

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 paragraph must be taken directly from the university catalog description of the course. In addition to this paragraph you may choose to provide more information in the copy you distribute to students.

Required Textbooks:

The Only Business Writing Book You'll Ever Need (First Edition). Laura Brown. W. W. Norton. 2019.

Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace (12th Edition). Joseph Williams and Joseph Bizup. Pearsons. 2016.

Course Objectives:

Students can expect to achieve the following goals:

- To learn the genres, conventions, and expectations of business writing.
- To improve writing organization, clarity, style
- To learn how to conduct research and how to analyze, synthesize, and incorporate that research into writing
- To demonstrate thorough knowledge of standard English grammar and mechanics
- To develop the collaborative skills necessary for effective workplace communication
- To learn how to produce and integrate visual communication in professional writing

Course Schedule

Week 1

During our first week, we will review standard English grammar, mechanics, conventions, and style. We will also begin to study what revision is and how to do it. To implement what we cover, we will practice writing professional self-promotional materials.

Day 1: Introductions and crafting a professional biography.

Day 2: Review of grammar, mechanics, and punctuation. READ: Brown, pages 205-228.

Day 3: Emails and memos. READ: Brown, pages 11-39, 106-118.

Day 4: Emails and memos, continued. READ: Brown, pages 40-67, 131-142.

Week 2

This week, we will focus on how to revise effectively, the most important skill a good writer possesses. You will practice this skill by revising the materials developed during week 1. We will also begin studying workplace communication.

Day 1: Revising for form. READ: Williams and Bizup, pages 97-124.

Day 2: Revising for concision. READ: Williams and Bizup, pages 126-167. Day 3: Social media. Brown, pages 68-85, 118-119, 143-154.

Day 4: Resumes. READ: Brown, pages 166-168; sample resumes.

Each group must meet with me at some point during this week to discuss possible final project topics.

Week 3

This week, we will continue to apply what we've learned in the first two and continue to practice common workplace writing genres. We will also begin to practice writing the conventional documents necessary to apply for jobs

Day 1: The cover letter. READ: Brown, pages 169-170; handout on cover letters; sample cover letters. DUE by end of day: Workplace communication portfolio

Day 2: Proposals. READ: Brown, pages 128-130; handout on beginning research; sample proposals.

Day 3: In-class research and proposal workshop. DUE by end of day: informal proposals

Day 4: Visualizing research, creating presentations. READ: Brown, 120-127; handout on presentations. DUE by end of day: employment materials portfolio.

Week 4

Day 1: Reports. READ: handout on the business report; sample reports; in-class workshop: report.

Day 2: In-class workshop: presentation.

Day 3: Presentations, professional critique, discussion. READ: handout on providing feedback.

Day 4: Presentations, professional critique, discussion. DUE by end of day: proposal and report portfolio.

Grading & Evaluation:

Attendance is mandatory. Talk with the professor in advance if you cannot attend a class. More than two unexcused absences will reduce the Attendance and Participation grade.

Attendance and participation 10%

- We will spend our time in class completing collaborative workshops, informal writing exercises, and discussion. Your presence and active participation are therefore necessary.

Workplace communication portfolio 20%

- You will complete a series of short writing assignments designed to teach you the various genres of communicating with professional audiences through emails and social media.

Employment materials portfolio 30%

- You will write the various documents necessary for a successful application package, including a resume and/or cv and a cover letter.

Proposal and report portfolio 40%

- Working in groups, you will write a proposal for a researched report on an industry trend, problem, or forecast. You will practice writing memos while working on this project and will deliver an in-class presentation upon its completion.

FINAL PROJECT/EXAM DESCRIPTION:

Working in groups, you will write a proposal for a researched report on an industry trend, problem, or forecast. You will practice writing memos while working on this project and will deliver an in-class presentation upon its completion.

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."