

**2111F/G: Introduction to Professional Writing
F/W 2021-22****Section: #** 2111G 001**Time/Room:** Mon. 9:30 AM -12:30 PM UC -1220 (lab)**Instructor:** Prof. Marielle Ayles**Office hours:** Zoom Appointments**Email:****Office:**

Check that Owl Announcements are sent to your phone. I post updates and additional information regularly that sometimes require a response, and if we return to campus, I will be providing information about what to expect.

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 quiz on sentence structure/grammar issues (Week 7) 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:** In on campus classes, Assignments 1, 2, and 3 include a preliminary peer-reviewed draft stage. In the weeks that peer-review sessions are scheduled, you must bring to class a copy (paper and electronic) of a draft that is sufficiently complete (in my judgement) to allow you to obtain meaningful comment on it from peers. I will ask to see the draft at the start of 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, what would have been an earned mark of 78, for example, 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: Online January (and possibly beyond)

Since we do not meet formally this January, attendance and participation in Forums are intertwined. While online classes are generally asynchronous, they are not correspondence or self-paced. You must attend class by logging into our OWL section and posting responses to the set discussion topics. You are expected to contribute a **minimum of two postings/week** (defined as running from Monday to Sunday) in the discussion forums, **at least one of which must be a reply to another student and at least one of which must be a 'new' post responding to the main discussion topic**. Postings must be distributed so that at least one contribution is made **by Thursday** and **at least one after Thursday**.

Your weekly participation grade is based on whether you have fulfilled the posting requirements described below in terms of **1) frequency and number of posts**, and **2) quality of posting**.

1) *Frequency and Number of Posts Made*

- ✓ At least two posts have been made during the week, and at least one is made by Thursday and at least one after Thursday.

2) *Quality of Posting*

All posts on the Discussion Board must

- Contribute something meaningful to the board.

- Support your opinion with sufficient reasons or evidence.
- Display good grammar and organization.

Postings should not

- ◆ Contain disrespectful, insulting, or offensive language.
- ◆ Be excessively long (more than one screen length) or excessively short.
- ◆ Be unrelated to the forum topic.
- ◆ Only say things like “I agree with you” or “Nice comment!” that do not contribute substantially to the discussion.

Absence Policies (Online)

Note that ‘attendance’ as defined in this section is mandatory. Failure to meet the minimum number of posting requirements for **three weeks** where there is Discussion (online) will result in your final grade in this course being **reduced by 10%**. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements **for four or more weeks** where there is Discussion will result in your final grade being **reduced by 15%**.

This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If your absence is prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with the 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 policies: On Campus February-April

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.

Western University COVID-Related Ground Rules Masking Guidelines:

Students will be expected to wear triple layer 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.