

ENGL 2203: Intro to Professional Writing

Spring 2023 | Midwestern State University | Dr. Coenen

Day	Time	Location
MWF	9-9:50 AM	BW 210

Contact

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Email: hillary.coenen@msutexas.edu **Office:** BW 203

Office Hours: MW: 10-11 AM & Noon-1 PM
R: 2:30-3:30 PM & by appointment
Email is the best way to contact me.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

- [Howdy or Hello? Technical and Professional Communication \(HoH\)](#)
- [Business Communication for Success \(BCS\)](#)

Other Resources:

- Access to D2L/Brightspace to receive messages and news and submit assignments
- A Gmail account (like MSUTexas account) to collaborate & access digital materials
- Microsoft Office or Google Suite (Pages & WordPerfect will not work). You may use the free Microsoft Online through MSU Portal.

Course Goals

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Learn strategies and methods to write effectively as a professional in the workplace
- Acquire knowledge of different professional writing genres for a variety of careers
- Analyze audience in order to make rhetorical decisions
- Analyze and apply the ethical responsibilities involved in professional communication
- Create technical documents that solve problems and improve situations through communication.
- Apply concepts of information design to create convincing, usable, and informative documents.
- Communicate effectively with a diverse audience.

Additional information about course objectives can be found on the department webpage, <http://libarts.mwsu.edu/english/>.

Course Description

The purposes and practice of expository writing in the professions, with particular emphasis on writing related to each student's major. Topics include audience analysis, communication ethics, collaboration, information design, and professional writing genres (letters, e-mails, memos, procedures, proposals, reports, and presentations).

"You cannot afford to think of being here to receive an education: you will do much better to think of being here to claim one. One of the dictionary definitions of the verb 'to claim' is: to take as the rightful owner; to assert in the face of possible contradiction. 'To receive' is to come into possession of: to act as receptacle or container for; to accept as authoritative or true. The difference is that between acting and being acted-upon."

--Adrienne Rich

Grades

<i>Individual Tasks</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Due</i>	<i>Grade Scheme</i>												
(Projected) Job Packet	15	2/13	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Letter</th> <th>Total/100</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>89.5-100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>79.5-89.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>69.5-79.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>59.5-69.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>0-59.4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Letter	Total/100	A	89.5-100	B	79.5-89.4	C	69.5-79.4	D	59.5-69.4	F	0-59.4
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D	59.5-69.4														
F	0-59.4														
Technical Instructions	15	3/6													
Team & Self Evaluations	15	5/5													
<i>Team Tasks</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Due</i>													
Internal Proposal	15	3/27													
Recommendation Report	20	4/17													
Social Media Campaign & Presentation	20	5/1													
Total	X/100														

Course Practices & Policies

On Language Assessment

You may expect to learn “proper grammar” in this class, but linguists argue that every language and dialect has a distinctive grammar and no one grammar is inherently better or more correct. American universities rely on “Standard (American) Academic English” (SAE) to determine “college readiness,” but this [“standard” is a false one rooted in intentional gatekeeping and discrimination](#) based on race, class, and citizenship status. In this class, your professor will assume that SAE is a false and flawed standard. Your language practices are relevant. You will not be chastised for using grammars other than SAE in discussion. We will discuss clarity, conciseness, and common language expectations in various professional environments, and you will be given feedback based on those expectations; these goals are more practical and inclusive than striving for an arbitrary and false notion of correctness. Grammar police be warned. (See also [CCCC’s 2020 Demand for Black Linguistic Justice](#).)

Attendance Policy

Attending class on time and in person is one of the biggest predictors of success in my classes. A total of more than two (2) weeks’ worth (MWF: 6 class sessions) of absences, excused or not, will make it difficult for you to excel. Students who miss class are not directly penalized, but they miss opportunities to learn and earn points for activities. Some activities may be made up if you make arrangements with me to do so within a week of absence. If you must miss multiple sessions for personal/health reasons, alert the Dean of Students and provide the necessary documentation so they can verify the situation for your instructors. Notify me via email in advance if you will not be able to make class or will join via Zoom. It is your responsibility to be present and prepared for class in order to succeed and maximize your learning.

Contacting Me & GroupMe

Because this is a writing course, emails sent to me must be professionally written using the standard email format. Emails not using professional standards may be ignored. In the body of your email, indicate your name and course. Allow 2 business days for a response to your email. You may also use our class GroupMe to ask questions and share resources among classmates.

Late Assignments

Late assignments (i.e. work not submitted to the proper dropbox by the designated due date and time) won't be accepted unless negotiated with HC *in writing* prior to the due date. Assignments in this course build upon one another, and collaborators rely on each other to complete work according to agreed upon timelines. If you have difficulty submitting, email me with your work attached.

Assessment and Revision

I will provide written or oral feedback on drafts prior to submission as needed, and I will inquire about your writing progress regularly. You may revise and resubmit any coursework within 2 weeks of receiving a grade and prior to finals week for additional feedback. Grade revisions will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis and should establish expectations in a revision plan.

Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is the use of another's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument (including text written by a generation system or artificial intelligence tool) in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation at the end and a listing on the Works Cited page)—whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. At the very least, plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment; at worst, the consequence will be an F in the course. Offenders will be reported to the Chair of the Department of English, Humanities, and Philosophy and the Dean of Students.

D2L & Google Drive

We will use D2L to access most course materials including the syllabus, timeline updates, assignment sheets, PowerPoints, your grades and writing feedback, and others. You will also submit formal assignments and find announcements on D2L, so please check it daily, especially before our class meets. Google Drive will also be used as a collaborative space and to store info.

University Resources & Policies

Accessibility & Technology

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the [Disability Support Services](#) in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 940-397-4140.

I want to ensure that this course is accessible to all students. If you have problems accessing campus sites or learning materials (physical or digital), talk with me about how we might improve that. I may refer to uses of technology that are not covered during class, but I will provide one-on-one or workshop-based support for students who are unfamiliar with said platforms.

Access to Microsoft 365

All students are able to download Microsoft Office 365 free of charge using their MSU Texas student email address. To acquire Office 365, visit <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/products/office?ms.officeurl=getoffice365?ms.officeurl=getoffice365> and create an account.

Writing Center & Tutoring

Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, Writing tutors are available most weekdays. You don't need an appointment to use these services. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they will provide support and feedback at every stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to drafting, revising to proofreading. See <https://msutexas.edu/academics/tasp/on-campus.php> for more info.

University Computer Labs

The University provides four open computer labs throughout the week. These four labs feature access to Microsoft Office Suite for writing and internet access for research.

Location	Hours
Clark Student Center	24 hours (Mon-Sun)
Dillard 146	Mon-Thurs 6 AM – 7 PM
Moffett Library	Mon-Thurs 8AM – 10PM; Fri. 8AM-5PM; Sat 10AM-6PM; Sun 2PM-10PM
Legacy Hall	24 hours (Mon-Sun)

Campus Carry Statement

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to MSU Texas's Campus Carry page (<https://msutexas.edu/campus-carry/>).

Writing Proficiency Requirement

All students seeking a Bachelor's degree from Midwestern State University must satisfy a writing proficiency requirement once they have 1) completed 6 hours of Communication Core and 2) earned 60 hours. Students may meet this requirement by passing the Writing Proficiency Exam, passing two Writing Intensive courses, or passing English 2113. If you have any questions about the exam, visit the [Writing Proficiency Office website](#) or call 397-4131.

Course Community

Ensuring a Learning Environment

College classes should be vibrant environments that foster creativity, discussion, and intellectual growth. You have the freedom to create the kind of intellectual community you desire. Included here are some characteristics of a thriving learning environment. Let's discuss what this looks like in practice:

Characteristics	Students will...	Professor will...
<i>Communicative</i>	Inform professor about issues and problems early	Clarify expectations and deadlines regularly
<i>Accountable</i>	Take responsibility for own tasks, communicate problems	Meeting agreed upon expectations, willing to hear critical feedback
<i>Receptive</i>	Open to making connections to your work/life; open body language, eye contact, focused on present moment	Open to making connections to your work/life; open body language, eye contact, focused on present moment; learn from students' expertise
<i>Engaged</i>	Speak up when they have comments or questions	Caring about what we're learning, enthusiastic about subject
<i>Respectful</i>	Listen when others speak; not disruptive (inside voices; causing a scene; phones silent & only in use for class-related reasons); Using preferred address	Using preferred address

Learning with Equity & Generosity

As a class community, we have diverse bodies, experiences, and needs. Our diversity is a strength, and it's something we should strive to learn from. In order to learn in a safe environment, we must ardently reject language and behaviors that denigrate others based on identity category. In this learning space, hate speech, harassment, discrimination, & violence are not tolerated.

Committing to equity, inclusion, and accessibility requires us to do more than reject discrimination. Equity begins with acknowledging how our institutions (academic and otherwise) have oppressed, excluded, and marginalized people based on race, religion, sexual orientation, sex and gender expression, immigration status, language background, ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, age, body type, and other aspects of identity. Equity work continues with seeking to understand and resist those failures by educating ourselves about oppression, fostering conversation and learning about those topics, developing practices that respond to the needs of historically marginalized communities, and holding our communities and leaders accountable for becoming more equitable, inclusive, and accessible.

This course encourages the discussion and consideration of uncomfortable topics. We can work through discomfort and create a brave space for learning and exploration by showing respect and

consideration of perspectives that differ from our own. There is a lot we don't know about each other, and our word choice in discussing social & political issues matters a great deal. Ignorance is not an excuse for cruelty or dismissiveness, but we all make mistakes as we learn, so we should be willing to forgive & learn from these situations.

Class Schedule Spring 2023

This version of the schedule is a projection. Some items will change throughout the semester, and they will be updated on [this Google Doc version of the schedule](#). Changes will also be discussed in class and posted to D2L. D2L also houses PDFs of readings and details for tasks and assignments not listed here.

Readings from:

- [Howdy or Hello? Technical and Professional Communication](#) (HoH)
- [Business Communication for Success](#) (BCS)

Wk	Date	Before Class	During Class	Due Dates
1	Wed 1/18	Complete Survey , Join GroupMe	Intro	
	Fri 1/20	Read Syllabus & HoH Ch. 1 Intro (All 4 Sections)	Intro: What is Professional Writing?	
2	Mon 1/23	Read HoH Ch. 2 Rhet. Sit. (8 Sect.)	Introduce Job Packet, Discuss Rhetorical Situation & Job Search	
	Wed 1/25	Search for job postings	Discuss Rhetorical Situation & Job Search	
	Fri 1/27	Select job posting; Complete Job Packet Planning Tool	Audience Analysis; Discuss planning tool	Planning Tool Due
3	Mon 1/30	Read HoH Ch. 15 Correspondence	Discuss Correspondence genres	
	Wed 2/1	Read HoH Ch. 16 Applications	Job Packet, Application Genres	
	Fri 2/3	Read HoH Ch. 7 Design ; Draft Job Packet	Job Packet, Document Design	
4	Mon 2/6	Read HoH Ch. 5 Writing Skills & Ch. 6 Organization ; Draft Job Packet	Job Packet, Writing Skills & Structure	
	Wed 2/8	Read HoH Ch. 10 Revising & Editing ; Draft Job Packet	Discuss Peer Review of Job Packet	
	Fri 2/10	Revise Job Packet	Complete Job Packet Peer Review	
5	Mon 2/13	Read HoH Ch. 17 Instructions	Introduce Instructions & Planning (IP)	Job Packet Due
	Wed 2/15	Select topic for instructions	Complete Instructions Planning (IP Stage 1)	
	Fri 2/17	Review HoH Ch. 7 Design ; Plan Instructions	Complete Part II of IP (Flowchart)	
6	Mon 2/20	Read HoH Ch. 8 Graphics ; Find two sets of instructions: one effective &	Instructions, Discuss graphics & design	

		one less effective		
	Wed 2/22	Read HoH App: Using Sample Documents Effectively	Discuss Examples; Planning Instructions	
	Fri 2/24	Read: Federal plain language guidelines ; Draft Instructions	Instructions, Discuss language and clarity	
7	Mon 2/27	Review HoH Ch. 5 Writing Skills ; Complete Instructions	Instructions Workday	
	Wed 3/1	Complete Instructions	Peer Review: Content & Clarity	
	Fri 3/3	Revise Instructions	Peer Review: Design & Graphics	
8	Mon 3/6	Read HoH Ch. 4 Persuasion	Introduce Team Project	Instructions Due
	Wed 3/8	Read HoH Ch. 18 Proposals	Discuss Internal Proposal & Examples	
	Fri 3/10	Read HoH Ch. 13 Collaborative Writing	Discuss Internal Proposal & Examples	
9	Mon 3/13 - Fri 3/17 Spring Break			
10	Mon 3/20	Read HoH Ch. 11 Research	IP Workday	
	Wed 3/22	Read HoH Ch. 12 Avoiding Plagiarism	IP Workday	
	Fri 3/24	Read HoH Ch. 20 Recommendation Reports	Introduce Recommendation Report (RR) & Research	
11	Mon 3/27	Read HoH App: Qualitative Interview Design	Planning Interviews	Internal proposal Due
	Wed 3/29		Research Day	
	Fri 3/31		Research Day	
12	Mon 4/3	Read HoH Appendix: Search Strategies (3 sect.)	Discuss Team Progress Report, Research Day	
	Wed 4/5	Draft Progress Report	Research Day	Team Progress Report Due
	Fri 4/7	Holiday Break		
13	Mon 4/10	Read TBD	Research Day/RR Workday	
	Wed 4/12	Read TBD	Research Day/RR Workday	
	Fri 4/14		Research Day/RR Workday	
14	Mon 4/17	Read DW Ch. 2 & Social Media Genres Resources	Discuss Social Media/Campaign	Recommendation Report Due
	Wed 4/19	Read DW Ch. 2 & Social Media Genres Resources	Discuss Social Media/Campaign	

	Fri 4/21	Read DW Ch. 2 & Social Media Genres Resources	Discuss Social Media/Campaign	
15	Mon 4/24	Read HoH Ch. 14 Oral Communication	Discuss Presentation Types	
	Wed 4/26		Workshop: Social Media/Campaign	
	Fri 4/28		Workshop: Social Media/Campaign	
16	Mon 5/1		Campaign presentations	SM Campaign Due
	Wed 5/3		Campaign presentations	
	Fri 5/5		Team & Self Evaluations & Course Evaluations	Evaluations Due