

**AMBERTON UNIVERSITY**  
**e-COURSE SYLLABUS**

**BUS4605.E1 Business Acumen**  
**FALL 2023**

**PROFESSOR INFORMATION:**

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**COURSE INFORMATION:**

BUS4605.E1 Business Acumen  
Level: Undergraduate  
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, September 09, 2023  
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, November 16, 2023  
**Student access available to the Student Portal: Saturday, September 09, 2023.**

*Students enrolled in distance learning courses are not assessed any additional fees for security or identity verification.*

**COURSE PREREQUISITES:**

None

**TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED MATERIALS:**

Title: The Business Acumen Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Succeed in the Corporate World  
Author: Steven Haines  
Publisher: Business Acumen Institute  
Year Published: 2019  
Edition: 1<sup>st</sup>  
ISBN: 10: or 13: 9781795148221

Title: Business Essentials Simulation: Coffee Shop Inc.  
Author: Tim Rogmans  
Publisher: Harvard Business Publishing  
Year Published: 2022  
Edition: Product #: FO 0004-HTM-ENG  
Price: \$15 Available at: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1064178>

Amberton University has an agreement with eCampus.com to provide a full-service online bookstore to students. The Amberton University Virtual Bookstore is accessible through the University's website, [www.Amberton.edu](http://www.Amberton.edu). There is also a bookstore link in the Student Portal.

The AU Virtual Bookstore provides an easy to use interface, online buyback of books, and same day shipment of most titles with an average delivery time of 2-3 days depending on the student's location. Textbook options include new, used, rental, and electronic media as available.

Since no books are sold on campus, students should plan accordingly and purchase their books in advance of the first day of class, allowing time for shipping. Be certain you are enrolled in the course before purchasing your book(s). All textbook information (Title, Author, ISBN, etc.) is available in the course syllabi so students can shop competitively. Most textbooks can be purchased from many different textbook vendors. Some textbooks may only be available on the University's Virtual Bookstore. Students should be careful to obtain the exact resource(s) required for the course.

**APA Requirement**

APA (American Psychological Association) style is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences. This resource, revised according to the 7th edition, offers examples for the general format of APA research papers, in-text citations, endnotes/footnotes, and the reference page. For more information, please consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (7th ed.). All coursework at Amberton University will comply with the standards contained in the APA Publication Manual.

**COURSE COMPETENCIES:**

This course will be a prerequisite course for the MBA in General Business and the MBA in Management degrees. The course is designed for those students who have not completed an undergraduate degree in business or those students who want a “refresher course” before starting an MBA. The course will provide a solid basis of business knowledge, strategies, and tactics at a general, introductory level. The overarching goal for this course is to enable the student to understand fundamental business concepts to better prepare them to successfully complete the courses required for the above-named MBA degree programs.

**UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE, THE STUDENT WILL BE COMPETENT IN:**

1. Identifying and evaluating influential literature relevant to business acumen topics
2. Discussing the meaning of business acumen and its importance as a foundation to developing additional business management and leadership skills
3. Synthesizing and applying universal ethical principles to business acumen in modern organizations
4. Understanding the importance of business acumen as it relates to competitive analysis, decision-making, strategy development and implementation, and change management
5. Discussing how business management and leadership operational decision-making creates business value
6. Understanding how to create and build an organization that prioritizes business fundamentals in the decision-making process
7. Analyzing, evaluating, and applying stakeholders’ feedback to prioritize and improve future business endeavors
8. Analyzing, evaluating, and applying business management best practices for effective and informed decision-making in modern organizations
9. Identifying how statistical analysis impacts decision-making, competition, change management, and other strategic decisions.
10. Identifying and applying appropriate business management tools and technology to accomplish strategic operational goals
11. Discussing the importance of leveraging business acumen knowledge to better enable organizations to analyze competition amongst firms and industries
12. Identifying, evaluating, and applying effective methods and techniques for learning, applying, and improving business acumen
13. Understanding the importance of leveraging risk management with business acumen fundamentals
14. Understanding and evaluating business communication strategies for leveraging current and developing communication channels and technology
15. Discussing the future of business acumen concepts and efficient approaches to integrating business management approaches

**COURSE POLICIES:**

1. Read and complete all assignments, papers, and exercises by the scheduled due date. Assignments are due **no later than midnight**, Central Standard Time (time in Dallas, TX) on the published due date.
2. Late Assignments: An assignment submitted after the due date will be assessed a penalty of **5%** for each day or partial day that it is late. Work submitted more than five (5) days after the scheduled due date will **NOT** be accepted without written permission from Dr. Stephenson. There are **no options for extra-credit or make-up work** in this course.
3. Assignments must be submitted through Moodle Learning Management System and Dr. Stephenson must be able to open each assignment in order for it to be considered on time.
4. Assignments will typically be available at one (1) minute after midnight on the first day the assignment is open on Moodle; and will close at one (1) minute (23:59) until midnight on the last day the assignment is open on Moodle.

5. When submitting an assignment as an attachment to an email or an attachment to a Moodle assignment, please include your name, BUS4605.E1, and the assignment number in the subject line of the email as well as on the first page or title page of the assignment. If required, file attachments may be submitted in **Word 2010 or later versions of Word** for this course. **Do NOT submit files in pdf format.**
6. **Plagiarism is strictly forbidden in this class. All written assignments will be submitted to an online review service (Turnitin and/or Grammarly) to evaluate your grammar and to check for plagiarized material. NO more than 15% of your paper can be directly quoted from outside sources OR generated by an AI tool like ChatGPT. I do run a plagiarism check and generative-AI check on each paper. Any assignment exceeding the 15% limit will be given a zero score. Be certain that all of the material that is drawn from a specific reference source is properly cited according to APA 7<sup>th</sup> ed. standards.**
7. **The last day to submit ALL assignments is November 14, 2023.**

### **Student's Responsibilities**

This syllabus contains information, policies, and procedures for a specific course. By enrolling, the student agrees to read, understand, and abide by the policies, rules, regulations, and ethical standards of Amberton University as contained in the current university catalog and schedule of classes.

### ***Attendance Policy:***

Regular and punctual class attendance and engagement is expected at Amberton University. In case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor as soon as possible. If a student intends on withdrawing from a course, it is the student's responsibility to follow the university's policy on formally withdrawing from a course. **Ceasing to attend classes does not constitute an official withdrawal.**

Attendance in a lecture course is defined as punctual arrival to, and engagement in, a full lecture session. Attendance in a distance learning course is defined as active participation in the weekly online class sessions. "Active participation" can be defined as: submitting an academic assignment, taking an exam, engaging in an interactive tutorial, participating in an online discussion forum (or chat session), or initiating (or responding to) a communication with a faculty member about an academic assignment or the subject matter of the course. A student not meeting these requirements may be dropped at the discretion of Amberton University.

### **Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as though it were your own. If you use another person's words, ideas, or information; or if you use material from an outside source – whether a book, magazine, newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, or electronic media – you must acknowledge that source. Plagiarism is a violation of the University's code of student ethical conduct and is one that is taken seriously. Amberton University operates on an honor system; therefore, honesty and integrity are essential characteristics of all who are associated with the institution. All Amberton students are expected to abide by the honor system and maintain academic integrity in all their work. Amberton University and its instructors monitor student work for plagiarism and reserve the right to submit such work to technology-based plagiarism detection services and applications at any time.

Self-plagiarism means reusing work that you have already published or submitted for a class. It can involve:

- Resubmitting an entire paper
- Copying or paraphrasing passages from your previous work

Self-plagiarism misleads your readers by presenting previous work as completely new and original. Students may not submit the same paper in substance in two or more classes without prior written permission of the instructors involved.

Students agree that by taking this course, all required assignments may be subject to submission for a textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism and self-plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in future papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com website.

Turnitin is a writing improvement and plagiarism prevention tool which uses special algorithms, to compare text-based student submissions to the Turnitin database and other online sources. Turnitin produces a detailed **similarity report** that can be customized and viewed by instructors and students.

Turnitin “Draft Coach” is a Google based add-on to Turnitin which supports students in developing high-quality academic writing; and serves as an integrity coach. Draft Coach, helps address errors and improve the quality of student’s writing by highlighting grammar mistakes, identifying incorrectly cited sources, and scanning for similarity across several databases. By providing formative feedback on how to address citation issues, incorrect grammar, and matches with the Turnitin database, Draft Coach provides explanations to help students become more confident writers, capable of producing higher quality work both in academics and in the workplace.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:**

**Moodle Message Contact:** Send a message via Moodle to Dr. Stephenson by September 17<sup>th</sup> to verify your ability to send and receive messages via the Moodle BUS4605.E1 course’s messaging function. Your message should confirm that you have read and understand the course syllabus, course expectations, and Moodle Communications Guide. *To send a message through Moodle, log onto this course in Moodle; click on “Participants” in the left navigation bar; select my name; click on “Send a Message;” type your confirmation message in the box provided; and click “Send Message”.*

This course will provide the student with an overview and framework for understanding general business acumen, as well as an introduction to strategies that support business communications to match operational supply with demand through a given enterprise. The course outline will focus on contemporary and general business management theories and best practices along with concepts from accounting, economics, finance, marketing, business law, and statistical analysis. Students will acquire knowledge of the tools, techniques, and processes needed to effectively employ business management applications such as communications, risk, budgeting, ethics, and business-decision fundamentals. The graded assignments for this course will include: Four (4) Discussion Forums (6% each); a 3-Stage Simulation exercise (45%); and a Final Project (30%). The assignments will have due dates spread throughout the semester. Each Discussion Forum will require that a student posts a well-developed answer to the question(s) posed by Dr. Stephenson for that specific forum – AND a well thought out response to at least TWO other student’s postings. The 3-Stage Business Essentials Simulation exercise will require the student to make decisions regarding launching a business; building the brand; and going international. The Final Research Paper will require the student to prepare a feasibility analysis of a business concept of his/her own choosing (with the prior approval of Dr. Stephenson).

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
<b>Week #1: September 09 - 16</b>	<b>What is Business Acumen?</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapters 1 & 2 <b>Assignment:</b> Expectations Acknowledgement: Introductory Discussion Forum Graded 1 Point	1, 2, 4, 5	September 17
<b>Week #2: September 17 - 23</b>	<b>Teams, Decision-Making, Ethics &amp; Communication</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapters 3 & 2 Introduction to Simulation Exercise <b>Assignment:</b> Week 2 – Discussion Forum #1: Graded 6 Points	2, 3, 6, 14	September 24

<b>Week #3: September 24 – September 30</b>	<b>Organizational Tools, Functions &amp; Risks</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 5 Simulation Pre-brief <b>Assignment:</b> Week 3 – Discussion Forum #2: Graded 6 Points 1 <sup>st</sup> Practice Run on Simulation	8, 10, 13	October 1
<b>Week #4: October 1 - 7</b>	<b>Problem Solving &amp; Decision-Making Using Data</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 6 <b>Assignment:</b> Week 4 – Discussion Forum #3: Graded 6 Points 2 <sup>nd</sup> Practice Run	8, 9, 10, 13	October 8
<b>Week #5: October 8 - 14</b>	<b>Marketing Analysis, Strategy &amp; Innovative Technology</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 7 <b>Assignment:</b> <b>Graded Simulation Run &amp; Reflections Stage 1: 15 points</b>	4, 7, 9, 10, 11	October 15
<b>Week #6: October 15 - 21</b>	<b>Development of Strategy, Risk Management &amp; Communication</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 8 <b>Assignment:</b> Week 6 – Discussion Forum #4: Graded 6 Points 3 <sup>rd</sup> Practice Run <b>Topic Selection for Final Research Report Due: Graded 1 Point</b>	4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14	October 22
<b>Week #7: October 22 - 28</b>	<b>Developing Product Strategy &amp; Market Position</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 9 <b>Assignment:</b> <b>Graded Simulation Run &amp; Reflections Stage 2: 15 points</b>	5, 7, 11	October 29
<b>Week #8: October 29 – November 4</b>	<b>Marketing &amp; Analysis of Competitive Position</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 10 <b>Assignment:</b> <b>Graded Simulation Run &amp; Reflections Stage 3: 15 points</b>	4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14	November 5
<b>Week #9: November 5 - 11</b>	<b>Assessing Business Performance</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 11 <b>Assignment:</b> <b>Prepare Final Research Report</b>	4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11	None
<b>Week #10: November 12 - 14</b>	<b>Your Professional Development</b>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 12 Research for Final Report <b>Assignment:</b> <b>Prepare and</b>	2, 3, 5, 11, 12, 15	November 14

		<b>Submit Final Report: 30 Points</b>		
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### GRADING CRITERIA:

Since the assignments in this course contain written assessments, Dr. Stephenson expects each student to present his/her material with well-written, coherent, properly structured English appropriate for a high level, undergraduate course with reference citations included correctly. The thoughts and material presented should be original, well-developed, and relevant to the specific topic(s) of the assignment. An assignment that is too brief or sparse will typically **NOT** provide an adequate basis for assessing a student's knowledge and research effort on that particular assignment topic. English grammar, spelling, word choice, and usage (APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition compliant) are a part of your grade. **All written assignments will be submitted to an online review service (Turnitin and/or Grammarly) to evaluate your grammar and to check for plagiarized material. NO more than 15% of your paper can be directly quoted from outside sources OR generated by an AI tool like ChatGPT. I do run a plagiarism check and generative-AI check on each paper. Any assignment exceeding the 15% limit will be given a zero score.**

Grading for this course will be as follows:

Discussion Forums (4)	24%
3-Stage Simulation Exercise	45%
Final Research Topic	1%
Final Research Project	30%

### Zoom Chat Sessions

During the semester, **Dr. Stephenson will be available for online Zoom sessions each Thursday evening from 7:45 to 8:20 p.m. CST.** These online Zoom sessions will be an opportunity for students to exchange ideas and ask questions. This time is provided as a resource to students in this course. Participation is optional; but Dr. Stephenson does encourage each student to take advantage of this option for personal interaction with other classmates and the instructor. These Zoom sessions offer an opportunity to gain insight and clarification regarding Dr. Stephenson's expectations – and occasionally, hints that might improve a student's grade. Just sayin'!

### Moodle Discussion Forums

Courses offered on Moodle are also provided with a Discussion Forum area. During this semester, Dr. Stephenson will post a weekly discussion topic question on the Moodle Discussion Forum. During the following week, students are expected to post their **thoughts and responses** regarding the posted topics. These postings will be graded **(24 points during the semester)**; and they do provide an excellent tool for interaction and discussion regarding business-related topics of interest. Each discussion forum will require that a student posts a well-developed answer to the question(s) posed by Dr. Stephenson for that specific forum – **AND** a well thought out response to **at least two other student's postings.**

Undergraduate

90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
Below 60	F

### GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:

A successful distance learning experience requires a flow of communication between instructor and student throughout the session. Instructor comments are considered essential to the learning process. Therefore, each assignment/exam submitted will be reviewed, graded, and returned to the student in a timely manner along with the appropriate commentary. Students should carefully review all comments.

Final grades are processed approximately one week after the last day of the session and may be located in the My Grades section of the online registration portal as well as being emailed to the student's Amberton

University email. Amberton University staff will not release grades over the phone. University instructors will not leave a message with comments or grades in any type of media that is not secure.

For questions regarding grades after the semester has ended, students should use their university email account and contact the instructor at the faculty email address as provided above in *Professor Information* area.

### ***Incomplete Grades***

An "I" (incomplete grade) is given at the discretion of the professor and may be given only when an emergency or illness prevents the student from completing course requirements. Should an "I" be granted, the student has 30 days from the end of the session to complete the conditions of the incomplete. An "I" which is not properly removed within 30 days following the session enrolled will become an "F" grade.

### ***How To Withdraw From a Course***

To be official, the class withdrawal must be in writing and signed by the student requesting the withdrawal; no withdrawal is accepted verbally. Please review the "Schedule of Classes" (online or in-print) for procedures for class changes or withdrawals and the refund policy and schedule.

### **COURSE DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:**

This course is offered as a distance-learning course through the Moodle Learning Platform. Amberton's distance learning courses, called e-Courses, are identical to classroom courses in terms of learning outcomes, competencies, and instructor expectations. A student choosing to take an e-Course must have the following skills and technical capabilities:

1. Access to the Internet
2. General knowledge in:
  - Internet browser settings and configuration
  - e-mail and file attachments
  - Uploading and downloading files
  - Using a word processing package
3. Ability to conduct on-line research

Students who have not mastered these skills should not enroll for this course but should consider enrolling in MIS2110 Computer Concepts and Internet Technologies for instruction in these areas.

### **HOW TO ACCESS YOUR COURSE:**

#### ***Through the Amberton University Student Portal***

Students enrolled in distance learning courses using the Moodle Learning Platform may access the course through the Amberton University Student Portal. The site may be accessed through the University's main page (<http://www.Amberton.edu>) or at <http://apps.Amberton.edu>. After selecting the "Student Portal" link, you will be prompted for a Username and Password.

Use your assigned **username and password** (AUID) as described below to enter the AU Student Portal:

**Username** = your capitalized firstname **initial**+lastname+last 3 digits of your SSN.

\* Use your name exactly as it is listed on the University's records, including any suffixes or hyphenations, such as Jr, Sr, or II, as a part of your username.

For example: James Jones, Jr. SSN: 123-45-6789  
Username: JJonesJr789

**Password** = your Amberton University ID# (AUID) **including the dashes**

For example: 04-999-999

Once your login has been validated, you may select from a variety of menu options, including your individual E-Course, email account, Remote Research, General Tools, all Syllabi, Research Tutorials and Electronic Instructor Folders (FTP).

If you are accessing the Student Portal from a public or shared computer, close the browser completely when finished, or click on the Logout button. For security purposes, no other person should have access to your Username or Password. If you feel your information has been compromised or if you experience technical difficulties, contact the e-course system administrator at: [e-sysop@amberton.edu](mailto:e-sysop@amberton.edu)

If you have lost or do not know your Amberton ID#, please contact the Student Services Office 972/279-6511 or [advisor@Amberton.edu](mailto:advisor@Amberton.edu) for a replacement AUID card. You must know your Amberton ID# to gain access to the course and to send email to your professor.

### ***Through the Amberton University Moodle Website***

Students enrolled in distance learning courses using the Moodle Learning Platform may also access the course by going to: <http://moodle.Amberton.edu>

For those utilizing Moodle for the first time, the **username and password** for the Moodle Learning Platform will be emailed to the student's University email account prior to the start of the course. For those returning to Moodle who do not remember their username and password, click on the link "*Forgotten your username or password*" available on the Moodle log in page (<http://moodle.Amberton.edu>). Otherwise use the same username and password as previous session.

### **Moodle Tutorial:**

Upon successful log in and access to the Moodle learning platform, there is a *Student Moodle Tutorials* course available, to learn about the basics of Moodle. Simply click on the link for the *Student Moodle Tutorials* and read through the various learning topics: Navigating; Communicating; Assignments & Exams; Grades; and Student Resources.

### **COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:**

Students will communicate with faculty through the Moodle Learning Platform or the Amberton University email system.

Each student enrolled is assigned an Amberton email account, which gives the student access to the Amberton email system ([my.Amberton.edu](mailto:my.Amberton.edu)). This email account is provided by Google Apps for Education. Students are encouraged to check their email regularly for University news, notices, and to communicate with instructors.

The student's assigned email address would be `Username@my.Amberton.edu`

Example: `LJones-Smith789@my.Amberton.edu`

The student Username is determined by:

firstname initial+lastname+last 3 digits of student ssn.

For example: Linda Jones-Smith    SSN: 123-45-6789  
Email Address = `LJones-Smith789@my.Amberton.edu`

Students will be prompted for a Username and Password when accessing their email account. Use the Username portion of the email address as the username (Example: `LJones-Smith789`) and your Amberton ID# (including the dashes) as the password.

If you already have a Google Gmail account, you might be prompted to add this account to your current account. Click 'Yes' and you will be logged into your [my.Amberton.edu](mailto:my.Amberton.edu) email account. It will be a separate email account from your personal Gmail account.

If you need assistance with your email account, please visit <https://support.google.com/mail>

**Students are responsible for reviewing the “Communication Guidelines” provided on the individual E-Course for specific instructor requirements.**

Upon completion of a session, all communication and course specific information is removed from the Moodle system. If a student needs to maintain a record of communications or assignments, the student is strongly encouraged to print out or download these items to a disk for their own records.

#### **FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

Assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate assignment Drop Box in the Moodle system. Specific directions and guidelines for submission of assignments are located on-line in the “Communication Guidelines” of the e-course. Due to compatibility issues, Office 2007 files cannot be read by earlier versions of Microsoft Office. Before submitting an exercise file, confirm the file is in the proper format for grading by the instructor.

#### **INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:**

Each session, all Amberton students are provided with the opportunity to evaluate their courses and instructors. The evaluation process is an important one and provides students with an anonymous and confidential way to give meaningful feedback to the University. Summary information and comments are provided to faculty after the close of the session. All information provided is anonymous.

The Instructor/Course Evaluation will be open for completion during week 9 of the session. An evaluation assignment will be placed in week 9 of the Moodle course, along with the instructions on how to complete the evaluation. Prior to week 9, the University will send out an email containing instructions and dates for the evaluation period.

#### **RESEARCH RESOURCES:**

The Library provides access to full-text, and peer reviewed articles, and digital research tools. Students can search Library holdings through the online catalog and databases search engines available on the Library website or browse the physical library space and holdings located at the Garland campus.

Research items not contained in the Amberton Library collection can be located through interlibrary Loan (ILL) or through the TexShare program with the help of the Library staff. Students with questions about available services, resources, or research, may contact the Library via email at [Library@amberton.edu](mailto:Library@amberton.edu).

#### **RESEARCH ACCESS:**

Databases can only be accessed by authorized users, and students at Amberton must enter their Amberton ID credentials-same as Moodle login-to gain access when off-campus. Use an Amberton website, such as the University site ([Amberton.edu](http://Amberton.edu)) or the library site ([Library.amberton.edu](http://Library.amberton.edu)) to find links to databased and digital books. Online resources are available all day, every day.

#### ***Library Live Chat Feature***

Library staff are available to assist students with research problems or questions during Library hours through a live online chat feature, telephone, email, “How-to” videos, or in person. The library telephone is (972-279-6511 ext. 185. You can email questions to [library@amberton.edu](mailto:library@amberton.edu) or visit the library in person on the Garland campus for assistance.