

BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE (BAS)

Course Syllabus

BAS 300 - BUILDING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES - FALL, 2025

Instructor: Daniel Walsch, PhD
Email Address: dwalsch@gmu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment only
Office Location: TBD

Catalog Description: This course serves as an orientation to the BAS degree program in which current strengths are assessed and future planning is highlighted. Course competency areas related to personal effectiveness and academic/workplace success are stressed. Introduction to the university online learning system and other available resources useful for degree completion are also emphasized.

Prerequisites: None

Course Design: The BAS degree was designed to provide students with an AAS degree - a pathway to a bachelor's degree. Generally, students in the program are adult learners who come from diverse backgrounds. BAS 300 serves as an introduction to George Mason University, to BAS, and the overall learning environment. Professional or Career Development will be one primary focus of the class.

Further, the course is online, asynchronous and delivered via Canvas. Generally, class will begin each Monday and conclude the following Sunday, 11:59 pm.

Course Outcomes: Students will become familiar with Canvas; identify and utilize university resources for student success; better understand and apply behaviors or self-management in a distance-learning environment; and access their current capabilities, learn new skills, and improve current skills to increase employability.

STUDENTS NEEDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WITH POSTING ASSIGNMENTS ARE URGED TO REACH OUT TO GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY'S ITS SUPPORT CENTER, LOCATED IN INNOVATION HALL, ROOM 226. THIS OFFICE MAY ALSO BE REACHED AT 703-993-8870 OR AT SUPPORT@GMU.EDU.

IF NECESSARY, STUDENTS WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS SHOULD NOT HESITATE TO REACH OUT TO INSTRUCTOR VIA EMAIL.

Required Textbooks:

(1) *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen S. Covey

(2) *Love and Profit: The Art of Caring Leadership* by James A. Autry

Recommended Textbooks

(1) *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr.

(2) *What Every Student Should Know About Avoiding Plagiarism* by Linda Stern.

GRADING

My inclination is to keep this part of the course simple by giving everyone full credit for what they submit. But that will not be happening unless, in my judgement, each student turns in their assignments on time, makes a good-faith in their work, adheres to scholarly guidelines in terms of such formalities as citations and format, and that their submissions are well written. That said, grading will be awarded in accordance with the George Mason Grading System for undergraduate students. (See the university catalog for policies for more details. The grading scale for this course is:

- 97 - 100% A+
- 93 - 96% A
- 90 - 92% A-
- 87 - 89% B+
- 83 - 86% B
- 80 - 82% B-
- 77 - 79 C+
- 73 - 76 C
- 70 - 72 C-
- 60 - 69% D
- 0 - 59% F

Specific point total for specific assignments is at discretion of instructor. Late submissions will also be at discretion of instructor. Should a learner have a "life situation" that could lead to a late submission, then extension will be granted based on pre-notice of the late submission by student or the specific circumstance. (A final grade of C or better is required for students to proceed to BAS 490,)

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Note: The content with the sessions in the Canvas course site will be the final authority for due dates. The information below is intended as a global view of the semester's work requirements but is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Session 1

- Due Date: 8/31/25
- Focus: Introduction: Begin reading the two textbooks; post brief biography of self; post photo either of yourself or one you like
- Point Total: 10

Session 2

- Due Date: 9/7/25
- Focus: Be Proactive: Compose paper on personal paradigm paralysis; post video or article on value of proactivity
- Point Total: 10

Session 3

- Due Date: 9/14/25
- Focus: Professional Development: Prepare draft of resume & cover letter for any job you find of interest (it is acceptable to invent your own job listing for purpose of this assignment); post video or article on proper email etiquette
- Point Total: 10

Session 4

- Due Date: 9/21/25
- Focus: Personal Mission Statement: Compose draft of your personal mission statement; post video or article on personal goal statements; make an appointment with your Academic Advisor regarding your Plan of Study.

- Point Total: 10

Session 5

- Due Date: 9/28/25
- Focus: Leadership: Complete Love & Profit text; compose paper on experience with good or bad leadership; meet with Career Services to discuss cover letter & resume; post video or article on effective job searching.
- Point Total: 15

Session 6

- Due: 10/5/25
- Focus: First Things First: Meet with Academic Advisor to complete Plan of Study worksheet; compose paper on putting first things first; post video or article on time management
- Point Total: 10

Session 7

- Due Date: 10/12/25
- Focus: Think Win/Win: Compose paper on past win/win agreement you have experienced; work on Plan of Study worksheet with Academic Advisor; post video or article on win/win agreements.
- Point Total: 10

Session 8

- Due Date: 10/19/25
- Focus: Group Project: Move forward on Group Project
- Point Total: 20

Session 9

- Due Date: 10/26/25
- Focus: Understand/Understood: Compose paper on past communication failure; post video or article on effective communication
- Point Total: 15

Session 10

- Due Date: 11/2/25
- Focus: Professional Development 2: Compose final version of resume & cover letter with "receipt" from Career Services; Part One of Group Project is due; post video or article on professional networking
- Point Total: 10

Session 11

- Due Date: 11/9/25
- Focus: Synergy: Compose paper on a positive synergy experience in which you participated; post video or article on elements that create synergy.
- Point Total: 15

Session 12

- Due Date: 11/16/25
- Focus: Career Readiness: Compose career readiness reflection paper; Part Two of Group Project; post video or article on preparing for job interview
- Point Total: 25

Session 13

- Due Date: 11/23/25
- Focus: Sharpen the Saw: Paper on implementing all four 7th habit components into your life
- Point Total: 40

Session 14

- Due Date: 11/30/25
- Focus: Wrap Up: Submission of final Career Development Plan; post a "legacy" statement; complete course evaluation
- Point Total: 50

DISCUSSION BOARD POSTS

Students are encouraged to post comments on the Canvas discussion board. These postings will demonstrate your commitment to the topic at-hand interest in general meaningful interaction with the others in class. Throughout the semester, student will be asked to post or video on a given topic. In commenting on these postings, ideally, what you contribute should demonstrate your knowledge of the subject, a well thought out perspective, and respect for others - even those with whom you disagree.

PAPERS

Full details about the topics, page requirements, etc. can be found in the individual Canvas assignment for each paper. Also, the instructor will provide specific information on each paper in the individual messages to all students posted on a weekly basis. Generally, unless specifically noted, the same length requirement will not assigned to all papers. Each paper should be thoughtful, complete and do justice to the specific topic. As part of the content of each, students should draw from their readings, original research, and life experiences.

GROUP PROJECT

Full details will be reiterated in Canvas at appropriate time in semester. The instructor will determine group membership via a random selection provided by the university. The class Group Project is divided into two parts. They are as follows:

A) Part One: Each group will be asked to put together a Social Contract designed to highlight each member's commitment to each other and to the overall goal of the project. The Social Contract should consist of the following elements: a pledge from each member to communicate with each other in a timely and respectful manner; seek out compromise should there be disagreement; treat each other with respect and openness; and complete each and every task on-time. Social Contract should be shared with instructor. Names of all group members should be on Social Contract.

B) Part Two: The final goal of the group is to identify what it believes to be "the Five Most Essential Elements Required to Ensure Academic Integrity." This should be submitted to instructor in a Power Point format. Names of all group members should be on title page of final presentation.

RESUME/COVER LETTER/CAREER DEVELOPMENT PAGE

Full details will be available on Canvas at appropriate time in semester. The important element here is for students to work closely with Mason Career Service Center for these tasks. Doing so will be a requirement.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

In our class's online "classroom," students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is conducive to learning, as directed by the instructor. Any student who negatively impacts the opportunity for other students to learn will be warned. If disruptive behavior continues, the student will be removed from the course.

COMMUNICATIONS

Registered students will be given access to a section of the Canvas learning system for this course. Canvas will be used as the primary mechanism to disseminate course information, including announcements, lecture, slides, assignments, and grades.

Communication with the instructor on issues relating to the individual student should be conducted using Canvas mail, Mason email or in-person - not in the public discussion board on Canvas. Federal privacy law and George Mason policy require that any communication with a student related in any way to a student's status be conducted using secure Mason Systems. If you use email to communicate with the instructor, then you must send messages from your Mason email account.

PRIVACY

Instructors respect and protect the privacy of information relating to individual students. As described above, issues relating to an individual student will be discussed via email, telephone, or in-person. Instructor will not discuss issues relating to an individual student with other students (or anyone without a need-to-know) without prior permission of the student in-question.

Graded work other than exams will be returned to individual student directly by the instructor or by faculty or staff member or a teaching assistance designated by the instructor or via another secure method. Under no circumstances will a student's graded work be turned over to another student.

Faculty and staff will take care to protect the privacy of each student's scores and grades.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) works with students to arrange for appropriate accommodations, ensuring equal access to university services. Students with any kind of disability are strongly encouraged to register with ODS as soon as possible to take advantage of available services. Accommodations for disabled students must be made in advance as ODS cannot assist students retroactively. At least two weeks notice is requested for special accommodations related to exams. Any student who needs accommodations should contact the instructor early in the semester as possible so sufficient time is allowed to make arrangements.

PRINCIPLES FOR USE OF AI

- **Human Oversight.** Humans must remain accountable for all decisions and actions, even when assisted by AI. Users must review all AI-generated material for accuracy, reliability, and appropriateness, ensuring outputs are verified and refined to reflect human judgement, ethical standards, and the expectations and values of their work and the university community.
- **Transparency.** Users must maintain the highest standards of transparency and integrity by clearly disclosing when and how AI has been utilized in their work. This includes explicitly identifying AI-generated content, the platform utilized, and the date of use.
- **Compliance and Data Security.** Users must follow all relevant laws and university policies, taking the time to read privacy policies, using strong passwords, enabling two-factor authentication, and reviewing privacy settings regularly. Be cautious with sensitive information to ensure data privacy and maintain control over your professional and personal life.
- **Critical Thinking.** Users must cultivate AI literacy by understanding its workings, capabilities, and limitations, critically questioning AI content for validity and biases. Thoughtful engagement with AI ensures informed decisions, encourages independent thinking, and uses AI to enhance, not replace, personal reasoning and creativity.
- **Accuracy.** Users should ensure the accuracy of AI-generated content and always verify AI outputs by cross-referencing with reliable sources and using their own expertise to assess the information. This involves checking for any false, inaccurate, or misleading content before utilizing or sharing it. The responsibility of verifying AI output lies with each user, and this diligence is crucial to maintaining trust and upholding the integrity of our community.
- **Accessibility.** Users should ensure that AI tools and instructions are accessible to all members of our community, including those with disabilities or diverse learning preferences. Examples include providing resources in multiple formats and ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies to create an inclusive environment.

HONOR CODE

The integrity of the university community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. George Mason has an Honor code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work

submitted be your own; (2) when using work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarifications. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or faculty information from another person without giving the person or course credit.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, AND INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct, and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well being and student-access. The university encourages students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subject to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Sun Aug 31, 2025	Assignment Introduction: Begin reading textbooks; post biography of self, including photo preferably of yourself	due by
Sun Sep 7, 2025	Assignment Week Two: Be Proactive	due by
Sun Sep 14, 2025	Assignment Professional Development: continue readings; prepare draft of resume & cover letter; post video or article on proper email etiquette.	due by
Sun Sep 21, 2025	Assignment Personal Mission Statement: Continue readings; compose draft of personal mission statement; post video or article on personal goal statements; make an appointment to meet Academic Advisor regarding your Plan of Study.	due by
Sun Sep 28, 2025	Assignment Leadership: Continue readings; compose paper on personal experience with good or bad leader; meet with Career Services to discuss resume & cover letter; post video or article on effective job searching.	due by

Date	Details	Due
Sun Oct 5, 2025	Assignment First Things First: Meet with academic advisor to complete Plan of Study worksheet; compose paper on putting first things first; post video or article on time management.	due by
Sun Oct 12, 2025	Assignment Think Win/Win: Continue readings; compose paper on win/win agreement you have experienced; work on Plan of Study worksheet with academic advisor; post video or article on win/win agreements.	due by
Sun Oct 19, 2025	Assignment Group Project: Move forward on Group Project, particularly part 1; post video or article on professional networking	due by
Sun Oct 26, 2025	Assignment Understand/Understood: Compose paper on past communication failure; post video or article on effective communication.	due by
Sun Nov 2, 2025	Assignment Professional Development 2: Complete final version of resume & cover letter with receipt from Career Services; complete Part 1 of Group Project; post video or article on professional networking.	due by
Sun Nov 9, 2025	Assignment Synergy: Compose paper on a positive synergy experience in which you participated; post video or article on elements that create synergy.	due by
	Assignment Synergy: Compose paper on positive synergy experience in which you participated; post video or article on elements that create synergy.	due by

Date	Details	Due
Sun Nov 16, 2025	Assignment Career Readiness: Compose career readiness reflection paper; complete Part 2 of Group Project; post video or article on preparing for a job interview	due by
	Assignment Career Readiness: Compose career readiness reflection paper; complete Part 2 of Group Project; post video or article on preparing for a job interview.	due by
Sun Nov 23, 2025	Assignment Sharpen the Saw: Compose paper on implementing all four 7th Habit components into your life	due by
	Assignment Sharpen the Saw: Compose paper on implementing all four 7th Habit components into your life	due by
Sun Nov 30, 2025	Assignment Wrap Up: Submit final version of Career Development Plan; post a "legacy" statement; complete course evaluation.	due by
	Assignment Reading	