Western Arts&Humanities

Department of English and Writing Studies

2111G: Introduction to Professional Writing
Winter 2025

Section: # 001
Time/Room:
Instructor:

Email:
Office:
Office hours:

I post announcements on Brightspace (updates, scheduling changes, etc.), so be sure to set notifications on your devices.

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, Marco Campagna, and Carleigh Brady. *Business Communication: A Problem-solving Approach*. Second Canadian edition. Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 2024. **This textbook costs between $59.00 (180-day rental) and $112.15 (paperback). This edition is required.**

Messenger, de Bruyn, et al. *The Canadian Writer's Handbook: Third Essentials Edition*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2023. This textbook costs between $22.00 (180-day rental) and $42.85 (paperback). **This edition is preferred, but earlier editions will work for reference, even though page numbers won't line up with the course materials.**

Course Requirements and Grade Allocations (the schedule appears below)

Assignment #1: Negative messages with positive emphasis (up to 750 words for both documents)	**20%**
Assignment #2: Proposal with visual (900-1000 words)	**25%**
Assignment #3: Formal report with visual (1000-1200 words, excluding front and back matter)	**40%**
Grammar Quizzes (in Brightspace; best two of three)	**15%**

Note: Assignments 1, 2, and 3 include a preliminary peer-reviewed draft stage. In the weeks of scheduled peer-review sessions, you must bring to class a paper or electronic draft of the assignment. I will ask you to show it to me during the peer-review session. It must be sufficiently complete (in my judgement) to allow you to obtain meaningful comment from your peers. ***Be sure to submit electronic drafts in Brightspace in a format that I can access***. Failure to attend class with a sufficiently complete draft and/or to participate by reviewing at least one or more students' draft ***will result in the earned mark for that assignment being reduced by 10% (i.e., submitting without attending and vice versa results in the deduction).*** So, for example, what would have been an earned mark of 78 for Assignment #3 will receive a mark of 70. ***Note*** that this penalty will be applied *in addition* to other applicable penalties (e.g., for late submission).

OWL and Tech Support
Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (https://westernu.brightspace.com/) regularly for news and updates. It is the primary method for disseminating information, *so be sure to set notification on your devices.* If you need assistance with OWL, see the OWL Brightspace Help page or contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800. Also, tickets can be submitted through the Tech Support link on the course homepage.

Assignment Format
All assignments must be electronic (typed)and have your name, course name, section number, and instructor's name on the first page. Do not use a cover page; these are particularly unnecessary for online submissions. When using sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow MLA citation practice. See Rentz, Lentz, Campagna, and Brady, Reference Chapter B, and *The Canadian Writer's Handbook: Third Essentials Edition*, Sections 36a and 36c.

Submitting Assignments
Assignments are due on the dates specified in the syllabus below). Late papers will be penalized 5% per day unless I have permitted an extension of the due date. You must contact me ahead of time for an extension and provide a suitable reason (see also **Academic Accommodation**, below). All term work must be completed by the last day of classes. Any term work not submitted by the last day of classes will receive a grade of zero without official academic accommodation. Important: you are responsible for keeping a copy of all assignments you submit.

Procedure for Assignment Submission
Under policies adopted by Writing Studies, final drafts of all assignments in 2100-level writing courses must be submitted through Turnitin.com (see **Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism**, below). Consequently, you will find Turnitin submission links for each assignment on OWL. You will upload your final version of each assignment through its link, as a single

Word (.doc or .docx extension) file,* titled to identify you as author. Your graded assignment, with comments, will be returned to you in the same format through Brightspace.

***Note**: PDF or other read-only formats and compressed/zipped files are not acceptable. Note: Turnitin will not accept more than a single file submission.* In other words, do not try to submit an assignment twice or in parts as two or more files. Also note that I access your original uploaded Word file.

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.

Attendance also extends to tardiness. If you are more than 20 minutes late or leave early, you will be penalized for one 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 it ***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 assignment at times that 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 to write such a test, that is ***your*** choice; your absence will not be excused.

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

Academic Accommodation
University policy on academic considerations is described here. This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation.

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests through the Student Absence Portal, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage: https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline. All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation, which may include a Student Medical Certificate. Recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

In this course, because not all elements of the quizzes (only two of three quizzes get counted) are required in the calculation of the final course grade, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for missed quizzes.

Intellectual Property and Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g., PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.