

ENGL 120P Professional Writing

Course Code: ENGL 120P

Instructor: Dr. Brendan Prawdzik

Home Institution: Pennsylvania State University

Office Hours: by appointment

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Credit: 3

Course Description:

This course prepares students to conduct the types of researched and professional writing common to their disciplines. Since our class will accommodate multiple academic and professional interests, students can expect to learn about researched writing across the disciplines. Students will work through stages of a formal research paper: a proposal, a progress report, a findings presentation, as well as a final draft that closely follows the formal and stylistic conventions of the discipline. Our researched writing will communicate effectively to specific audiences based on specific professional conventions; it will support arguments through analysis and interpretation of data and textual/visual evidence. We will learn principles and strategies of persuasive writing, including research, planning, drafting, organization, paragraphing, sentence-level style, and documentation. Students will sharpen their critical writing skills through cooperative discussions and critical peer assessment.

Required Textbooks:

James D. Lester Sr. and James D. Lester Jr., *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*, 15th edition
(Pearson: 2015). // ISBN-13: 978-0321952950

Course Objectives:

Students can expect to achieve the following goals:

- Understand conventions of researched writing in one's discipline.
- Develop effective rhetoric for professional correspondence.
- Gain familiarity with research methods and practice them effectively.
- Acquire responsible note-taking, citation, and documentation skills.
- Practice principles of planning, outlining, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
- Practice principles and strategies of organization and formatting.
- Construct effective paragraphs.
- Demonstrate sharp grammar and effective sentence-level style.

Course Schedule

Note: All course readings, which are written in *italics*, are to be completed before class on the day for which they are listed.

Week1

Tuesday – Course introduction

Wednesday – *Chapter 2* / Plagiarism; writing professional emails I

Thursday – *Chapter 1* / Topic workshop

Friday – *Chapter 3* / Writing Workshop

Week2

Monday– *Chapter 4*; **Research Proposal Due**

Tuesday – *Chapter 5*; Source Location Exercise

Wednesday – *Chapter 6*; writing professional emails II

Thursday – *Chapter 6* / Concision Exercise; **Reading List Due**

Friday – Workshop / Peer Review

Week3

Monday– *Chapter 7*; **Professional Emails Due**

Tuesday –*Chapter 9* / mentoring

W – *Chapter 8* / mentoring, in-class workshop; **Outline Due**

Th – *Chapter 10* mentoring, in-class workshop;

F – Workshop / Peer Review; **Rough Draft Due**

Week4

Monday – *Chapter 12*

Tuesday – *Chapter 14 / Documentation Exercise*

W – *Chapter 15 / mentoring, in-class workshop*

Th – *Chapter 13 / mentoring, in-class workshop*

F – Final Paper Due

Grading & Evaluation:

Final Draft of Research Paper: 25%

Proposal for Research Paper: 10%

Reading List: 7.5%

Annotated Bibliography: 10%

Outline: 7.5%

Rough drafts: 10%

Professional Email Assignment: 15%

Quizzes: 5%

Exercises: 5%

Attendance and Participation: 10%

Final Draft: You will complete a formal research paper that pursues a question relevant to your discipline and that follows conventions of formatting and documentation properly. The Final Draft is due on the last day of class.

Proposal: After some preliminary research, you will develop a proposal that 1) identifies the problem or question under consideration; 2) locates the inquiry within a scholarly context; and 3) outlines a research and drafting process.

Reading List: You will develop a list of 10-12 sources most relevant to your research, with the understanding that you will read and document these sources independently.

Annotated Bibliography: You will describe the core claims of 8-10 sources and specify what you see as information relevant to your project. These entries will include correct citations in the format appropriate to your discipline.

Outline: Having researched the organizational strategies appropriate to your discipline, you will draft an outline of the paper's sections, claims, and significant evidence/findings.

Rough Drafts: You will complete all stages of the drafting process productively and on schedule.

Professional Email Assignment: Write three rhetorically effective emails within your professional area based on a provided situation, goals, and constraints

Quizzes: At the start of some classes, there will be a brief quiz (three questions) on the assigned reading.

Exercises: There will be three in-class group exercises, about: 1) concision; 2) finding sources; and 3) documentation.

Attendance and Participation: Points will be awarded for level of engagement during class, meaningful contributions to class discussion, and effective work in groups. Attendance is required.

Letter Grade Assignment

Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the percentage of total points earned and are assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Performance
A	93-100%	Excellent Work
A-	90-92%	Nearly Excellent Work
B+	87-89%	Very Good Work
B	83-86%	Good Work
B-	80-82%	Mostly Good Work
C+	77-79%	Above Average Work
C	73-76%	Average Work
C-	70-72%	Mostly Average Work
D+	67-69%	Below Average Work
D	60-66%	Poor Work
F	0-59%	Failing Work

Course Policies:

Build Rapport

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let your instructor know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that they can help you find a solution.

Understand When You May Drop This Course

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider disenrolling from a course. Refer to the Course Schedule for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student's family.

Commit to Integrity

As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom.

Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures

"The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars and teachers. University expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing, will protect the integrity of academic work and student grades."

Definitions

"**Cheating** is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means."

"**Plagiarism** is a form of cheating."

"Plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution."