

UGANDA MARTYRS UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

BUSINESS ENGLISH EXAMINATION SEMESTER ONE

DATE: 7TH DECEMBER 2023

TIME: 9.30 A.M. TO 12.30 P.M.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Answer THREE questions in all.**
- 2. Question 1 is compulsory.**
- 3. Start each question on a new page.**

QUESTION 1

Below is an intercultural case study. Read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.

A COLORFUL COLLABORATION? TAYLOR KENNEY

Members from two unfamiliar and diverse communities face conflict when attempting to solve one community's financial crisis. As she shut her notebook filled with scribbles from the city budget meeting, Mayor Wilson knew the city was in trouble. After months of brainstorming fundraising tactics, the council had officially run out of ideas. The Green Community, once filled to the brim with life, activity, and events, was quickly losing residents and their once steady influx of cash. The Green Community residents, more commonly known amongst themselves and others as Greenies, were strong people. They prided themselves on being self-sufficient and successful, which meant that asking for help and giving it to others wasn't in their nature. If a Greenie struggled, they wouldn't reach out for help. If a Greenie saw another member of their community struggling, it wasn't their business. That's why this financial crisis had hit the city so hard. Mayor Wilson, one of the most prominent and prideful Greenies in the community, was faced with a decision—ask for help or watch the city crumble before her. But the Mayor was resourceful and unwilling to fail. Suppressing her pride behind a smile, Mayor Wilson placed her "Proud to be Green" pin on her lapel and hit the streets. She wanted to ask

her citizens for help before she proceeded with her less than desirable backup plan. As she was walking down Front Street, Mayor Wilson admired the rows of perfectly manicured lawns and freshly painted white fences. She gazed upwards at the never ending two-story colonial homes decorated proudly with green shutters and window boxes. The pride the Greenies had in their heritage instilled a reassuring feeling within the mayor. "Anyone who loves their community this much will surely be willing to help keep it, even if it means doing A Colorful Collaboration?" "Something out of their comfort zone," the mayor thought to herself as she extended her fist to knock on the first door. "Oh, sorry. This is just such a bad time." "The city is struggling? Who knew?" "We just can't." While the dialogue varied, the answers from the community remained the same. No one was able, or willing, to help. Having now exhausted all of her options, Mayor Wilson pulled out her phone and initiated her backup plan. "Brianna? Hello, it's Mayor Kacie Wilson. I think it's time." The Redlet rundown The Red Community, whose residents were referred to as Redlets, were located several thousands of miles away from the Greenies, across the Zenith Divide. On the outside, the Red Community, for all intents and purposes, were very similar to the Green Community. Their yards were perfectly manicured, their houses were tall and white, and their windows were accented with red trimmings and window boxes. However, that's where the similarities ended. Unlike the Greenies, the Redlets were not overly proud people. If there was anything prideful about them, it was the pride they took in helping their neighbor. The Redlets built a strong and connected community, based on openness, honesty, and asking for help. Because of their strong desire to help, the community flourished. Community events were well attended, and local businesses had a steady flow of customers. The community wasn't as perfect as it seemed, though. While the Redlets liked helping each other, it often turned into a competition of who could help who more. Their competitive and authoritative nature was an attribute that the Greenies were well aware of. The Greenies also had a reputation with the Redlets—their keep-to-themselves, selfish attitudes were perceived by outsiders as stuck-up and cold. Because of the distance that separated them and the preconceived notions about the other, the two communities never interacted. Fixing the finances Brianna pulled up to the Green Community City Hall with her Redlet briefcase clasped tightly in her left hand. She took a deep breath, scanned her surroundings, and reached for the front door. To her surprise, just as she was about to reach for the handle, the door swung away from her. "Hello, Brianna. Welcome!" Mayor Wilson gleamed. "We're so glad you're here." As the two walked in silence towards the council, which was meeting in their large board room, the apprehension of an unprecedented meeting grew. After a long meeting that briefed Brianna, who was the Redlet Chief Innovation and Finance Officer, on the current situation of the Green

Community, the council left for lunch. Brianna suddenly found herself alone in the town hall that was once filled with Greenies. She took a moment to catch her breath as she sat down at a table in the center of the rotunda. She was good at her job, and she had no doubt that she would be able to help the community. But her skills weren't what she was concerned about. Her reception at the meeting earlier in the day was less than warm. "Maybe it's just their 'keep to myself' attitude?" she thought as she opened her lunch bag. But Brianna couldn't shake the feeling that Mayor Wilson was the only one who had actually wanted her help. She knew that in order to successfully enact her plan to save the Green Community, she would need the participation and approval of everyone—which she knew would not be easy, especially with the plan she was proposing. She lifted her eyes for a moment and saw Mayor Wilson walking past. She was just about to raise her hand to flag her over when she noticed the mayor quickly shift her gaze to break their eye contact. Maybe the mayor was even having second thoughts now that she had arrived. Mayor Wilson knew Brianna's presence was the last thing the council wanted. After all, she was from the "over-proud and elitist Redlet community," as one of the council members had described them. But Brianna was smart, creative, and extremely good at her job. After she had accepted the role of Chief Innovation and Finance Officer, the Red Community had flourished rapidly. The strong sense of Red pride she had instilled in her community was something that the Greenies were missing. Mayor Wilson had begged the council several times to allow her to seek Brianna's council. But because of her allegiance to the Red Community, they had refused. "We don't need an elitist Red to come in here and tell us how to live." "I'd rather have our bank accounts lean and be a Green than invite in an inbred Red." "Those righteous Reds aren't welcome here." Mayor Wilson thought that maybe if the council members met someone from the Red Community, they would see that they were, in fact, good people. After all, Brianna and she had worked together several times A Colorful Collaboration? And they'd never had any problems. Eventually, Mayor Wilson went above the angry council and acted on her own authority to bring Brianna in. The morning's meeting was supposed to have been a friendly introduction and welcome for Brianna, but that had definitely not been the case. As Mayor Wilson collected her things and headed to lunch, she saw Brianna sitting alone at a table eating. She so badly wanted to pull up a chair and probe her for her thoughts, but the anxiety she felt of imposing on another person steered her towards her car. The proposed plan To Brianna, it was simple. To the council, it was absurd. The opposition Brianna faced was more than Mayor Wilson had anticipated. Her ideas were good. No, great. Her vision of breaking down barriers and bringing the Greenies together to help finance the town was inspiring. "How could she suggest using a spin-off of the Red Community's

'Together We're Strong' town motto to bring life back into the Green Community?" "It isn't our way. As a matter of fact, it goes against almost everything we believe." "Growing Green—Together' will not be accepted by this council, let alone the general public. Mayor Wilson could see the frustration growing in Brianna's eyes. She wanted so badly to slam her gavel on the table to silence the protests of the council members. She had the power but not the nerve. Again, her strong Greenie pride kept her from imposing on her fellow council members' outcries. Meanwhile, Brianna struggled to conceal her frustration. She had worked so hard on her proposal. She felt confident in her community involvement plan, even though the Greenies tended to be cold and siloed. That sense of confidence, though, was now gone. The council hated her ideas. She was flabbergasted that joint community efforts could be so repulsive. She deafened her ears to the scornful remarks of the councilmen and locked eyes with Mayor Wilson. She could tell the mayor was deep in thought, but about what, she was unsure. After 30 minutes of being questioned, grilled, and rejected, Brianna stood. "I traveled all of this way to help. Your community is struggling, not mine. I have ideas, lots of them, but I can barely finish a thought without you shooting it down. I appreciate your time," Brianna turned her gaze towards Mayor Wilson, "and your hospitality, but I cannot help those who do not want to be helped." With that, Brianna finally silenced the room. She collected her things and walked out the door. "All I needed was one ally. Someone to stand up for me and help me," Brianna thought. "I thought Mayor Wilson would. But I suppose, she is a Green after all."

What now? As soon as the door shut behind Brianna, the councilmen stirred and buzzed. The once silent room was now filled with backhanded comments and snarky remarks. "Typical Redlet, only wanting to help when it's easy for them." "I can't say I didn't expect this type of behavior." "The righteous Reds, ladies and gentlemen." Mayor Wilson placed her left hand to her temple and rubbed it vigorously. She knew that Brianna was their last shot at saving the town. The unknown of the future was suddenly even more terrifying. The mayor, upset with herself for not reaching out and helping Brianna, removed her "Proud to Be Green" pin and placed it on her notebook. "What now, Mayor Wilson? How do we save the town?" A Colorful Collaboration?

Questions on the reading

1. Find connections between this case study and any other real-life situation that you have either experienced or are likely to experience in the workplace. Consider instances of stereotyping, ethnocentrism and prejudice. (10 marks)

2. How do stereotypes and community biases impact the task before Brianna even arrives in the Green community? (15 marks)
3. What could have been done to prevent the abrupt and unpleasant welcome Brianna received when she arrived? (15 marks)

QUESTION 2

Last month Richard Oketcho promised a young businessman that he would buy several household items from his online stall. He got irritated when the budding entrepreneur sent him reverse calls, rapidly followed by multiple “Please, call me” messages. In the end Richard cancelled the deal. Some people might consider what the young businessman did was a small thing.

From the knowledge you have acquired from the course Business English, and from your own experience of buying and selling, write some rules of telephone etiquette for all young and budding business men and women. (30 marks)

QUESTION 3

- a) Using three examples, discuss the importance of presentations in business. (10 marks)
- b) Imagine that you have spent six weeks doing internship in a company. You have asked your immediate supervisor for a report of your internship which you will take to your Dean of Faculty. She has told you that she will only write that report after you have made a presentation at the Heads of Department meeting to be held in a week’s time about what you have done and learnt in the company as well as what you have contributed to the company. Prepare and write your presentation. (20 marks)

QUESTION 4

Third year students of Uganda Martyrs University from all its campuses, each represented by three class coordinators, held a meeting on Friday 29th November 2023 from 2.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. Focus was on the teaching and learning of Business English. The meeting was physical at the main campus, Nkozi, with a provision for students from other campuses to attend virtually/online. One of the class representatives for Nkozi campus, Ms Jacinta Apiot, chaired the meeting while you recorded the minutes. Some members were absent but had

communicated to the chairperson about their absence while others did not attend and did not notify anybody that they would be absent.

In the meeting, they discussed the following:

- Brief about the teaching and learning of Business English in all campuses
- Benefits of Business English
- Challenges encountered during the course of the semester
- Coordination of the centers
- Way forward
- Any other business

NB: The campuses are: Mbale, Lubaga, Masaka and Nkozi

As Secretary/Minute Recorder, write the minutes for this meeting. Make all the necessary adjustments to make it appear real. (30 marks)

QUESTION 5

As the Human Resources Manager, it is your responsibility to initiate new staff into the mainstream activities and culture of your business organization. Imagine that the organization has recruited a good number of new employees in many departments and you have to induct them on various issues with include:

- Business communication
- Customer care
- Holding meetings
- Professionalism
- Any other issues that you may deem very important.

Write details of how you would carry out the induction with reference to the above issues.

(30 marks)