

MEDAILLE COLLEGE
Agassiz Circle
Buffalo, NY 14214

COURSE OUTLINE

Program: English

Course Number: ENG 260

Course Title: Business and Professional Writing

Number of Credits: 3

Prerequisites: ENG 200

A. Catalog Description of Course

This course explores the different types of business and professional writing, helping students to recognize the variety of career options for and responsibilities of professional and business writers and the most important resources in the field. Students review and learn how most effectively to implement the basic grammar and usage rules they have studied in other courses, as well as how to incorporate graphs, pictures, and other visual information effectively into their written texts. Students also investigate the necessary relationship between audience and style, and the ethical implications of business and professional forms of communication, while learning how to apply persuasive writing strategies to different professional contexts. Students produce a portfolio in both print and web-based media that will include a resume, letters, memoranda, brochures, instructions, and short reports.

B. Goals

- To become familiar with career opportunities for professional writers;
- To understand the basic genres of business and professional writing and the major similarities and differences among them;
- To be exposed to resources in various fields of business and professional writing;
- To develop skills in identifying and applying rhetorical, critical thinking, and problem solving strategies in specific writing situations;
- To foster the ability to analyze audience, purpose, and style, and apply such analysis to produce clear, specific, grammatically correct, and professional-quality documents;
- To understand general theories of rhetoric and communication in the context of organizational settings.
- To become familiar with electronic tools to produce and print web-based publications and confident oral presentations;
- To understand the dynamics of team work;
- Consider the impact of multiple and diverse perspectives.

C. Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify career opportunities for professional writers;
- Identify and employ the basic genres of professional and business writing with an understanding of the major similarities and differences among them;

- Access and use the research tools in various fields of professional and business writing;
- Solve problems in specific writing situations using rhetorical, critical thinking, and problem solving strategies;
- Analyze audience, purpose, and style to produce professional-quality documents;
- Define and apply general theories of rhetoric and communication in specific organizational settings;
- Use power point and web-based media to produce and print web-based publications and confident oral presentations;
- Work effectively and professionally to delegate responsibility and meet deadlines for production of professional-quality documents;
- Apply multiple and diverse perspectives, and the concerns of different kinds of audiences, to produce professional writing assignments.

D. Outline of Course Content

1. Introduce rhetorical principles of purpose and audience, genres and style
2. Letter and resume assignment
3. Grammar and sentence making skills
4. Sharing information professionally (visual formats and design)
5. Case study method and professional problem solving
 - good news/bad news letter
 - short report
 - cover memo/letter with executive summary
6. Group computer-based instruction project
 - team work
 - delegation and scheduling of group member responsibilities
 - instructions
 - cover memo/letter
 - test results memo
7. Creation of 3-sided brochure
8. Web page creation and rhetorical analysis of web documents
9. Oral presentations

E. Suggested Texts

Paul V. Anderson, Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach (5th ed.), Harcourt Brace, 1999.

Pagel, Larry G. Proofreading & Editing Precision (5th ed.). Thompson/Southwestern, 2006.

Materials on hard copy and e-reserve through the Medaille library

F. Suggested Modes, Media, and Techniques of Instruction

Lecture and large and small group peer interaction and review; daily writing work in the computer lab; production and analysis of web-based documents; power point and other oral presentations.

G. Instructor References

- Aldrich, Pearl G. How to Plan and Organize Your Writing: A Text-Workbook for Executives and Professionals. Washington, D.C.: Research Enterprises, Publishers, 1984.
- Anderson, Paul V. Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach. Harcourt, 1998.
- Bacon, Mark S. Write Like the Pros: Using the Secrets of Ad Writers and Journalists in Business. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1988.
- Barnes, Gregory A. Write for Success: A Guide for Business and the Professions. Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1986.
- Bazerman, Charles, and James Paradis, eds. Textual Dynamics of the Professions: Historical and Contemporary Studies of Writing I Professional Communities. University of Wisconsin Press, 1991.
- Beveridge, J.M., and E.J. Velton. Positioning to Win: Planning and Executing the Superior Proposal. Radnor, Pennsylvania: Chilton Book Co., 1982.
- Bielawski, Larry, and A. Franklin Parks. Organizational Writing. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1987.
- Brown, Leland. Effective Business Report Writing. 4th ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1985.
- Bruce, Stephen D., ed. Business Writing Made Simple: A Manager's Handbook. Madison, Connecticut: Business and Legal Reports, 1986.
- Carr-Ruffino, N. Writing Short Business Reports. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1980.
- Dias, Patrick, ed. Worlds Apart: Acting and Writing in Academic and Workplace Contexts. The Rhetoric, Society, and Knowledge Series. Lawrence Erlbaum Association, 1999.

DiGaetani, John L., and Earl N. Harbert. Writing Out Loud: A Self-Help Guide to Clear Business Writing. Homewood, Illinois: Dow Jones-Irwin, Inc., 1983.

Fearing, Bertie E., and W. Keats Sparrow, eds. Technical Writing: Theory and Practice. MLA, 1990.

Gardner, Susan, and Toby Fulwiler, eds. The Journal Book: For Teachers in Technical and Professional Programs. Boynton, 1998.

Georges, Thomas M. Business and Technical Writing Cookbook: How to Write Coherently on the Job. Boulder, Colorado: Syntax Publications, 1983.

Golden, Steven P., et al. Report Writing for Business and Industry. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1985.

Gould, Jay Reid, et al. Opportunities in Technical Writing Careers. McGraw, 2000.

Halpern, Jeanne W., et al. Business Writing: Strategies and Samples. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1987.

Hammerich, Irene, and Claire Harrison. Developing Online Content: The Principles of Writing and Editing for the Web. (Forthcoming 12/2001).

Holcombe, Marya W., and Judith K. Stein. Writing for Decision Makers: Memos and Reports with a Competitive Edge. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1987.

Holloway, Brian. Technical Writing Basics: A Guide to Style and Form. Prentice-Hall, 2001.

Hult and Huckin, The New Century Handbook.

Jones, Dan. Technical Writing Style. Allyn and Bacon, 1997.

Journal of Technical Communications

Keenan, John. Feel Free to Write: A Guide for Business and Professional People. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1982.

Keithley, Erwin M., and Marie E. Flatly. A Manual of Style for Business Letters, Memos, and Reports. 4th ed. Cincinnati, Ohio: South-Western Publishing Co., 1989.

- Kent, Peter. Technical Writer's Freelancing Guide. Sterling, 1992.
- Keyes, Langley C. "Profits in Prose." Harvard Business Review. 1 (1961: 105-21).
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- Kostelnick, Charles, and David D. Roberts. Designing Visual Language: Strategies for Professional Communicators. Allyn and Bacon, 1997.
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- Pattow, Donald, and William Wresch. Communicating Technical Information: A Guide for the Electronic Age. Prentice, 1997.
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- Solomon, Morton, et al. Main Hurdman Guide to Preparing Financial Reports. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1984.
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Zinser, William. On Writing Well. Harper, 1998.