day of class, I know very little about each student. However, I have found that some students benefit by visiting me in my office during scheduled office hours at least once very early in the course. Please do let me know if you fall into one of the following categories:

*Differently-abled students.* All materials in this course have been designed to be accessible as possible to those with visual, aural, motor, and cognitive impairments. If there are additional needs, please let me know as soon as possible.

*Military service.* If you are a veteran, currently in the active service, reserves, ROTC, or will be attending OCS soon, please let me know. Honorably-discharged veterans, in particular, have unique skills, knowledge, and abilities that can benefit the class in various ways.

*Student athletes.* I try to attend at least one game or meet for each student athlete, even if your sport is in a future semester. Again, you will need to self-identify yourself to me.

*International students.* Managing expectations is difficult; managing expectations regarding higher education and culture is *extraordinarily* difficult. Please see me as soon as possible if you do not completely understand any aspect of this course, including writing and grading standards.

**At the end of the semester:**

I do not discuss any aspect of scores or grades via email after the last class session. I can discuss scores or grades in my office after the beginning of the following semester.

Students who earn an “A” or “B” may request a written letter of recommendation from me. If such a letter is desired, please try to ask me before the end of the following semester. A request for a letter of recommendation begins and ends with a discussion in my office during office hours.