

ENGLISH 202D: BUSINESS WRITING

Spring 2019

Section 030, 032, 041, 049

TR 9:05-10:20, 10:35-11:50, 1:35-2:50, 3:50-4:20

Rackley Building 103, Sparks 15A, Huck 006, Sparks 15A

Instructor: Phillip Zapkin

Office Location: Burrowes 017

Office Hours: W 11-2 PM



COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 202D introduces students to the conventions, genres, and strategies of business communication. In particular, it focuses on skills in critical analysis, document design, reader-centered writing, and professional discourse.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- decipher and understand the discourse features of business communication;
- utilize a range of writing processes appropriate to various writing tasks;
- forecast the organization of communications by using preview and transitional statements, headings, and effective page design;
- deploy appropriate generic conventions and formats for letters, resumes, memoranda, and a variety of informal and formal reports; and
- collaborate effectively in a community of writers to provide feedback on each other's work.

REQUIRED TEXT

Oliu, Walter E., Charles T. Brusaw, and Gerald J. Alred. *Writing That Works: Communicating Effectively on the Job*. 12th ed. Macmillan, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-319-01948-8.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

For this course, you will complete 5 major projects, reading quizzes, and participate in both in-class and Canvas forum discussions.

Project	Grade Weight
Topic Approval Proposal	10%
Business Messages	15%
Oral Progress Report	10%
Job Application Documents	20%
Formal Analytical Report	20%
Reading Quizzes	15%
Participation	10%
Total	100%

GRADING SCALE

The grades of A, B, C, D, and F indicate the following qualities of academic performance:

A = (Excellent/Superior) Indicates exceptional achievement

B = (Good/Very Good) Indicates strong achievement

C = (Satisfactory) Met assignment requirements/course standards

D = (Poor) Indicates only minimal achievement

F = (Failure) Indicates inadequate achievement necessitating a repetition of the course in order to secure credit

MAJOR PROJECTS

You must hand in all major projects to pass this course.

This course will hold you to the professional standards of business communication.

- Each writing project should look professional and polished.
- Whether it is a resume, memo, or report, each project should exhibit correct formatting.
- Grading will reflect the seriousness with which these matters are frequently viewed in the working world.

1. *The Topic Approval Proposal (TAP)*

Write a business letter seeking my approval for your chosen topic and permission to proceed with the research necessary to complete the final assignment—your formal analytical report.

The TAP is the first document in a sequence that also includes the oral progress report (Project 3), and the formal analytical report (Project 5). You may work in a small group, with a partner, or alone for these 3 projects.

2. *Business Messages (BM)*

Compose responses to the scenarios provided using a variety of writing strategies. You will also include a cover memo outlining challenges you faced and strategies you used.

3. *The Oral Progress Report (OPR)*

Apprise your instructor and peers of the progress your group is making on your final project and seek any help you might need.

4. *Job Application Documents (JAD)*

Rhetorically analyze a company and job advertisement, then compose and design a resume and application letter that are fully targeted to that specific position. You will also submit a copy of your “generic” resume, a copy of the job ad, and a cover memo describing how you have targeted your resume and application letter.

5. *The Formal Analytical Report (FAR)*

Complete the formal analytical report that you described in your topic-approval proposal letter. The report must do the following:

- define a problem or opportunity;
- analyze the criteria for a satisfactory solution;
- propose one or more potential solutions; and
- argue for the one solution that best satisfies the criteria.

Reading Quizzes

There will be 10 in-class quizzes based on chapters in *Writing That Works*. Each quiz will be 5 questions, with each question worth 1 point. Your letter grade will be cumulative:

Letter Grade	Cumulative Points
A	50-45
B	44-40
C	39-35
D	34-30
F	29 or Below

A missed quiz can be made up during office hours within 1 week of when it was originally administered.

Participation

This holistic grade includes participation in full class discussions, reading from the projector or textbook, active engagement in group work and peer review, and responding to prompts in the Canvas discussion forums.

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

You are allowed to miss two classes with *no penalty* to your grade. *Each class missed beyond those two will cost 1/3 of your overall course grade.*

- Excused absences do not count against your grade. In order for an absence to be excused you must discuss it with me as early as possible beforehand (at least 24 hours). Reasons for excused absences may include: religious holidays, military service, university required activities (i.e., participation in a university sports team), or severe illness or injury.
- If you miss class, *it is your responsibility to make up the missed material*. Ask a classmate to take notes for you, come to office hours, and/or email me as soon as possible, preferably before the missed class period.

LATE POLICY

Submitting a project after the specified deadline will result in the loss of one full letter grade per late day.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a shared commitment to reject unethical intellectual practices like plagiarism and cheating. This is a foundation of academic work.

- The guidelines for US academic integrity standards are laid out in the University's Code of Conduct (see our Canvas page).
- Consistent with this expectation, the Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through their efforts.
- Academic integrity includes a commitment by all members of the University community not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception.

ACCESSIBILITY: DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, contact the appropriate disability services office on campus, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation (equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/applying-for-services). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, the disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with me as early as possible so we can discuss accommodations.

The Student Disability Resources Web site provides contact information for every Penn State campus (equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/disability-coordinator). For further information, please visit the Student Disability Resources website at equity.psu.edu/sdr.

EDUCATION EQUITY: BIAS REPORTING

Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity via the Report Bias webpage (equity.psu.edu/reportbias/).

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Penn State offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): 814-863-0395, studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/
- Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400
- Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741

STANDARDS OF CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Classroom behavior should always reflect the essential Penn State values of civility, integrity, and respect for the dignity and rights of others. As such, the classroom space should be safe, orderly, and positive—free from disruptions, disorderly conduct, and harassment as defined in the University Code of Conduct, Section IV, B.

As instructor, I have the authority to request that any disruptive student(s) leave class for the class period. If disruptive behavior continues in subsequent class periods, a complaint may be filed with the Office of Student Conduct, which may result in the student being dismissed from class until University procedures have been completed.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change by me. I will notify you ahead of time in class and/or by email of any changes.

Readings Key: *WTW*=*Writing That Works*, *CA*=Canvas

WEEK 1

- ❖ T 8 Jan.: Introductions; Syllabus Overview; the Rhetorical Situation

HW: Read *WTW* chs. 1 and 2; Read *CA* “The Writing Instructor’s Approach to Grading”

- ❖ R 10 Jan.: Introduce Projects 1, 3, and 5; Planning Business Communications

HW: Read *WTW* chs. 3 and 4

WEEK 2

- ❖ T 15 Jan.: Writing and Revising Business Communications; **Reading Quiz #1**

HW: Read *WTW* ch. 13; Read *CA* “Formatting a Business Letter Sample” and “Art of the Paragraph”

- ❖ R 17 Jan.: Writing Proposals; Business Letter Formatting; **Reading Quiz #2**

HW: Read *WTW* chs. 5 and 6

WEEK 3

- ❖ T 22 Jan.: Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette; **Reading Quiz #3**

HW: TAP Draft

- ❖ R 24 Jan.: Introduce Project 2; TAP Peer Review

HW: **Topic Approval Proposal**; Read *WTW* ch. 9

Due: TAP Draft

WEEK 4

- ❖ T 29 Jan.: Writing Routine and Sensitive Messages; **Reading Quiz #4**

HW: Watch *CA* “Business Writing Strategies” sections 1, 2, 3, and “Persuasive Outline”

Due: **Topic Approval Proposal**

- ❖ R 31 Jan.: Writing to Persuade

HW: Read *WTW* ch. 8; Read *CA* “Formatting a Memo Sample”

WEEK 5

- ❖ T 5 Feb.: Formatting Memos and Emails; **Reading Quiz #5**

HW: Read *CA* “Politics and the English Language,” “Jack Dorsey’s Layoff Letter to Twitter’s Staff,” and “Microsoft Just Laid Off Thousands of Employees with a Hilariously Bad Memo”

- ❖ R 7 Feb.: Writing Clearly and Effectively; Sign Up for OPR

HW: Read *WTW* appendix A; Watch *CA* “Learning to Write for the Web”; Read *CA* “PSU Diversity Policy,” “Nike Diversity Policy,” and “Amazon Diversity Policy”

WEEK 6

- ❖ T 12 Feb.: Writing for Digital Spaces; **Reading Quiz #6**

HW: BM Draft

- ❖ R 14 Feb.: BM Peer Review

HW: **Business Messages**; Read *WTW* ch. 14

Due: BM Draft

WEEK 7

- ❖ T 19 Feb.: Introduce Project 3; Oral Presentation Strategies; **Reading Quiz #7**

HW: OPR; Read CA “3 Tricks to Get People to Actually Listen to Your Presentation”

Due: **Business Messages**

- ❖ R 21 Feb.: **ORAL PROGRESS REPORTS**

WEEK 8

- ❖ T 26 Feb.: **ORAL PROGRESS REPORTS**

- ❖ R 28 Feb.: **ORAL PROGRESS REPORTS**

HW: Read CA “Job Ad Theraplay, Inc”

WEEK 9

- ❖ T 5 Mar.: *Spring Break, No Class*

- ❖ R 7 Mar.: *Spring Break, No Class*

WEEK 10

- ❖ T 12 Mar.: Introduce Project 4; Critically Reading Job Ads and Company Websites

HW: Read *WTW* ch. 15

- ❖ R 14 Mar.: Writing and Formatting Generic Resumes; **Reading Quiz #8**

HW: Read CA “Guidelines for Resumes and Application Letters”; Watch CA “Writing a Resume”

WEEK 11

- ❖ T 19 Mar.: Tailoring Targeted Resumes

HW: Read CA “How a Tenacious Summer Analyst Applicant Got Laughed at by Goldman, Morgan, and Everyone Else on Wall Street”

- ❖ R 21 Mar.: Writing and Tailoring Application Letters

HW: Read CA “How To Write the Perfect LinkedIn Summary”; Watch CA “Learning Personal Branding” sections Introduction, 1, and 2

WEEK 12

- ❖ T 26 Mar.: Personal Branding and Social Media

HW: JAD Draft

- ❖ R 28 Mar.: Review Project 5; JAD Peer Review

HW: **Job Application Documents**; Read *WTW* ch. 11; Watch CA “Writing a Business Report: section 2; Read CA “Content Elements for Reports and Proposals”

Due: JAD Draft

WEEK 13

- ❖ T 2 Apr.: Prefatory and Supplemental Materials; **Reading Quiz #9**

HW: Read *WTW* ch. 7; Watch *CA* “Understanding the PARC System” and “Incorporating Graphics”; Read *CA* “How to Incorporate Visuals Into Your Report”

Due: **Job Application Documents**

- ❖ R 4 Apr.: *No Class*

WEEK 14

- ❖ T 9 Apr.: The PARC System; Incorporating Figures, Infographics, and Formatting; **Reading Quiz #10**

HW: Watch *CA* “Consider Language Formality”; Read *CA* “Formal and Informal Language”

Due:

- ❖ R 11 Apr.: Formal Language; Preview and Review Sections; Transitions

HW: Skim *CA* “Credit Suisse Report on Global Wealth_2011”; Watch *CA* “Word 2013: Creating Long Documents”

WEEK 15

- ❖ T 16 Apr.: Analyze A Sample Report

HW: FAR body with images

- ❖ R 18 Apr.: FAR Peer Review—body with images

HW: FAR prefatory materials

Due: FAR Body Draft

WEEK 16

- ❖ T 23 Apr.: FAR Peer Review—prefatory materials

HW: FAR full report draft

Due: FAR Prefatory Materials Draft

- ❖ R 25 Apr.: FAR Peer Review—full report

HW: **Formal Analytical Report**

Due: FAR Full Draft

- ❖ M 29 Apr.:

Due: **Formal Analytical Report, due before 11:59AM**