Fall 2-23-2021

ENG 2760-001: Introduction to Professional Writing

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Eastern Illinois University

Fall 2020
English 2760-001 and 2760-600

Introduction to Professional Writing
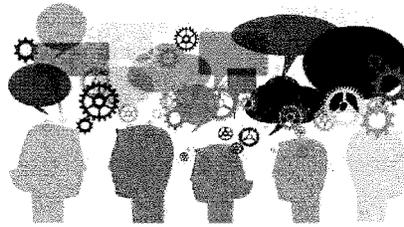
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Course Description: Introduction to the principles and practices of writing in professional settings. Students will complete case-based and/or client-based projects in multiple genres and media. Course will also address ethical communication, document design, intercultural/global communication, collaboration, basic copyediting, and presentation.

About our hybrid/flexible class format: At the beginning of the semester, we will be meeting by videoconference (using Collaborate Ultra, which is built into D2L and can be found in the "Online Classroom" module in the Content). Whether you are in the hybrid section or the online only section of the course, you are welcome to attend these real-time discussions. For those on campus, if web cam access is a problem, we can make arrangements for you to attend class at the Gregg Triad or in a computer classroom in the English Department. However, there will also be an online discussion thread paralleling each real-time class discussion. While I think that those of you who were hoping for a F2F class would definitely find real-time videoconferences a better choice, anyone in either section is welcome to use the online discussion thread alternative if you prefer. Your participation grade will be based on weekly participation, either in real-time conversations or online alternatives.

Text from TRS: *Successful Writing at Work* Concise 4th Edition by Philip C. Kolin

Learning Objectives

1. Use effective communication strategies, including appropriate research techniques, to solve hypothetical and real-world problems (critical thinking & problem solving).

2. Adapt general professional writing principles (related to content, organization, and tone) to specific audiences, purposes, and contexts—including online and global contexts. (Audiences will include international readers of English as well as readers with accessibility needs.)

3. Use revision and editing strategies to improve your own and others' writing. (We will go beyond general editing, including a short introduction to copyediting as well as stylistic editing.)

4. Use basic principles of effective visual and document design.

5. Use effective collaborative strategies to create a positive work environment.

6. Demonstrate understanding of basic ethical and legal considerations related to professional communication.

7. Demonstrate college- and professional-level writing produced through the process of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.

Students with disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

The Student Success Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (http://www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

If I see you struggling in the course, especially if you miss two or more assignments in a row without contacting me, I will try to communicate with you to see if I can help. If I don't hear back from you, I will use the University's Early Alert system, which means that someone from the Student Success Center will try to contact you to offer help. This isn't meant to "get you in trouble" but to help you avoid trouble.

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

The Electronic Writing Portfolio: Any written project of 750 words or longer written for this class would be suitable for submission to the EWP. Submissions must be made by the last day of finals week at the end of the semester. *Earlier deadlines apply for graduating seniors.*

English Teacher Education Majors: Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should provide each of their English Department professors with a copy of the yellow form called "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach" before the end of the semester. These forms are available in a rack outside the office of Dr. Melissa Ames (3821 Coleman Hall).

The English Department Statement on Plagiarism: Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's own original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Office of Student Standards. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

Assignments and Deadlines: Professional writing is a hands-on subject. You learn by doing, by getting feedback, by critiquing your own performance, learning from the performance of others, and by revising. So you need to do the assignments in order to get a return on your investment in this course.

Meeting deadlines is also an important skill for professional communicators. Often, professional communicators must work under time pressure, with competing deadlines. So we need to build the habit of meeting deadlines. Can you get extra time? See the section below.

Extensions Versus Late Work: In the real world, sometimes it's possible to get an extension on a project without ruining your professional reputation or putting anyone's job in danger—and sometimes it's not. But it's <u>never</u> okay to miss a deadline without having asked for an extension, before the deadline.

So, to help you get in the habit of being deadline-oriented (if you're not already), my policy in this class is that you may have a 24-hour extension for anything except the final exam as long as you ask for it

(a) **no later** than an hour before the deadline,
(b) by texting or phoning (leave a message if I don't answer) me at 217-549-3203.

Late work for which an extension was not requested through the process described above will be docked 5% of its value per day. Please do not request extensions via email.

Grading and Assignments

1. Exercises/homework/quizzes	15%
2. Participation*	15%
3. Professional writing career analysis	15%
4. Short report: field/original research	15%
5. Feature/profile	15%
6. Client or case project (collaborative)	15%
7. Final exam	10%

Final Grading Scale

A	90-100%
B	80-89.99%
C	70-79.99%
D	60-69.99%
F	59.99% and below

*Participation involves thoughtful, productive engagement in class conversation each week, either in live videoconference or face-to-face class meetings, or in the alternate "weekly discussion" discussion threads.

Overview & Key Dates (subject to change)

Specific deadlines for exercises, quizzes, and discussion board postings appear in the content modules in D2L as well as on the D2L calendar.

Aug 25 – Sept 24 Overview of basic principles of professional writing:
- Adapting content and tone to audience and purpose
- Adapting organization to audience and purpose
- Considering audiences with special needs
- Selecting medium and genre
- Ethics
- Collaboration
- Design
- Concision
- Editing for style & correctness
- Project management

Sept 29 – Oct 1 Topic selection for major projects (3, 4, 5, 6)

Oct 6 – Dec 10 Applying the basic principles:

Guided research, drafting, peer review, editing, design for major projects

Oct 20: Final Professional Writing Career Analysis due

Nov 5: Final Short Report due

Dec 1: Final Feature/Profile due

Dec 8: Final report on Client/Case project due

Dec 17 Final Exam due