



## **WRITING 1031G – Distance Studies**

### ***Global Positioning: Introduction to Rhetoric and Professional Communication***

**Winter 2019**

**Section 650**

**Instructor: Brock Eayrs**

**Email: [beayrs@uwo.ca](mailto:beayrs@uwo.ca) Office: University College Rm. 2430**

**Hours: in-office Tuesdays 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; on Sakai or Western mail anytime (response within 36 hours)**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

This course introduces students to the rhetorical principles and practices of writing and oral communication in professional contexts. Particular attention is paid to understanding audience, context, and purpose; the grammar of Standard Written English; modes of persuasion; and the negotiation of cultural difference.

Students learn strategies for idea generation, composing a first draft, approaching revision, peer review, and effective editing and proofreading techniques.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the ability to

- ! identify and define rhetorical contexts for professional communication;
- ! understand the relationship between context, purpose and audience and how that relationship should shape a message;
- ! use that understanding to develop persuasive messages;
- ! generate ideas for a variety of communicative purposes, such as communicating a negative message with positive emphasis;
- ! understand the basic principles of writing formal reports and apply them;
- ! understand the basic principles of cross-cultural communication and their significance;
- ! understand the basic principles of document design and apply them;
- ! understand the basic principles of designing individual and group oral presentations

- ! write cohesive and coherent prose using the grammar and conventions of Standard Written English;
- ! identify and correct errors in composition, grammar, and mechanics; and
- ! incorporate feedback into revisions.

**TEXTBOOKS**

MacRae, Paul. *Business and Professional Writing: A Basic Guide*. Peterborough: Broadview, 2015.

Messenger, de Bruyn et al. *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook. Second Essentials Edition* . Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2017.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Diagnostic Paper (audience analysis [up to 500 words])	Ungraded
Assignment 1: Negative Message (up to 1000 words)	10%
Assignment 2: Persuasive Message with Visual (up to 1200 words.)	25%
Assignment 3: *Formal Report (up to 1250 words, excluding front and back matter)	30%
Sentence Grammar/Structure Quizzes (3 x 5%)	15%
Final Exam (written during Exam Period)	20%

\*See also ‘Attendance/Participation’ below.

**Exam**

The exam will test the skills that you have developed over the course of the semester in terms of your writing ability (purpose, coherence, cohesion, style, and grammar) and your understanding of the fundamental elements of writing for professional communication as discussed in class and in course readings.

**Assignment Format**

Assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and will be submitted online (see ‘Submitting Assignments’ below). All assignments must have your name, course name, section number and instructor’s name on the first page.



Postings on the Discussion Board must have the following characteristics:

- Must contribute something meaningful to the Board;
- Must support your opinion with sufficient reasons or evidence;
- Must display good grammar and organization.

Postings should not:

- Contain disrespectful, insulting, or offensive language;
- Be excessively long or excessively short;
- Be unrelated to the week's topic;
- Say things that do not contribute anything, e.g. "I agree with you" or "nice comment".

**Note**

decision on the request directly, or refer the student to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty.

record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

### **Schedule**

**Remember: A ‘Week’ in Distance Studies courses begins on Monday and ends on Friday.**

#### **Unit/Week 1 (Jan. 9 – 11)**

! *Introduction to the course: Writing and rhetoric in professional contexts*

*In general, the aim of this Unit is to provide you with an overview of the course, to elucidate some of the assumptions on which the course is predicated, and to introduce you to an historical context within which you can think about the processes and products of rhetoric (persuasive communication) and ‘writing.’*

**Read:** MacRae ‘Introduction to Business and Professional Writing’

**This Week’s Discussion Topic: *In this first Week’s Discussion, introduce yourself to***

**Read:** MacRae ‘Introduction’; Chapters 1 and 2; Chapter 3, p. 64-73

**Read:** Messenger et al. Chapters 3e-g, 6 (all), 7a, 8a-d, 10-13 (all)

**Read:** the ‘Globe’ case (see ‘Assignment Instructions’ page)

***This Week’s Discussion Topic:*** *Are there qualities in Lyn Smith’s letter that might (wrongly) tempt you to be dismissive and/or condescending in your reply? What other qualities or features might you notice that would help you avoid falling into that trap?*

**Begin Work on Diagnostic Paper (see ‘Assignment Instructions’ page)**

**Unit/Week 3 (Jan. 21 – 25)**

- ! *Introduction to the Grammar and Conventions of ‘Standard Written English’*
- ! *Writing Clearly and Paragraphing: Basic Principles*
- ! *Copy-editing*

**Objectives:**

- To encourage you to develop a critical self-awareness of your writing practice
- To understand the distinction between grammatical ‘conventions’ and ‘rules’
- To understand the notion of ‘Standard Written English’
- To articulate some basic revision principles answering the question “How can I ensure that my document as a whole will clearly communicate my intended message?”

**Read:** MacRae Chapters 2, 4

**Read:** Messenger et al. Chapters 1a-g, 2

***No Discussion Required this week: Complete Online 4 (17) 0.24 0 9 (u) 20 (i) 2 (r) 4 ( ) 1#14 ( ) 18(n)***

**Objectives:**

Through the discussions and readings for Units 4 and 5 you should be familiar with the following topics:

- The basic rhetorical principles underlying the drafting of informative, positive, and negative messages
- The formatting of letter, memorandum, and email messages
- The basic principles applicable to trying to take an essentially 'negative' message and give it a 'positive' spin
- An analysis of a case: 'Statstar'
- The concept of 'voice'
- Uses of the comma
- Use of the colon and semicolon and other punctuation marks

**Read:** MacRae Chapters 7, 8; Chapter 3, p. 81-84

**Read:** Messenger et al. Chapters 8, 15

**Read:** 'Statstar' case (on 'Lecture Notes' page)

***This Week's Discussion Topic: apply the principles articulated in the Week/Unit 3 Lecture notes to the following example. Post a revised version, and explain why you made the changes you did.***

"In spite of the fact that the educational environment is a very significant facet to each and every one of our children, some groups do not support



*This Week's Discussion Topic*

***Objectives:***

***This Week's Discussion Topic: Your aim in TeknoSport would be to construct an argument (a case) in which you use reasons and data to support a Claim. Your Claim is that the STP should be retained, in at least more or less its present form. Your Warrant for this Claim will involve some assumptions ('common ground') that you need to define, and that you can reasonably expect Karvinen to share with you. What might these Warrants look like?***

## **Work on Assignment 2**

**Begin thinking about Assignment 3 Proposal and report – see Assignment 3 prompt on 'Assignment Instructions' page**

**Unit/Week 9 (March 11 – 15)**

**! *Rhetoric: Overview of Issues arising from Cross-Cultural***

## **Unit/Week 10 (March 18 – 22)**

! *Rhetoric: Writing Proposals and Reports*

! *Writing: evaluating and incorporating sources; documentation*

### ***Objectives:***

Through this Unit's discussion and readings, you should be familiar with the following topics:

General rhetorical considerations for writing formal reports

The difference between causation and correlation

Patterns of organization common in formal reports

Stylistic expectations in formal reports

The individual components of a formal report

The evaluation and use of sources

**Read:** MacRae Chapters 17, 18, 19

**Read:** Messenger et al. Chapters 34-3

