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ENG 2760-001: Introduction to Professional Writing

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ENG 2760G-001 Course Policy and Syllabus
Introduction to Professional Writing
 2-2:50 pm MWF, 3120 Coleman

Dr. Tim Taylor
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 Office Hours: 9:30-10:30am, 1-3:30pm TuTh; or by appointment
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“Whoever does not study rhetoric will be a victim of it.”

-ancient Greek wall inscription

“Having to say something is a very different matter from having something to say.”

-John Dewey, *How We Think*

Texts:

- *Revising Professional Writing: In Science and Technology, Business, and the Social Sciences*, 2nd ed.; Riley, et al.
- *Strategies for Business and Technical Writing*, 5th ed.; Harty
- *Writing on the Job*; Brereton and Mansfield

Materials:

Writing instruments, paper, two 2-pocket folders, a college dictionary, a typewriter or computer, and other appropriate supplies

Course Description:

Introduction to the theory and practice of writing and writers in professional settings. Prerequisite 1002G. WC

Some Student Learning Objectives for this Course:

Students will...

- Refine writing and editing skills learned in previous writing courses
- Recognize the responsibility of technical and professional writers to communicate clearly and concisely to satisfy an audience's need for information
- Understand the value of professional and technical writing for readers in the world of work
- Demonstrate college- and professional-level writing produced through the process of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading
- Write purposeful adequately developed paragraphs and sentences that are direct, economical, free of ambiguity, and structurally appropriate for the ideas expressed and for the audience to whom it is directed
- Develop research skills, including effective use of source materials and the principles of documentation

Expected Performance Outcomes:

Students will exhibit the ability to:

- Analyze the need for a document in terms of a rhetorical situation to be addressed, the context of the writing project, the purpose of the document, and the audience's needs
- Select an appropriate document format and writing style for a given writing situation
- Select and design simple graphics and integrate them logically into written text
- Revise and edit for clarity and correctness, and produce professional-looking final documents
- Distinguish between objective and subjective language
- Conduct library, electronic, and field research effectively

- Document sources appropriately within reports
- Work effectively and ethically in a group writing project and group presentation

Write clear, concise prose in Edited American English. Success in this course includes (1) finding your own creative ways to make topics and assignments personally interesting--especially if your first instinct is to label them "boring" or "too hard," (2) believing that you have something worthwhile to say, and (3) expressing it after you've debated/ pondered/ listened/ read/ explored beyond the surface.

Course Requirements:

Class consists of in-class writing activities, discussions of assigned works, peer review sessions, journal entries, shorter assignments, formal and informal presentations, a copyediting exam, and you can count on pop quizzes. There will be eleven formal writing assignments. I also have a participation grade and a writing process grade. Active and constructive class participation can make a positive impact on your overall grade.

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.

Your Instructor:

If you are having any trouble with the material covered in this course, or if you simply want reassurance that you are on the right track, please do not hesitate to visit my office. Many times a short visit to go over a paper or to clarify a concept can save you time in the long run and improve your chances of success in this course. In addition to being in my office during the posted hours, I can also make arrangements to meet at other times to better accommodate your schedule.

Attendance, Late Work Policy, and Expectations:

Students are expected to attend every class. However, as detailed in the EIU Undergraduate Catalog, "properly verified absences due to illness, emergency, or participation in an official University activity" are recognized. When an absence is unavoidable, students are responsible for acquiring missed course materials and the information supplied in class (sickness or emergency), submitting an assignment at a time in accordance with the instructor (University activity), or using one of their late assignment opportunities (sickness, emergency, or University activity).

You have the opportunity to turn in two late assignments of your choosing. If you have to turn in an assignment late, you must communicate with me about your situation prior to the class time that the assignment is due. This can be done by a phone conversation, an exchange of emails, or talking with me in my office. Once we've discussed the situation, you must write a short memo that indicates the day we've agreed that you'd turn it in, which is then turned in with your late assignment. Unless it's an extreme situation, I typically grant an extension of a day or two for late assignments.

I do not have an attendance policy that reduces students' overall grades based on absences. But keep in mind that this course is a class in composition, one where students will be actively composing work and collaborating with others, so if excessive absences happen (five or more absences is excessive to me), those days missed are usually reflected in the quality of work produced by a student, and they also affect one's participation grade.

Although I keep accurate records of your grades and progress, I also expect you to keep track of your grades. You should document all your point totals for essays, journals, quizzes, and other assignments throughout the semester to give yourself an idea of your grade in the course. It is your education, and I believe students should take an active role in assessing how they are doing in their courses.

If there is an extreme discrepancy between in-class and out of class work, I reserve the right to base a student's grade on in-class work alone.

Coursework: Papers, Journals, In-Class Work, Quizzes, Other Assignments:

Unless otherwise indicated, all class work (drafts, journals, and other assignments) will be typed. If an assignment isn't typed, I will not accept it.

Unless otherwise indicated, journals should be a full page or more. Journals should demonstrate an accurate reading, display an appropriate response, or present a valid rhetorical aim/purpose. Journals should also demonstrate stylistic maturity and mastery of editorial conventions (grammatical correctness).

Revision of Essays:

Students can revise all of the formal business/technical documents except for the cover letter and résumé. Time allotted for revision is approximately one week from the day they are ready to be passed back in class. Revisions are due a week from that day and will be submitted in-class unless otherwise noted. Revisions will not be graded unless the original graded essay is submitted with it. If you choose to revise, it should help your overall grade; however, I expect deep revision, not just surface editing.

Extra Credit Opportunities:

There are opportunities for extra credit points (maximum of 10 points) throughout the course. To receive extra credit points, a student has to work as a "grammar sleuth," a person who notices grammar mistakes and then reports these to the instructor. The process works like this: Through the course of reading textbooks, newspapers, magazines, junk mail, or other written communication, if a student finds a sentence that is ungrammatical, he or she can earn two points of extra credit per item found and analyzed. Once a student discovers a grammatical mistake, he or she must write a short paragraph (3-5 sentences) explaining why the sentence is ungrammatical, offer a correction for the author, and attach a photocopy of the grammar problem.

Note: Intended fragments and headlines are not eligible for extra credit. And once one student finds a grammatical mistake, that mistake is no longer "fair game."

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Here is the official statement on plagiarism by EIU's English Department: "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 Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources."

Here is an explanation of plagiarism from my previous English department that explains this important concept:

Plagiarism

To present someone else's work or ideas as one's own is plagiarism. A student commits plagiarism by

- copying, word for word, someone else's writing without putting that passage in quotation marks and identifying the source.
- taking someone else's writing, changing some of the words, and not identifying the source;
- taking someone else's ideas or organization of ideas, putting them into his/her own words and not identifying the source;

- having someone else change the student's writing—a tutor, friend, or relative, for instance—and creating the impression that this is the student's own work; or
- purchasing or downloading papers or passages from the Web.

As a rule of thumb, if you have to have a source before your eyes as you write, you need to copy it accurately, put quotation marks around it, and acknowledge your source. I reserve the right to ask for pre-writing, drafts, etc. or faculty review to prove that it is the student's own work. As most instructors are, I am involved in a "network" to catch plagiarism, and I sometimes randomly—and sometimes not so randomly—check students' work to make sure it is their own. If there is a huge difference between the quality of in-class work and out-of-class work, I reserve the right to base the final grade on in-class work alone. In this class, there is a social contract between the instructor and students that the work submitted will be the students' own documents, not someone else's work. Do your own writing.

Class Conduct:

My classroom community demands good manners, careful listening, respect for diverse backgrounds and opinions, and equal time for everyone who wants to share his or her perspective. In sum, I expect students to act in a mature and collegial manner. Student-learners should come to class having read the material, eager to participate, and ready to write. Here are some examples of someone not exhibiting mature or collegial behavior:

Good Guidelines to Abide by in Any College Course:

1. Come to class on time and stay the entire period.
2. When we discuss a reading or writing assignment, have the materials in front of you on your desk. When we are doing in-class writing, be prepared to actively brainstorm, draft and compose your ideas. And bring texts, paper, and pen
3. Have an opinion and support your opinion with details and examples.
4. Play well with others. Respect others' opinions and be open to them. Actively help your peers in collaborative activities like peer review
5. When working in a group, stay on the assigned tasks.
6. Do not carry on side conversations with other students when the instructor or a student "has the floor" during class.
7. General rudeness and disrespect is not tolerated.
8. Cell phones and pagers need to be turned off.
9. No profanity.
10. No personal grooming.
11. No sleeping. If you do, I will ask you to leave.
12. Wait until I dismiss you before packing your book bags to leave.

If you have concerns about this list or any other aspect of the class, please arrange to discuss the matter with me during my office hours. Similarly, if circumstances arise that will impact your performance in this class, let me know as soon as possible.

Composition of the Overall Grade

(assignments and point totals of participation, va, and journals are tentative)

Participation	100	points
Discussion, in-class writing, small group work, informal presentations		
The Writing Process	80	
10 pts. available for each Peer Review session		
Quizzes	34	
Formal Presentation on the Longer Report	50	
Copyediting exam	50	
Copyediting exercises from Revising Professional Writing	66	
Journals/Shorter Writing Assignments	40	
Memo of Introduction	10	
Professional Email Assignment	20	
Evaluation Memorandum	10	
Formal Business/Technical Documents		
Non-Sensitive Memorandum	100	
Sensitive Memorandum	100	
Short Report	100	
Longer Report (Group)	100	
Professional Profile	100	
PR Flyer	100	
Résumé	50	
Cover Letter	50	
		<hr/> 1120 points possible

Grading Scale for Formal Documents:

100-92% = A	89-88 = B+	79-78 = C+	69-68 = D+
91-90 = A-	87-82 = B	77-72 = C	67-62 = D
	81-80 = B-	71-70 = C-	61-60 = D-

Overall Grading Scale:

100-90% = A
89-80 = B
79-70 = C
69-60 = D
59 and below = F

ENG 2760 Syllabus

All assignments and due dates are tentative

RPW = Revising Professional Writing

SBTWW = Strategies for Business and Technical Writing

WJ = Writing on the Job

* = handout

M 8-20	Introductions and Introduction to the Course
W 8-22	The Rhetorical Principles of Business and Technical Writing *Breaking the Business Code" Memo of Introduction due Course Policy Quiz due Intro of Cover Letter Case
F 8-24	Sample Cover Letter due Introduction and "Using PAFEO Planning" SBTW (1-14) Unit I: Non-Sensitive Memorandum
M 8-27	Ch. 1 "Memos" WJ (21-25) Ch. 9 "Revising for Conciseness" RPW (73-75) and submit revisions of passages 1-11 under " Applications " on p. 76-7
W 8-29	"How to Write Better Memos" and "How to Use Bottom-Line Writing in Corporate Communications" SBTW (127-40)
F 8-31	Ch. 5 "Revising Placement of the Bottom Line" RPW (45-47) and turn in your analysis of " Applications " on p. 48
M 9-3	Labor Day, no class
W 9-5	<i>Peer Review of Non-Sensitive Memo</i>
F 9-7	Non-Sensitive Memo due Unit II: Sensitive Memorandum "I Have Some Bad News for You" SBTW (122-26)
M 9-10	"The Writing Process" and "Evaluating and Testing as You Revise" SBTW (15-20, 26-38)
W 9-12	Ch. 6 "Revising for Cohesion" RPW (49-51) and submit revisions of passages 1-10 under " Applications " on p. 53-4
F 9-14	<i>Peer Review of Sensitive Memo</i>
M 9-17	Sensitive Memo due Unit III: Short Report "What to Report" and "Ten Report Pitfalls: How to Avoid Them" SBTW (187-94, 200-206)
W 9-19	Ch. 7 "Revising to Build Transitions" (55-8) and submit analysis and revision of 1 and 2 under " Applications " on p. 59-60
F 9-21	Ch. 6 "Reports and Proposals" WJ (101-113) "Strategies of Persuasion" SBTW (233-244)

- M 9-24 Ch. 8 "Revising Format to Unify Text" RPW (63-68)
W 9-26 **Peer Review of Short Report**
F 9-28 **Short Report due**
Unit IV: Professional Email
- M 10-1 **Professional Email Assignment due**
Unit V: Longer Report (Group) and the Formal Presentation
Brainstorming and Group Logistics
W 10-3 Using APA Style, Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting
F 10-5 Presentation Methods—Working Together for a Cohesive Message
- M/Tu 10-8/9 No class, but Mandatory Conferences with Groups
W 10-10 "Creating Tables and Illustrations" SBTW (207-232)
F 10-12 Ch. 19 "Editing References to Other Sources" RPW (139-44) and submit
revisions of parenthetical citations in APA Style for 3a-e under "**Applications**"
on p. 146-7
Group work on the report and presentation in class
- M 10-15 Group Presentations
Ch. 14 "Editing Punctuation" RPW (109-16) and submit revisions of passages 1-
20 under "**Applications**" on p. 117-19.
W 10-17 Group Presentations
Ch. 16 "Editing Modifiers" RPW (125-27) and submit revisions of passages 1-10
under "**Applications**" on p. 128-9
F 10-19 Group Presentations
- M 10-22 **Peer Review of Longer Report**
W 10-24 Ch. 3 "Interviews" WJ (47-50, 52-56)
Unit VI: Professional Profile
F 10-26 **Longer Report due**
- M/Tu 10-29/30 No class, but Mandatory Conferences
W 10-31 *Comp Day*
F 11-2 **Peer Review of Professional Profile**
- M 11-5 **Professional Profile due**
Unit VII: PR Flyer
W 11-7 Ch. 5 "Flyers and Brochures" WJ (81-100)
F 11-9 Sample Flyers and Brochures for Analysis
- M 11-12 **Peer Review of PR Flyer**
W 11-14 *Comp Day*
F 11-16 **PR Flyer due**
Intro and "Writing Resumes and Letters in the Language of Employers" SBTW
(263-293)

Thanksgiving Break

M 11-26 Sample Cover Letters for Analysis
 "The Basics of the Cover Letter" SBTW (294-308)
W 11-28 Ch. 9 "Resumes and Cover Letters" WJ (145-156)
F 11-30 ***Peer Review of Resume***

M 12-3 ***Peer Review of Cover Letter***
W 12-5 *Comp Day*
F 12-7 **Cover Letter and Resume due**
 Evaluation Memo due

Final: Copyediting Exam