



English 2203: Intro to Professional Writing

2023 Fall Bridwell 209 TR 11:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m. | 13614

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.
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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: Zoom by appointment OR, face to face, MW 2-3:30 p.m.
Tuesday 2-4 p.m.

Texts



MacRae, Paul. *Business and Professional Writing: A Basic Guide*. Second edition. Broadview, 2019.

You can find this textbook from Amazon, Powells, or your preferred used book resellers. You may purchase an older/cheaper/ Canadian edition, but you will need to make any needed adjustments to chapters referenced in course content.

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 (10%): correspondence, progress report, meeting minutes
 - Document Analysis (15%)
 - Job Search Packet (15%)
 - Participation (10%): in-class assignments/workshops

- Group project
 - Internal proposal (15%)
 - Technical report (15%)
 - Presentation (10%)
 - Teamwork evaluation & portfolio (10%)

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

A 88.5-100	B 79.5-89.4	C 69.5-79.4	D 59.5-69.4	D< 59.5
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Attendance & Participation

- Your attendance is reflected through participation score (10%). 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 2 classes without having your grade adversely affected (as long as all due dates are met). If you miss more than 2 classes without any excuse, your final grade for the course will be affected.
- 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 Fall 2023 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	Aug. 29 (T)	Intro to class & syllabus	
	Aug. 31 (R)	Business and professional writing	
Week 2	Sep. 5 (T)	The basics of plain language and effective design	Business and Professional Writing (BPW), Chs 1 & 2
	Sep. 7 (R)	Principles for effective business messages AI writing	BPW Chs 6, & 7
Week 3	Sep. 12 (T)	Understanding audience (employers) & context (organizational culture) Intro to job search packet	BPW Ch 8 Correspondence assignment due
	Sep. 14 (R)	Job ad analysis Transferable skills	Using Storytelling as a Job Search Strategy
Week 4	Sep. 19 (T)	Resume workshop	BPW Ch11
	Sep. 21 (R)	Resume peer review	
Week 5	Sep. 26 (T)	Cover letter workshop	BPW Ch10
	Sep. 28 (R)	Cover letter peer review	
Week 6	Oct. 3 (T)	Intro to document analysis assignment Document Design	BPW Ch 5
	Oct. 5 (R)	Basic Visual Design	

Week 7	Oct. 10 (T)	Basic Visual Design	Bring your resigned work to the class
	Oct. 12 (R)	Pervasive letters	BPW Ch 9
Week 8	Oct. 17 (T)	In-class workday	
	Oct. 19 (R)	Document analysis assignment peer review	
Week 9	Oct. 24 (T)	Intro to group project	
	Oct. 26 (R)	In-class workday	
Week 10	Oct. 31 (T)	Proposal writing	
	Nov. 2 (R)	Proposal writing	
Week 11	Nov. 7 (T)	Principles for planning & delivering effective presentations	Read BPW, Chs 15 & 16
	Nov. 9 (R)	Group proposal pitch	
Week 12	Nov. 14 (T)	Progress report	
	Nov. 16 (R)	Group work: completing the technical report rough draft	
Week 13	Thanksgiving Break – No Class		

Week 14	Nov. 28 (T)	Group presentation introduction Revising your technical report for the peer review in the next class	
	Nov. 30 (R)	Group Work peer review	
Week 15	Dec. 5 (T)	Group Presentation	
	Dec. 7 (R)	Group Presentation	
Final Week		Drop-in Conference	