

## ENGLISH 202D: BUSINESS WRITING

Spring 2021  
Section 025, 052, 053  
Remote Asynchronous

Instructor: Phillip Zapkin  
Email: [pzz17@psu.edu](mailto:pzz17@psu.edu)  
Zoom Office Hours: M & Th 1-3PM EST



### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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

### COVID-19 AND REMOTE ASYNCHRONOUS COURSE FORMAT

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Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this normally in-residence course has been converted to an online class. We are using a slight variant of the course content Penn State's English Department has prepared for online English 202D courses. This course is designed specifically for online delivery and the needs of online learners.

This course runs asynchronously, meaning you can work largely at your own pace each week. This should afford you greater flexibility during these difficult times. Though we will not meet physically, I will ask you to attend five synchronous meetings via Zoom.

This class is paced, meaning that there are established start and end dates and weekly deadlines throughout the term. In most weeks of the course, you will be asked to participate in: 1) a discussion forum post and response about a core aspect of the course and 2) a workshop and response related to a formal writing assignment. Like taking a course on campus, you will be required to participate in class discussions and workshops that have specific time frames and deadlines associated with them. Please remember, this is still a cohort-based course, not an independent study.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

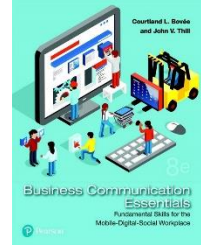
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Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- 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

Bovee, Courtland L. and John V. Thill. *Business Communication Essentials*, 8th edition, Pearson Education, 2018. ISBN 9780134729404.



This textbook can be purchased from the [Penn State Bookstore](#). You may purchase either a hard copy or a digital version.

## LINKEDIN LEARNING ACCESS AND MICROSOFT WORD

- This course includes videos and video courses from LinkedIn Learning. Penn State students can access LinkedIn Learning for free. To activate your free account, log in at <https://linkedinlearning.psu.edu/>.
- For information about LinkedIn Learning, including [Quick Start Guides for Students](#), visit <https://linkedinlearning.psu.edu>.
- This course requires you to use Microsoft Word for your formal assignments. Penn State makes the full Microsoft Office suite, which includes Word, available to Penn State students for free. To acquire this free version of Microsoft Office, simply login to <https://office365.psu.edu/> using your Penn State credentials.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

For this course, you will complete 5 major projects, complete writing workshops, and participate in Canvas forum discussions.

Project	Grade Weight
Topic Approval Proposal (TAP)	15%
Correspondence Packet (CP)	15%
Job Application Documents (JAD)	15%
Personal Website (PW)	15%
Formal Analytical Report (FAR)	20%
Writing Workshops	10%
Discussion Forums	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## MAJOR PROJECTS

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

- There will be assignment sheets on Canvas for each project. These sheets will give you more specific details about what the assignments require. We will also have synchronous Zoom meetings to go over each project assignment sheet. If you're unsure about what an assignment requires/allows, please ask me in the Zoom meeting, in office hours, or over email.
- Each project should be grammatically and stylistically polished. Each project should exhibit correct formatting for that type of document. Grading will reflect the seriousness with which these matters are frequently viewed in the professional world.
- *All assignments must be submitted by 11:59PM EST on the date assigned. Submitting a project after the deadline will cost one full letter grade per late day.*

## WORKSHOPS AND DISCUSSION FORUMS

- Workshops and discussions foster a sense of community, help us to process course materials, and provide a space to think through assignments.
- Workshops will generally help develop, refine, or review project drafts. By Wednesday (11:59PM EST) of most weeks you will respond to a discussion prompt, and by Sunday (11:59PM EST) of most weeks you will reply to one or more of your classmates' posts.
- Discussions help develop skills or respond to elements of professional writing. By Wednesday (11:59PM EST) of each week you will respond to a discussion prompt, and by Sunday (11:59PM EST) of each week you will reply to one or more of your classmates' posts. Think of these posts and responses as a conversation.
- While a free exchange of ideas and expressions is encouraged, please strive for civility and respect in all of your comments. Remember, the discussions and workshops are a space for us to work together and to grow as writers and thinkers.

## GRADING SCALE

This class uses the LionPATH standard grading scale to determine final course grades:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Point Range</b>
A	94-100
A-	90-93.99
B+	87-89.99
B	84-86.99
B-	80-83.99
C+	77-79.99
C	70-76.99
D	60-69.99
F	0-59.99

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

## POLICIES

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### 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, as are the penalties for violations (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](http://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 University Park (<http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/contact>). For further information, please visit the Student Disability Resources website at [equity.psu.edu/sdr](http://equity.psu.edu/sdr).

#### EDUCATION EQUITY: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

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 via the [Affirmative Action webpage](https://affirmativeaction.psu.edu/) (<https://affirmativeaction.psu.edu/>).

#### 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, <https://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

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

Readings Key: *BCE=Business Communication Essentials*, *CA=Canvas*, *LIL=LinkedIn Learning*

### WEEK 1: 19 JAN.-24 JAN.—INTRODUCTIONS AND FUNDAMENTALS OF BUSINESS WRITING

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⇒ Thursday: Synchronous Zoom Meeting to Discuss Topic Approval Proposal (TAP) and Formal Analytical Report (FAR); Time TBD

- Read:
  - *CA*: Syllabus, TAP Assignment Sheet, FAR Assignment Sheet
  - *BCE*: Chapter 2
- Watch:
  - “Introductory Video,” “The Syllabus,” “Navigating Canvas,” “Workshops and Discussion Forums,” and “5 Key Principles for Business Writing”
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Discussion post: Introducing Myself
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - Discussion post response

### WEEK 2: 25 JAN.-31 JAN.—PLANNING BUSINESS MESSAGES; ANTICIPATING AUDIENCE NEEDS

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- Read:
  - *BCE*: Chapters 3 and 4
- Watch:
  - “Audience Awareness,” “Brainstorming,” and “Logging in to LinkedIn Learning”
  - *LIL*: “Determining the Three Elements of a Strong Purpose” and “Designing the Content of Your Message”
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: TAP Plan
  - Discussion post: Audience Profile—Penn State Students
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - Workshop response
  - Discussion post response

### WEEK 3: 1 FEB.-7 FEB.—DRAFTING EFFECTIVE PROPOSALS; BUSINESS LETTER FORMATTING

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- Read:
  - *BCE*: Chapter 10
  - *CA*: “Formatting A Business Letter Sample” and “The Art of the Paragraph”
- Watch:
  - “Formatting a Business Letter,” “Peer Reviewing,” and “Submitting a Project and Downloading Feedback”
  - *LIL*: “Making Your Writing Concise” and “Making Your Writing Conversational”
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: TAP Peer Review
  - Discussion post: Assessing a Business Message

- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - Workshop response
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 4: 8 FEB.-14 FEB.—ANALYZING TAP SAMPLES; REVISION STRATEGIES

- Read:
  - *BCE*: Chapter 5
  - *CA*: “TAP Samples 1-3” and “Revision Strategies”
- Watch:
  - “Grading and Standards (?)” and “Three Tiers of Revision”
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: TAP Revision
  - Discussion post: TAP Grade Norming
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - **Topic Approval Proposal**
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 5: 15 FEB.-21 FEB.—WRITING POSITIVE/NEUTRAL AND NEGATIVE MESSAGES

⇒ Monday: Synchronous Zoom Meeting to Discuss Correspondence Packet (CP); Time TBD

- Read:
  - *BCE*: Chapters 7 and 8
  - *CA*: CP Assignment Sheet, “Jack Dorsey’s Layoff Letter to Twitter’s Staff,” “Microsoft Just Laid Off Thousands of Employees with a Hilariously Bad Memo,” and “Target Email”
- Watch:
  - “Positive/Neutral Messages,” “Negative Messages and Bad News,” and “Direct vs. Indirect Rhetoric”
  - *LIL*: “Presenting Information” and “Presenting Bad News”
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: One Message Draft
  - Discussion post: Rewriting a Routine Memo
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - Workshop response
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 6: 22 FEB.-28 FEB.—WRITING PERSUASIVE MESSAGES; FORMATTING MEMOS AND EMAILS

- Read:
  - *BCE*: Chapter 9
  - *CA*: “Crash Course in Rhetorical Appeals” and “Formatting a Memo Sample”
- Watch:
  - “Formatting a Memo,” “Writing a Professional Email,” “Rhetorical Appeals,” and “The AIDA System”
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:

- Workshop: CP Revision
- Discussion post: Which Rhetorical Appeal is Most Effective?
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - **Correspondence Packet**
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 7: 1 MAR.-7 MAR.—GENERIC RESUMES; CRITICALLY READING JOB ADS

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⇒ Monday: Synchronous Zoom Meeting to Discuss Job Application Documents (JAD); Time TBD

- Read:
  - *BCE*: Chapter 13
  - *CA*: JAD Assignment Sheet, “Career Coaches on the Biggest Mistakes People Make in the Job Search,” and “Guidelines for Resumes and Application Letters”
- Watch:
  - “Searching for Jobs,” “Critically Reading Job Ads,” and “Generic Resume Design”
  - *LIL*: Chapter 2—Customizing the Basic Resume Components (4 videos) and Chapter 3—Upgrading Your Resume (3 videos)
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: Analysis of a Job Ad
  - Discussion post: Career Aspirations Statement
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - Workshop response
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 8: 8 MAR.-14 MAR.—TAILORING TARGETED RESUMES

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- Read:
  - *BCE*: Chapter 14
  - *CA*: “How a Tenacious Summer Analyst Applicant Got Laughed at by Goldman, Morgan, and Everyone Else on Wall Street”
- Watch:
  - “Tailoring Targeted Resumes” and “Demographic Information in Job Applications”
  - *LIL*: Chapter 7—Using Your Resume to Get the Job You Want (5 videos)
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: Tailored Resume Peer Review
  - Discussion post: Which Resume Sections Are You Including?
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - Workshop response
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 9: 15 MAR.-21 MAR.—WRITING AND TAILORING APPLICATION LETTERS

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- Read:
  - *CA*: “More Help For Your Resumes and Application Letters”
- Watch:
  - “Writing and Tailoring Application Letters” and “Succeeding in an Interview”

- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: Application Letter Rhetoric
  - Discussion post: What is the Core Idea in Your Application Letter?
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - **Job Application Documents**
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 10: 22 MAR.-28 MAR.—BUILDING A PERSONAL WEBSITE, THE MECHANICS

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- ⇒ Monday: Synchronous Zoom Meeting to Discuss Personal Website (PW); Time TBD
- Read:
    - *BCE*: Chapter 1
    - *CA*: PW Assignment Sheet
  - Watch:
    - “Navigating Penn State Sites” and “Is YouTube Like the Printing Press”
  - ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
    - Workshop: Reporting Your FAR Progress
    - Discussion post: Compare Three Personal Websites
  - ❖ Submit by Sunday:
    - Workshop response
    - Discussion post response

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WEEK 11: 29 MAR.-4 APR.—WRITING FOR DIGITAL SPACES; PERSONAL BRANDING

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- Read:
  - *BCE*: Chapter 6
  - *CA*: “How to Write the Perfect LinkedIn Summary”
- Watch:
  - “Writing for Digital Spaces” and “Personal Branding”
  - *LIL*: Chapter 1—Personal Branding Basics (4 videos), “Your Personal Brand Website,” and Writing A Compelling Blog Post (entire course)
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: PW Peer Review
  - Discussion post: What is Your Personal Brand?
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - Workshop response
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 12: 5 APR.-11 APR.—DOCUMENT DESIGN

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- ⇒ Wednesday: Wellness Day, no class
- Watch:
    - “Interview with Logan Venderlic, Web Designer” and “Serif and Sans Serif Fonts”
    - *LIL*: “Understanding the PARC System,” “Understanding the Importance of Type,” and “Understanding the Importance of Color”
  - ❖ Submit by Thursday:
    - Workshop: PW Revision



- Discussion post: What Do You Look for in a Good Website?
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - **Personal Website**
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 13: 12 APR.-18 APR.—WRITING AN EFFECTIVE FAR; ANALYZING FAR SAMPLES

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- ⇒ Monday: Synchronous Zoom Meeting to Discuss Formal Analytical Report (FAR); Time TBD
- Read:
    - *BCE*: Chapter 11
    - *CA*: FAR Assignment Sheet and “FAR Samples 1-2”
  - Watch:
    - “Formal Writing Strategies”
    - *LIL*: “Formal and Informal Reports” and “Analytical Reports”
  - ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
    - Workshop: FAR Body Peer Review
    - Discussion post: FAR Grade Norming
  - ❖ Submit by Sunday:
    - Workshop response
    - Discussion post response

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WEEK 14: 19 APR.-25 APR.—PREFATORY AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

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- Read:
  - *CA*: “Content Elements for Reports and Proposals” and skim “Credit Suisse Report on Global Wealth\_2011”
- Watch:
  - “Prefatory Materials for a Formal Report”
  - *LIL*: Chapter 2—Exploring the Parts of a Report (9 videos)
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Workshop: FAR Prefatory Materials Peer Review
  - Discussion post: Two Effective Strategies in “Credit Suisse Report”
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - Workshop response
  - Discussion post response

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WEEK 15: 26 APR.-2 MAY—INCORPORATING FIGURES, INFOGRAPHICS, AND FORMATTING

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- Watch:
  - “Incorporating Figures, Infographics, and Formatting,” “Why Completing the SRTEs Matters,” and “Goodbye, English 202D”
- ❖ Submit by Wednesday:
  - Discussion post: Looking Forward
- ❖ Submit by Sunday:
  - **Formal Analytical Report**