

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus

Business Case Analysis

LABU2040 and LABU2040G

Prerequisite(s): LANG 1403 OR LANG 1404 OR LANG 1003 (prior to 2022-23)

Exclusion(s): LABU 2051, LABU 2052

3 credits

Name of Course Coordinator: Kathy Sin

Email of Course Coordinators: lckathy@ust.hk

If you have any questions, your first point of contact should be your section instructor. Please find the email address on Canvas.

Office Hours of Course Coordinators: Available by appointment only.

Course Description

This course seeks to equip students with persuasive communication skills, both oral and written, through analyzing business cases and presenting solutions to problems identified. It provides students with a solid framework and hands-on practice to communicate persuasively and professionally in business settings. In presenting the case problem, analysis and recommendations, students learn to identify issues, develop and organize key ideas, and eventually to persuade the audience of the validity of the arguments and proposed actions. The course sharpens students' ability to explain and support ideas logically, coherently and cohesively using various techniques, to communicate clearly, concisely and accurately, and in appropriate tone and style. Through a range of learning activities involving reading, discussion, writing and making oral presentations, students also develop critical reading, critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as teamwork and leadership skills. For students who have this course as a program requirement.

Key Topics:

Module 1: Introduction to business case analysis and business presentation skills.

Module 2: Write a recommendation report to a specific audience to solve problems identified in business case 1.

Module 3: Conduct an oral presentation (with Q&A) to a specific audience on recommendations to solve problems in business case 2.

Methods of instruction: interactive learning through group discussion, demo presentations, in-class readings, peer learning, group practice and peer feedback.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Communication and Language Skills

1. Write effectively to persuade a specific audience
 - Adapt the message to the purpose and context of the communication and to the audience's needs;
 - Identify, develop and organize ideas logically, coherently and cohesively;
 - Use clear, concise and accurate language;
 - Adjust style and tone to suit the purpose, context and audience.
2. Give an oral presentation effectively to persuade a specific audience
 - Identify and adapt the message to the purpose, context and audience's needs;
 - Identify, develop and organize ideas logically, coherently and cohesively;
 - Create effective openings and closings;
 - Build rapport, make the message effective, sustain the audience's attention and impact the audience using space, facial expression and eye-contact, gestures, body posture and movement;
 - Create effective visual aids;
 - Handle questions and answer sessions professionally;
 - Use voice, tone and style effectively to enhance the message.

Critical Reading, Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

3. Develop critical reading, critical thinking and problem-solving skills by analyzing a business case.

Knowledge/ Content Related

4. Apply knowledge/ concepts across business disciplines.

Leadership and Teamwork, International Outlook, Vision and Orientation to the Future, and Ethical Standards and Compassion

5. Display teamwork and leadership skills.

6. Manage learning individually and in teams.
7. Use technology in learning.
8. Demonstrate awareness of cultural sensitivity and ethical issues.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve.

Assessment Tasks	Contribution to overall course grade	Due date
Oral presentation 1	20%	Week 5/6
Peer evaluation 1	5%	Week 6
Report writing	30%	Week 8
Oral presentation 2	30%	Week 12/13
Peer evaluation 2	5%	Week 13
Learning portfolio	8%	Week 13
Online Quizzes	2%	Week 4, Week 9

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Task

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
Oral presentation 1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Students engage in persuasive oral presentations that require them to adapt messages to various audiences, organize ideas logically, and utilize effective openings and closings (ILO 2). By analyzing business cases, they develop critical thinking skills to identify problems and propose solutions (ILO 3), while integrating interdisciplinary concepts for a holistic understanding of business challenges (ILO 4). Group presentations foster teamwork and leadership (ILO 5), promoting both self-directed and collaborative learning as students manage their contributions and collaborate effectively (ILO 6). Additionally, they leverage technology to enhance their presentations (ILO 7) and consider cultural differences and ethical

		implications, raising awareness of critical global issues (ILO 8).
Peer evaluation 1	5, 6, 7	Through peer evaluation, students engage in collaborative assessment, fostering teamwork and enhancing leadership skills (ILO 5). This process promotes self-reflection and accountability, allowing students to assess their own performance while learning from peers, thus encouraging self-directed and collaborative learning (ILO 6). Additionally, students leverage digital resources to facilitate feedback, enhancing their learning experience and preparing them for tech-savvy business environments (ILO 7).
Report writing	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8	In writing their reports, students learn to adapt their communication styles to ensure clarity and coherence (ILO 1). They analyze business cases to identify problems and make well-supported recommendations, enhancing their critical thinking and problem-solving skills (ILO 3). This process encourages interdisciplinary knowledge application by integrating concepts from various business disciplines (ILO 4). Students manage their research independently while collaborating with peers for feedback, fostering self-directed and team-oriented learning (ILO 6). They utilize technology for research, writing, and formatting, enhancing their digital skills (ILO 7). Additionally, they consider ethical implications and cultural sensitivity in their recommendations, promoting a well-rounded approach to business decision-making (ILO 8).

Oral presentation 2	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	<p>In their final presentations, students demonstrate effective communication by adapting messages for specific audiences and organizing ideas coherently (ILO 2). Analyzing business cases showcases their critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they evaluate solutions and present well-reasoned recommendations (ILO 3). The presentations encourage interdisciplinary knowledge application, integrating concepts from various business disciplines (ILO 4). Working in groups fosters teamwork and leadership skills, promoting collaboration among team members (ILO 5). Students manage their preparation independently while collaborating with peers for feedback, enhancing self-directed and collaborative learning (ILO 6). They utilize technology and visual aids to enhance their message delivery, showcasing their ability to integrate digital tools into communication (ILO 7). Additionally, the presentations prompt students to consider cultural diversity and ethical implications, raising awareness of these issues in a global context (ILO 8).</p>
Peer evaluation 2	5, 6, 7	<p>Through peer evaluation, students engage in collaborative assessment, providing constructive feedback that fosters teamwork and enhances leadership skills (ILO 5). This process promotes self-reflection and accountability, encouraging students to assess their own performance while learning from their peers, thus supporting both self-directed and collaborative learning (ILO 6). Additionally, they leverage digital resources to facilitate feedback processes, enhancing their learning experience and preparing them for tech-savvy environments in the business world (ILO 7).</p>

Learning portfolio	2, 6, 7	As students compile their portfolios, they reflect on their persuasive presentation skills and incorporate feedback, enhancing their ability to articulate learning experiences (ILO 2). The portfolio promotes self-directed learning by allowing students to assess their progress and set personal goals (ILO 6). Additionally, creating a digital portfolio involves using various technological tools for documentation and presentation, enhancing their ability to leverage technology in learning (ILO 7).
Online Quizzes	3, 4, 6, 7, 8	Quizzes challenge students to analyze concepts and apply critical thinking skills to solve problems, reinforcing their understanding of course material (ILO 3). They encourage interdisciplinary knowledge application by integrating and applying knowledge across different areas (ILO 4). Quizzes promote self-directed learning as students assess their understanding and identify improvement areas (ILO 6). Utilizing online platforms enhances familiarity with digital tools, emphasizing technology's importance in modern education (ILO 7). Additionally, quizzes include scenarios that require consideration of ethical issues and cultural contexts, fostering awareness of these critical aspects in business (ILO 8).

Grading Rubrics

Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided on Canvas. These rubrics clearly outline the criteria used for evaluation. Students can refer to these rubrics to understand how their work will be assessed.

Grade	Short description	Elaboration on subject grading description
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A	Excellent performance	Demonstrating mastery of content and exceptional presentation skills. Two presentations showcase strong communication and analysis; the writing assessment is insightful and well-structured; peer evaluations reflect constructive feedback and collaboration.
B	Good performance	Showing a solid understanding and effective delivery. Presentations are coherent and engaging; writing assessment is clear with minor issues; peer evaluations indicate active participation and helpful feedback.
C	Satisfactory performance	Meeting basic requirements but lacking depth. Presentations are adequate but may lack engagement; writing assessment covers essential points but lacks detail; peer evaluations show some participation but limited constructive feedback.
D	Marginal pass	Demonstrating minimal understanding and effort. Presentations are unclear or poorly organized; writing assessment has significant issues with clarity; peer evaluations show minimal engagement or feedback.
F	Fail	Not meeting course requirements. Presentations are not delivered; writing assessment is missing or off-topic; peer evaluations show no participation or constructive feedback.

Course AI Policy

We encourage students to make use of all the tools available that can help them to communicate more effectively in English. We also expect students to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. There is no penalty for using or not using GenAI. However, GenAI and other tools cannot

be used as a substitute for a student's own work. Students are expected to write their own assessed assignments and to prepare their presentations themselves.

GenAI tools can be very useful for:

- Brainstorming ideas and suggesting sources BUT the information provided may not be accurate or relevant to your assignment.
- Giving suggestions about improving the organization of your writing BUT GenAI tends to suggest very formulaic patterns of writing which may not fit your requirements.
- Giving suggestions about improving your language BUT GenAI may make suggestions for language changes which are not appropriate for the intended context and audience.
- Suggesting simple ways of expressing complex discipline-specific concepts BUT these explanations may be unfamiliar to your audience.
- Providing summaries of long texts BUT important information may be omitted, particularly if the original text is not well-written.

In short, GenAI provides opportunities to enhance your use of English and contains pitfalls which you need to be aware of.

Communication and Feedback

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within ten working days of submission. Feedback on assignments will include strengths and areas for improvement where relevant. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Resubmission Policy

Resubmissions are not accepted, except in exceptional circumstances.

Required Texts and Materials

Course materials and additional resources are provided via Canvas.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.

Plagiarism

In CLE assignments, students should not copy from others nor submit the same work for multiple courses. Source materials must be explicitly acknowledged.

Assignments with evidence of plagiarism may score a zero and be followed up with your department's Dean. To demonstrate academic integrity and avoid plagiarism, you are expected to:

- paraphrase, summarize, reference and synthesize ideas from sources
- refrain from copying expressions and ideas directly from any source (e.g. from another student, or from a video, or from an article, etc.) without proper acknowledgement