

WR 214: Writing in Business

Instructor: Liz Delf
Elizabeth.Delf@oregonstate.edu

3 credits
Prerequisite: WR 121

As college students, you will soon enter a job market driven by new technologies, a changed economy, and the need to communicate with different audiences from all over the globe. The ability to write clearly and effectively will be a vital skill in your future, regardless of your field of work. Strengthening these writing skills will give you the ability to create and maintain relationships, explain ideas clearly and effectively, and persuade others to take specific actions. This course will develop your understanding of rhetoric, audience, and conventions to improve your communication skills; we will focus on the practical uses of clear and effective writing that can be applied to a variety of fields and disciplines.

Required Textbook: *Business Writing Today*. 2nd ed. Natalie Canaver.

Note: I don't have a copy of the 1st edition, so if you choose to buy an older copy, it's up to you to figure out page numbers, exercises, etc.

What Will I Learn?

WR 214 Course Specific Learning Outcomes

In the area of rhetorical awareness, successful students will:

- Demonstrate multi-cultural audience awareness in all workplace documents
- Create professional workplace documents which respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations
- Demonstrate mastery of appropriate formats and professional writing, including voice, tone, and level of formality.

In the area of critical thinking and research, successful students will:

- Locate, read, evaluate, summarize, analyze, and synthesize appropriate information
- Integrate text and images ethically and effectively; design effective page layouts.

In the realm of writing process, successful students will:

- Use multiple drafts to produce a variety of professional documents
- Revise documents to their highest polished professional potential
- Collaborate in the writing process and workshop personal and peers' works in typical workplace fashion

In the area of skill with conventions, successful students will:

- Demonstrate mastery of correct and professional syntax, grammar, word choice, punctuation, and spelling, etc.

This course fulfills the WR II Bacc Core requirement.

ENG and WR courses in this category: HC 199, WR 201, 214, 222, 224, 241, 323, 324, 327, 330, 341, 362

Bacc Core Learning Outcomes for Writing II Courses:

1. Apply multiple theories, concepts, and techniques for creating and evaluating written communication.
2. Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions.
3. Apply critical thinking to writing and writing process, including revision.

It does this in the following ways:

OSU Bacc Core Outcomes for WR II Courses	Outcomes Relative to Course Content	Assessment Methods
Apply multiple theories, concepts, and techniques for creating and evaluating written communication	Students practice recognizing and deploying appropriate persuasive techniques in professional documents, including visual rhetoric and design. Students locate, evaluate, and synthesize workplace documents and create various standard workplace documents that respond to different rhetorical situations.	Instructor assesses low-stakes activities that critique and evaluate the persuasiveness of professional documents; assignments modeling workplace communication such as email and letters; and three larger projects such as resume and cover letter, a proposal, and presentation.
Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions	Students reflect on expectations from various professional audiences, incorporating cultural awareness into their reading of workplace documents, assessing documents' appropriateness for certain audiences. Students adapt tone, language, and format given the audience and purposes of documents.	Instructor assesses low-stakes activities that practice audience recognition; resume and cover letter for appropriateness given the audience of a potential employer; the proposal for audience of supervisors; the blog post for an audience of customers.
Apply critical thinking to writing and writing process, including revision	Students critique their own work and their peers' in multiple submissions of formal and informal drafts; collaborate to complete projects and to practice peer review and revision processes; integrate text and images from other sources into their own documents; learn proper formats, conventions, and style guidelines for workplace documents.	Instructor assesses low-stakes writing activities in paragraphing and formatting; participation in group assignments and peer review activities; engagement in self-reflective activities; collaborative work on the proposal; and development of drafts.

Course Policies

Please read and re-read all course policies carefully before coming to me with questions. Once you've done your own footwork, I'm happy to talk about individual concerns, questions, etc.

Two major guidelines for success in this class:

- 1) Start early. Don't wait until the end of the week to start your work. Self-discipline is paramount in online education.
- 2) Communicate! If you have a concern, confusion, or question, talk to me. I want to help—but I can't do that if I don't understand there's a problem.

Due Dates

Work is due by 11:59pm PACIFIC TIME on the day noted.

Late assignments will not be accepted without prior written arrangement.

That said, if you have a legitimate concern--illness, family emergency, work catastrophe--email me BEFORE the due date to talk about an extension. I'm willing to be flexible if it's unusual (say, one a term) and if you've checked in ahead of time. I am generally unsympathetic after the due date has passed.

All work will be submitted digitally via Canvas.

Academic Honesty

Cheating, in any form, is not tolerated at Oregon State University. Any plagiarism – that is, using ideas, information, words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs from someone else's work without giving credit to the original source has serious consequences, up to an F for the class and/or a written report to Student Conduct for further disciplinary action.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting me prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098.

What Kind of Assignments Will We Do in This Class?

WR 214 assignments will focus on research skills, audience awareness, clear sentences, and document design.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows, for 1000 total points:

Writing to Get a Job—25%

Find a real job and take all the steps to apply, including researching the company, writing a resume and cover letter, creating a LinkedIn profile, and answering interview questions.

Writing On the Job—25%

Practice common workplace formats and structures, including letters, summaries, blog posts, and presentations.

Writing as a Team—25%

Group proposal project. Research a problem and present a detailed, well-supported solution in a short report. As part of this unit, you will also write a progress report, performance review, and other process documents.

Informals—25%

Sharpen your writing at a sentence level with style exercises, reflect on major concepts in discussion boards, show mastery of the reading with quizzes. There will be 2-4 informals each week—similar to class participation. *Your 2 lowest informal scores will be dropped.*

Extra credit (optional)—3%

Two extra credit opportunities will be available this term—an informational interview and an infographic assignment. You can complete ONE for extra credit.

Grading criteria

Assignments are graded using four criteria: student's attention to assignment instructions and requirements, quality of written content, attention to formatting and organization, and grammar and mechanics.

A 93.5-100; A- 90-93.4 (Exceptional)

B+ 86.5-89.9; B 83.5-86.4; B- 80-83.4 (Reasonable)

C+ 77.5-79.9; C 73.5-77.4; C- 70-73.4 (Minimal)

D+ 67.5-69.9; D 63.5-67.4; D- 60-63.4 (Does Not Meet Expectations)

F 0-59.9 (Incomplete or Does Not Meet Assignment Requirements)

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All assignments are due by **11:59pm** Pacific Time. No late work accepted without prior approval.

Dates and assignments are subject to change at instructor's discretion.

		Our Focus	Readings	Assignments
Foundations	1	Introduction to Business Communication	<i>Wednesday</i> <i>Sunday</i> Ch. 1 (Business Writing in the Digital Age) Ch. 6 (Email: pg. 116-128 only)	<i>Wednesday</i> Informal(s) <i>Sunday</i> Informal(s)
	2	Planning Documents Crafting Strong Sentences	<i>Wednesday</i> Ch. 2 (Writing to Accomplish Goals) Ch. 3 (Putting the Planning Structure to Work) <i>Sunday</i> Ch. 12 (Business Meets the Interactive World: pg. 274-78, 288-91 only) "The 31 Best LinkedIn Tips for Job Seekers" (link on Canvas) Ch. 4 (Good Sentences, the Right Words)	<i>Wednesday</i> <i>Thursday (this week only—due to 4th of July)</i> Informal(s) <i>Sunday</i> LinkedIn profile Informal(s)
Writing to Get a Job	3	Your Online Presence Tailoring Your Job Search Documents for Each Job Conferences	<i>Wednesday</i> Ch. 7 (Applying for Jobs) Ch. 5 (The Whole Picture) <i>Sunday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i> Résumé draft Informal(s) <i>Sunday</i> Résumé Cover letter Rhetorical analysis (job docs) Informal(s)
	4	Revising Job Docs Interviews Reaching Out to Others	<i>Wednesday</i> Ch. 8 (Letters and Memos: pg. 177-8 only) <i>Sunday</i> Ch. 8 (Letters and Memos: pg. 168-182 only)	<i>Wednesday</i> Thank-you note Informal(s) <i>Sunday</i> Bad news letter Informal(s)

Writing on the Job	5	<p>Research</p> <p>Ethical Use of Other's Work</p> <p>Audience Awareness</p>	<p><i>Wednesday</i> Ch. 8 (Letters and Memos: pg. 183-192 only)</p> <p><i>Sunday</i> Ch. 11 (Writing for Websites and Online Readers: pg. 244-250, 254-256)</p> <p>Ch. 12 (Business Meets the Interactive World: pg. 271-273, 278-288 only)</p>	<p><i>Wednesday</i> Internal memo Informal(s)</p> <p><i>Sunday</i> Blog post / video Extra credit: informational interview report (you can do ONE extra credit assignment this term) Informal(s)</p>
	6	Writing Together When You're Far Apart	<p><i>Wednesday</i> Ch. 13 (Present Yourself: 309-317 only)</p> <p><i>Sunday</i> Ch. 9 (Writing to Persuade, Part 1: pg. 194-207 only) Ch. 10 (Writing to Persuade, Part 2: pg. 223-230 only)</p>	<p><i>Wednesday</i> Presentation Informal(s)</p> <p><i>Sunday</i> Group bylaws + topic memo Informal(s)</p>
Writing as a Team	7	Research and Project Development	<p><i>Wednesday</i></p> <p><i>Sunday</i></p>	<p><i>Wednesday</i> Informal(s)</p> <p><i>Sunday</i> Informal(s)</p>
	8	<p>Finalizing Your Project</p> <p>Wrapping Up</p>	<p><i>Wednesday</i></p> <p><i>Sunday</i></p>	<p><i>Wednesday</i> Team proposal (final draft) Extra credit: Infographic (you can do ONE extra credit assignment this term) Informal(s)</p> <p><i>Sunday</i> Performance review (individual assignment) Informal(s)</p>