

**2111F: Introduction to Professional Writing
Fall 2021****Section: 002**
Time/Room: Tues 9:30-12:30, SH 3307
Instructor: Dr. Tim Freeborn**Email: Please use OWL Message**
Office: UC 1426
**Office Hours: Thursday 10:30-12:30 or
by appointment****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,” December, 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 the 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.

Required Texts

Rentz, Kathryn, Paula Lentz, and Marco Campagna. *Business Communication: A Problem-Solving Approach*. First Canadian edition. Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 2021.

Messenger, de Bruyn, et al. *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook: Second Essentials Edition*. Toronto: 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 (3x5%) 15%

- Assignment 1: Negative Message with positive emphasis (up to 1000 words) 20%
- Assignment 2: Proposal with visual (up to 1200 words) 25%
- Assignment 3: Formal Report with visual (1200-1400 words, excluding front and back matter) 40%
- **Note:** Each of Assignments 1, 2, and 3 includes 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 judgement) 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).

Attendance Policies

Attendance at class 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 good reasons for waiving an absence of one class meeting (e.g. if you've missed three hours, and need or want to miss another class meeting) discuss these reasons with your instructor within one week of that absence. If your absence is extended and 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 the **Medical Accommodation Policy** below.

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.

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 counsellor 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.

Email Policy

When you contact me using OWL Message, you can expect a response within twenty-four hours. If you email me using Outlook/Western email, you can expect a response within one week. If you email me using a non-UWO account, you will not receive a response. If I foresee that I cannot respond to emails within times listed above, I will post an announcement on OWL. Please keep in mind that you should use email to arrange appointments, to inform me that you will miss a class, and to ask relatively simple questions (i.e., questions that I can answer in one or two sentences).

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/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.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).

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 The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Antirequisites

The antirequisite for this course is WRIT 1031F/G. You cannot take this course if you have taken WRIT 1031F/G.

Academic Accommodation and Consideration

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation. All requests for consideration for assessments worth more than 30% of a final grade must be directed to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.

In this course, all requests for academic consideration must be directed to the Academic Counselling office of the student's Home Faculty if a SRA will not be used.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

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 your instructor does 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.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Schedule

Week One **Introduction; Workplace Communication**
Sept. 14 **Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 1 and 5 and Reference Chapter A**

Week Two **Audience, Purpose, and Medium**
Sept. 21 **Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 2**

Introduce Assignment 1: Negative Messages with Positive Emphasis (up to 1000 words total for both documents/20%) due Week Five (draft due in class, Week Four)

Week Three
Sept. 28 Goodwill
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 6

Week Four
Oct. 5 Good-News, Neutral, and Bad-News Messages
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 8 and 9

Assignment 1 draft due; peer review
Quiz 1: Parts of Speech

Week Five
Oct. 12 Good-News, Neutral, and Bad-News Messages
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 8 and 9

Assignment 1 due

Week Six
Oct. 19 Persuasive Messages and Proposals
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 10

Introduce Assignment 2: Unsolicited Internal Proposal (up to 1200 words/25%) due Week Nine (draft due in class, Week Eight)

Week Seven
Oct. 26 Document Design
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 3

Fall Term Reading Week: 5 p.m., Friday, October 29–midnight, Sunday, November 7

Week Eight
Nov. 9 Visuals
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 4

Assignment 2 draft due; peer review
Quiz 2: Punctuation

Introduce Assignment 3: Internal Formal Report (1200-1400 words excluding front and back matter/40%) due end of classes (draft due in-class Week Eleven)

Week Nine
Nov. 16 Communicating Across Cultures; Researching and Writing Reports
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 7 and 11

Assignment 2 due
Quiz 3: Editing Exercise

Week Ten
Nov. 23 Researching and Writing Reports
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 11 and 12

Week Eleven
Nov. 30 Employment Communications
Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 15

Assignment 3 draft due; peer review

Week Twelve Researching and Writing Reports
Dec. 7 Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 11 and 12

Assignment 3 due either in class Week Twelve or no later than the last day of classes: Fall Term—midnight, Wednesday, December 8.