

The Premier Life Skills University

Master of Arts Communication & Business Leadership

STUDENT HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026



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Dear Graduate Student,

Congratulations on taking the next step in your academic career. We are pleased that you believe the Master's of Arts in Communication and Business Leadership is that next step. We believe that this program will provide you with the development of "power skills" that are valued by the workforce and will set you apart in your future career.

This graduate program was envisioned to train graduate students how to effectively work in complex, multidisciplinary environments. Regardless of undergraduate degree, this program focuses on building "power skills" that are essential for every organization and industry sector. We are confident that if you apply yourself to your studies you will graduate with markedly improved "power skills".

We know that the decision to choose a graduate program is personal and based on your experiences and future aspirations. The purpose of this program is to help you realize that vision through fostering the development of skills necessary for navigating organizations. You have the technical understanding and knowledge from your undergraduate degree, this graduate program provides you with the fuel to succeed in multiple organizations.

As you pursue your degree, take advantage of the opportunities that are available to you at High Point University. Interact with your faculty and fellow graduate students and engage in the campus and local communities. We look forward to partnering with you on this exciting next stop on your academic journey!

Being a graduate student requires more personal responsibility, intrinsic motivation and problem solving than your undergraduate degree. You have to make the choice to succeed in graduate school! Your faculty are here to guide your learning, but don't take on the role of advisor or success coach that you may have experienced in undergrad, that responsibility now belongs to you!

We are confident that you will succeed, if you choose to, in your graduate studies!

With warmest wishes,

Tim Koba, PhD



MA in Communication and Business Leadership IMPORTANT CONTACTS

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Tim Koba, Chair

tkoba@highpoint.edu (336)841-2972

Bob Stec, Co-Director

rstec@highpoint.edu

Marisa Ritter, Capstone Director

mritter1@highpoint.edu

GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

Bronwen Gainsford, Graduate Recruiter

bgainsfo@highpoint.edu (336)841-9000

Jodi Moser, Director, Graduate Operations

jmoser@highpoint.edu (336)841-9310

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

Megan Inch, Senior Director

minch@highpoint.edu (336)841-9166



MA-CBL: THE FUEL FOR YOUR SUCCESS

VISION

We build the next generation of future focused leaders. Leaders who **connect, engage, inspire**, and **create** value for themselves and their organizations.

MISSION

Design and deliver a curriculum and learning environment that level up the four necessary "power skills" of communication, leadership, teamwork, and critical thinking necessary to excel in tomorrow's dynamic workplace.

CORE VALUES

Personal accountability, adaptability, curiosity, collaboration, active listening, resilience, and problem solving

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Undergraduate students from all disciplines that desire to enhance their technical skills with superior communication and leadership skills

VALUE PROPOSITION

For motivated students, MA-CBL provides the best total learning environment for developing superior communication and leadership skills by delivering an experiential and application-based approach to 4 "power skills" (communication, leadership, teamwork, critical thinking). These skills are consistently ranked as being important to employers and found to be lacking in recent graduates. The focus of the MA-CBL program is to train graduate students, regardless of undergraduate degree, to succeed in today's job market through focused learning surrounding these "power skills".



The coursework is built around four "power skills" of communication, leadership, teamwork and critical thinking. This is accomplished through personal and organizational leadership development, the ability to craft thoughtful and strategic communication messages to manage relationships, organizations and brands, and being able to negotiate for mutual benefit. Coursework also entails critical thinking and synthesis of information to solve problems, using available data to improve decisions by weighing multiple options, and collaborating with people from different backgrounds for team success.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Following their study in the MA-CBL, students will be expected to demonstrate these skills:

Communication

- Graduate students will be able to create and deliver well-structured documents and
 presentations that effectively demonstrate analytical thinking, and adhere to industry
 standards and expectations to address organizational needs and support business
 objectives.
- 2. Graduate students will be able to craft presentations specific to a target audience, using industry accepted standards for design and delivery that effectively communicate key information.

Leadership

3. Graduate students will be able to articulate vision and goals clearly to influence others to achieve desired outcomes and build strong professional relationships with stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds.

Teamwork

4. Graduate students will actively participate in and facilitate collaborative problem-solving processes and manage group dynamics to develop innovative solutions to pursue common goals.

Critical Thinking

5. Graduate students will be able to analyze complex situations, evaluate and align communication strategies with business objectives to enhance organizational performance, support strategic goals, while considering broader impact on the organization and stakeholders.



Professionalism

6. Graduate students will be adequately prepared to pursue their future career through the creation of effective cover letters, resumes, and portfolio projects that demonstrate competence.

NACE Self-Assessment of students

7. Graduate students will demonstrate competence across the five areas of Communication, leadership, teamwork, critical thinking and professionalism.



The curriculum for MA-CBL is structured around these four "power skills." They are present in the content of all core and elective classes. This approach builds an interdependency between all courses and serves to maintain emphasis on development of these "power skills".

Curriculum Starting in Summer 2025

- 1. 5 Core classes
- 2. 1 Capstone class
- 3. 4 Elective classes
- 4. 30 total credit hours

PROGRAM OF STUDY

		Semester		Credits
	Summer	Fall	Spring	
Required Courses				18
CBL 5000: Strategic Message Design				3
CBL 5020: Organizational Behavior				3
CBL 5100: Data and Decision Making				3
CBL 5200: Persuasion and				3
Negotiation				
CBL 5220: Leadership				3
CBL 6010: Capstone				3
Elective Courses				12
Elective 1				3
Elective 2				3
Elective 3				3
Elective 4				3
Total Credits for Degree				30

To graduate in one calendar year, you must take 6 credits in summer, 12 in fall, and 12 in spring



MA in Communication and Business Leadership PROGRAM OF STUDY EXAMPLE: 1 YEAR COMPLETION

		Semester		Credits
	Summer	Fall	Spring	
Required Courses				18
CBL 5000: Strategic Message Design	X			
CBL 5020: Organizational Behavior		X		
CBL 5100: Data and Decision Making		X		
CBL 5200: Persuasion and			X	
Negotiation				
CBL 5220: Leadership	X			
CBL 6010: Capstone			X	
Elective Courses				12
Elective 1		X		
Elective 2		X		
Elective 3			X	
Elective 4			X	
Total Credits in Semester	6	12	12	30

NOTES

The maximum number of credits a student can take in the summer is 6.

The maximum number of credits a student can take in the spring or fall is 12.



MA in Communication and Business Leadership MA-CBL COURSE MAP

Power Skills	Communication	Teamwork	Leadership	Critical Thinking
Drive ability			-	
to	Connect	Engage	Inspire	Create
Create value by	Build trust and relationships	Maximize human capital	Pursue common vision	Solve problems and seize opportunities
Core Courses	Strategic Message Design; Persuasion	Organizational Behavior	Leadership	Data & Decision Making
			Storytelling;	AI Media/Marketing; Strategic
Elective	Storytelling;	Interdisciplinary	Change	Mindset;
Courses	Crisis	Teams;	Management;	Consumer
	Communication;	Corporate	Communication	Insights; Brand
	Super	Culture; Sales	& Global	Management;
	Communicators	& Marketing	Leadership	Design Thinking
Summative				
Course	Capstone	Capstone	Capstone	Capstone

ELECTIVES

There are 14 total elective classes that can be offered to enhance the "power skill" of interest for each student. Based on the background and future aspirations, students can choose the four electives that best fit their needs.

CAPSTONE

For students starting in the Summer of 2025, in the spring of 2026 (their last semester), students will take a comprehensive three credit hour Capstone Course that challenges students to use the case study method to solve complex problems involving multiple stakeholders, perspectives and competing priorities with limited resources. Content will cover how to use a case study method, how to prepare for a case submission, how to identify and support decision making criteria, and how to effectively communicate a solution in written and oral presentation formats.



Admission is on a rolling basis and the application for admission can be found at: https://graduate.highpoint.edu/apply/

Students can start their graduate degree in summer, fall or spring. Summer session is a shortened 8-weeks with many courses offered online.

The Norcross Graduate School encourages students who wish to start in summer to apply by the end of January in order to receive guaranteed housing on campus. Information regarding graduate housing can be found at:

Graduate Housing Selection Guide | Residence Life | High Point University

APPLICATION DEADLINES

March 31: Summer start

June 30: Fall start

November 15: Spring start

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Earned Undergraduate degree from an accredited institution with a preferred cumulative GPA of 3.0

Two positive faculty recommendations, one has to be from student's undergraduate major.

Personal essay

No disciplinary reports/concerns

CONDITIONAL REVIEW FOR ADMISSION

For students who do not meet the admissions criteria, conditional reviews are held for additional assessment.

Earned Undergraduate degree from an accredited institution with a cumulative undergraduate GPA 2.75-2.99 with upward trend in past four semesters above the 3.0 GPA threshold.

And/Or

Earned Undergraduate degree from an accredited institution with cumulative GPA of 3.0 but do not have two satisfactory faculty recommendations.



And/Or

Earned Undergraduate degree from an accredited institution with cumulative GPA of 3.0 but having a disciplinary report/concern.

For any of these situations, the following process will apply:

- Three positive recommendations by faculty endorsing enrollment in CBL, with at least one coming from student's undergraduate major.
- Personal Essay addressing the failure to meet the threshold and outlining a strategy for future success.
- Interview with Director, Bob Stec, clearly articulating the case for admission and approval from Graduate Admissions Committee.

Once conditionally admitted, the student has to achieve a 3.0 in all classes. Failure to achieve a 3.0 in the first semester will result in disciplinary probation in the program. At the discretion of the Graduate Admissions Committee, a reduced courseload may be recommended to assist students in being successful in Graduate School.

ADMISSIONS APPEAL

If your application is denied, you may appeal the admissions decision by completing the form found on their website https://graduate.highpoint.edu/register/appeal.

This appeal will be reviewed by the admissions committee, the Chair of the Program, and the Dean of the School of Communication, if necessary. Final admissions decision reside with the Chair of the Program, and the Dean.

REGISTRATION

Registration starts upon completion of undergraduate degree.

The graduate registrar (Jodi Moser) will email you information about the classes and the registration process. Registration is open to all eligible students at the same time.

Online classes are reserved for online students. After they have registered, on-campus students can request remaining seats

Online practicums are open to all students.

TIME TO DEGREE

Coursework can be completed in one calendar year, however the pace is up to the student. A full-time graduate student is considered 6 credit hours per semester. The course template can help with planning your progress. Students can start the CBL in Summer, Fall or Spring semester.



Many summer classes are online in 8 weeks, so it may be better for students to start in Fall and complete their degree the following summer. The maximum credits that can be taken per session are:

6 in summer

12 in Fall

12 in Spring

As such, the CBL can potentially be completed in one year. However, any deviation from the credit hours per semester will change the timeline to completion. The CBL Tuition Grant is in effect for two years from the date of the first semester enrolled.

RE-APPLYING

Declined admission to the MA-CBL does not disqualify someone from future applications.

To strengthen an application, the prospective applicant can work for at least 9 months on a full-time basis and complete another application. In addition to the application, two letters of recommendation from their employer attesting to their competency and how the program will help the candidate become a better employee are required.

Interview with Director, Bob Stec, clearly articulating the case for admission and approval from Graduate Admissions Committee.

GRADUATION

Must have a 3.0 cumulative GPA and be in good academic standing to graduate with an MA-CBL degree. Refer to the Graduate Bulletin for additional requirements.

In order to walk for graduation, a student cannot have more than two courses remaining to complete.

WITHDRAW FROM PROGRAM

Students who wish to withdraw from the program for a period of time may complete a reactivation application if they return within one year. Once started, a graduate degree must be completed within five years. In order to remain eligible for the CBL grant, the program must be completed within two years. A student may take longer than two years (up to five) to complete the program, but the grant will only apply toward the first two years.

To officially withdraw, a student must file an official Norcross Graduate School Withdrawal Form with the Director of Graduate Operations. Failure to do so before the first day of classes will result in a student being responsible for whatever financial or academic repercussions result from being continued registration in courses. Anyone wishing to return to the university after a



withdraw, dismissal or leave, should initiate the return process through the Graduate Admissions office. For a link to the online readmission form, contact GradAdmit@highpoint.edu at least 8 weeks prior to the term in which they intend to return.

Once the semester officially begins, a student who withdraws will be charged according to the University Refund Schedule.

Students are able to withdraw from a class by the drop with a "W" date for that semester. A student may withdraw from a class during the drop/add period without penalty, however a course dropped after that period will result in grant funds used for full tuition paid for the class. Taking a subsequent class will result in a higher tuition fee to complete the degree. If a student chooses to drop a course after the drop/add date, they may do so with instructor permission and earn a WP or WF.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The technical standards outline the core requirements for success in the MA-CBL program. These standards are the minimum requirements that are deemed necessary for students based on knowledge, skills and competencies. Students must meet the technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations.

To be enrolled or maintain enrollment in the MA-CBL program, the student must demonstrate:

- The mental capacity to synthesize, integrate and assimilate information to create effective solutions to pressing problems.
- The ability to communicate effectively to multiple audiences through multiple channels.
- The capacity to maintain composure and continue to function well in periods of high stress
- Affective skills and appropriate demeanor and rapport that relate to professional education and workplace effectiveness.
- The ability to collaborate with others from different backgrounds and different beliefs.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

It is High Point University's policy to ensure that no qualified student with a disability is denied the benefits of, excluded from participation, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in any University program or activity. In response to a request made by a qualified student with a documented disability, the University will arrange, at no cost to the student, for the provision of reasonable academic and programmatic accommodations and supports while upholding the academic and technical standards of the MA-CBL Program.

Accommodations are determined by the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) to be necessary to afford the student with the opportunity for full participation in University



programs. If any student needs assistance with regards to any disability, the student must contact OARS.

Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS)

4th Floor, Smith Library

Phone (336) 841-9026

Fax (336) 841-6324

Email OARS@highpoint.edu

www.highpoint.edu/oars

PROGRAM TUITION AND FEES

TUITION & FEES	COST
On-Campus	
Tuition	\$1465 per credit
Fees	\$150 per credit
HPU Grant eligible-offered	
only to HPU graduates	100% tuition grant
	Student responsibility in addition
HPU Housing and Meal	to applicable fees

HPU Grant eligible-offered	
only to HPU graduates	50% tuition grant
Off-Campus (No HPU assigned	
housing)	
Tuition	\$1465 per credit
Fees	\$75 per credit
	Student responsibility 50% tuition
Online/Commuter	and applicable fees

CBL TUITION GRANT

As long as a student meets the admission standards and lives on campus and pays for HPU assigned housing with a meal plan, the program is tuition free. Students would be responsible for selecting housing tier, paying for room, and residential meal plan, and program fees.



The tuition grant remains active for two years, so students can attend either full or part time to complete the program. Students who take longer to complete the program will be required to pay tuition after the two years have expired.

Dropping a class or changing a class during the first week does not result in a grant penalty.

Withdrawing from a class after the drop/add period will result in a grant penalty and the student having to take a replacement class.

The grant covers 30 credit hours of academic study it takes to complete the program. For courses that are retaken, or taken outside the MA-CBL curriculum, the grant does not cover those tuition charges.

GENERAL REMINDERS

If the student is living on campus during the semester, meaning they are paying for room and board charges and associated fees, the CBL grant will cover the tuition charges for that semester at 100%.

If the student is NOT living on campus during the semester and/or not paying room and board, the student will be responsible for 50% of the tuition and associated fees.

A student can live on campus and only be eligible for 50% coverage due to student worker sponsorship, the VISTA program, etc which may sponsor certain room or board charges.

During the Summer semester, if a student is only registered for Summer Session I housing/dining and not both Summer Session I (ex. June 3 – June 28, 2024) & Summer Session II (ex. July 1 – July 26, 2024), the student will only qualify for 50% of tuition grant coverage.

Students who are not living on campus, but still attend on-campus classes can opt into a meal plan (Fall/Spring).

The grant the student will receive goes towards the cost of tuition only. The student will be responsible for paying room and board charges, as well as other applicable fees.

The tuition grant covers the first 30 credits that it takes to complete the program. After all 30 credits have been utilized for the tuition grant, students will have to pay out-of-pocket for any other courses and/or fees that may arise.



Students are expected to follow the Codes of Conduct as outlined in the Graduate Bulletin.

Students will uphold the Code of Student Responsibilities as outlined here: https://www.highpoint.edu/studentconduct/code-of-conduct/. This code presupposes that there will be civility and respect for others within the university. The MA-CBL program also extends this expectation of civility and respect to apply to digital platforms.

As the document of authority for all students, the Bulletin is your guide to the departments, programs, policies, and courses at HPU.

Graduate School Policies: https://www.highpoint.edu/graduate/bulletins/

Nido R. Qubein School of Communication Policies, Practices, and Expectations:

https://www.highpoint.edu/communication/files/ngsc syllabus policies.pdf

University Honor Code: https://www.highpoint.edu/community-standards/university-honor-code/

Students are expected to follow these guidelines.

VIOLATIONS

For Honor Code violations, the professor and student will follow the University procedures outlined here:

https://www.highpoint.edu/community-standards/adjudication-of-honor-code-violations/

For Honor Code, or conduct appeals, the student will follow the University procedures outlined here: https://www.highpoint.edu/community-standards/appeals-process/

Graduate students are held to a higher standard than undergraduate students and are expected to exemplify the values of the program, the university, and professionals. As a result of these elevated expectations, violations to the Honor Code may result in harsher penalties and dismissal from the program.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance plays an essential role in learning and is important not only for your learning but also for our ability to build a community, your presence in class matters. The expectation in the MACBL program is the same as the professional work environment, your attendance is required in every class meeting. Just like the professional world, we recognize that there are unavoidable circumstances that sometimes make it impossible for you to attend class, so each instructor has



indicated the number of class sessions that can be missed before you are at risk of failing the course or your participation grade is reduced. There is no utilization of Starfish in Graduate School for attendance, so it is your responsibility to attend and communicate with your instructor.

If you will not be in class for any reason, it is your responsibility to inform your instructor in advance via email, the same as it will be when you are in a professional environment. Providing an attendance waiver is at the discretion of the instructor, but some legitimate reasons to miss class include:

- Injury, illness or other infirmary that restricts your ability to attend class.
- Family emergency where your attendance is required.
- Travel for school sponsored events.
- Observance of religious holidays.

Note that the instructor may ask for documentation related to your request for an absence and failure to comply, or presenting inaccurate information may result in your being dropped from, or failing, the class.

There is an arrive late/leave early policy. Each time you are more than 10 minutes late, you will be counted as absent. Also, if you leave early without discussing it with your instructor, you will be counted as absent. You are responsible for all material covered on the days you weren't in attendance. The expectation in the work environment is that you are on time and finish the day, so the expectation in the MA-CBL is the same.

If an individual instructor has a different policy in their syllabus, that syllabus will be upheld. It is the responsibility of the student to abide by the policies in each class.

For longer term request for absences, a formal request should be made to the program chair, Dr. Tim Koba. Once a request is made, he will gather information related to classes, instructors and determine if an alternative means of attendance and participation (online access, short-term remote learning, etc.) is a feasible option. Requesting a change does not guarantee that it will be feasible. Some legitimate reasons to request a change in class attendance include:

- Injury, illness or infirmary that will result in a long recovery period. Some examples include long-term illnesses, surgery, etc.
- Family emergencies, where your attendance is required.



PARTICIPATION

Participation is distinct from attendance and is also an essential part of courses in the school of communication. In-class discussions, participation in class activities, etc. can be factored into a participation grade at the discretion of the instructor. For any graded participation as a result of attendance, the instructor must include those points on the syllabus and state what participation means in the context of that class.

Team and group assignments are utilized extensively in the MA-CBL program and it the responsibility of the group to delineate tasks and responsibilities according to the strengths of the members. Some professors may require a contract to outline contributions, but students are encouraged to create their own contract, as well.

GROUP/TEAM GRIEVANCE

For concerns regarding group collaboration and cooperation, the members of the group should attempt to resolve it through this process:

- First, attempt to resolve any disputes internally amongst the members. If this is not successful;
- Second, email all group members and the professor outlining the challenge/issues the group is facing to make the instructor aware. If this is not successful;
- Third, the group will request to meet with the professor and hold a mediation session to discuss the challenges/issues and determine a resolution on a case-by-case basis. If there are issues that are not able to be resolved;
- Fourth, the instructor will contact directors, Dr. Koba and Professor Stec, and request an intervention. The members, and instructor, will then discuss a resolution. The decision of the directors is final.

Every effort should be made by the group members to exhibit the leadership and concepts that are integral to the understanding of the content of this degree at all times. Grades may be either individual, or team based, based on the policy outlined by the instructor in the syllabus.



PROFESSIONALISM

A key mission of the NQSC is to prepare students for their eventual workplace experiences. The expectation in the MA-CBL that you will abide by the standards expected of your chosen profession. This means that you will:

- Behave in an ethical manner;
- Familiarize yourself with, and abide by the regulations that govern this institution in general, and which govern your position as a student in the School of Communication;
- Take responsibility for your own actions;
- Work to the highest level of competence;
- Treat all those with whom you interact in a collegial, respectful, and professional manner;
- Familiarize yourself with and abide by the regulations that govern each course you take, as detailed in the course syllabus.
- Be proactive in your communication with the instructor.

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

The MA-CBL program follows APA formatting for all submissions, unless otherwise indicated by faculty. Submissions are to be made in word or pdf in APA style following the assignment instructions. As a graduate program, the utilization of external sources is vital, so special emphasis is placed upon appropriate, and accurate, references and in-text citations in APA format. The failure to cite work appropriately is a type of plagiarism that is a violation of the Honor Code. This is also a vital skill for the professional world, as developing ideas and opinions based on availability of quality information and previous research is an expectation and a key aspect of the "power skills". Failure to submit in the appropriate format, or without appropriate references, can result in a zero for that assignment.

Resources for APA format can be found through the HPU Library https://guides.highpoint.edu/apa and from Purdue OWL https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/ge neral format.html

Appointments can also be made in Smith Library for assistance with appropriate format.



All assignment submissions are to be in .word, .pdf, .ppt format when uploaded to Blackboard, unless expressly indicated otherwise by the instructor. Assignments that are not submitted in the correct format may not be accepted for credit.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY

The use of Artificial Intelligence, such as ChatGPT, is becoming increasingly prominent in educational and professional settings. The policy of the MA-CBL program is that students are allowed to use AI, with instructor permission. Students should be aware that copying and pasting content is considered plagiarism. Artificial Intelligence technology should be used to assist your work, not be a replacement for it. Students are responsible for what they submit and should edit the information appropriately by ensuring accuracy, adding citations, making sure that grammar and spelling are correct, etc.

When submitting an assignment that was assisted with the use of technology, the student must cite the use following APA guidelines found at https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt

An individual instructor may adopt a different AI policy specific to their class and clearly outline this in the course syllabus. For courses that have a policy that differs from the MA-CBL policy, the individual course policy will take precedent.

It is the responsibility of the student to abide by the policies for each class.

LATE WORK POLICY

As a graduate program dedicated to preparing students for future career success, the policy of the MA-CBL is that **late submissions are not accepted for credit**. It is the responsibility of the student to exemplify the core values of the program and to plan appropriately for all assignments.

An individual instructor may adopt a different late policy specific to their class and clearly outline this in the course syllabus. For courses that have a policy that differs from the CBL policy, the individual course policy will take precedent.

It is the responsibility of the student to abide by the policies for each class.

ONLINE EXPECTATIONS

The MA-CBL program offers classes both in person and online. The expectations for course delivery, faculty responsibility and student code of conduct are the same as on campus, in person. Students are to follow the Graduate Bulletin and all sections under "Academic Expectations" printed above.



Failure to abide by these codes of conduct in an online course will result in the same penalties as in person and include Honor Code violations, code of conduct violations, reprimands and potentially dismissal from the program.

GRADING SCALE

A	92.5%-100%	B-	79.5%-82.4%
A-	89.5%-92.4%	C+	77.5%-79.4%
B+	87.5%-89.4%	С	72.5%-77.4%
В	82.5%-87.4%	C-	69.5%-72.4%

GRADING

It is expected that students enrolled in graduate courses demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding that is significantly beyond what is expected at the undergraduate level. While letter grades are used in the graduate program, they differ in meaning from undergraduate programs.

A grade of "A" signifies that a student's performance has been superior, going above and beyond what is normally expected in a graduate class.

A grade of "B" signifies that a student's performance has been satisfactory and that the student has demonstrated the level of understanding normally expected in a graduate class.

A grade of "C" signifies that a student's performance has been poor and that the student has not demonstrated the level of understanding expected in a graduate class. An accumulation of 2 "C's" makes the student ineligible to continue graduate studies in the MA-CBL program and he/she will be dismissed from the program.

A grade of "F" designates failure of the course. A graduate student who receives an "F" is ineligible to continue graduate studies in the MA-CBL program, and he/she will be dismissed from the program.

A grade of "I" (incomplete) is given when a student is unable to complete work because of an unavoidable circumstance such as illness. It is not to be given to enable a student to do additional work to improve a grade. Assigning the "I" grade is at the discretion of the individual instructor. It is the student's responsibility to request the "I" grade. Generally, the student will have completed most of the work required for the course before the grade of "I" is requested. An incomplete must be removed in order to graduate once all the requirements for the course have been completed. Typically, this is done within one semester of the student receiving an "I", however, it can take up to a calendar year to complete. Failure to complete the required work



within the specified time frame agreed to between the student and the instructor will result in the "I" being converted to a letter grade commensurate with the work completed to that point.

GRADE GRIEVANCE

If there is a complaint or concern about a faculty member regarding a grade, the student will first try to resolve it with the instructor in question. If the complaint is not resolved through this interaction, a formal appeal can be made to the program director (Professor Bob Stec, rstec@highpoint.edu or Dr. Koba (tkoba@highpoint.edu). If the instructor of the course also serves as the program director, then appeals can be made to the other director as the first step in the process. The director can initiate a review by the Dean when deemed appropriate. The decision of the Director, or Dean in some instances, is final.

If a student desires to formally appeal a grade, they will submit a written appeal, including the submitted assignment, the feedback from the instructor (if available), and notes about the areas of appeal within one week of the issued grade in question. Mere dissatisfaction with a grade is not grounds for appeal. Such appeals must be based on evidence that a factual, technological, or procedural error was made or that some significant piece of information was overlooked. Overall course grades are not eligible for appeal, except where there is a mathematical error. Only the most recent assignment can be disputed and eligible for appeal. Student appeals occurring at the end of the semester looking for a higher grade in the course will be immediately dismissed. An appeal must occur within one week of when the assignment in question was entered. Appeals on assignments beyond this deadline will be denied.

Only the student can appeal a grade.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If a student has a complaint or concern about a faculty member regarding any matter other than a grade, they should first try to resolve it with the instructor in question. If the complaint is not resolved through this interaction, the student should then address the issue with the following—in this order—until resolved or at the final step:

- 1. Chair of the CBL, Dr. Koba;
- 2. Dean of the School of Communication, Dr. Eltantawy;
- 3. Provost, Dr. Erb, which is the final step in the grievance process.

Bypassing any of these steps—going directly to the president, for example—will not resolve the issue and will only delay resolution. Senior administration will not deal with grievance issues unless it has been discussed at the appropriate level.



MA in Communication and Business Leadership DISMISSAL FROM PROGRAM

In order to maintain academic eligibility, a student in the MA-CBL program may only receive one "C" in their graduate studies. If a student receives a second "C" or an "F" in any class, the student will be dismissed from the program.

If, at any time, during the duration of the program a student's overall GPA falls below a 3.0, or they receive a grade below a B-, the graduate school will review the status of the student. The student may be placed on academic probation or in some cases permanently dismissed from the program.

Any student has the right to appeal a grade following the grade grievance process and may reapply for admission following the re-admission process.

Students who violate the University Code of Conduct, the Honor Code, or other expectations may be dismissed from the program.

A student may appeal a dismissal if they believe there was an error in the interpretation. They may submit a written appeal within 5 business days to Dr. Jeff Adams jeadams@highpoint.edu, and the program directors, clearly outlining the issues and the error in the dismissal decision that was made. The program directors and Dr. Adams will review appeals and make a final decision regarding readmission.

The program directors and Dr. Adams may request a meeting with the student for more information, as well as additional information pertinent to the appeal.

The decision of the program directors and Dr. Adams regarding dismissal from the MA-CBL program is final.



CODE OF STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students will uphold the Code of Student Responsibilities as outlined here: https://www.highpoint.edu/community-standards/code-of-conduct/

This code presupposes that there will be civility and respect for others within the university. MA-CBL program also extends this expectation of civility and respect to apply to digital platforms.

As the document of authority for all students, the Bulletin is your guide to the departments, programs, policies, and courses at HPU.

Graduate School Policies: https://www.highpoint.edu/graduate/bulletins/

Nido R. Qubein School of Communication Policies, Practices, and Expectations:

https://www.highpoint.edu/communication/files/ngsc syllabus policies.pdf

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR DEGREE COMPLETION

I have reviewed the requirements for my degree as listed in the University Bulletin. I know that...

- I must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher to remain a student in good standing in the MA-CBL program.
- 30 credits are required to receive my degree. With prior approval, I can only transfer 6 credits from another university or another HPU graduate program.
- The CBL program requires a minimum of three semesters to complete. In fall and spring semesters, the maximum number of credits a student can register for is 12. In the summer semester, the maximum number of credits a student can register for is 6.
- If I deviate from the requirements listed, I must speak with the director/co-director of the MA-CBL program and have the course(s) approved by the graduate registrar
- If, at any time, I fall below a 3.0 GPA, or receive a grade below a B-, the graduate school will review my status, and I will be placed on academic probation or in some cases permanently dismissed.
- As a MA-CBL student, I know that a second "C" grade or any "F" grade will result in dismissal from the program.



MA in Communication and Business Leadership ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS OF CONDUCT

I understand that graduate school is an intensive commitment, and I am expected to commit, on average, 10-12 hours per week for each course. All CBL courses and grade expectations are designed accordingly. In the summer, the schedule is condensed, so I should plan for twice the weekly time commitment. If I am taking one class, that would be approximately 20-hours of coursework per week (for a three-credit class).

I understand that I am responsible for tracking my course progress. Starfish is not used in graduate school, so I will pay attention to deadlines, ensure my work is submitted correctly, and monitor my grades. I will consult with the program director if I have questions, but my progress toward completion is my responsibility.

I am responsible for managing myself. Graduate students do not waive FERPA, so instructors and program directors will not speak to anyone else about your academic progress.

As articulated in the University Honor Code, all HPU students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity and are honor-bound to refrain from conduct which is unbecoming of a High Point University student, and which brings discredit to the student and/or to the University. I understand that it is the responsibility of every student to be aware of the Academic Conduct Code's contents and to abide by its provisions.

Every student is honor-bound to abstain from cheating; Every student is honor-bound to abstain from collusion; Every student is honor-bound to abstain from plagiarism; Every student is honor-bound to confront a violation of the University Honor Code; Every student is honor-bound to report a violation of the University Honor Code.

https://www.highpoint.edu/studentconduct/university-honor-code/

I am aware that I cannot pay for anyone else (online resource, classmate, family member, friend...) to complete my academic work. This prohibition includes editing services unless the instructor has given permission to use a copy-editor for a final project. Purchasing a paper, project, presentation or any other work from an outside source violates High Point University's Academic Conduct Code.

I know that I am not allowed to "double dip" or repurpose assignments without the express consent of all instructors involved. This means that I cannot submit a paper/assignment or variations of a paper/assignment to satisfy the requirements in two or more classes, including if I am retaking a course. Such practice is considered plagiarism.

I know that I am to submit assignments to Blackboard in either word or pdf format, unless otherwise specified by the instructor, and that the submissions are to be in APA format.



MA-CBL TUITION GRANT

The tuition grant is available to graduates of HPU's undergraduate programs. Details about how to access the grant are available through the graduate school, student accounts, or the program directors.

I have reviewed the requirements for CBL grant as provided by the University Business Office. I know that...

- The grant was activated by the return of the spring 2020 room and board refund. If the refund was not returned to HPU or a refund was not applicable, a student may pay the activation fee, which is billed the first semester of enrollment.
- After activation, the CBL grant pays 100% of tuition for the duration the student pays to live on campus. The grant pays 50% of tuition if the student does not live on campus. This includes summer.
- Students must be enrolled in a residential food plan, along with housing, to be eligible for tuition grant at 100%.
- The CBL grant is available to full-time and part-time students, so if I decide to change my status, I will let the program directors, and the graduate registrar know.
- The CBL grant only applies to the first 30 credit hours of graduate study. If I drop a course after the beginning of the semester or must repeat a course, I may be responsible for paying either a prorated portion of the tuition or the entirety of the tuition for the course when retaken.
- The CBL grant is active for two continuous years. The activation period starts the first day of semester in which any portion of the grant is used. If I need to change my enrollment timeline, I will discuss this with the program director and the Office of Student Accounts.
- The CBL grant does not cover university fees or instructional materials, such as books.
- I understand that the grant was activated by my graduation from HPU's undergraduate program and is not transferrable to anyone else.

GRADUATION APPLICATION AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- I will complete an application for graduation at least one semester prior to my expected graduation date.
- As a degree-seeking student, I must complete all degree requirements within five years from the date of my first course registration.



- I will maintain the required 3.0 cumulative GPA in order to graduate.
- I understand that it is the responsibility of all graduate students in the MA-CBL program to be aware of the graduation and academic requirements as outlined in the University Bulletin. I am responsible for knowing the graduation requirements for my program and my own status regarding fulfillment of these requirements.
- I understand that if I have more than two courses remaining toward my degree that I cannot walk for graduation.

GRADE GRIEVANCE

If I have a complaint or concern about a faculty member regarding a grade, I will first try to resolve it with the instructor in question. If I need to formally appeal a grade, I will write up the appeal and include the submitted assignment, the feedback from the instructor (if available), and notes about the areas of appeal. I know that mere dissatisfaction with a grade is not grounds for appeal. Such appeals must be based on evidence that a factual, technological, or procedural error was made or that some significant piece of information was overlooked.

If the complaint is not resolved through this interaction, I will then go to the program director (Professor Bob Stec, rstec@highpoint.edu). If the instructor of the course also serves as the program director, then I will approach the Dean as the first step in the process. The decision of the Director, or Dean, is final.

Only the student can appeal a grade.

FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STATUS

- I am considered a full-time student if I am registered for 6 or more academic credits per semester (fall and spring; 3 credits in the summer). Unless authorized by the Graduate Affairs Office, I cannot take more than 12 credits per semester.
- If I am registered for fewer than 6 credits in the fall or spring semester, I am considered a part-time student. In summer sessions, fewer than 3 credits is considered part-time.
- If I am an international student, I must remain a full-time student unless it is my final semester. Students registered in the summer semesters (Summer Session I and Summer Session II) should consult with the business and financial aid offices about their enrollment and financial aid status.

WITHDRAWALS AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

• If I choose to withdraw from the University, whether I am full-time or part-time, I must file an official Norcross Graduate School Withdrawal Form with the Director of Graduate Operations. If I fail to do so before the first day of classes, I will be responsible for whatever financial or academic repercussions result from my continued registration in



courses. Anyone returning to the university after a withdraw, dismissal or leave, should initiate the return process through the Graduate Admissions office. For a link to the online readmission form, contact GradAdmit@highpoint.edu at least 8 weeks prior to the term in which they intend to return.

• Once the semester officially begins, I understand I will be charged according to the University Refund Schedule.

By signing below, I have entered into a contract in which I agree that I will accept responsibility for my actions and, if necessary, advocate for myself. As a graduate student, I understand that if I encounter a difficult situation, I will communicate with my professors and program directors.

Please acknowledge that you have read and understand the MA-CBL Handbook and Graduate Student Academic Contract.

Printed Name:			
HPU ID #:			
Signature:			
Date:			