**Explanation for the TNSNAMES.ORA file**

The TNSNAMES file contains a series of entries. Each entry represents a connection string to the database.

For example, an entry will look like this:

tnsnames\_service\_name =

 (DESCRIPTION =

 (ADDRESS\_LIST =

 (ADDRESS =

 (COMMUNITY = )

 (PROTOCOL = tcp)

 (Host = xxx.xxx.com)

 (Port = 1521)

 )

 )

 (CONNECT\_DATA =

 (SID = service\_name)

 )

 )

What does this mean?

* **tnsnames\_service\_name**: This is the name that you use for a connection string later. You can choose what this is. It’s like a name you give to this set of connection details. If your tool allows you to connect via TNS entries (like Power BI), this is the name you should provide.
* **host**: The IP address or server name where the database lives or that you want to connect to.
* **port**: The port that is required for the connection. In most cases the default port 1521 is used.
* **SID**: Sometimes the same host may have multiple databases on it; this is the name of the database you want to connect to.

**Example:**

database =

 (DESCRIPTION =

 (ADDRESS\_LIST =

 (ADDRESS =

 (COMMUNITY = )

 (PROTOCOL = tcp)

 (Host = databaseaddress.uwm.edu)

 (Port = 1521)

 )

 )

 (CONNECT\_DATA =

 (SID = database)

 )

 )

This means that the database runs on the server ***“databaseaddress.uwm.edu”***. The database name is “***database”***, and when you connect to it, you’ll refer to this as ***“database”***.