



Course Syllabus: Contemporary Skills in Organizations
Dillard College of Business Administration
(MGMT 4113)
Fall 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Yang Xu

Office: Dillard College 272A

Office hours: MW 11am-12pm & 2pm-3pm and Tuesdays 1pm-2pm in person, via phone or email or online; Other times by appointment.

E-mail: yang.xu@msutexas.edu

Prerequisites: Junior standing or above or consent of the chair, and MGMT 3013.

Course Description

“I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.”

Those people who can deal effectively with other people are the ones who succeed, the ones who can help organizations to be successful. This course is designed to provide fundamental skills necessary for success in the business environment. In each lesson, we discuss how a skill or concept can be incorporated into one's self-development, how a skill or concept is used in interactions with others, especially in team settings, and how the skill or concept is applied in the context of managerial roles in organizations. Each class is set up to provide a complete learning experience. This course is experiential in nature, and taking an experiential course takes time, energy, a willingness to try new things, and commitment. I hope you benefit from this class and be successful in your career.

Learning Goals

General Learning Goals:

- Problem-solving and decision-making abilities through critical analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of business information. These critical skill areas are practiced through experiential exercises, activities, and case analyses.
- Students will demonstrate ethical reasoning skills within a business environment.
- Our students will be multicultural and globally aware. Through course material, students gain an understanding of the importance of these issues.
- Competency in writing about common business scenarios. Students will write two personal reflection papers, comprised of situational analysis and application of concepts learned in this class.

These general learning goals are among those established by the Dillard College of Business Administration. General learning goals represent the skills that graduates carry with them into their careers. While assessing student attainment of these general learning goals, the Dillard College is evaluating its programs. These assessments assist us as we improve our curriculum and curriculum delivery.

Course-Specific Learning Goals:

- After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Assess personal strengths and understand how these might guide them to a major and career path
- Assess personal limitations and develop a plan for improving in these areas
- Use situational cues to guide self-disclosure and trust.
- Implement goal setting to achieve personal and professional goals
- Make better use of time by working smarter and not harder.
- Identify stressors and find ways to reduce or change responses to them.
- Seek out opportunities to increase the diversity and the benefits it brings to individuals personally and as a member of an organization.
- Differentiate between positive and negative listening behaviors.
- Improve the ability to send clear messages
- Incorporate tactics and strategies to improve influence and persuasion skills
- Utilize agendas, questioning, framing, scripting, and other negotiation strategies to increase effectiveness as a negotiator
- Ensure that all members of a team understand their roles and responsibilities and contribute equitably to meeting team objectives
- Understand natural conflict styles and know which strategy to adopt in a conflict situation.
- Teach and guide teams in utilizing effective process skills
- Make a decision before having all of the necessary information.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

- Connect 3P Inclusive Access Online Access for Interpersonal Skills in Organizations by de Janasz, Edition: 7th ISBN: 9781265303020 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Higher Education
Formats: Adobe Ebook Reader Copyright Year: 2022 (No need to order this content, as it will be in your D2L account the first day of class.)
- Supplemental readings posted on Desire 2 Learn site.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

A copy of Instructor Policies will be distributed in class for your signature.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

Grading

Important note: You must turn in each assignment to complete/pass the course.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Quality Class Participation	100
Individual/Group Exit Tickets	150
Group Quizzes	150
Two Personal Reflection Papers	200
Midterm Exam	200, or 0 if you waive midterm score
Final Exam	200, or 400 if you waive midterm score
TOTAL	1000 points

Grades will be based upon a percentage of those points earned by the student. There will be no substitutions for the above assignments. Final grades will follow the traditional demarcations as follows:

A = 90.00% and above

C = 70.00% to 79.99%

F = less than 60.00%

B = 80.00% to 89.99%

D = 60.00% to 69.99%

Quality Class Participation (100 points maximum): Class discussion is a critical learning vehicle. The importance and value of *your* participation cannot be stressed too highly. In order to be successful with regard to class participation, you must participate in an active and relevant way in *every* class meeting. By default, every student will receive 75 points for class participation. If you make significant contributions to class discussions, you may receive more than 75 points. However, if you miss classes, do not actively participate in class discussions, or consistently make non-constructive comments, you may receive fewer than 75 points. You will lose 5 points for every class session you miss or are more than 10 minutes late. If you need to miss a class for special circumstances, you should inform me by email in advance. Please get materials and notes from a classmate. Persistently low preparation and poor contributions will jeopardize your chances of receiving a good grade. Participation grades will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Table 2: Class Participation grading rubric

Exemplary (100%)	Average (75%)	Needs Improvement (50%)	Unacceptable (0%)
- You make valuable contributions during nearly all class sessions - You actively discuss the topic at hand and avoid discussing matters unrelated to the course - You consistently <u>demonstrate</u> a high level of preparation	- You frequently make valuable contributions, though not every class - You are a constructive member during small group discussions - You consistently <u>demonstrate</u> a high level of preparation	- You sporadically comment in class - During group discussions, you are not a productive participant (i.e., you discuss matters unrelated to the course) - You <u>demonstrate</u> a poor level of preparation	- You do not participate in class - You do not participate in group discussions - You <u>demonstrate</u> a poor level of preparation

Individual/Group Exit Tickets (150 points maximum): In some classes, students will have the opportunity to earn up to 10 points depending on the quality by responding to several questions about the materials under discussion. Students can answer a maximum of two questions per week, but will only receive credit for the single question that scores the highest grade.

Group Quizzes (150 points maximum): For most classes, a group quiz will be given covering the materials under discussion. Each group can earn a maximum of 10 points on each quiz; however, the absent students cannot get any points.

Two Personal Reflection Papers (100 points maximum each paper): In each paper, you will select a skill topic area from the book/class and write about how the topic relates to a personal experience you have had. You should present a situation, explain what happened and why, and analyze how the situation could have been handled differently based on specific learning from the book/class. You should then devise an action plan for the future in order to become more competent when faced with similar situations. Do not use any cases from the assigned readings or from the class. You may submit three reflection papers during this semester. The best two papers will count for your course grade.

The paper should be between 600 and 800 words, and type-written. On the first page, you must print the following information: course number and your name (“4113 Name*** Personal Reflection Paper #”). Failure to follow these instructions may result in a deduction of points. Please try to be creative and insightful. You should analyze only one topic area in each paper.

Exams (400 points maximum): There will be two exams. Both exams will be in-class and closed-book. The exams will be based not only on assigned readings, but also on materials discussed in class but not covered in the readings. If you are not satisfied with your midterm score, you may ask me to discard it; however, you must submit your request to me via email at least one week **prior** to the final exam. You may not skip the midterm or take the final exam only. There is **no** make-up for the final exam – you **must** take the exam at the assigned time – no exceptions.

Late Work

The grade penalty for the late submissions is **10% off for each day** the submission is late. Work submitted more than **ten** days late will not be graded. Please check and remember the due date of each assignment on the Schedule of Classes.

Make Up Work/Tests

There is no make-up provision for any missed assignments and tests. If you feel that any material in this class has been improperly graded, you may submit a *written* appeal within one week of receiving the graded material to be regarded. In your appeal, you must both state and prove why you deserve more credit than you received.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

The class handouts, materials posted on D2L, and supplemental readings you will receive are copyrighted works. They are provided for your educational purposes only, and should not be copied or distributed.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. Although in general students are graded on intellectual effort and performance rather than attendance, absences may lower the student’s grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by

the faculty member. In those classes where attendance is considered as part of the grade, the instructor should so inform students of the specifics in writing at the beginning of the semester in a syllabus or separate attendance policy statement. An instructor who has an attendance policy must keep records on a daily basis. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to being dropped from the class. Instructor's records will stand as evidence of absences. A student with excessive absences may be dropped from a course by the instructor. Any individual faculty member or college has the authority to establish an attendance policy, providing the policy is in accordance with the General University Policies.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule

Week	Session	Readings/Assignments
Week 1 8/24	Syllabus & Supplemental readings	Syllabus & Handouts
Week 2 8/31	Chapter 1: Self-Awareness	
Week 3 9/7	Chapter 2: Self-Disclosure/Trust	
Week 4 9/14	Chapter 3: Goal Setting Chapter 4: Self-Management	
Week 5 9/21	Chapter 5: Diversity Chapter 6: Listening	
Week 6 9/28	Chapter 7: Communicating Effectively	
Week 7 10/5	Chapter 8: Persuasion	
Week 8 10/12	Midterm Exam	1st Personal Reflection Paper due.
Week 9 10/19	Chapter 9: Negotiation/Negotiation exercise	
Week 10 10/26	Chapter 10: Building Teams/Exercise	
Week 11 11/2	Chapter 11: Managing Conflict	
Week 12 11/9	Chapter 13: Facilitating Team Success	
Week 13 11/16	Chapter 14: Making Decisions and Solving Problems	
Week 14 11/23	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	
Week 15 11/30	Chapter 15: Use of Power and Influence	2nd Personal Reflection Paper due.
Week 16 12/7	Final Exam	3rd Personal Reflection Paper due (optional)