

2111F: Writing in the World: Introduction to Professional Writing

Distance Studies: 653

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Instructor: Dr. Andrew C. Wenaus

Office Hours: Zoom (by appointment)

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,” December, 2005). More specifically, upon successful completion of this course, you will have demonstrated the ability to

1.

(1200-1400 words, excluding front and back matter)

Sentence Grammar/Structure Test (online on Owl site)

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 Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Reference Chapter B, and *The Canadian Writer's Handbook: Second Essentials Edition*, Appendix B.

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 **Medical Accommodation Policy**, below). Our class week runs from Monday to Sunday, so assignments for a particular week are due by Sunday (mid)night, Eastern Standard Time, unless otherwise stated. Important: you are responsible for keeping a copy of all assignments you submit.

Procedure for Assignment Submission

Under policies adopted by Writing Studies, final drafts of all assignments in 2100-level writing courses must be submitted through Turnitin.com (see **Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism**, below). Consequently, you will find Turnitin submission links for each assignment. You will upload your final version of each assignment through its link, as a single Word (.doc or .docx extension) file,* titled to identify you as author. Your graded assignment, with comments, will be returned to you in the same format, through Sakai.

***Note:** PDF or other read-only formats and compressed/zipped files are not acceptable. Please note also that Turnitin will not accept more than a single file submission. In other words, do not try to submit an assignment twice, or in parts as two or more files. Also note that I access your original uploaded Word file; typically any formatting errors (etc.) which show in the Turnitin preview function will not appear on your uploaded file.

Attendance/Participation (please note posting requirements)

Obviously, we do not meet formally as a class in a Distance Studies course. Therefore, attendance and participation on the

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Schedule

(Classes begin Wednesday, September 8. The first week, therefore, runs from September 8 until September 19. Subsequent weeks run Monday-Sunday, with exceptions for Thanksgiving, Reading Week, and the final week of classes, where classes end on Wednesday, December 8.)

Unit/Week One (September 8-19)

[An introduction to professional communication](#)

***Read:* RLC, Chapter 1, “Communicating in the Workplace”
CWH, Sections 3-4**

Discussion Topic: Look at Skills-Building Exercises on "Using the You-Viewpoint" and "Rewriting for Courtesy and Positive Effect" (RLC, pp. 189-90). Pick any sentence, and rewrite that sentence according to the instructions. Comment as necessary. Try and pick a sentence no one has done (some will get done more than once, but many different rewrites are possible!). Remember to comment on other people's work.

Unit/Week Four (October 4-10)

Good-news, neutral, and bad-news messages

Read: RLC, Chapter 8, "Writing Good-News and Neutral Messages"
RLC, Chapter 9, "Writing Bad-News Messages"
RLC, Reference Chapter A, pp. A-2 to A-13
CWH, Sections 16-25

Unit/Week Five (October 12-17)

Good-news, neutral, and bad-news messages (continued)

Read: RLC, Chapter 8, "Writing Good-News and Neutral Messages"
RLC, Chapter 9, "Writing Bad-News Messages"
RLC, Chapter 5, pp. 136-43
Statstar case (under Unit 5/Week 5 content)

***Assignment #1 due by 11:55 p.m., Sunday, Week 5**

Discussion Topic: Refer to Problem-Solving Case #1 (RLC, p. 283). Compose a brief message to the Rim Ridge Community Arts Association that declines the offer to serve on their board. Post the message, and explain your choices in composing it.

Unit/Week Six (October 18-24)

Persuasive messages and proposals

Read: RLC, Chapter 10, "Writing Persuasive Messages and Proposals"
RLC, Chapter 5, pp. 141-3
RLC, Reference Chapter A, pp. A-13 to A-14
CWH, Section 8

Discussion Topic: What appeals would be appropriate for the following products when they are being sold to consumers? How might the appeals differ depending on the age and/or gender of the target audience? Think about the broad categories (pathos and logos), but also think of specific appeals that might work with different consumer groups. Choose one product from the list to comment on.

Unit/Week Seven (October 25-29)

Visual rhetoric: document design

Read: RLC, Chapter 3, “Designing Documents with Visual Appeal”
RLC, Chapter 5, pp. 153-9
CWH, Section 2

Reports: executive summaries; and final comments

Read: RLC, Chapter 11, “Researching and Writing Reports”
RLC, Chapter 12, “Creating the Right Type of Report”

**Assignment #3 submission due by 11:55 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8 (last day of classes) OR as directed by your instructor*