

# University Studies 489: BUS Capstone Experience

Fall 2007 \* 1 Credit \* M 3:00-4:50, Hours Arranged

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E-mail:  
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Office Hours: M-W, F, 10-12.



## Texts

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Bachelor of University Studies: A guide to a degree in University Studies

Blakesley, D. & Hoogeveen, J.L. (2007). *The Brief Thomson Handbook*.

**Blackboard 7.0:** Part of this course will be online. On a regular basis, you will need to login and check <http://blackboard.ndsu.nodak.edu> for announcements and to use the Digital Drop Box. **Supporting Materials will be posted on Blackboard.**

## Course Description

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The course consists of creating a job packet (report, cover letter, resume, and virtual interview) as well as a reflective paper, approximately 15 pages in length, designed to provide the student with the opportunity to integrate and synthesize the cumulative academic experience as it relates to the approved Statement of Goals. It also includes edited peer responses to the paper and a presentation of the paper. Students must make arrangements with the instructor prior to the first class, regarding their intention to pursue the class as a distance course.

## Course Outcomes

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The course outcome is that students will demonstrate understanding of the extent to which the Bachelor of University Studies Degree curriculum provides them with the educational experience necessary to accomplish the goals specified in the approved BUS Student Proposal.

## Assignments / Evaluation

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Students will be assigned a course grade of Pass or Fail. Students will be expected to earn 80 points (out of 100) in order to pass the class.

- Mini-Research Report / Netiquette Assignment (10 points and 5 points, respectively)
- Cover Letter (10 points)
- Resume (10 points)
- Virtual Interview (5 points)
- Reflective Paper (25 points)
- Conference (5 points)
- Final Presentation (10 points, 5 for turning PP in early and 5 for actual presentation)
- Mandatory class dates (20 points)

Please note that an addition to the assignments, students will be expected to attend mandatory class dates (each class date is worth 5 points) and turn materials in on time. You will only receive credit for being in class if you come to class with assignments completed. **Late work receives an automatic zero**—unless

prior arrangements had been made with me. Please see each assignment for individual rubric and evaluation procedures.

**General Note:** All papers must adhere to APA guidelines. Students should use Times New Roman 12 point font. The paper should have one inch margins.

## **Policies** --- *Special*

*Needs:* In keeping with the Americans with Disabilities Act, I would encourage students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course to contact me as soon as possible so that the appropriate arrangements can be made to accommodate particular needs. This syllabus can be made available in alternative formats upon request.

*Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:* Work submitted for this course must adhere to the Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct as cited in the *Handbook of Student Policies*: “The academic community is operated on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. Occasionally, this trust is violated when cheating occurs, either inadvertently or deliberately. This code will serve as the guideline for cases where cheating, plagiarism, or other academic improprieties have occurred. . . . Faculty members may fail the student for the particular assignment, test, or course involved, or they may recommend that the student drop the course in question, or these penalties may be varied with the gravity of the offense and the circumstances of the particular case” (65). See also: <http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/policy/335.htm>.

*Academic Honesty Defined:* All written and oral presentations must “respect the intellectual rights of others. Statements lifted verbatim from publications must be cited as quotations. Ideas, summaries or paraphrased material, and other information taken from the literature must be properly referenced” (*Guidelines for the Presentation of Disquisitions*, NDSU Graduate School, 4). In other words, if it is not your work or words, give proper credit to the author.

*Code of Student Behavior:* All interactions in this course will be civil and show respect for others. Student conduct at NDSU is governed by the Code of Student Behavior: <http://www.ndsu.edu/ndsu/vpsa/code/>

*Deadlines:* All assignments must be submitted on time unless a *prior arrangement* is made with me.

## Course Calendar

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- August 27 Introduction. Discuss expectations, due dates, course information, and course information. Brainstorm ideas for mini-research report. Research activities. **This is a mandatory meeting—0 points.**
- September 10 Discuss plagiarism. **This is a mandatory meeting—5 points.**
- September 17 Peer review mini-research reports and Part I of the reflective paper IN CLASS. Bring an extra copy of your Part I to give to me. **This is a mandatory meeting—5 points.** Talk about cover letters and resumes.
- September 24 Submit mini-research report and netiquette assignment via the digital dropbox by 4 p.m.—10 and 5 points each. Work on cover letter and resume.
- October 1 Work on cover letter and resume.
- October 8 Peer review cover letter, resume, and Part II of the reflective paper IN CLASS. Bring an extra copy of your Part II to give to me. **This is a mandatory meeting—5 points.** Talk about interviews (what to bring, what to wear, etc.).
- October 15 Submit cover letter and resume via the digital dropbox by 4 p.m. Work on reflection paper—10 points each.
- October 22 Keep working on your paper!
- October 29 / week Meet with me—5 points.
- November 5 Peer review complete reflection paper IN CLASS. Bring an extra copy of your reflection paper to give to me. **This is a mandatory meeting—5 points.** Talk about PowerPoint presentations.
- November 12 Submit reflection paper via the digital dropbox by 4 p.m.—25 points. If you haven't done so already, get your resume critiqued by the Career Center.
- November 19 Work week.
- November 26 Work week, Virtual Interview Due—5 points.
- November 30 Finished PowerPoint sent to me by 4 p.m.—5 points.
- December 3 Presentations. **This is a mandatory meeting—5 points.** (This may change—depending on room availability).

Please use the following chart to help you track your progress in the class. Dates and deadlines are your responsibility. If you have any questions, please ask! You must earn 80 points in order to pass the course.

Task	Date Due	Points Worth	Date Attended / Submitted	Points Earned
Mandatory Class, No Assignment Due	August 27	0		
Mandatory Class, No Assignment Due	September 10	5		
Mandatory Class, Draft of Mini Research and Netiquette Assignment as well as Part I of Reflective Paper*	September 17	5		
Research Report and Netiquette Assignment , 4 p.m. via Digital Drop Box	September 24	15		
Mandatory Class, Draft of Cover Letter, Resume as well as Part II of Reflective Paper*	October 8	5		
Cover Letter and Resume, 4 p.m. via Digital Drop Box	October 15	20		
Conference	October 29 / week	5		
Mandatory Class, Draft of ENTIRE Reflective Paper	November 5	5		
Final Draft of Reflective Paper, 4 p.m., Paper Copy to 112 Morrill Hall	November 12	25		
Virtual Interview	November 26	5		
Power Point, 4 p.m. via Email	November 30	5		
Presentations	December 3	5		

\* Please note: Bring an extra copy of your reflective paper that I can look over and provide feedback on. IF you do not bring me a copy of your reflective paper, you will not receive any points.

## Mini Research Email and Netiquette Assignment

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**Length:** 3 pages

**Due Date:** September 24

**Assignment:** Your assignment is to write a mini-research report describing your investigation of the potential employer, the organization, or the graduate school to which you will be addressing your letter of application. You will need to determine where you would realistically be interested in applying. Finding a job (or a school) is all about representing yourself, and for most you, you will be asked to represent and sell yourself in the form of a cover letter, resume, and eventually an interview. The key to good communication is knowing your audience. This assignment will help you “know” your audience.

You will also be asked to write a short email to the employer, organization, or graduate school requesting more information. You will not be required to send this email, but I would like you all to have practice sending out a formal email.

Some hints:

- Decide where you are applying (and for what)
- Choose a company you would really want to work for, a graduate school you really want to attend, or an organization (Peace Corps, for example) that you genuinely want to be a part of
- Get all the information you can about your audience from brochures, help-wanted ads, internet source, application, etc.
- If after gathering information you still have questions (pretend you do), write an formal email requesting more SPECIFIC information.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the report is to inform me about the company (school, organization) you are most interested in. It will help you learn more about your audience, ultimately, create better resumes, applications, etc. This is a professional, formal document. If you get information from an outside source, which you most likely will, make sure to cite the source!

The purpose of the email is to get you thinking about communicating professionally electronically. This is a formal email, so you will also get practice in sending important information electronically. Often, people send informal emails addressing formal matters. Always know your audience. The email portion of this assignment can be emailed directly to me.

**Audience:** For this writing assignment, your audience will be me.

**Evaluation:** Your report should be clear and organized and provide an in-depth look at the company or school you are interested. You should be professional and employ careful editing and correct grammar. See rubric below.

Below are a few things you might want to consider putting in your report.

- Name, title of a person to whom you are applying
- History of the organization as it relates to your application
- Competition for the position
- Size of company, school, organization
- Line of products, programs, and services
- Organizational structure, promotional path, age and background of top management
- Other information that interests you

**Grading Rubric:**

Provides adequate amount of information (in-depth look at company / school)	5 4 3 2 1
Addresses audience appropriately, netiquette	5 4 3 2 1
Document is well organized, transitions are used	5 4 3 2 1
Document is professional and free of editing errors (spelling, grammar, citation)	5 4 3 2 1

**Please note:** If for whatever reason you would like to propose a different type of report because of your current career goals, feel free to run your ideas by me. This assignment should be useful to you in some way or another.

## Cover Letter

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**Length:** 1-2 pages (depending on audience)

**Due Date:** October 15

**Assignment:** Your assignment is to write a letter of application. This letter should be 1-2 pages in length. Most likely, a job application cover letter would be about a page. On the other hand, a graduate school application cover letter might be a bit longer. The length will be determined based on your assessment of your audience.

**Purpose:** A good letter of application, like your resume, is both informative and persuasive.

**Audience:** Your audience will depend on where you are applying.

**Evaluation:** I will be looking to see if you how well you addressed your audience. I will also be looking to see if it clear and organized and is both persuasive and informative.

Below are a few things you might want to consider putting in your report.

- State what you are applying for (mirroring the word of the ad or grad program)
- Use specific examples to describe your qualifications AND tie those qualifications to the actual job you are applying for
- Show the company you know how they operate and what they value AND why this interests you
- Refer to your resume (or other enclosed materials)
- Ask for an interview or request a follow-up

### Grading Rubric:

Provides evidence that the applicant understands the position / company and has researched the it	5 4 3 2 1
Uses specific examples to highlight qualifications	5 4 3 2 1
Addresses audience appropriately—is professional, informative, and persuasive	5 4 3 2 1
Document is well organized, transitions are used	5 4 3 2 1
Document is professional and free of editing errors (spelling, grammar, citation)	5 4 3 2 1

## Resume

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**Length:** A resume should probably not be longer than two pages (and preferably one) in length.

**Due Date:** October 15 (if later, prior arrangements must be made with me).

**Assignment:** Your next assignment is to develop and submit your professional resume suitable for a job interview. Your resume—along with your cover letter— should “sell” you to a possible employer.

**Purpose:** A good resume supports and is supported by your letter of application. It should be both informative and persuasive.

**Audience:** The company, school, or organization you have been planning to apply for.

**Evaluation:** The resume must also be submitted for critique to the NDSU Career Center. Professional critiques are also provided every Wednesday from noon to 1 pm in the Crest Room in the Memorial Union. If this time doesn't work for you, contact the NDSU Career Center (Ceres 306) for an appointment for a resume critique. Students must submit the final resume, along with a copy of the critique response from the Career Center, to the instructor. The following website provides general information on resume development: [http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/career\\_center/students/resume\\_writing.php](http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/career_center/students/resume_writing.php)

## Interview

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**Due Date:** November 26

**Assignment:** Congratulations! You got an interview!

For this project, students must make an appointment with NDSU Career Services (Ceres 306) to do a virtual interview taping by entering the RezFusion system at [www.ndsu.nodak.edu/career\\_center/](http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/career_center/).

**Purpose:** The purpose of setting up a virtual interview is simple—practice! With each interview you go to, the better (and more comfortable) you will become.

**Evaluation:** Students will be interviewed by a computer-based system at the Career Center, where it will be taped. Verification of completion will need to be obtained from Career Center staff and submitted to instructor. Students have the option to have it critiqued by Career Center staff.



## Reflective Paper & Oral Presentation

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**Length:** 15 + pages

**Due Date:** November 12 (paper) December 3 (presentation)

**Assignment:** For your final project, I would like you to bring together everything that you have done in your academic career. You will also be required to give a 4-5 minute presentation on your paper with a PowerPoint. You will be expected to highlight what you have done at NDSU and what you plan on doing. Below is an outline I would like you to follow for the paper.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this paper is to reflect on what you have done in your academic career. Being able to reflect on your experiences in a clear and concise manner will help you when you get a job or graduate school interview. Hopefully, you will be able to use what you have written down in this paper and apply it to a “real world” scenario. Even though a future employer will most likely not want to read 15 pages of reflection, if you can casually talk through some of your paper, it will give the employer a better idea of your background.

**Part I. Statement of Goals** (From previously approved Plan of Study as described in *Bachelor of University Studies: A guide to a degree in University Studies*)

The Statement of Goals serves to introduce the candidate and to orient the reader to the focus of the degree. Part I should be devoted to providing an understanding of who the student is and what circumstances led to your choice of the BUS degree. Each candidate is expected to articulate the goals expressed at the time the student presented the degree proposal and the manner in which the proposed degree was expected to assist the student in achieving the expressed goals. This section focuses on what the student hopes to achieve and the manner in which the degree will prepare the student for that future.

Part I should be reflective as well as proactive as the student equates the value of the degree to future goals. The unique nature of this degree allows the student to choose each course based upon its contribution to the proposed outcome once the General Education Requirements have been met. Attention may be given to personal growth and interests as well as to the growth and changing needs of a specific profession and the need to be prepared for life-long learning.

### **Part II. Reflective Experience**

For each of the six areas of general education (Communication, Quantitative Reasoning, Science and Technology, Humanities and Fine Arts, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Wellness), discuss your perceptions of the extent to which courses approved in the Program of Study for each of the six areas will and/or will not support the attainment of the goals contained within the Statement of Goals. In addition, evaluate general education as it relates to life-long learning.

### **Part III. Application**

Describe a current issue, problem, or situation you may encounter in employment. Relate it to your Statement of Goals (Part I). Be sure to include current literature in the field to develop the example, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Also explain how you would apply your academic background and transferable skills obtained from the courses you have taken to deal with the issue, problem, or situation. Include personal and professional ethics. Provide at least 2 current citations from the literature in your field of study (these should follow APA style in text and on reference page).

**Audience:** Although I will be the one ultimately grading your papers, please do not address me. Any person picking up your paper should easily understand your purpose (reflection) and what you are trying to do.

**Grading Rubric:**

Provides a clear and concise statement of goals	5 4 3 2 1
Provides a description and reflection of course taken to achieve the BUS degree	5 4 3 2 1
Situates academic experience in a real world scenario (application section)	5 4 3 2 1
Uses two credible sources to support the document	5 4 3 2 1
Document is well organized, transitions are used	5 4 3 2 1
Document is professional and free of editing errors (spelling, grammar, citation)	5 4 3 2 1