

University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
Bryan School of Business and Economics  
Department of Business Administration

**BUS 450/ENT 450**  
**Directed Business Practice**  
**Spring 2011**

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Anytime I am in my office you may call or stop by to ask questions, etc. I ask that you make appointments for longer discussions. I try to be in my office during office hours; however, because of committee meetings and other University business, I cannot always be there. You are welcome to leave messages on my voice mail, my door, or in my mailbox located in the Department Office, Bryan 366.

**Dr. McMillian**  
**SYLLABUS/ASSIGNMENT PACKAGE**  
**BUS 450/ENT 450 – DIRECTED BUSINESS PRACTICE**  
**Spring, 2011**

Assignments and expectations are announced in this document to ensure that each student receives maximum benefit from this experience. Each assignment, as presented, is a minimum requirement. However, there are opportunities for each assignment to be embellished so that each submission contains specificity, in-depth information, and examples to illustrate. Companion documents are the Syllabus for BUS 450 (referred to as the Syllabus or S) and the Guidelines for Preparing Reports for BUS 450 (referred to as the Guidelines or G).

***The BUS 450 Course Essentials***

The Directed Business Practice course culminates with the attainment of a significant number of hours of employment and/or observation in an approved business establishment (for a spring term, the number of hours will approach 100). Each student will receive three semester credits upon successful completion of the total experience, including completed assignments and the workplace experience - this is a non-traditional effort in academic learning. The purpose of the directed business practice is to both extend and refine one's business knowledge.

The initial charge of this course, in regard to your work experience, is to perform in an exemplary manner. The second charge of this course is to take advantage of this experience to the extent that it can provide the platform for obtaining valuable knowledge. The third charge is to place the knowledge gleaned from this experience in a useful context so that it can be used in your current and/or future employment where your accumulated knowledge will be tested by new experiences. These experiences will add value to your area of degree concentration.

***Insight***

For each report (weekly reports as well as the Business Report), you are required to provide Insight. The Insight should address the firm and the manner in which the firm is managed. The term, insight, as used in this course, implies that one has gone beyond the ordinary and the superficial. Insight is the act of seeing into a situation (penetration). Penetration implies a searching mind that goes beyond what is obvious. A synonym for insight is discernment. Discernment is skill in discriminating and reveals an understanding of the situation. There are three key elements that are required for reporting your insight:

1. make a recommendation for change,

2. offer a rationale for each recommendation, and
3. provide an example to illustrate how the recommendation will be implemented. (See the Guidelines document for more comment on these three components.)

Create an Insight section at the end of each report – no exceptions. It is unacceptable to not have a recommendation for each report. When presenting the recommendation as part of the Insight, underline the recommendation sentence, not a paragraph. Do not offer recommendations that are merely repeating what was previously mentioned in the report or are vague, uninspired, unoriginal, and imitative. Also, do not offer recommendations that are suggestions, with little impact, such as “continue the plan,” “do not change the operation,” “keep up the good work,” or “training is recommended.” And, certainly, do not state that there is no recommendation to be presented. Do not report information in this section that was previously reported in the same report. Providing a recommendation (as well as other insightful comments) is a chance to impress the reader of the report. Go beyond what is obvious and superficial. Be clear in what is recommended and give equal clarity to the rationale for the recommendation as well as the example. (See Guidelines for a discussion of the three components of the Insight section.)

### ***Keep in Touch***

Establish communication. You will be expected to provide regular communication to me by adhering to a consistent and regular schedule of reporting. Submission of your reports or inquiries can be the subject of these communications. Do not let time become a negative factor because you are not sure of something and have neglected to communicate your concern to me. Avoid the need for “last-minute” or “last-day” explanations. See the Syllabus for reporting dates.

All reports should be submitted prior to midnight on the date the report is due. There is one assignment (the employer’s evaluation of the student) that can be either hand-delivered or mailed (USPS) to the office of the Department of Business Administration (Room 366); if hand-delivered, it must be consistent with the departmental office hours for the date the assignment is due (call 336.334.5691 to confirm the office hours for a specific day). Documents sent by the U.S. Postal Service must be received at the departmental office on the date due – advance preparation is needed for this option.

Keep backup files containing electronic copies and, where appropriate, photocopies of all reports and forms; retain the files until you have received your course grade and you have no questions or comments regarding the course grade.

## ***Nature of the Assignments***

The weekly reports have a common set of components, but the student is given the latitude to decide on the event to be topic for each weekly report. Topics selected can vary from demographic information to company strategy. The general nature of the weekly assignment should cause the student to probe for information, synthesize it, analyze it, and, ultimately, recommend changes. Should you be confronted with a problem, it will always be presumed that you will take the initiative in regard to any inquiry and that you will have attempted to address the problem whether it is terminology or the act of completing the assignment. For any term used for which you are in doubt as to the meaning, refer to a dictionary (see Guidelines for an e-dictionary Web address) and/or conduct an Internet search prior to contacting Dr. McMillian for a possible explanation.

There are five key parts to be included in each of the five weekly reports:

1. The number and nature of the hours worked during the report period. (For the first report, indicate the number of hours worked for the firm prior to the first week of the spring term.) Was the work repetitive? Did you volunteer for a new assignment?
2. What career possibilities can be addressed by your present position? How can you get in a position to advance with this company or in the future?
3. The knowledge learned or a specific aspect learned. (What did you learn on your own this week? What was most interesting? What was most challenging? What did you learn about your strengths and areas needing improvement? What did you learn from a coworker and from a person superior in rank?)
4. What observations did you make of positive behaviors that can be adapted?
5. Insight – Suggested workplace improvement in the form of a recommendation accompanied with a rationale, and an example of the recommendation being enacted. A summary statement (optional) can be added to the section

*The totality of each report should be comprised of complete sentences that are coherent, have clarity, and are correctly worded. In short, the student is to exhibit “control” over the subject matter so that the reader is able to understand the message upon the first reading with no interpretation needed.*

## ***Contact Information***

The departmental office number for the Department of Business Administration is Room 366, Bryan Building. The departmental office phone number is 336-334-5691. The departmental Fax number is

336-334-5580 (when sending a Fax to me, put my name as the receiver on the first page (fax cover page) of the Fax and be sure to the sender). The mailing address is Department of Business Administration, Bryan School of Business and Economics, UNCG, POB 26165, Greensboro, NC 27402-6165.

### ***Assignments***

Note: If your supervisor (or his/her designee) has a question about the course or the course assignments, first contact Dr. McMillian.

*Below are suggested activities on which you might base your report (applicable to component #3 in the weekly report).*

1. The workplace layout of your organization and indicate areas needing improvement (e.g., efficiency and convenience). Comment on the layout of the workplace including all relevant details of where work takes place and identify the functions performed. In your discussion of the layout, place emphasis on the reasons behind the layout rather than on the preciseness of a description of the layout. Comment on any pertinent information you acquired from the manager, owner, supervisor, etc.
2. Discuss the firm's organization chart – the line and staff relationships as well as the titles of the various personnel involved in your organization. Provide a brief description of each position. (What is an organizational chart? Do an Internet search. Here are several prompts: "A diagram representative of the hierarchy of an organization's personnel" and "A graphic representation of the organization, positions, and reporting relationships of a company.")
3. Discuss a policy bulletin from the organization (or obtain the information through an interview) and interpret it. Include a description of policies of interest to you such as wage plans, hospitalization, promotion, retirement, professional development, and vacation.
4. Cite problems/obstacles which prevent the efficient operation of the organization and then provide possible solutions that will resolve the problems. Comment on solutions that are being (or have been) implemented.
5. Depict the general image of the organization that is projected upon first entering the building as well as the impressions experienced thereafter. Comment on items such as those listed below:

- ❖ The physical aspects of the firm. (How do they reflect the character of the organization?)
  - ❖ The attractiveness of the workplace area as seen by the patrons/clients/customers (or other appropriate term).
  - ❖ The “style” of the overall appearance of the company and its comparison to companies/organizations located adjacent to your organization.
  - ❖ The type of personnel employed in the organization.
6. Interview an employee whose job is one in which you have an interest (an aspiration). Whomever you interview, the position of the interviewee should be a consideration in your career plans. You could also interview the employee’s supervisor to obtain the supervisor’s perspective of the employee’s job
  7. Portray three human-relation problems in your organization involving one or more of the following: managers (top-level personnel), supervisors, employees, or clients/patrons/customers. Propose possible solutions. Note: include MI. The MI is separate from your possible solutions requested on lines two and three of this assignment.
  8. Describe effective and/or ineffective acts of employees of the firm. Comment on how one can improve on the ineffective acts.
  9. Identify problems/obstacles in your organization that might be solved, or alleviated, through research. Describe the problems/obstacles and suggest the approach to the conduct of the research (e.g. survey or observation) as well as possible solutions.
  10. Make a record of entries for a few days – things that you have casually observed around you as you performed your job (not your actions but those of others). The unbiased entries cite actions that you have observed. What are the themes (subjects) of what you observed (e.g., planning, accuracy, teamwork)? Are these themes positive, negative, or both? What do you propose that the firm’s owner (management team, etc.) could to address each theme and deal with the negatives and expand on the positives?

### ***Employer’s Evaluation of the Student***

### ***Required End-Of-Course Report***

The Business Report will deal with the conduct of your firm (the following are two definitions of conduct: “The act of directing or controlling...” and “To direct the course of; manage, or control.”)

In other words, how does your company direct itself – how does it operate? In creating this paper, you will need to plan for a range of 10 to 15 pages. In addition to the body of the report you may include exhibits if that is feasible. To some students, this will be the largest number of pages ever written and assembled for a report in a course. The length is mentioned to give you a perspective. In the past, business reports submitted in a high-quality category were in that range. It seems it takes that range of pages in order to adequately deal with the assignment.

*Following are some suggestions for sections of your report to get your creative juices flowing:*

- ❖ Promotion (in its broadest sense) to include advertising, public relations, and display/visual merchandising
- ❖ Sales
- ❖ Inventory
- ❖ Control/Accounting
- ❖ Purchasing
- ❖ Operations
- ❖ Distribution
- ❖ Legal Affairs
- ❖ Human Resources

In preparing this report, you might want to consult a style manual or a text on preparing a paper with the necessary components such as a table of contents and appendices. You are to aid the reader by including at least the followings items: a title page, a table of contents (showing both the organization of the report and the page references for the topics), the body of the report (including an Insight section), and exhibits (optional).

### ***Online Evaluation of the Course***

### ***Final Comments***

This document (Assignment Package) has presented the totality of the course work. There are no required readings, texts, or tests in this course. Your worksite experience is the basis on which the assignments are to be completed. I look forward to reading your submissions and getting to know you. Ask questions when in doubt.

***You must pay attention to the details of the course materials in order to submit a high-quality report. I look forward to this experience. Let us have fun!***