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ENG 2760-001: Introduction to Professional Writing

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2760-001

ENGLISH 2760: INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL WRITING

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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*, 6th edition
- Kolln, Martha, *Rhetorical Grammar*, 5th 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

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; ability to critically analyze a case

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

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

Group proposal: In teams of three or four, you will research a campus or local community issue and then write a proposal to an appropriate decision-maker. Your group will then give a 10–15 minute presentation. Evaluation criteria: primary and secondary research, critical thinking, application of professional writing principles and proposal format, persuasive writing, effective collaboration, oral presentation ability

Flier design: You will apply design principles we cover in class to create a flier or other single-page design for a campus or community client. Evaluation criteria: application of design principles, ability to adapt to a client's needs, attention to detail, professionalism

Reading responses: You will write 8 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 11 dates for writing responses. You may choose any 8 of the 11. If you complete all 11, 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 two exams. 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
Refusal letter*	5
Letter analysis/rewrite*	5
Ethics report*	10
Audience-based document*	10
PSA	5
Group Project	30
Individual memo to group	5
Group proposal	15
Presentation	5
Collaboration	5
Flier design	5
Grammar/Editing	20
Homework	10
Exam 1	5
Exam 2	5
Reading Responses	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 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.
- You cannot receive participation points on days you are 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 ethics report (due February 20) 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 Friday, March 13**. 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 3120 (lab); Shaded rows = Coleman Hall 3130 (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>	Discuss articles; audience
Jan 16	Read <u>Munger, Case 4</u> ; complete <u>Task 1</u>	Complete Task 2
Jan 19	No school—MLK Day	
Jan 21	Read SBTW pp. 105–113; 127–130; write <u>response</u>	Content principles
Jan 23		In-class activities: content
Jan 26	Read SBTW pp. 131–140; RG Ch 2; write <u>response</u>	Organization principles
Jan 28		In-class activities: organization
Jan 30	Read SBTW pp. 64–71; 122–126; write <u>response</u>	Style/tone principles; approaches for giving bad news
Feb 02	Read RG Ch 6; complete Ex 16 #1 (p110)	Style/tone
Feb 04	Project: <u>Munger, Case 4, Task 3</u> Read RG pp. 44–45, 58–60	Subject-verb agreement; parallel structure
Feb 06	Read RG pp. 37–38, 46–57; complete Ex 8 #1–5	Sentence punctuation
Feb 09	Project: Letter/analysis rewrite	Editing exercises
Feb 11	Read SBTW pp. 355–366; write <u>response</u> ; Bring code of ethics/case	
Feb 13	No School—Lincoln's Birthday	

Feb 16	Editing homework	In-class workshop
Feb 18	Bring draft of ethics report Read SBTW pp. 170–186; write <u>response</u>	Peer review
Feb 20	Project: Ethics report	Adapt report to professional setting
Feb 23	Read RG Ch 12; complete Ex 43 #1–3	Pronoun use; work on report
Feb 25	Read SBTW pp. 233–244; write <u>response</u>	Pronoun use; work on report
Feb 27	Bring <u>complete</u> draft (x2) of report	Peer review
Mar 02	Project: Audience-based report	Meeting with Rachel Miller
Mar 04	Bring PSA ideas	Review/refine ideas
Mar 06	Bring draft of PSA	Peer review
Mar 09	Bring draft of PSA (by 10 a.m.) Submit PSA to HERC (by 4 p.m.)	Second peer review
Mar 11		Review for midterm
Mar 13		Midterm exam
Spring Break Week		
Mar 23	Read Burnett; write <u>response</u>	Discuss group project; form teams
Mar 25	Bring group memo (copies for group + Dr F)	Group work
Mar 27		Meet at radio station to record PSAs
Mar 30	Read SBTW pp. 245–261; <u>response</u>	Proposals; teams generate plans
Apr 01	Read <u>RPW 107–112</u> ; editing homework	Punctuation; group work
Apr 03	Editing homework	Punctuation; Modifiers; group work

Apr 06	Read <u>Johnson-Sheehan</u> ; RPW 69–71; write <u>response</u>	Conciseness
Apr 08	Editing homework	Conciseness; modifiers; group work
Apr 10	Bring drafts of group reports	Peer review; edit reports for conciseness
Apr 13	Editing homework	In-class workshop
Apr 15	Project: Group proposal (B teams)	Presentations (A teams)
Apr 17	Project: Group proposal (A teams)	Presentations (B teams)
Apr 20	Read SBTW pp. 207–232; write <u>response</u>	Design issues
Apr 22		Design issues; assign flier design
Apr 24	Editing homework	In-class workshop
Apr 27	Bring draft of flier	Peer review
Apr 29	Project: Flier design due	Review grammar/editing
May 01		Review grammar/editing
Dec 16	8:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.	Grammar/editing exam