

**2111F: Introduction to Professional Writing
Fall 2013****Section: # 005****Instructor: Dr. Rasmus R. Simonsen****Email: rsimonse@uwo.ca****Time: T 9:30-11:30am; TH 9:30-10:30am****Office: UC 378****Room: SH-3307****Office hours: TH 12:30-2:30pm****Course Description and Objectives**

This course aims to introduce you to the basic grammatical and stylistic principles of good, clear, written English within a specific context. That context is professional writing. You will be introduced as well to basic theories and concepts in professional writing, given opportunities to develop skills applicable to writing in a professional context, and encouraged to read about and apply findings from research in professional writing. More generally, the course aims to help you develop “the ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences” (Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents’ statement on ‘University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations’ 24 October 2005).

To provide the context for the course assignments, this course makes use of case studies. You will read a chapter about concepts of professional writing in the textbook, and then either create or read in case study materials a case study in which those concepts are operational. After group discussion of the cases, you will be asked to complete a written assignment that incorporates those principles (see ‘**Final Course Grades**’ below).

Required Texts

Locker, Kitty O. and Isobel Findlay. *Business Communication Now*. Second Canadian edition. McGraw-Hill Ryerson: Toronto, 2012.

CasePack for Western Writing 2111F/G (McGraw-Hill Ryerson; inc. w/textbook)

Messenger, de Bruyn et al. *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook: Essentials Edition*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Course Policies**1. Attendance**

You are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. If you do have legitimate reasons for missing the occasional class (to a maximum of *six class hours*), notify me (with your reasons) either before or as soon as possible after the missed class. If I find your reasons acceptable, that absence will not be recorded. If you end the term with recorded absences totaling *seven to nine class hours*, a **ten-mark penalty will** be applied to your final course grade (e.g. an earned grade of 83 will be reported as a 73); if you end

the term with recorded absences totaling **more than nine class hours**, you **will** receive a failing grade for the course unless (in either case) you are able to secure appropriate documentation through the Dean's office of your home faculty.

Note: a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of 'make-up class' in another course **will** count as non-attendance, and **will** attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario **shall not require** a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student's other scheduled class times. If you are asked or 'required' to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counselor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is **your** choice; your absence will not be excused.

See also the section '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

2. **Late Policy**

All written assignments are due in class as stipulated in the course schedule. Late papers will receive a **grade no higher than 65%**, unless you negotiate a new deadline with me **prior to the original due date** by making a request **in writing for a new deadline in either a memo or an email which clearly states your reason(s) for requesting an extension** (see also '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below).

3. **Medical Accommodation Policy**

For Western's Policy on Accommodation For Medical Illness, see:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>

(downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading)

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical or other grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth 10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds cannot be granted by the instructor or the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, and Professional Communication, and the Program requires students in these circumstances to follow the same procedure when seeking academic accommodation on non-medical (i.e. non-medical compassionate or other) grounds.

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth less than 10% of their final grade** must also apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Where in these circumstances the accommodation is being sought on **non-medical grounds**, students should consult in the first instance with their instructor, who may elect to make a decision on the request directly, or refer the student to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive medical documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an 'Attendance' policy in the course). **All** medical documentation **must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

- 4. Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing**
Please refer to the “Information for All Students in a Writing Course” for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that I do not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean’s office of your home faculty.

- 5. Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism**

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above). Plagiarized work will receive an ‘F’ (ranging from 0 to 49) and may result in failure in the course as a whole.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between Western and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>.”

Note: In this course, the final versions of your assignments must be submitted electronically to turnitin.com through your section’s Sakai HomePage. Your instructor will provide you with further information and instructions on this procedure.

- 6. Prerequisites**

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

- 7. Final Course Grades:** your final grade in the course will be based on your performance in the required work, weighted as shown below.

■ Resume and Cover Letter Assignment

10%

- In-class exercises, quizzes etc. 10%
- 3 Case Study Assignments 50%
- Formal Report (final assignment; research-based) 30%
- **Note:** each of Assignments 3, 4, and 5 include a preliminary peer-reviewed draft stage. In each week a peer-review session is scheduled, you must bring to class a copy (paper or electronic) of a preliminary draft of the assignment in question. This draft should be sufficiently complete (in my judgment) to allow you to obtain meaningful comment on it from one or more of your peers. I will ask you to show me your draft in class, during the peer-review session. Failure to attend class with a sufficiently complete draft, and/or to participate by reviewing at least one other student's draft **will result in the earned mark for that assignment being reduced by 10%**. So for example what would have been an earned mark of 78 for Assignment #3 will have a mark of 70 recorded. **Note** that this penalty will be applied *in addition* to any other applicable penalties, e.g. for late submission.

Schedule

Week One **Introduction: Writing and Rhetoric in a Professional Context**
 Locker/Findlay, Chapters 1, 2, 3, and Appendix 'A'

Week Two **Rhetoric: The Concept of Audience**
 Locker/Findlay, Chapter 2
Case ("Toyota") and Assignment #1: (Audience Analysis; 250 words/10%) due Week Three

Week Three **Writing Clearly**
 Locker/Findlay, Chapter 3 and Appendix 'A'

Week Three Assignment #1 Submission: Audience Analysis memo or letter (250 words; 10%)

Week Four **Resumes and Cover Letters**
 Locker/Findlay, Chapter 13
Assignment #2: "Job Package" (letter and resume 10%) due Week Five

**Bring to class a job advertisement for a position you could apply for now with your existing skills; you will draft an application (cover letter/resume) for that position*

Week Five **Writing Informative, Positive and Negative Messages**
 Locker/Findlay, Chapters 7 and 8
Case ("Canadian Cancer Society") and Assignment #3: (Positive and/or Negative Message; 350 - 500 words/15%) due Week Seven (draft due in-class Week Six)

Week Five Assignment #2 Submission: 'Job Package' (letter and resume 10%)

- Week Six** **Writing Informative, Positive and Negative Messages**
Locker/Findlay, Chapters 7 and 8
Case and Assignment #3: (Positive and/or Negative Message)

Peer Review of Assignment 3 (Positive and/or Negative Message) Draft
- Week Seven** **Writing Persuasive Messages**
Locker/Findlay, Chapter 9 (and 4)
Case (“Just Clean Your Hands”) and Assignment #4: (as foundation for persuasive memo or brief report w/ visuals; 750 words/25%) due Week Ten (draft due in-class Week Nine)

Week Seven Assignment #3 Submission: Positive and/or Negative Message memo or letter (350 - 500 words; 15%)
- Week Eight** **Writing Persuasive Messages**
Locker/Findlay, Chapter 9 (and 4)
Case and Assignment #4: (Persuasive Message) due Week Ten (draft due in-class Week Nine)
- Week Nine** **Document Design and Visuals**
Locker/Findlay, Chapter 4

Peer Review of Assignment 4 (Persuasive Message) Draft
- Week Ten** **Cross-Cultural Communication**
Locker/Findlay, Chapter 5
Case (“Cross-Cultural Negotiation”) and Assignment #5: (Case[s] as foundation for formal report exercise; approximately 1250 – 1500 words [excluding front and back matter]/30%) due Week Thirteen (draft due in-class Week 12)

Week Ten Assignment #4 Submission: Persuasive Memo or brief report (750 words, with visual(s); 25%)
- Week Eleven** **Writing Proposals and Reports;**
Locker/Findlay, Chapters 10 and 11
Case and Assignment #5: (Case[s] as foundation for formal report exercise)
- Week Twelve** **Writing Proposals and Reports**
Locker/Findlay, Chapters 10 and 11
Case and Assignment #5: (Case[s] as foundation for formal report exercise)

Peer Review of Assignment #5 draft formal report
- Week Thirteen** **Continue Work on Assignment #5; Conclusions**

Week Thirteen Assignment #5 Submission: Final Formal Report (1250 – 1500 words [excluding front and back matter]30%)

