

ENGLISH 295: WRITING IN THE WORKPLACE

University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Ayres Hall (A) 111
Section 017
Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:15 a.m. – 12:05 a.m.
Fall 2016

Instructor: Dr. Rhonda Lott

Email: rlott1@utk.edu

Office Location: McClung Tower, Floor 2, Carrel 3

Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. and by appointment

TEXTBOOK

Essentials of Business Communication (10th Edition), Mary Ellen Guffey and Dana Loewy.

MATERIALS

Required:

- textbook (to bring to every class meeting)
- pen or pencil
- notebook or notebook paper

Recommended:

- laptop computer (to supplement in-class activities)
- USB drive (to back up homework files and transport presentation files)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Rhetorical strategies and genres of professional communication. Includes principles of writing style, structure, and document design appropriate for audience and purpose.

Satisfies General Education Requirement: (WC) (RE) Prerequisite(s): 102 or 118.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this course, you will learn a variety of rhetorical strategies of professional communication. In addition, you will study and practice an array of genres of business writing, develop and practice revision strategies in a constructive workshop environment, and build oral communication skills through presentations in order to become more effective communicators in the workplace.

WC REQUIREMENTS

As English 295 fulfills a general education requirement as a WC (“Communicating through Writing”) course, this class will be writing intensive. Students will be expected to produce a total of at least 5000 words of formal and informal writing by the end of the semester. The following list of assignments explains how this word requirement will be met.

Email	250 – 500 words
Resume	250 – 500 words
Cover Letter	250 – 500 words
Follow-Up Letter	250 – 500 words
Trip Report	250 – 500 words
Proposal	250 – 500 words
Flyer	250 – 500 words
Brochure	250 – 500 words
Progress Report	250 – 500 words
PowerPoint	250 – 500 words
Social Media Project	500 – 1000 words
Memo for Midterm Portfolio	250 – 500 words
Memo for Final Portfolio	250 – 500 words
Classwork	250 – 500 words each (about 7 assignments)
Total	5000 – 10,100 words

You will have the opportunity to receive feedback on homework assignments from your instructor and peers in workshops during class and will be asked to revise assignments with their suggestions in mind. These revisions will be submitted in a midterm and final portfolio along with a cover letter for each one to briefly describe your rationale for the changes you made.

ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Type</u>	<u>Total Percentage</u>	<u>Due Dates</u>
Homework (1.25% each)	10%	(See course schedule.)
Quizzes (1.25% each)	10%	(See course schedule.)
Midterm Exam	25%	10/ 5, 5:00 p.m.
• Classwork and Memo (5%)		
• Homework, Revised (20%)		
Presentation	20%	11/23, 8:00 a.m.
• Social Media Project (10%)		
• PowerPoint and Oral Report (10%)		
Final Exam	25%	12/9, 5:00 p.m.
• Classwork and Memo (5%)		
• Homework, Revised (20%)		
Participation	10%	

GRADING POLICY

Grades will be posted on Blackboard and may appear up to two weeks or more after assignments are submitted, depending on the nature and complexity of the assignment. The definitions of grades explained below are based on the University of Tennessee English Department standards.

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Range</u>	<u>Definition</u>
A	93 – 100	Superior
A-	90 – 92	(Intermediate Grade)
B+	87 – 89	Very Good
B	83 – 86	Good
B-	80 – 82	(Intermediate Grade)
C+	77 – 79	Fair
C	73 – 76	Satisfactory
C-	70 – 72	Unsatisfactory
D+	67 – 69	Unsatisfactory
D	63 – 66	Unsatisfactory
D-	60 – 62	Unsatisfactory
F	59 and below	Failure

ATTENDANCE

Since this is a small, discussion-driven class, and participation factors into your final grade, attendance is crucial to your success in this course, so I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. **You may miss up to 5 days of class without penalty. Additional absences will result in a reduction of your final average for the course.** If you are a member of an organization (e.g., a sports team, marching band, etc.) that requires your attendance at one or more university event, please bring the proper documentation to class in advance.

<u>Number of Absences</u>	<u>Final Average Reduction</u>
5 – 6	10 points
7 – 8	15 points
9 – 10	20 points
11 – 12	25 points
> 12	50 points (automatic failure)

If you must miss class due to a legitimate personal, medical, or legal emergency (e.g., death of a loved one, serious illness or injury, jury duty, etc.), **please bring proof of the circumstances to class upon your return so that your absence may be excused.** Acceptable documentation includes doctors' excuses, hospital or emergency room release forms, funeral programs, obituaries, police reports, and court summons. Other documents may or may not be accepted at the instructor's discretion.

LATE WORK

Classwork will be collected at the end of the class day on which it was assigned, but classwork submitted on the class day immediately following the day it was assigned will also be considered on time (to allow students to type and print rather than handwrite assignments, if desired). **If you know in advance that you will have a problem turning in a homework or midterm portfolio assignment on time, please inform your instructor as soon as possible to request an extension.**

Otherwise, any assignment to be completed at home that is submitted late without a documented emergency will automatically receive half credit. Because the presentation must be given during class and because the final portfolio counts as a final exam, these assignments cannot be accepted late.

MAKEUP WORK

No quizzes or classwork may be submitted after the required date except in case of a documented emergency. See the section of the syllabus on attendance for an explanation of what is considered acceptable documentation for an absence. If you must miss class for a university event, please check the course schedule in advance, and ask your instructor as soon as possible to schedule a time to complete the assignments.

PARTICIPATION

Because the goal of this course is to practice and improve professional communication skills, both written and oral, active engagement in discussions, peer review, and group activities is essential. Participation will be worth **10% of the final average** and will be assessed as part of the final exam grade along with the portfolio. This portion of your grade will be determined at the end of the course through **a combination of your instructor's assessment, your peers' assessment, and your own assessment of your contributions.** Below is a rubric containing the criteria on which these assessments will be based and the corresponding percentages.

9-10%

- demonstrates exceptional preparation in class (reads, rereads, makes notes, and reflects on all required material and all recommended material in advance)
- always offers astute, thorough responses to questions asked directly and often to questions asked indirectly to the class in general
- always contributes helpfully to peer review and group activities

7-8%

- demonstrates above average preparation in class (reads and reflects on all required material and all or most recommended material in advance)
- often offers astute, thorough responses to questions asked directly and sometimes to questions asked indirectly to the class in general
- often contributes helpfully to peer review and group activities

5-6%

- demonstrates average preparation in class (reads all assigned material and may read some recommended material in advance)
- sometimes offers astute, thorough responses to questions asked directly and occasionally to questions asked indirectly to the class in general
- sometimes contributes helpfully to peer review and group activities

3-4%

- demonstrates below average preparation in class (skims all or reads some of the required material in advance)
- occasionally offers astute, thorough responses to questions asked directly and does not respond to questions asked indirectly to the class in general
- occasionally contributes helpfully to peer review and group activities

1-2%

- demonstrates minimal preparation in class (skims some of the required material in advance)
- offers minimal responses to questions asked directly and does not respond to questions asked indirectly to the class in general
- occasionally contributes helpfully to peer review and group activities

0%

- demonstrates no preparation in class (does not read assigned material in advance)
- offers no responses to questions asked directly or indirectly to the class in general
- does not contribute to peer review or group activities

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

You are expected to behave with the same level of civility in this course as you would at a workplace. While you are free and encouraged to express your opinions and ideas when appropriate, discriminatory language regarding sex, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or disability will not be tolerated in any form. Talking on cell phones, texting, falling asleep, having side conversations, working on assignments for other classes, and doing anything else unrelated to this course will affect not only your productivity but that of your classmates and your instructor, so please act with professional courtesy and avoid these distractions. In particular, please silence all electronic devices before the beginning of class. Those who break the code of conduct may be asked to remove themselves from the classroom or the class itself (in extreme or repeated cases), which will result in a reduced participation grade or failure of the course, respectively.