

2111G 650: Writing in the World: Introduction to Professional Writing

Distance Studies; Winter 2020

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Lee

Course Description and Objectives

This course aims to introduce you to the basic grammatical and stylistic principles of good, clear, written English within a specific context. That context is professional writing. You will be introduced as well to basic theories and concepts in professional writing, given opportunities to develop skills applicable to writing in a professional context, and encouraged to read about and apply findings from research in professional writing. Generally, the course aims to help you develop “the ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences” (Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents’ statement on ‘University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations’ 24 October 2005). More specifically, upon successful completion of this course, you will have demonstrated the ability to

1. identify and define rhetorical contexts for professional communication;
2. identify, define, and understand ‘purpose for writing’ within those rhetorical contexts;
3. understand the relationship between context, purpose and audience and how that relationship should shape a message;
4. use that understanding to develop a persuasive argument;
5. generate ideas for a variety of communicative purposes, such as communicating a negative message with p

Locker, Kitty O. and Isobel Findlay. *Business Communication Now*. Fourth Canadian ed. McGraw-Hill Ryerson: Toronto, 2018.

Custom Course Book (The BookStore, Western) for Writing 2111F/G. Book No. M11883 (Note: this is print-on-demand. If not on shelves, obtain voucher.)

Messenger, de Bruyn et al. *The Canadian Writer's Handbook: Second Essentials Edition*. Toronto: OUP, 2017.

Instructor postings on section Sakai site.

Course Requirements and Grade Allocations

Diagnostic Paper: Audience Analysis (up to 500 words)	Ungraded
Assignment #1: Negative Message with positive emphasis (up to 1000 words)	20%
Assignment #2: Persuasive Message with visual (up to 1200 words)	25%
Assignment #3: Formal Report (up to 1250 words, excluding front and back matter)	40%
Sentence Grammar/Structure Test (on Sakai)	15%

Course Policies

Assignment Format

All assignments are to be typed and double-spaced, and must have your name, course name, section number, and instructor's name on the first page. Do not use a cover page; these are particularly unnecessary for online submissions. When using sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow MLA, APA, or Chicago citation practice. See text (Locker/Findlay), pages 238 – 245.

Submitting Assignments

Assignments are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. Late papers **will be penalized at 2.5% per day unless** I have permitted an extension of the due date. You must contact me ahead of time for an extension and provide a suitable reason (*see also the section 'Medic*

*.docx extension) file,**

In Writing courses, students covered by this policy who are seeking academic consideration must proceed as follows.

Writing Studies' Basic Policy: students seeking academic consideration **on medical or any other grounds** for any missed tests/exams, class attendance/participation components, or late or missed assignments must either initiate a Self-Reported Absence (**for a grade component worth up to 30% of their final grade, but excluding final exams scheduled during the exam period**) or apply in person to the Academic Counselling or Undergraduate office of their home Faculty and provide a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) or other supporting documentation as required in accordance with official Western policy (linked above).

Students seeking academic consideration **must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either:

- i. A Self-Reported Absence, or
- ii. Academic consideration supported by the Academic Counselling Office.

Exception: in Writing Studies courses, a student seeking academic accommodation **on non-medical grounds** for any missed in-class tests/exams, class attendance/participation components, or late or missed assignments **worth less than 10% of a final grade** *may* first consult directly with her or his instructor, who will – in his or her discretion – elect either to make a decision on the request directly or instruct the student to follow the procedures set out in **Writing Studies' Basic Policy**.

Please note that individual instructors willn

quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above). Plagiarized work will receive an 'F' (ranging from 0 to 49) and may result in failure in the course as a whole.

“All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).”

Prerequisites

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your 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

(Note: classes begin Monday January 6. On this Schedule, Week 1 ends Friday January 10; Week 2 runs Monday January 13 to Friday January 17, and so on, excluding Reading Week. Last day of class is Friday April 3.)

Unit/Week One Jan 6-12

[Introduction: Writing/Rhetoric in a Professional Context](#)

In general

To learn how analyze potential audiences for a message;
To understand the concept of ‘multiple audiences’ (primary and secondary)
To understand how that analysis can help us *shape, structure, and organize* a message in order to maximize its potential effectiveness;
To define the concept of ‘Goodwill’ (including ‘You-attitude,’ ‘Positive Emphasis,’ bias-free language, and tone) and explore the relationship of these concepts to effective writing

Read: Locker/Findlay, Chapter 2; Assignment Case: ‘Globe’ (in ‘Create’ case pack)

Diagnostic Paper: Audience Analysis (Memo. to Instructor; up to 500 words/); due midnight Friday Week 3

Discussion Topic: Are there qualities 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?

Unit/Week Three Jan 20-26

Writing Clearly: Introduction to the Grammar and Conventions of ‘Standard Written English’

Unit/Week Four January 27-February 2

Writing Positive and Negative Messages

Objectives:

Through the discussions and readings for these two related Units, 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 distinction between the formal validity of an argument and its persuasiveness in a more general sense

The importance of assumptions shared by the sender and receiver of a (persuasive) message

Read: Locker/Findlay, Chapter 9 and “TeknoSport” and “Rocky Mountain Fitness” (pdfs on ‘Lectures’ page); Assignment Case: “Just Clean Your Hands” in Create coursepack

Assignment #3: (Formal Report, research based. Approximately 1250 words excluding front and back matter/40%) due end of term

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

*Read: Locker/Findlay, Chapters 10 and 11; Assignment Case: -
Cultural Negotiation: Americans Negotiating a Contract in China (in
Create coursepack)*

Unit/Week Eleven March 23-29

Employment Communications – an Overview

Objectives:

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

***Week Twelve**

Deadline for submission of Assignment #3 is midnight on the last day of classes: Friday April 3rd.