

2111F/G: Introduction to Professional Writing**F/W 2018-19****Instructor: Prof. Marielle Ayles****Section: # 001****Time/Room: M 9:30-12:30 UC 1220**

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. 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). More specifically, upon successful completion of this course, you will have demonstrated the ability to

1. identify and define rhetorical contexts for professional communication;
2. identify, define, and understand ‘purpose for writing’ within those rhetorical contexts;
3. understand the relationship between context, purpose and audience and how that relationship should shape a message;
4. use that understanding to develop a persuasive argument;
5. generate ideas for a variety of communicative purposes, such as communicating a negative message with positive emphasis;
6. understand basic principles of cross-cultural communication and their significance;
7. understand basic principles of document design and apply them;
8. write cohesive and coherent prose using the grammar and conventions of Standard Written English;
9. identify and correct errors in composition, grammar, and mechanics; and
10. incorporate feedback into revisions.

Case studies provide the context for the assignments. You will read a chapter in the textbook that outlines concepts of professional writing and a case study in which those concepts are operational. The written assignments incorporate those principles (see ‘**Final Course Grades**’ below).

Required Texts

Locker, Kitty O. and Isobel Findlay. *Business Communication Now*. Fourth Canadian edition. McGraw-Hill Ryerson: Toronto, 2018.

Create CasePack for Western Writing 2111F/G (McGraw-Hill Ryerson). Note: this may be sold either bundled with the textbook (Locker/Findlay) or separately. Check with the Bookstore.

Messenger, de Bruyn et al. *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook. Second Essentials Edition*. Oxford University Press, 2017.

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

▫ In-class quizzes on sentence structure/grammar issues	15%
▫ Diagnostic Paper: Audience Analysis (up to 500 words)	Ungraded
▫ Assignment 1: Negative Message with positive emphasis (750 words)	20%
▫ Assignment 2: Persuasive Message with visual (800-1200 words)	25%
▫ Assignment 3: Formal Report: research-based (1000 words, excluding front and back matter)	40%

Missing Draft -- 10% deduction: Assignments 1, 2 and 3 include a preliminary peer-reviewed draft stage. For each scheduled peer-review session, you must bring to class a copy of a draft of the assignment. Drafts must be sufficiently complete (in my judgment) for meaningful comment from your peers. I will ask you to show me your draft *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%**. For example, an earned mark of 78 will result in a final mark of 70. **Note** that this penalty will be applied *in addition* to any other applicable penalties, e.g. for late submission.

Course Policies

Attendance policies:

Attendance is required to improve as a writer. Here is the Writing Studies attendance policy in this class:

- You may miss up to three hours (the equivalent of one week of class) of class meetings during the term without explanation. That means that the first three class hours you miss will be recorded as absences but *excused provided you don't miss any more*.
- However, if you miss a total of four to nine class hours (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 10% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 72).
- If you miss a total of more than nine hours of class meetings (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class meetings) your final grade will be reduced by 15% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 68).

This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have grounds for waiving an absence (e.g. if you've missed three hours, and you need to miss another hour or more) discuss the reasons in advance with your instructor. If your absence is prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, who may require documentation. That advisor may then contact all of your instructors. See also: '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

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 Western University **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 counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a Writing class in order to write such a test in another class, that is your choice; your absence will not be excused.

Attendance also extends to tardiness. If you **are more than 20 minutes late**, you will be **penalized an hour of attendance**. Please make every effort to be on time as late entry can disrupt the flow of discussion in our class. Early departures from class, which have not been previously arranged with the instructor, will also be counted as an absence. If you leave during the break, you will be docked an hour of attendance.

Late Assignments Policy: Assignments are due on the dates specified in the syllabus.

Late papers **will be penalized 2.5% per day – including weekends and holidays – unless I** have granted you an extension of the due date. For example, an Assignment submitted one day late without permission that would have earned a grade of 80 will instead receive a grade of 76.

You must contact me ahead of time to request an extension, and you must provide a suitable reason. *See also the section 'Medical Accommodation Policy' below.*

Important: you are responsible for keeping a copy of all assignments you submit.