

**2111F: Introduction to Professional Writing  
Fall 2021****Section:** 003**Time/Room:** Wednesdays, 9:30am-12:30pm,  
UC 1220**Instructor:** Sonia Halpern**Email:** shalpern@uwo.ca**Office:** UC 1421**Office hours:** Tuesdays, 10:00-  
11:30am VIA ZOOM**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 15%
- Assignment 1: Negative Message with Positive Emphasis (maximum 1000 words) 20%
- Assignment 2: Proposal with Visual (maximum 1200 words) 25%
- Assignment 3: Formal Report with Visual (1200-1400 words, excluding front and back matter) 40%
- **Note:** Assignments 1, 2, and 3 include a peer-reviewed draft stage that has specific requirements. Please see **Assignments and Peer Review** section below.

## Course Policies

### Attendance:

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: '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.

**Assignments/Peer Reviews:**

You are required to submit TWO hard-copy first drafts of each writing assignment for all Peer Reviews (see Class Meeting Schedule below): one for your instructor AND one for your peer. Students who do not submit a complete first draft to the instructor OR to the peer will **lose 10%** from the earned grade for that assignment. In other words, an assignment that would have earned a 78, for example, will receive instead a recorded grade of 70. This penalty will be applied in addition to any other penalties incurred (e.g., 5% for late submission of the final draft).

You are required to submit your hard-copy final draft on the due date (see Class Meeting Schedule below) WITH the peer-reviewed draft. Students who do not submit both will **lose 10%** from the earned grade for that assignment. In other words, an assignment that would have earned a 78, for example, will receive instead a recorded grade of 70. This penalty will be applied in addition to any other penalties incurred (e.g., 5% for late submission of the final draft).

**Late Assignments:**

Assignments are due on the dates specified in the syllabus.

Late final drafts **will be penalized 5% per day – including weekends and holidays – unless** the instructor has 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 the instructor ahead of time to request an extension and 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.***

**Electronic Devices:**

During all lectures and Peer-Reviews, the use of cell phones, iPods, any other potentially disruptive devices, and lap tops for recreational use (web surfing, e-mailing, etc.), is **NOT** permitted in the classroom.

**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](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>.

### **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](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.

**Antirequisite:**

WRIT 1030F/G

**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/>**

**Western University COVID-Related Ground Rules**

**Masking Guidelines:**

Students will be expected to wear triple layer, non-medical, paper masks at all times in the classroom as per University policy and public health directives. Students who are unable to wear a mask must seek formal accommodation through Western Accessible Education, and present medical documentation.

Students are not permitted to eat or drink while in class to ensure masks stay in place. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks.

Students unwilling to wear a mask as stipulated by Western policy and public health directives will be referred to the Dean, and such actions will be considered a violation of the student Code of Conduct.

**Course Absences due to Daily COVID Screening Questionnaire:**

Missed assessments (e.g., presentations, essays, quizzes, tests, midterms, etc.) require formal academic considerations (typically self-reported absences and/or academic counselling).

Methods for dealing with missed work and course content are at the discretion of the instructor(s). Students should be aware that some learning outcomes cannot be easily made up and may need to be completed in a subsequent year. Your instructor will provide you with further information as to how this applies within this course.

Students who demonstrate a pattern of routinely missing coursework due to self-reported

COVID symptoms, and therefore do not demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes of the course, will not receive credit for the course.

**Contingency Plan for an In-Person Class Pivoting to 100% Online Learning:**

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor. In the event that online learning is required, a stable v1 (2021.09.03) internet connection with working microphone and webcam will be required. As has been the case in the past, the decision to pivot to online learning will be made by Western, and not individual instructors or departments (excepting temporary online instruction in the event of instructor illness).

**COVID-Related Regulations Summary:**

- Western has both a vaccine and a mask mandate
- Students must complete the symptom checklist every day. Students who are found to be on campus who have not completed the symptom checklist or have failed the daily symptom check will be referred for investigation under the Student Code of Conduct.
- Students are expected to carry their student cards to campus each day in anticipation of spot checks by Building Ambassadors.
- Students not wearing masks will be asked to leave the classroom. Students with accommodations approved by Accessible Education must make arrangements with the instructor before coming to class, lab, practicum or clinical site.
- Eating and drinking is prohibited in the classroom to facilitate proper mask wearing. Individuals found to have attended class without appropriate vaccination, or who are found to have engaged in fraud related to the vaccination policy, will face academic sanctions up to and including expulsion.
- Students who are not fully vaccinated by October 12th and who are not granted an exemption under the policy will be issued a trespass order. Enforcement of this trespass order will be carried out by campus police, and will be accompanied by academic sanctions, including expulsion.
- Please be respectful of your classmates and your instructors at all times, as we navigate re-entry.

**Please See Course Schedule on Next Page**

Western University, London, Ontario  
Department of English and Writing Studies  
Writing 2111F (Section 003)

Sept.-Dec. 2021: Wednesdays 9:30-12:30pm, UC 1220

**\*Please Note that all Drafts Must be Hard Copies and are Due at the Start (within the First 20 Minutes) of Class\***

CLASS MEETING SCHEDULE

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Week One:</b><br>Sept. 8    | <b>No Class (Rosh Hashanah)</b><br><br>Introduction; Workplace Communication<br>Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 1, 5, and<br>Reference Chapter A (lecture posted on OWL)   |
| <b>Week Two:</b><br>Sept. 15   | Audience, Purpose, and Medium<br>Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 2<br><br><b>-Introduce Assignment 1: Negative Message with Positive Emphasis<br/>(maximum 1000 words total for both documents) (20%)<br/>-Due Date of First Draft: Week Four<br/>-Due Date of Final Draft: Week Five</b> |
| <b>Week Three:</b><br>Sept. 22 | Goodwill<br>Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 6<br><br>Messenger, Chapters 8 (Verbs) and 15 (Commas)  |
| <b>Week Four:</b><br>Sept. 29  | Good-News, Neutral, and Bad-News Messages<br>Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 8 and 9<br><br><b>-Due: First Draft of Assignment 1; Peer Review</b>  |
| <b>Week Five:</b><br>Oct. 6    | Good-News, Neutral, and Bad-News Messages<br>Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 8 and 9<br><br>Messenger, Chapters 16 (Semi-Colons) and 17 (Colons)<br><br><b>-Due: Final Draft of Assignment 1</b>   |

- Week Six:**  
Oct. 13                    **Persuasive Messages and Proposals**  
                                 **Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 10**
- Introduce Assignment 2: Proposal with Visual (maximum 1200 words) (25%)**  
**-Due Date of First Draft: Week Eight**  
**-Due Date of Final Draft: Week Ten**
- Quiz #1 (5%)**
- Week Seven:**  
Oct. 20                    **Document Design**  
                                 **Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 3**
- Messenger, Chapters 14 (Diction) and 5 (Modifiers and Construction)**
- Week Eight:**  
Oct. 27                    **Visuals**  
                                 **Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 4**
- Due: First Draft of Assignment 2; Peer Review**
- Introduce Assignment 3: Formal Report (1200-1400 words excluding front and back matter) (40%)**  
**-Due Date of First Draft: Week Twelve**  
**-Due Date of Final Draft: Week Fourteen**
- Week Nine:**  
Nov. 3                    **- No Class: Fall Term Reading Week: Friday, October 29, 5:00pm-Sunday, November 7, midnight**
- Week Ten:**  
Nov. 10                    **Communicating Across Cultures; Researching and Writing Reports**  
                                 **Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 7; Chapters 11 and 12**
- Due: Final Draft of Assignment 2**
- Week Eleven:**  
Nov. 17                    **Employment Communications**  
                                 **Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapter 15**
- Quiz #2 (10%)**
- Week Twelve:**  
Nov. 24                    **Researching and Writing Reports**  
                                 **Rentz, Lentz, and Campagna, Chapters 11 and 12**
- Due: First Draft of Assignment 3; Peer Review**
- Week Thirteen:**  
Dec. 1                    **-Essay Consultation**
- Week Fourteen:**  
December 8                **-Due: Final Draft of Assignment 3**