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ENG 2760-001: Introduction to Professional Writing

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ENGLISH 2760: INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL WRITING

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INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

English 2760 is an introduction to the theories and practices of communication (written, oral, and visual) and communicators in professional settings. We will focus our attention particularly on communication in community health (non-profit) professions. You will be asked to complete two types of projects: those that require you to *research* common communication issues in a field of your interest and those that require you to *practice* common professional communication skills. The specific objectives for this class are as follows:

- Develop understanding of general and field-specific theories and practices of composing
- Demonstrate your ability to adapt communication to specific audiences, purposes, and contexts
- Increase your ability to revise and edit your own and others' writing
- Learn and implement basic principles of effective document design
- Increase facility using computer software to complete technical communication work
- Develop effective collaborative strategies

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Harty, Kevin J. *Strategies for Business and Technical Writing*, 5th edition
- Riley, Kathryn, et al., *Revising Professional Writing*
- Suggested: A USB "thumb" drive (also known as "jump" or "flash" drives) for data storage.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Ethics report: You will research the codes of ethics and a sample ethical situation from a chosen field. You will then write a short report to me describing what you have found. Evaluation criteria: effective secondary research, basic writing skills, appropriate citation, grasp of ethical issues

Audience-focused document: Using the information you gathered for the ethics report, you will create a document about ethics for employees at a specific workplace. You will assess your audience and then adapt your content, organization, format, and tone accordingly. Evaluation criteria: adaptation to audience, effective decision making, basic writing skills, grasp of ethical issues

Professional correspondence: You will write a memo and letter responding to a prompt provided to you. Evaluation criteria: correct letter format, adaptation to audience, writing to a deadline

Student Guide: In groups, you will develop a set of materials for a group of incoming EIU students that introduces them to information, people, and places on-campus and/or in the community.

Assignment goals: adaptation to audience, effective analysis, blending of diverse materials, document design, informative writing, collaboration

Radio Public Service Announcement: You will work with the Health Education Resource Center (HERC) and EIU's radio station to create and record a public service announcement (PSA) on a

health-related topic. Your PSA will air on EIU's radio station. Evaluation criteria: Ability to explain health information, effective research, oral communication, professionalism

Research project: You will propose and carry out a small-scale research study on some aspect of communication in a professional setting of your choice. The study you design will include interview(s) with workplace professionals, on-site observation, secondary research, and a text analysis of one or more concrete pieces of workplace communication (a document, an email, a videotape of a presentation). You will write a report based on your findings and create a poster analyzing a document. Evaluation criteria: primary and secondary research, informative writing, grasp of professional communication issues, document design

Note: EIU stresses the importance of ethical approaches to conducting research. Because your project will involve interviews and observations of people in workplace environments, we will discuss ways to protect research participants. You will also read "Protecting Human Subjects in Research," published by EIU's Grants and Research office prior to beginning your study.

Reading responses: You will write 7 responses to the articles we read in class. These responses may focus on (1) your reactions to the article, (2) connections to your own career, and (3) questions you have about the article you read. You will also be asked to discuss the articles in class. Evaluation criteria: reading comprehension, clear writing, informal oral communication

Note: The syllabus lists 10 dates for writing responses. You may choose any 7 of the 10. If you complete all 10, I will apply 15 extra credit points to your semester grade.

Grammar/editing: We will review common conventions of grammar, punctuation, style, and organization in the course. You will edit sentences, paragraphs, and documents for homework and on the final exam. Evaluation criteria: grasp of editing concepts, ability to edit writing in context

ASSESSMENT

Papers will be graded holistically on content, organization, expression, and correctness as adapted to the audience and context for which you are writing. Assignments marked with an asterisk may be revised for a higher grade (see assignment sheets for specific guidelines and deadlines).

Assignment	% grade
Ethics Report*	5
Audience-based document*	10
Professional correspondence*	5
Incoming student guide	10
PSA	5
Research Report	35
Project proposal*	5
Research plan/notebook	10
Report	15
Poster	5
Reading Responses	10
Editing	20
Homework	10
Final	10

Note:

I reserve the right to make additions and alterations to this assessment breakdown should the need arise. Students will be informed in class and in writing prior to any changes being made.

REVISION GUIDELINES

Assignments marked with an asterisk may be revised as many times as you choose (note: assignments have specific deadlines for revisions). The grade on a revised assignment cancels out the previous grade. If you would like me to re-evaluate a revised assignment, you must follow these instructions:

1. Read all of the comments carefully. Check with me about comments you do not understand.
2. Start big. Don't bother with grammar until you've revised for organization and content.
3. Complete a substantive revision before handing the document back to me. If you have changed only a few minor elements and/or deleted a few words, you have not made a complete enough revision to improve the paper, and I will not re-evaluate it.
4. Turn the paper in to me along with all previously evaluated versions. At the time you resubmit the paper, schedule an out-of-class appointment to go over my comments.

Repeat these steps as many times as you choose. And don't be afraid to try something new! It may be an excellent improvement to your paper! And if it's not, you have time to change it back!

NOTE: Grade penalties (for late work, failure to turn in a draft, etc.) WILL carry over to any revisions. So be sure to meet all deadlines.

WRITING CENTERED COURSE

You should consider submitting an essay written for this class to the Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP). Please visit the following web address for information on the submission process: <www.eiu.edu/~assess/electronic_writing_portfolio1.htm>. Submissions to EWP must be made before the end of the semester.

ATTENDANCE:

In a professional workplace, the concept of excused employees are given a speci, To be more specific:

- You have 150 minutes (3 class periods) of vacation/sick time to use as you choose. Beginning with the fourth absence, each absence will lower your final course grade by 3%.
- **Eight absences will result in a failing grade in the course.**
- One-time tardiness of more than 10 minutes or frequent tardiness of five minutes or more will result in a reduction of your available vacation/sick time.

DEADLINES

Due dates for homework and assignments are listed on the course syllabus.

- Reading responses and grammar/editing homework must be submitted by the beginning of class time on the date listed. Late work will not be accepted.
- Unless otherwise noted, assignments listed in bold on the syllabus must be submitted by the end of the business day (4 p.m.) on the date listed. Late projects will be docked 5% or 2 points (whichever is greater) each day until they are turned in.

EXPECTED CONDUCT

This class focuses on communicating in professional settings. In a workplace setting, certain types of conduct would be expected and outlined in a code of conduct. We have one here, too. In addition to your vacation/sick time, pay attention to the following course policies:

- Class correspondence (i.e., emails you send to someone in the class, including me) should be written professionally and according to the expectations of the business world.

- You are expected to convert your documents as necessary to be able to work on them in class. I will give you advice and out-of-class assistance at your request, but I expect you to have a basic understanding of word processing and/or the willingness to spend time out of class learning features of software programs that will improve the appearance of your documents.
- Keep multiple copies of all the work you produce for this class. Don't delete files once you've turned in the assignment.
- Class time is for doing work related to the course. Checking or sending email, surfing the web, using Facebook or instant messenger, text messaging, etc. should be done on your own time.
- All major assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.
- Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. According to English Department policy, "any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism...has the right and the 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 Judicial Affairs Office." If you are in doubt of the appropriate way to identify your source, check with me before turning in the assignment.
- Late assignments will be docked 5% each day until they are turned in. Reading responses may not be turned in late for credit.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Most accommodations may be easily met in this class. 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.

English 2760: Introduction to Professional Writing

Daily Syllabus

SBTW = *Strategies for Business and Technical Writing*

RPW = *Revising Professional Writing*

White rows = Coleman Hall 3130 (classroom); Yellow rows = Coleman Hall 3120 (lab)

DATE	DUE	IN-CLASS ACTIVITY
Jan 08	WebCT post (due 11:59 p.m.)	Introduction to course
Jan 10	SBTW 1-4, 7-14; response	Class: Discuss articles
Jan 12	SBTW 15-20; response	Class: Discuss articles; ethics
Jan 15	No school	
Jan 17	SBTW 335-346; response Bring code of ethics; case	Class: Discuss article; audience
Jan 19	SBTW 127-130; 131-140; response	Class: Discuss memo format/org. Individual: Draft report