

# Business Information

## INLS 709 SPRING SEMESTER 2023

### Course Information:

INLS709.001.SP23, SILS, Spring 2023

Class Meeting:

Tues/Thurs 8-9:15 am

Instructor:

Nancy Lovas, I hold office hours by appointment.

By default meetings are virtual (Zoom) but may be able to meet you in-person by request.

- I am best reached via email. Make sure to include INLS 709 in your subject line so I don't miss your message.

Target Audience:

This course is intended for graduate students in library and information science.

Course Prerequisites:

Prerequisite, INLS 501.

*I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus. These changes will be announced as early as possible.*

### Learning Goal:

The goal of this course is to provide a foundation of the many components of business information so that you are confident in your ability to do reference and research in many contexts. Business information includes and is relevant to government statistical data, nonprofit research, economic development, entrepreneurship and small business, public policy research and analysis, data literacy, and more.

### Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of how business information is used in the context of other subjects (interdisciplinary) and in different types of libraries and information services contexts;
2. Find business information and critically evaluate various business sources;
3. Apply knowledge of potential sources for specific types of information to real-world business research problems.
4. Communicate resource and search strategy suggestions clearly and concisely.

## Learning Objectives:

1. Identify and implement business information research and analysis techniques and strategies.
2. Compare and contrast business reference interactions and services in special, academic, and public libraries, and other information services contexts.
3. Understand the information requirements of the disciplines within business and wider applications (industry and company analysis, marketing, investment and finance, economics, nonprofit, economic development, entrepreneurship, and public policy research, etc.).
4. Practice and describe research strategies and search techniques that aid in finding relevant business information sources.
5. Develop and apply evaluation criteria for business resources and convey the importance of resource evaluation to clients.

Free and fee based text, statistical, and data information resources in electronic formats from commercial, organizational, and governmental providers will be covered.

## Readings & Resources:

Kirkwood, H. (2020). *Strauss's handbook of business information: A guide for librarians, students, and researchers* (Fourth edition). Libraries Unlimited.

- Ebook available online from UNC Libraries: <https://catalog.lib.unc.edu/catalog/UNCb10183243>
- Print copy on reserve: <https://catalog.lib.unc.edu/catalog/UNCb11243326>

Ross, C. (2020). *Making sense of business reference: A guide for librarians and research professionals* (Second edition). ALA Editions.

- Ebook available online from UNC Libraries: <https://catalog.lib.unc.edu/catalog/UNCb11252991>
- Print copy on reserve: <https://catalog.lib.unc.edu/catalog/UNCb9781899>

De, S. U. (2008). *Business cases for info pros: Here's why, here's how*. Medford, N.J.: Information Today.

- Ebook available online from UNC Libraries: <https://catalog.lib.unc.edu/catalog/UNCb8072249>
- Print copy on reserve: <https://catalog.lib.unc.edu/catalog/UNCb5745651>

## Other Readings:

- **ALA BRASS Business Guides:** <https://brass.libguides.com/businessguides>  
Core resources & best websites across business subjects
- *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*, <https://catalog.lib.unc.edu/catalog/UNCb5836259>
- *Ticker: The Academic Business Librarianship Review*,

- <https://journals.publishing.umich.edu/ticker/>
- *BizLibratory*, <https://bizlibratory.wordpress.com/>
- *This Liaison Life*, <https://liaisonlife.wordpress.com/>

All readings will be posted in Canvas.

## Additional Resources:

- **BRASS Business Reference Essentials:**  
<https://brass.libguides.com/BusinessReference>
- **BUSLIB-L:**  
<https://libraryguides.nau.edu/buslib>  
BUSLIB-L is an unmoderated discussion list for anyone interested in business librarianship and information services. Participants may exchange information, ask questions, and post employment opportunities and other announcements. Anyone with an email address may subscribe to BUSLIB-L.
- **SLA Connect:** <https://www.sla.org/get-involved/divisions/>  
Most division discussion lists from the Special Libraries Association are open to non-members. Business & Finance, Competitive Intelligence, Academic and other lists will be of interest to business librarians.
- **BLINC (Business Librarianship in North Carolina):**  
<https://nclaonline.org/BLINC/eventbusiness-librarianship-north-carolina>  
BLINC is a community of public, academic, and special librarians who value networking, supporting each other, and offering frequent and free workshops. We focus on how libraries support community engagement, economic development, entrepreneurship, small business, nonprofits, job hunting, and business education.

## Policies & Expectations for Students

INLS 709 Business Information will be a student-centered, inclusive, and affirmative learning space. Students are encouraged to bring their whole-selves to their learning and to shape their reflections and course projects around their own interests.

### Participation:

This course is a mix of lecture, discussion, and applied practice. This means it is important that each member of the learning community come to class prepared; having read and reflected on the readings for the week, completed any reference practice or weekly assignment, and brainstormed questions for guest speakers (when applicable).

### Attendance:

#### Official University Policy:

As stated in the University's [Class Attendance Policy](#), no right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities

2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

**University Approved Absence Office (UAAO):** The [UAAO](#) website provides information and FAQs for students and faculty related to University Approved Absences.

**Note:** Instructors have the authority to make academic adjustments without official notice from the UAAO. In other words, it is not required for instructors to receive a University Approved Absence notification in order to work with a student. In fact, instructors are encouraged to work directly with students when possible.

### **Class Policy:**

Because the quality of the learning environment is based directly on student-participation, it is important that you attend each week. If you are unable to attend for reasons of illness, religious observance, participation in University activities at the request of University authorities, or compelling absences beyond your control, please let me know prior to class [for non-emergencies].

If you need to miss a class for any reason, please let me know as soon as you can that you will not be there.

Please talk with me if you're having trouble, whether with a particular assignment, with the course generally, or with everything.

### **Classroom Environment:**

Our classroom environment will be respectful and collegial. I ascribe to the bell hooks' school of learning and believe that, "as a classroom community, our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, in recognizing one another's presence." Arriving late, leaving early, or failing to participate fully in the learning community impacts our collective ability to hear, recognize, acknowledge, and support one another. I understand that emails need to be sent, texts read, and there will be days when circumstances outside of your control will make it difficult to focus. I ask that you make every attempt to be present, empathetic, and engaged in the learning space. If something calls your attention away from this experience, please return (mentally or physically) as quickly and respectfully as possible. I recognize that this class is early in the morning; please feel free to bring snacks.

### **Classroom Communication**

We have a class page in Canvas which will be an important forum for class communication. I have posted the syllabus there, as well as readings, assignments, discussions, etc. All learning assessments must be submitted in Canvas as Word documents.

## Mental Health Resources

All students should be aware they may seek support for any issue from [Counseling & Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) in Student Health. To speak to someone immediately about an urgent emotional or mental health concern:

- Call CAPS 24/7 at 919-966-3658
- Call or text the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 988, or
- Text HOME to the Crisis Text Line at 741741 from anywhere in the United States, anytime.
- [Peer2Peer](#) is a student-led group that advocates for the mental well-being of the members of the UNC student community through peer support. They offer free one-to-one sessions to talk with a peer responder with the option of remaining anonymous, and you can choose to connect with the same person each time you reach out. The organization is open to any graduate and undergraduate student at UNC.

In addition, there is another peer chat service staffed by student volunteers, [LSN](#) (Listen, Support, Navigate; pronounced listen). Be aware, though, it is NOT 24/7. The service is limited to email outside of service hours, when classes are not in session, and when volunteers are not available, with a resulting longer response time.

Please reach out to one of these resources if you need help.

Here is [a resource guide](#) for anyone experiencing sexual or gender-based harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, interpersonal (relationship) violence, or stalking.

See more resources available through the Heels Care Network at <https://care.unc.edu/>.

## Accessibility/Accommodations

Lots of help is available on campus if you have learning or physical challenges. If you need assistance, please contact and register with the Accessibility Resources and Service Office at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/register>. Specific accommodations are determined by that office on a case-by-case basis. The web site offers a wealth of information about accommodations and services, including an [FAQ](#) (<https://ars.unc.edu/students/FAQs>) and [links to various campus offices' services](#) (<https://accessibility.unc.edu/students/registered-students/unc-campus-resources>) like the University Libraries'. If you think you might not qualify for formal accommodations but you think there's a way I can help, please let me know anyway.

Also, the observance of religious holidays is respected, and flexibility around class attendance and assignments may be negotiable. Where flexibility is not possible, however, students may request religious accommodations pursuant to the University's [Policy on Religious Accommodations](#) and Procedures by completing the University's Religious Accommodations Advisory Committee's [Request Form](#) and sending it to

religiousaccommodations@unc.edu for consideration. This process allows the University to consider each student's needs, based on their religious beliefs and practices

## **Honor Code**

The UNC Honor Code prohibits giving or receiving unauthorized aid in the completion of assignments. Students are strongly encouraged to cooperate and assist one another and share insights and respective expertise in this course. I expect that you will acknowledge the support you receive from your colleagues (this may be done in acknowledgements at the end of assignments or projects). It is crucial, however, that in every case where you use the actual written words of others, that these be properly quoted and cited. When you build arguments upon the ideas of others, the originators of those ideas should also be cited. To learn more about what plagiarism is (and how it is that one might plagiarize oneself), complete the tutorial at <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/instruct/plagiarism/>.

## **Extensions:**

In this course, you will be setting your own deadlines for some of the learning assessments. I ask that you consider responsibilities, schedule, and available bandwidth before committing to a deadline. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis. If circumstances impact your ability to complete a learning assessment on time, please contact me as early as possible to discuss alternative arrangements. Unless you are facing an emergency situation or you receive an extension, late work will automatically be graded down by one point (e.g., 10 points will become 9 points) for each dayca that it is late. Learning assessments more than seven (7) days late will not be accepted.

## **Written Work:**

All written work should be proofread before you submit it. Use Times New Roman 12-point font, double-space, and one-inch margins. Although it is recommended that you use APA Style for in-text citations and reference lists, you may use any citation style, provided that it is consistent. See OWL at Purdue for help with APA formatting: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

## **Submitting Coursework:**

Learning assessments are due (officially) at 11:59pm on the indicated due date through our Canvas site ("INLS709"). I will download submissions from Canvas the morning after the due date. Please name your file using the following convention: LastName\_ Assign \_Date (e.g. 'Smith\_BusinessResourceAssessment\_1.10.2023'). Doc or Docx are required.

## **Grades:**

Grades are determined by your performance on the learning assessments in the course. All assessment scores will be posted on the course Canvas page. If you would like to review any of your grades, or have questions about how something was scored, please email me to schedule a time to meet. I am happy to discuss any of your grades with you, and if I made a mistake I will immediately correct it.

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Please see the last pages of this syllabus for specific instructions regarding each of the learning assessments. The weighted average of your grades on all of the learning assessments (including your course participation grade) will be converted to the graduate student grades of H, P, L, or F according to the following table:

<b>Graduate Grade</b>	<b>Weighted Average</b>
H (high pass)	93-100%
P (pass)	75-92%
L (low pass)	70-74%
F (fail)	<70%

<b>Learning Assessment</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Points</b>
Personal Deadline Selection	0%	C/INCM
Attendance and Participation (incl. weekly pre-work)	15%	15 pts
Information Problem Sets (5 total)	10%	10 pts
Resource Assessment/Proposal	35%	35 pts
Business Research Project	35%	35 pts
Professional Development Activity	5%	5 pts

## **Learning Assessments**

### **Project & Personal Deadline Selection (Complete / Incomplete)**

You will be selecting many of your own deadlines for this course. This accomplishes two goals. First, it allows you to select due dates that complement your existing work, academic, and personal schedules. Second, it models professional practice. As a librarian or information professional, many of your deadlines may be self-imposed and enforced. This is an opportunity to practice setting and keeping personal deadlines. The last possible date for submission is **11:59 pm on Sunday, April 30th**.

Although these deadlines are self-imposed, you should take them as seriously as any other deadline or due date for the course. Please fully consider your schedule, personal and professional commitments and available bandwidth before committing to deadlines. You are welcome (and encouraged!) to come to me with questions about these assignments.

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By **Friday, January 27th**, please complete the “Project Selection and Personal Deadlines” quiz in Canvas. This will let me know (1) which project scenario you will be completing for the Business Resource Assessment & Proposal and which set of deliverables you will be completing for the Business Research Project, and (2) the dates that you plan to submit each component of the learning assessments including the Professional Development Activity/Reflection.

### **Attendance / Participation (15 points)**

Unless prior arrangements have been made, or emergency circumstances arise, students will be present in class and will contribute to group discussions and class activities.

### **Weekly Pre-Work**

1. Canvas Discussion Board

Each week, students will post a brief (1 paragraph or less) reflection on the week’s readings and/or learning activities, including at least one question for class discussion. When a guest speaker is scheduled, include at least 1 question for the guest speaker. (Due Sunday, 11:59 pm)

2. Collaborative Glossary of Business Language & Jargon

Learning the language of business information is a key part of becoming proficient. As a class, we’ll develop a glossary of key terms and jargon that we encounter in readings, class discussions, information sources, from guest speakers, and other spaces.

Each week, students will add at least one key term/phrase to the glossary. Definitions may come from course texts, dictionaries, online sources such as Investopedia, or other reputable reference sources.

Weekly Pre-Work is graded as part of attendance and participation.

### **Five Information Problem Sets (10 points)**

Every 2 weeks, students will complete an information problem set of real-world questions in small groups (“reference group”) of 3-4 students. For each problem set, group members will divide up the questions so that each student is responsible for writing an initial response to one question, and all questions are claimed. After the initial responder answers the question, each group member will reply to at least one other question with at least one reply that enhances the initial response.

By Sunday at 11:59 pm of the first week, students will post their response to their question to their reference group’s Canvas discussion board. Responses should include links to resources that address the questions as well as descriptions of the approach and search strategy.



By Sunday at 11:59 pm of the second week, students will have posted at least one reply to a classmate that enhances the initial response.

## **Business Resource Assessment & Proposal (35 points total)**

Managing resources and collections is a major component of many business information jobs. The specialized nature of business information sources means that your expertise will be crucial to making sure stakeholders understand what resources your user population needs and why those particular sources are important.

The course text *Business cases for info pros: Here's why, here's how* will be helpful in approaching this project.

### **Background**

[NC LIVE](#) is North Carolina's statewide library cooperative, supporting 200+ public and academic libraries across North Carolina. A major service provided by NC LIVE is licensed electronic resources, including 1.6 billion full-text articles, eBooks, streaming videos, digitized newspapers, language learning tools, and more. NC LIVE has a [3-year resource selection cycle](#): every three years, the Resource Advisory Committee undergoes a process to recommend resources to license for the next 3-year timespan. The goal of resource selection is to "Support education, enhance economic development, and improve the quality of life of North Carolinians by procuring as much relevant, high-quality digital content as possible."

For many years, NC LIVE subscribed to SimplyAnalytics, a web mapping and data tool. In the 2020-2023 cycle, this subscription was not renewed. Business librarians and information specialists across the state faced the issue of how to continue providing access to the type of information contained in SimplyAnalytics.

### **Scenarios**

Select one of the scenarios below. Think of yourself as a business information professional in that scenario. You must decide a course of action for your institution and make an official proposal of your recommendation to your organization's decision makers. Present your proposal using the Business Case Memorandum outline as described in the *Business Cases for Info Pros: Here's Why, Here's How*.

#### 1. Public Libraries

##### a. Large Public Library

Total budget for business subscriptions: \$5,000.

Current subscription costs: \$3695.

User population examples: "Main Street" entrepreneurs, economic development workers, local small business owners

Example institution: Greensboro Public Library

##### b. Rural Public Library

Total budget for business subscriptions: \$500.

Current subscription costs: \$150.

User population examples: "Main Street" entrepreneurs, economic development workers, local small business owners

Example institution: Wayne County Public Library

2. Academic Libraries

a. State Flagship University

Total budget for business subscriptions: \$500,000.

Current subscription costs: \$488,000.

User population examples: undergraduate and graduate students, research faculty, technology commercialization office

Example institution: UNC Chapel Hill

b. Small independent/private college

Total budget for business subscriptions: \$80,000.

Current subscription costs: \$78,000

User population examples: undergraduate and graduate students, college's innovation/entrepreneurship office and programs

Example institution: Elon University

3. Special Libraries

a. Market Research Consulting Firm

Total budget for business subscriptions: \$35,000.

Current subscription costs: \$33,000.

User population examples: life science or tech startups, local mid-size business owners, businesses wanting to expand into NC

Example institution: NC Biotech Center

**Simplified Fictional Pricing Structure**

The pricing structure for SimplyAnalytics varies based on type of institution, size of institution, number of concurrent users, and number of premium data packages (if any) beyond the standard package.

Use this simplified fictional pricing structure for your analysis and decision making. Prices are the same regardless of institution type and size, and premium data packages have all the same prices.

	1 user	3 users	5 users	10 users	20 users
Standard Data	5000	6500	7800	9250	12000
Historical Census Data	1200	1850	3275	4000	5250
Company Data	1200	1850	3275	4000	5250
Market Research Survey Data	1200	1850	3275	4000	5250
Market Segmentation Data	1200	1850	3275	4000	5250

Tips/Suggestions

Resource evaluation is typically a compare/contrast of content: what do different resources cover and to what depth?

Also consider the needs of your user population.

Budget is always a factor: can you afford an individual subscription? Do you need to cancel a resource in favor of a new subscription? What resources, subscription or free, provide similar content? What do you already have access to?

## **Business Research Project (35 points total)**

Select one set of deliverables to satisfy this project.

### **1. Shark Tank Pitch & Business Information Report**

As an aspiring entrepreneur, you have come up with an innovative product or service that solves a particular problem or fills a niche in the market. However, one major hurdle stands between you and success: funding. Without funding, you will not be able to continue developing your product or service, take production to a larger scale, or launch a nationwide marketing campaign. Not easily disheartened, you decide to audition for *Shark Tank*, a popular TV show that features entrepreneurs like yourselves pitching business ideas to a group of venture capitalists. If the Sharks like your business idea, they will offer you their time, expertise, and a substantial monetary investment.

#### **Part #1: Business Information Report (20 points)**

Before you present in front of the Sharks, however, they have asked for a Business Information Report to help the Sharks prepare for your presentation. A Business Information Report provides valuable information such as a company description, the value proposition, market research and analysis, and design plans. Although the primary goal of this report is to inform facts (i.e. describe conditions in the market), it will also contain a measure of analysis and interpretation (i.e. analyzing threats and opportunities) to help the Sharks gain insight into and evaluate the viability of your business idea. The Business Information Report should include most (if not all) of the following elements:

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary
- Company Description (background: define the industry) [e.g. find a similar public company and use some of their info]
- Products or Services (value proposition; what is your product solving for?)
- Market and Competition (industry analysis)
- Marketing Strategy (projections of sales volume; outline strategy for identifying and reaching potential customers)
- Operations Plans (Setting prices, facilities, equipment, providing customer support, delivering products)
- Critical Risks and Problems
- Financial Projections and Requirements and Requests (what resources, e.g. money or expertise, do you need from the Sharks?)
- Conclusion

Follow [guidelines for written work](#). All written work should be proofread before you submit it. Use Times New Roman 12-point font, double-space, and one-inch margins. Although it is recommended that you use APA Style for in-text citations and reference lists, you may use any citation style, provided that it is consistent. See OWL at Purdue for help with APA formatting: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

Business writing is concise and to-the-point. Write enough to complete a thorough analysis, but remember to be focused and succinct. Your report should be no longer than 6 pages. *There is no word limit and no page minimum.*

### **Part #2: The Pitch (recorded video or in-class presentation) (15 points)**

Now it's time for your big pitch to impress the Sharks. Prepare a 10 minute presentation describing your idea in depth. Record your presentation, upload to a video sharing site (e.g. YouTube or Vimeo), and post the link to the Canvas discussion board for this project. Your classmates, aka the Sharks, will pose questions to you on the Canvas discussion board.

Your presentation should address the following:

- Who are you?
- What is your product or service? How does it work?
- What problem does it solve?
- Who is your target market?
- How does your product or service differ from competitors?

#### Tips for Coming up With a Business Idea

Coming up with a business idea can feel daunting. This [blog post](#) from Harvard Business School Online has questions to prompt your brainstorming.

As well, consider what problems you or your friends/family experience. Is there something you could create that would provide a solution?

Entrepreneurs typically do one of two things: they do an old thing a new way, or they do a completely new thing.

## **2. Company Analysis and Industry & Economic Development Reports**

You will do a deep dive into a U.S. public company and an industry. Part #1 Company Analysis/SWOT Report is an opportunity for you to research any U.S. public company of interest. Part #2 is an application of your business research skills to an industry & economic development scenario.

### **Part #1: Company Analysis/SWOT Report (17 points)**

Select a U.S. public company to analyze and prepare a short report. Business reports are succinct and focused, so keep this in mind as you do your research and writing. See [below](#) for tips on selecting a company.

You will locate and check out various business information resources including the company websites, annual reports, the company's SEC filings (10-K of the past two years+ 10-Q of the last quarter), analyst reports, media coverage on the company, industry reports on the industry (if available), etc. You will also search business databases (available through UNC Libraries), general article databases, and/or library catalogs to find information on the company. You will need to search your favorite business information database, the company's website, and you will also need to use standard business information sources including Orbis, Business Source Premier, ABI/Inform, Factiva, etc. for additional information.

Your report should include the following information:

- Name and headquarters location
- the nature of the company itself
- number of employees
- product or service the company generates
- the extent of its operations
- its involvement with the government (if any)
- special internal or external programs related to social responsibility, training and development, etc.
- a SWOT analysis

Use the following sections:

1. Title page
2. Executive Summary (no more than 1 page)
3. Company Profile (a brief information on founder(s), Lines of business/products, Segments, Subsidiaries, and Operations, etc.)
4. Management Profile (Key Executives)
5. Financials
6. Market Summary
7. Corporate Strategy
8. Marketing Strategies
9. Social Responsibility
10. Training and Development
11. Key Competitors
12. SWOT Analysis
13. Reference List
14. Appendices (if available)

Some of the sections above may be skipped, or a new section(s) might be added, depending on the availability of the data.

Follow [guidelines for written work](#). All written work should be proofread before you submit it. Use Times New Roman 12-point font, double-space, and one-inch margins. Although it is recommended that you use APA Style for in-text citations and reference lists, you may use any citation style, provided that it is consistent.

See OWL at Purdue for help with APA formatting:  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

Business writing is concise and to-the-point. Write enough to complete a thorough analysis, but remember to be focused and succinct. Your report should be no longer than 5 pages. *There is no word limit and no page minimum.*

### **Tips for Selecting a Company**

To begin with, consider creating a list of more than one company for the initial research. There are a number of different ways to select a company, and if there is a particular company that you have been interested in, start from there. Or, in a random manner, look around. Who is the maker of your car? Are you dining in a franchise restaurant? Or, browsing industry sectors first to pick a company is another good strategy. For example, explore the NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes to see the broad picture, or an industry list by Dow Jones.

NAICS: <https://www.census.gov/naics/>

Or look up business periodicals (such as The Wall Street Journal, Barron's, Money magazine, etc ... ) to gain ideas.

### **Tips on Using the Sources**

You may search the business databases first and find reports on the company to make yourself familiar with the format of the company reports. The company's annual reports are typically very long and for the most part, the reports are written in the way the company wants to be viewed. So are the press-releases of the company. Remember, for this assignment, you need to be brief and selective.

## **Part #2: Industry & Economic Development Report (18 points)**

### **Scenario**

You are an analyst with the state economic development office. The office wants to lure new businesses to North Carolina, and the latest efforts are to incentivize Amazon to increase business activity in the state. You are tasked with writing an analysis report that addresses the question: Should Amazon expand their economic activity/business footprint in North Carolina? You may focus your analysis on a specific region of North Carolina or the state in general.

First, you should use the NAICS codes for Amazon's varied lines of business to determine which industry sector you will analyze.

Then, consider these questions:

- What is the national outlook for this sector?
- What is the competitive landscape in your geographic region of interest?
- What might be the impact to local industry/business?

Your report should include:

1. Title Page
  2. Executive Summary
- (National outlook)
3. A brief overview of your chosen industry sector (A brief history, definition, major products/services, etc. )
  4. Economic features of the industry (Estimated size of the industry, growth rate, levels of profitability, established trends in sales over recent years, etc.)
  5. Supply chain
  6. Industry Conditions/Government regulations
- (Local competitive landscape)
7. Leading businesses in the industry sector
  8. Characteristics that differentiate the companies (Services, quality/price, geographic coverage, product line breadth, etc.)
  9. Local industry conditions/regulations
- (Potential impact to local industry/business)
10. what's happened to business/industry in other regions where Amazon has entered the market?

Follow [guidelines for written work](#). All written work should be proofread before you submit it. Use Times New Roman 12-point font, double-space, and one-inch margins. Although it is recommended that you use APA Style for in-text citations and reference lists, you may use any citation style, provided that it is consistent. See OWL at Purdue for help with APA formatting: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

Business writing is concise and to-the-point. Write enough to complete a thorough analysis, but remember to be focused and succinct. Your report should be no longer than 6 pages. *There is no word limit and no page minimum.*

## **Professional Development Activity & Reflection (5 points)**

Locate and participate in a business information professional development activity. Possibilities include participating in a webinar, workshop, or event from professional associations (BLINC, BRASS, SLA, etc), conducting an informational interview or job shadowing, or another activity of choice.

After participating in your chosen activity, write a 3-4 paragraph review describing the activity and your reflections. Post to the discussion board in Canvas. Reflective questions to spark your thinking: What did you learn? What surprised you? How is this relevant to your learning/professional goals? What questions do you have?

## **Course Schedule and Topics**

Week 1 Introduction to Course & Business Information Environment

Week 2 Company & Industry Research

Week 3 Company & Industry Research

Week 4 Introduction to Licensing & Resource Evaluation, Market Research & Marketing (International, b2b, b2c, domestic)

Week 5 Market Research & Marketing (entrepreneurship);

Week 6 SimplyAnalytics Deep Dive; recap/review/catch up of Weeks 2-6 Wellbeing Day Feb 14

Week 7 Intro to Government Info & Services; Economics & Data (Trade?) (gov info, FRED, United Nations Data, World Bank, microeconomics, connection w/ social demographic data)

Week 8 Econ data/statistics/data literacy (more gov info, data literacy)

Week 9 Government info practice (mostly Census data relate) More practice with gov data for all the previous topics! e.g. Census data for lots of different uses

Week 10 SPRING BREAK

Week 11 Networking & Professional Development , Biz Info in Context guest speaker

Week 12 ; SWOT Analysis/Business Research Project/Workshopping Info Problem Set #4, Investing

Week 13 ESG & Sustainable Business

Week 14 Biz Info in Context speaker ; Patents & IP



Week 15 Biz Info in Context speaker ; Biz Info in Context speaker

Week 16 Catching up/presentations

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