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# ENG 4760-001: Special Topics in Professional Writing

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# Studies in Professional Writing: Publishing

Prof. Angela Vietto

Text or phone (*preferred*): 217-549-3203 (9 am to 9 pm only, please, except for genuine emergencies)

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Office hours: 3341 Coleman Hall, M 9-11, TR 3:00-3:30, and many other times by appointment

*About the course:* In this course, we will learn about the publishing industry, including its various sectors and the publishing process, including its various roles and stages. We will practice and, ideally, enhance many of your existing professional writing and editing skills; develop skills in design for publishing purposes, including some basic familiarity with appropriate software; and produce finished, high-quality publishing projects that you can add to your portfolio. Specific learning objectives include the following:

- Describe the publishing process, including the professional roles and steps in production
- Analyze publishing situations by applying principles of professional writing related to audience, message, media, tone, and legal and ethical considerations
- Analyze the visual aspects of publications in various media
- Analyze marketing and PR strategies in the publishing world
- Apply the basic principles of copyright that are most relevant to the publishing enterprise
- Put your knowledge of the publishing process into action to make effective choices and carry them out in small-scale publishing projects
- Use effective collaborative strategies to work with others to produce high-quality products
- Use revision and editing to improve your own and others' writing
- Demonstrate awareness of your own strengths and areas for development in publishing skills

## *Textbooks*

*from TRS*

The Chicago Manual of Style

*Other readings*, to be distributed in on D2L or in class class, will be drawn from the following books, among others. For those who wish to work in the field, I recommend purchasing these for your personal library:

*Merchants of Culture* by John Thompson (Penguin, 2012)

*Bookmaking: Editing/Design/Production* by Marshall Lee (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Norton & Co., 2004)

*Thinking with Type* by Ellen Lupton (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Princeton Architectural Press, 2010)

*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.

*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 (excluding fiction or poetry) written for this class would be suitable for submission to the EWP. The case study would make an excellent submission, as long as you make it your best work. Submissions must be made by the last day of finals week at the end of the semester. *Earlier deadlines apply for graduating seniors.*

*Attendance:* You should be in class every day if at all possible. When you miss class, it is your responsibility to check on D2L *and with a classmate* to learn what you missed. If there's material you'd like to make up, check with me.

Once we are working in teams, you will be responsible for notifying your team (not me) when you must miss class. If you do not notify your team when you are absent, you may be dropped from the team by me; if you miss too many classes, based on a team contract, you may be ejected by your team. Being removed from a team can have serious consequences for your grade.

*Professionalism and Distractions:* This is a class in professional writing. So let's practice professional demeanor every day. That means demonstrating through your body language that you want to be here, you are a serious member of the team who is ready and able to work, and you are directing your full attention to what is happening in class at any moment. (Ideally, you won't just *look* like these things are true; ideally, they will *be* true. But at the minimum, you should look like it.)

This means doing a lot of things that aren't always standard habits for students. Taking off your backpack and coat, for example, demonstrates that you want to be here. Keeping your phone put away somewhere until there's a legitimate, work-related reason to use it demonstrates that you are paying attention to what's happening in class instead of elsewhere. Not having social media or video games cued up on your laptop or a lab computer is another signal that you are fully engaged with the work at hand. Looking at and listening to whoever is speaking with attentive and interested facial cues is the final refinement, which you should be practicing if you're not already so that it's second nature when you get to professional job interviews.

If necessary, I'll gamify professional demeanor and offer some rewards to teams who manage to exhibit it consistently.

*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.

### Grading and Major Assignments\*

Exercises / short writings	15%
Quizzes	10%
Client Project 1	15%
Client Project 2	15%
Client Project 3 ( <i>Bluestem</i> spring issue)	10%
Case Study	20%
English Student Conference participation	5%
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

**Additional Requirements for Graduate Students:** Graduate students will have a different set of requirements for the case study, involving additional application of theory as well as a higher level of analysis, which will naturally lead to a somewhat longer written report. In addition, many of our exercises and short writings will have alternate requirements for graduate students.

**Quizzes:** Quizzes will be given sometimes in D2L (and taken outside of class) and other times in class. Quizzes will cover assigned readings or viewing as well as material presented in class.

**Case Study:** The case study will be an analytic research report developed over the course of the semester. You will select a publication (a book, magazine, or journal) that interests you, research everything you can learn about its publication process, and, using everything you learn this semester, analyze what you learn. The topic will be selected early in the semester; some of our exercises will ask you to work with your selected publication to help you start applying what we learn to it; a *complete* draft will be due at mid-term; and you will have the opportunity to revise several times before the end of the semester. The case study will be designed as a printed report and the final product should be exceptionally well-written, filled with astute analysis, copyedited to perfection, and visually attractive and readable. Along with your client projects, the case study should be a jewel you can add to your portfolio.

**Client Projects:** Our exercises will include some hands-on publishing on a small scale, but the client projects will be larger publishing efforts undertaken in teams. I'll show you the work done by the last publishing class and invite you to consider the types of projects you'd be most interested in undertaking. If student writers in the class are interested, we may publish their work (but authors may not be on the teams publishing their work). Client projects 1 and 2 will also include a reflective essay.

**English Student Conference participation:** Since the conference will be held on a day our class meets, we will all be able to participate, and participation is required. However, you will have several options for how you participate. I hope that everyone will have a client project or an exercise that they will be ready to display as part of an exhibit of our class's work. In addition, graduate students are required to prepare either an oral presentation or a research poster (and undergraduates are welcome to do so as well). For some of our publication projects, we might distribute the results of the project to conference participants.

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be cumulative.

## Key Dates

A more detailed schedule will be developed during the first few weeks of the semester, as I learn more about your interests.

Expect regular reading assignments, exercises, and quizzes during the first weeks of the semester.

For now, here are some key dates and deadlines.

Sat. Jan 26	Lions in Winter creative writing festival. Strongly recommended.*
R Feb 28	At least a mock-up of Client Project 1 should be completed by this date
Mar 11-15	Spring Break
T Mar 19	Complete first draft of case study due
M Apr 1	Conference Kick-off Event on diversity in publishing. Strongly recommended.*
T Apr 2	English Student Conference
T Apr 23	All client projects should be complete by this date (but they may be completed earlier, of course, as may reflections for Projects 1 and 2)
R Apr 25	Last class day; final revision of case study due (it may of course be completed earlier); reflections for Projects 1 and 2 due
R May 2 2:45-4:45	Final exam

\* Yes, if it makes it more attractive for you, I will offer extra credit for attending Lions in Winter and the student conference kick-off—but extra credit will also entail doing some writing and then reporting on some things you learned to the class.