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# ENG 2760-001: Introduction to Professional Writing

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## ENGLISH 2760: INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Instructor: Dr. Terri Fredrick  
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### Instructional Objectives

English 2760 introduces the principles and practices of communication (written, oral, and visual) in professional settings. In this course, 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 *apply* professional communication concepts. The specific objectives for this class are as follows:

- Develop critical thinking strategies appropriate for professional settings
- Develop understanding of general and field-specific principles and practices of composing
- Demonstrate your ability to adapt general principles 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 professional communication work
- Develop basic collaborative strategies

### Required Materials

- Harty, Kevin J. *Strategies for Business and Technical Writing*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition
- Kolln, Martha, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition
- Suggested: A USB drive for data storage.

### Course Requirements

**Refusal letter:** Using a case provided to you, you will write brief letters delivering bad news to readers. Evaluation criteria: critical thinking; application of professional writing principles and letter format; basic writing skills

**Letter analysis and rewrite:** You will take a poorly written letter, analyze its features, and then rewrite the letter to be more effective. Evaluation criteria: critical thinking; application of professional writing principles and letter format; basic writing skills

**Correspondence:** Twice during the semester, you will be given a scenario and asked to write a letter or a memo that addresses the situation. Evaluation criteria: critical thinking; application of professional writing principles and letter or memo format; basic writing skills

**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

**Proposal:** You will research a campus or local community issue and then write a proposal to an appropriate decision-maker. Evaluation criteria: primary and secondary research, critical thinking, application of professional writing principles and proposal format, persuasive writing,

**Poster:** In teams of three or four, you will create an informational poster for the Coles County Health Department. Your group will be responsible for developing the content for the poster and then applying design principles we cover in class to create a poster that meets the needs of the client. Your group will then give a 10–15 minute presentation. Evaluation criteria: effective research; application of professional writing and design principles; ability to adapt to a client's needs; attention to detail; professionalism; effective collaboration, oral presentation ability

**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, ability to analyze, clear writing

NOTE: The syllabus lists 9 dates for writing responses. You may choose any 7 of the 9. If you complete all 9, 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 an exam. Evaluation criteria: grasp of editing concepts, ability to edit writing in context

## Assessment

Assignments will be graded holistically on (1) critical thinking/planning and (2) content, organization, tone/style, and correctness as adapted to the specific audience, purpose, and context.

## Revision Guidelines

Assignments marked with an asterisk in the table below 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. In the margins of the paper, insert notes (using track changes) indicating major changes you have made and why. These notes should draw on the principles we have discussed in class.

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.

### Assessment Breakdown

| Assignment                      | % grade   |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Refusal letter*</b>          | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Letter analysis/rewrite*</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>In-class correspondence*</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Assignment 4*</b>            | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>PSA</b>                      | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Proposal</b>                 | <b>15</b> |
| <b>CCHD poster</b>              | <b>30</b> |
| Memo to group                   | 5         |
| Poster                          | 15        |
| Cover email                     | 5         |
| Presentation                    | 5         |
| Collaboration                   | 5         |
| <b>Grammar/Editing</b>          | <b>15</b> |
| Homework                        | 10        |
| Exam 1                          | 5         |
| <b>Reading Responses</b>        | <b>10</b> |

**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 if any changes are made.

**Attendance:**

According to the *Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills* published by the Department of Labor, the number one reason employers cite for firing young, post-collegiate employees is absence and tardiness. Contrary to popular belief, getting out of bed and to work on time is not easier after graduation, so plan to use this course (and hopefully, your other courses as well) to practice the professional skill of prompt attendance.

- You may miss up to four classes. Each additional absence will reduce your grade by 2%.
- If you must miss a class, you are still responsible for meeting assignment deadlines. Submit assignments via the appropriate WebCT drop box or via email.
- Some activities, such as submitting drafts and peer reviewing others' work, can impact the grade on an assignment. You should arrange alternate methods for submitting such work when you must be absent.
- If you want to know what you missed in class, talk to a classmate. Assignment sheets and most handouts will be available on WebCT.

## 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 under any circumstances.
- 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. Expect to receive feedback from me on the style, content, and organization of your emails.
- 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 assignments listed in bold on the syllabus 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 Office of Student Standards." If you are in doubt of the appropriate way to identify your source, check with me before turning in the assignment.

## Writing Intensive Course

The proposal (due April 1) meets the requirements of the Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP). If you choose to submit your design analysis assignment to the EWP, you must do so **by Thursday, April 22**. Please visit the following web address for information on the submission process:

<http://www.eiu.edu/~assess/ewpmain.php> (scroll down for student information).

## 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*

RG = *Rhetorical Grammar*

White rows = Coleman Hall 3210 (lab); Shaded rows = Coleman Hall 3140 (classroom)

| DATE   | DUE  | IN-CLASS ACTIVITY  |
|--------|--|--|
| Jan 12 | WebCT post (due 11:59 p.m.)  | Introduction to course   |
| Jan 14 | Read SBTW pp. 1-4, 7-14; write <u>response</u><br>Read <u>Munger, Case 4</u> ; Complete Task 1 | Discuss articles and audience<br>Writing effective summaries<br>Complete Munger Task 2 |
| Jan 19 | Read SBTW pp. 105–113; 127–130; write <u>response</u>  | Content principles<br>Handouts: formatting memos / letters                             |
| Jan 21 | Read RG pp. 44–45  | In-class activities: content<br>Editing: subject-verb agreement rules and worksheet    |
| Jan 26 | Read SBTW pp. 131–140; RG Ch 2; write <u>response</u>  | Organization principles<br>In-class activities: organization                           |
| Jan 28 | Read RG pp. 58–60  | In-class activities: organization<br>Editing: Parallel structure rules and worksheet   |
| Feb 02 | Read SBTW pp. 64–71, 122–126; write <u>response</u>  | Style/tone principles<br>Strategies for giving bad news                                |
| Feb 04 | Read RG Ch 6; complete Ex 16 #1 (p110)<br><b>Project: <u>Munger, Case 4, Task 3</u></b>        | In-class activities: style/tone<br>Discuss letter rewrite assignment                   |
| Feb 09 | Read RG pp. 37–38, 46–57<br>Complete Ex 8 #1–5   | Editing: Sentence punctuation  |
| Feb 11 | <b>Project: Letter/analysis rewrite</b>  | Editing: exercises   |
| Feb 16 | Editing homework: punctuating sentences and parallel structure                                 | Editing: exercises   |
| Feb 18 | Read RG Ch 12; complete Ex 43 #1–3   | <b>Project: Correspondence #1</b><br>Editing: Pronoun use                              |
| Feb 23 | Read SBTW pp. 170–186; write <u>response</u>   |  |

|                          |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Feb 25                   | <b>Project: Correspondence #2</b>   | Meeting with Rachel Miller<br>Select and research PSA topics                   |
| Mar 02                   | Bring three possible PSA script ideas   | Review/refine PSA ideas<br>Discuss proposal project                            |
| Mar 04                   | Bring draft of PSA<br>Read SBTW pp. 245–261; <u>response</u>  | Peer review<br>Discuss proposals   |
| Mar 09                   | Bring draft of PSA (by 8 a.m.)<br><b>Submit PSA to HERC (by 4 p.m.)</b>   | Second peer review<br>In-class workshop  |
| Mar 11                   | Read <u>Johnson-Sheehan</u> ; <u>RPW 69–71</u> ; write <u>response</u><br><b>Last day to submit optional revisions of assignments 1–4</b> | Editing: Conciseness exercises<br>Discuss presentations                        |
| <b>Spring Break Week</b> |   |  |
| Mar 23                   | Read SBTW pp. 233–244; write <u>response</u>  | Discuss persuasion<br>Editing: conciseness                                     |
| Mar 25                   | Bring drafts of proposal  | Editing: conciseness; modifiers<br>Peer review<br>Edit reports for conciseness |
| Mar 30                   | Read RPW 107–115; editing homework  | Editing: Punctuation; modifiers  |
| Apr 01                   | <b>Project: proposal</b>  | Meet with Misti Farler<br>Form teams   |
| Apr 06                   | Bring group memo (copies for group + Dr F)<br>Read SBTW pp. 207–232; write <u>response</u>  | Discuss design principles<br>Group work on team project                        |
| Apr 08                   |   | Discuss poster design<br>Group work on team project                            |
| Apr 13                   |   | Team meetings with Dr. F   |
| Apr 15                   | Submit draft of content to Misti Farler   | Group work on team project   |
| Apr 20                   | <b>Last day to submit optional revisions of proposal</b>  | Discuss presentations  |
| Apr 22                   | Bring electronic draft of poster  | Peer review  |
| Apr 27                   | <b>Project: Poster due</b>  | <b>Presentations</b>   |
| Apr 29                   |   | Self and team evaluations<br>Review editing                                    |

May 3 8:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

**Editing exam**