English 2203: Intro to Professional Writing

2024 Spring   BW117   TR 12:30 p.m.-1:50 p.m. | 23090

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).

Course Objectives

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.

Contact Information

Instructor: Meng Yu, PhD.
Email: meng.yu@msutexas.edu
Phone: 940-397-4086

I will check the email from Monday to Friday 8 am to 5 pm. Messages sent outside this time span will not be check until the next business day. Students are also welcomed to visit the instructor during the office hours or request an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Students are strongly encouraged to "cc" themselves on all email correspondence to ensure delivery. Please note: There is a chance that I will not see the email on the same day that you send it. Therefore, please anticipate waiting at least 24 hours for a response to emails.

Office: BW201
Office Hours: Monday to Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. or by appointment

Texts

Howdy or Hello? Technical and Professional Communication, *2nd Edition.* Matt McKinney, et al., editors. Texas A&M University (2022).

Assessment

All assignments receive a numeric grade based on the 100-point scale. Assignments are weighted. Each project will consist of planning, design and production, and reflections. Here is the rough weight of each major assignment, and I might adjust weights of assignments as the semester progresses.

- Individual projects
  - Short writing assignments (20%): email, complaint letter, progress report, meeting minutes, and course reflective memo
  - Analysis of writing in your field (10%)
  - Document redesign memo (15%)
  - Participation (15%): in-class assignments/workshops/ peer reviews
- Group project (35%)
  - Internal proposal
  - Team report
  - Teamwork evaluation memo
  - Research Portfolio
- Pechakucha Presentation (5%)

Your final grade will be converted to a letter grade as follows:

A 89.5-100	B 79.5-89.4	C 69.5-79.4	D 59.5-69.4	D< 59.4

Attendance & Participation

- Your attendance is reflected through participation score (15%). In-class assignments cannot be made up for credit if you are absent.
- If you have legitimate reasons for not being able to attend class, please inform me prior to these absences so that arrangements, if warranted, can be made.
- It is possible to miss up to 1 class without having your grade adversely affected. I will drop your lowest participation grade when calculate your overall participation grade.
- 3 tardies equal one absence. If you are late or leave early and are not present for at least 30 minutes of class, you will be marked absent.
- I also reserve the right to mark you as absent if you are not actively "present" in class, which may be indicated not actively participating in class activities or discussion or zoning out of class by zoning into your phone or other devices.

Technology

Students in this course will need a working and reliable computer and internet access that will allow the use of D2L course site tools, Google Drive, and any online resources provided. No special software is required but students will need access to MS Office products.

Assignment Submission

- Peer review: Please bring all drafts of your assignments BEFORE coming to class. They can be typed or in your laptop. Peer review cannot be made up if you are absent.
- Assignment submission: It is the responsibility of the student to have and maintain access to D2L, to properly submit all work through this platform, and to contact the instructor immediately if they have issues with paper submission.
- All assignments should be submitted on time, and in the correct format. In-class assignments cannot be made up for credit if you are absent. Please email your instructor if you are having any difficulty completing an assignment before it becomes late and affects your grade.

Professionalism

Members of this class are expected to treat one another with courtesy, professionalism, and respect. Repeated unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior can result in points being deducted from a student's final grade for the course per instance of such behavior.

Accommodations

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.

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 Monday through Thursday from 11:00am to 6:00pm and Sunday 2:00pm to 9:00pm. You don't need an appointment to use these services. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they provide support and feedback at all stages of writing, from brainstorming to drafting, revising to proofreading.

Academic Dishonesty

All students are expected to adhere to the Midwestern State University Student Honor Creed when completing any work for this course. When using the content or ideas of others, both published and unpublished sources, students must use accepted documentation conventions (e.g., APA or MLA). See the MSU Student Handbook (attached to course website) to read the Student Honor Creed and the university's policy on academic dishonesty.

- All work submitted to D2L will be scanned by the Turnitin® program, which flags text that has been quoted from other sources and/or generated by AI tools such as ChatGPT.
- AI/ChatGPT: In this course, you are welcome and encouraged to use artificial intelligence platforms such as ChatGPT **ONLY** for **pre-writing tasks and brainstorming**. That said, you should not be using AI to produce your assignments or otherwise perform the "brain-work" that you are expected to be able to do (or learn to do) on your own. Doing so will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. If this happens twice, you will receive a grade of "F" for the course.
- When using the ideas of other published and unpublished sources, students must use accepted documentation conventions (i.e., MLA or APA). If you submit an assignment in which quoted content is not placed in "quotation marks" and/or you have not cited the correct source, you will receive a grade of zero for that assignment. If this occurs twice in the course, you will receive a grade of "F" for the course. There are no exceptions to this policy.

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 please refer to the MSU Texas website.

Writing Proficiency Requirement

All students seeking a Bachelor's degree from Midwestern State University must satisfy a writing proficiency requirement once they've 1) passed 6 hours of communication core and 2) earned 60 hours. You may meet this requirement by passing the Writing Proficiency Exam, two Writing Intensive Courses, or English 2113. If you have any questions about the exam, visit the Writing Proficiency Office website or call 397-4131.

Intro to Professional Writing Spring 2024 Schedule

This tentative schedule reflects a plan for the course, but deviations from this plan *will* become necessary as the semester progresses. Students are responsible for taking note of changes announced during class time *when* they occur.

Week	Date	In-Class Activities	Homework & Readings (Read the assigned text before the class)
Week 1	Jan. 16(T)	Intro to class & syllabus	
	Jan. 18 (R)	Business and professional writing Intro to project one: analysis of writing in your field	Read: Textbook Ch1 &Ch3
Week 2	Jan. 23 (T)	The basics of plain language and effective design	Read: Textbook Ch5
	Jan. 25 (R)	The basics of plain language and effective design	Read: Textbook Ch2
Week 3	Jan. 30 (T)	In class workday: analysis of writing in your field Report your findings to the class	Bring your findings (10 kinds of writing and code of ethics) to the class
	Feb. 1 (R)	Ai writing Short writing assignment: Email	Read: Textbook Ch9
Week 4	Feb. 6 (T)	Ai writing Cont'd Short writing assignment: Email	Read: Textbook Ch10 Short writing assignment: Email due on Friday
	Feb. 8 (R)	Peer Review: analysis of writing in your field	Read: Textbook Ch8 Bring the draft of Analysis of writing in your field to the class for peer review Analysis of writing in your field due on Sunday
Week 5	Feb. 13 (T)	Correspondence: Email, letter, and Memo	Read: Textbook Ch15
	Feb. 15 (R)	In-class workday: drafting your complaint letter	Read: Textbook Ch6

Week 6	Feb. 20 (T)	Peer review: complaint letter Intro to document redesign assignment	Bring the complaint letter to the class for peer review
	Feb. 22 (R)	Basic visual design	Read: Textbook Ch7 Short writing assignment: complaint letter due on Friday
Week 7	Feb. 27 (T)	Basic visual design	Bring your resigned work to the class
	Feb. 29 (R)	Pervasive letters	Read: Textbook Ch4
Week 8	Mar. 5 (T)	Peer review: document redesign memo	
	Mar. 7 (R)	Drop-in Conference	Document redesign project due on Sunday
Week 9	Mar. 12 (T)	Spring Break– No Class	
	Mar. 14 (R)		
Week 10	Mar. 19 (T)	Intro to group project Choosing your group members	Read: Textbook Ch13
	Mar. 21 (R)	Research method discussion Research portfolio creation	Read: Textbook Ch11
Week 11	Mar. 26 (T)	In class workday: proposal & meeting minutes writing	Read: Textbook Ch18
	Mar. 28 (R)	In class workday: finalizing your research method and preparing internal proposal	Read: Textbook Ch12
Week 12	Apr. 2 (T)	Peer review: Internal proposal	Internal proposal due on Wednesday, April 3
	Apr. 4 (R)	Progress report	
Week 13	Apr. 9 (T)	Group research & 1:1 conference	
	Apr. 11 (R)	Group research & 1:1 conference	
Week 14	Apr. 16 (T)	Report your research findings & organize your research portfolio	Progress report due on Wednesday, April 17

		In class workday: drafting progress report	
	Apr. 18 (R)	Recommendation report assignment instruction In class workday: drafting team report	Read: Textbook Ch20
Week 15	Apr. 23 (T)	In class workday: drafting team report	Research portfolio due on Wednesday, April 24
	Apr. 25 (R)	Group presentation introduction Peer Review: team report	Read: Textbook Ch14
Week 16	Apr. 30 (T)	In class workday: Pechakucha slides preparation	
	May. 2 (R)	Group Presentation	The deadline of all the assignments are Sunday, May 5: team report, group reflective memo, course reflective memo, meeting minutes