

ENGLISH 304

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Meeting: MWF 10:30-11:20 in G18 Colson
Section: W01 | CRN: 12229

Instructor: Christina Seymour
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Office: 344 Colson | Office Hour: M 11:30-12:30, and by appointment

CLASS MISSION: ASSESS, RESPOND, REVIEW.

This class is arranged by weekly topics in business and professional writing and corresponding assignments. Each week, you will consider a relevant topic, read a related chapter in *Writing That Works* (assess), write a corresponding assignment (respond), and participate in associated collaborative techniques (review). The primary requirement for this class is that you develop both *technical acuity* for common business and professional writing forms as well as a *strong tone-of-voice* appropriate for each writing situation. Hopefully from this practice of assessing, responding, and reviewing, we will foster some memorable and helpful moments for you as a viable job candidate and a competent employee.

Think of our classroom as a practice-workplace. In order to develop the confidence that sets you apart in any work environment, you must, first, know yourself, your strengths, and your ways of thinking and interacting with others. This class asks you to examine yourself closely in the context of a professional environment, to complete various writing tasks in a fast-paced, product-oriented manner, and to work with others frequently. Allow the essential questions of *who am I, where will I work, how do I think, who am I writing for, how well do I work with others, what am I good at, what is my passion, and what is an ideal tone-of-voice for professional writing* to drive your investment in the goals of this course:

1. **Context, Rhetoric:** Successfully analyze professional writing contexts, including audiences, purposes for writing, and organizational cultures.
2. **Design, Media:** Compose and design documents, both print and electronic, to meet the needs of a diverse audience and accomplish persuasive goals.
3. **Argument, Research, Collaboration:** Use research and rhetorical principles to construct persuasive arguments, both collaboratively and individually.
4. **Conventions, Ethics:** Use proper documentation, grammar, and punctuation; comprehend and evaluate ethical responsibilities and potential dilemmas associated with writing and research.

This course is designed to teach you that business and professional writing is a balance of technique and investment, full of personality, work, discovery, and integrity.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Oliu, Walter E., Charles T. Brusaw, and Gerald J. Alred, eds. *Writing That Works: Communicating Effectively on the Job*. 11th ed. New York: Bedford St. Martin's, 2013.

Use of eCampus and email daily.

ATTENDANCE

Our class requires your frequent collaboration and participation. You may miss up to three (3) class periods without penalty—save these for emergencies. For each subsequent absence, your grade will be lowered one full letter, and **if you reach six absences you will fail the course**.

Late work is not accepted. If you anticipate an issue with meeting a deadline or with attendance, it is your responsibility to speak with me to work out other arrangements.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Respect and value one another's ideas. In this class, we will be sharing written work and brainstorming with others, which is often difficult at first. Take care in your responses to others; say worthwhile and respectful things, and don't force anyone to think the way you think. Try to understand and learn from your interactions with your classmates.

GRADED MATERIAL

Reading Responses (30%)

- ⊗ Ten (10) reading responses and ten (10) comments (one each week), due throughout the semester, due dates indicated under the "homework" sections on the schedule.
- ⊗ Graded by ✓ or 0. A check is earned by presenting a persuasive 5-10 sentence response *and* one comment on another's response.
- ⊗ Post responses to eCampus in Discussions under the correct "Response" forum by 9AM on the Wednesday they are due.

These responses are ultimately for you, to make connections between the weekly business/professional writing topic, the corresponding assignment, and your writing strengths and personality as they are developing with each new challenge. You must (1) articulate a lesson you learned and (2) persuade us that you learned that lesson through specific examples from your writing and the text. Responses will also be used to foster discussion and collaboration in class. This is why you must *print and bring* these responses to the next class and why you must comment on another person's post in order to receive full credit.

Options: A response (your persuasive lesson) may focus on the connection between the weekly topic and the reading, a connection of course material to your major, something you found interesting or inspiring, a vocabulary word as it's used in the text, or your writing style as its developing. They are the "little lessons" that hopefully arise organically from your reading and that you share with our class as our understanding of workplace writing and professionalism develops.

Writing Assignments (30%)

- ⊗ Ten (10) writing assignments, due throughout the semester according to the schedule.
- ⊗ Graded by ✓ or 0. A check is earned through demonstrating proficiency in at least 3/4 of the assignment criteria, given on the assignment sheet.

Your ten writing assignments will correspond to the weekly reading in *Writing That Works* and the weekly theme on the syllabus. Each assignment will have four criteria associated with it.

Participation (Quizzes, Peer Review; 30%)

- ⊗ Ten (10) participation points: three (3) quizzes at the beginning of the semester, seven (7) random checks of your participation in discussion, peer review, and/or class writing activities.
- ⊗ Graded by ✓ or 0. A check is earned by doing well on the vocabulary/reading quizzes and by participating sufficiently in discussion, peer review, and class writing activities.

After the third week, we will begin discussion and review days each week, on Wednesdays and Fridays. Bring the required draft, as indicated on the assignment sheet, each Friday.

Portfolio (10%)

- ⊗ One final portfolio including a values statement and three (3) revised assignments.
- ⊗ Graded by letter according to the following rubric.

Your final portfolio will include a values statement (2-3 pages) that describes your values and progress in business and professional writing. You should use examples from your own writing and from *Writing that Works* to prove an overall thesis statement about your values. One value should come particularly from your favorite assignment. Your portfolio will also include three revised works that you have changed and expanded to better resonate with your new values. Be sure to choose assignments that demonstrate the final rubric criteria:

	Superior	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Unacceptable
Context, Rhetoric Does the student successfully analyze professional writing contexts, including audiences, purposes for writing, and organizational cultures?					
Design, Media Are the documents, both print and electronic, composed and designed to meet the needs of a diverse audience and accomplish persuasive goals?					
Argument, Research, Collab. Does the student use research and rhetorical principles to construct arguments, both collaboratively and individually?					
Conventions, Ethics Does the work reflect proper documentation, grammar, and punctuation and the ability to comprehend/evaluate ethical responsibilities and potential dilemmas associated with writing and research?					

COURSE SCHEDULE

subject to change

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
RHETORIC		Jan. 8 Introduction, Ice-Breaker <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in 22 copies of favorite example of logos, ethos, or pathos	10 Vocabulary/Quiz Worksheet, Share favorite arguments <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read and Study for Quiz 1
COLLABORATION	13 Writing Process and Research Quiz, Notecards, Finish Favorite Arguments	15 Personality Profile, Group Strength/Values Activity <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read and Study for Quiz 2	17 Collaboration and Design Quiz <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read and Study for Quiz 3
POSTMODERNISM	20 Martin Luther King Day Recess: No Class	22 Postmodern Work Quiz, Finish Notecards	24 Assign Class Teams, First Collaborative Activity—Propose Instructions Project
SYMBOLIC-ANALYSIS	27 Email Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 8 and 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	29 Symbolic Analytic Work Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	31 Email Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Email Assignment
DIVERSE AUDIENCES	Feb. 3 Instructions Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 12 and p. 336-343 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	5 Diverse Audiences Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	7 Instructions Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Instructions Assignment
VERSATILITY	10 Job List Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 16, p. 566-573 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	12 Versatility Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	14 Job List Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Job List Assignment

FORMAT	17 Resume Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 16, p. 573-596 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	19 Format Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	21 Resume Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Resume Assignment
TONE	24 Cover Letter Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 16, p. 596-616 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	26 Tone Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	28 Cover Letter Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Cover Letter Assignment
VISUAL RHETORIC	Mar. 3 Website Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 15 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	5 Visual Rhetoric Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	7 Website Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Website Assignment
	10 Spring Recess	12 Spring Recess	14 Spring Recess
RESEARCH	17 Informal Report Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	19 Research Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	21 Informal Report Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Informal Report Assignment
CONCISION/DESIGN	24 Abstract/InDesign Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	26 Concision/Design Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	28 Abstract/InDesign Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Abstract/InDesign Assignment

ETHICS	31 Proposal Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	Apr. 2 Ethics Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	4 Proposal Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Proposal Assignment
SYSTEMS-THINKING	7 Final Portfolio Assignment, Presentation Assignment <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>WTW</i> , ch. 14 <input type="checkbox"/> Reading response on eCampus by 9AM	9 Systems-Thinking Discussion <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Bring in draft for review	11 Presentation Review <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Presentation for class next week
PRESENTATION	14 *Presentations*	16 *Presentations*	18 Easter Recess: No Class
REVISION	21 Finish Presentations, Open Revision <i>Homework</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish Final Portfolio	23 Open Revision, Farewell Final Portfolios Due in my office (344 Colson) or mailbox (100 Colson) by 12PM	25 No Class— Have a great summer!