

ENG 300

FALL
2021

BUSINESS AND TECHNICAL WRITING



Instructor: Lisa M. Smith, MFA

Phone: [REDACTED] (call or text 10:00am - 9:00pm)

Location/Days/Time: Webb Hall, room 216, T, TH, 5:00 - 6:45pm

Virtual office hours: By appointment only (online conference)

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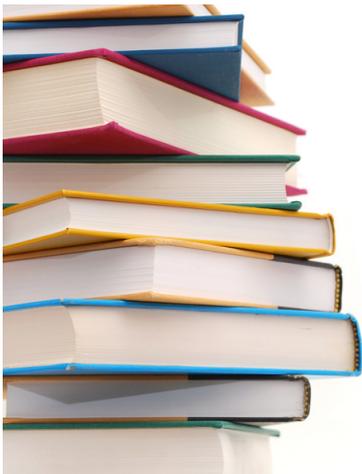
COURSE SCENARIO, COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADING

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide students with some exposure to the enormous field of business writing. Because basic writing skills are important to any writing, students will be working at improving skills.

By the end of the semester, students will:

- Understand how to analyze the three tenets of technical writing (reader, purpose, and situation) and how to develop a document appropriate to these three elements.
- Understand the different types of readers (general, operator, technician, manager, and expert) and how to develop a document appropriate for a particular audience.
- Understand and use the elements of technical writing (content, organization, design, style, and tone).
- Understand the different purposes for technical writing documents (instruct, record, inform, recommend, persuade, and interest) and to develop documents accordingly.
- Master a formal, professional style and tone appropriate for business documents.
- Master formats appropriate for business documents, such as memos, letters, and instructions.
- Understand the connection between the written document and public presentation.
- Master the basic conventions of grammar, spelling, usage, and sentence structure.



REQUIRED MATERIALS

- *None required*



COURSE GOALS

Submission of assignments

Work is due on the date assigned, and all assignments are **TO BE SUBMITTED VIA BLACKBOARD LEARN ONLY by 11:59 pm on the due date. No assignments will be accepted via email, no exceptions.** You are allowed a **ONE-DAY EXTENTION** for late submissions; for example, if the last day to submit your work ends on a Saturday, the latest I will accept the submission is Sunday by 11:59 pm, but you will incur a **25 point penalty** for lateness.

What's the lesson? Don't submit an assignment late, **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO SUBMIT VIA**

BLACKBOARD, and ask questions **BEFORE THE ASSIGNMENT IS DUE.**

If assignment instructions or expectations are unclear, seek assistance from me or [Eastern's Writing Center](#), but I strongly encourage you to seek the instructor for assistance first. Also, I am very receptive to receiving any ethnic food that doesn't upset my stomach or trigger my allergies as a form of appreciation.

Attendance

Repeated absences can have a negative impact, especially now given the effects of the pandemic. In order to make the online model of teaching this course successful, your in-class attendance can provide the necessary clarification that will allow you to successfully complete your assignments for the semester. **You are allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences. Three (3) absences will result in a loss of 50 pts from the final grade.**

Emergencies do occur, so contact me as soon as possible of such instances (via e-mail or text) and refer to the syllabus for assignments due for the next class so you will be able to participate. Unexcused absences will be excused with a doctor's note.



Class protocol

Cell phone or smartphone use is strictly prohibited during class time, which includes texting and/or visiting social media accounts. **Laptops or tablets are permitted in the classroom for notetaking or research purposes only.**

All cell phones will be switched to vibrate or shut-off immediately upon entry of classroom.

Office hours

I am available for any kind of assistance **Monday through Friday**, between the hours of **10 AM to 9 PM**. You can text, call, or email me between those hours; for a quick, short response, consider texting. If the meeting requires sharing a screen, video conferencing via WebEx is possible by appointment.

Choose your emergencies wisely! Quite often students panic when they hit a roadblock, especially if they've waited too close to a deadline. If you're tempted to contact me over the weekend or outside the hours mentioned above, consider the following: *Am I contacting Professor Smith because of poor planning on my part?*





Use of technology

Blackboard Learn will be used consistently for this course, which will not only help the instructor manage assignment submissions and disseminate information, it will also ease the students' burden of worrying if the instructor received assignments on time.

Therefore, it is essential that you learn how to use this technology and to be able to log-in with no glitches.

Additionally, you are strongly urged to actively store your writing assignment work on the University provided Microsoft OneDrive cloud system or other free Cloud storage website such as Google Drive. You are further encouraged to download the iPhone or Android app for Blackboard Learn and whatever Cloud storage service you choose.



Academic support

Students are encouraged to use the support offered by the Academic Success Center (ASC) located on the ground floor of the Library. Advising Services and tutoring in math, writing, and other subjects. The ASC also offers assistance in study techniques, time management and understanding learning styles. For further information call 465-4310 or check the ASC website.

Be prepared for special accommodations to adhere to social distancing.





The ECSU Writing Center

The Writing Center (WC) is located on the first floor of the library across from the Library Café in room 134. Hours and days: Sunday 2-9, Mon -Thurs 9-9, Fri 9-5. You can get more information about the Writing Center and register for an appointment with a tutor online or you can register in person. You can also contact the Writing Center by phone at (860) 465-0382.

So that the WC can better assist you, you should:

- Have a good idea of what you want help with when you arrive at the WC.
- Bring a copy of the assignment guidelines, the rough draft of your paper, and the outline.

Be prepared for special accommodations to adhere to social distancing.



Veterans Center

Eastern's Veterans Center is located in Wood Support Services Center 2nd floor, Room 201. Veteran students are invited to drop into the center Mondays through Fridays from 8-5. The Veterans Center has a lounge area and computers. Writing Center tutors will also hold limited hours in the Veterans Center.

Students are welcome to speak with the director, Rebekah Avery, and to get more information off the Veterans center webpage.



Be prepared for special accommodations to adhere to social distancing.



Academic integrity

Students should read and understand Eastern's [Academic Misconduct Policy](#), which can be found in the [Eastern Student Handbook website](#). Students are expected to take personal responsibility for their intellectual work and to respect and acknowledge the ideas of others.

Academic honesty means doing one's own work and giving proper credit to others whose work and thought are drawn upon. It is the responsibility of each student to become familiar with what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism, and to avoid all forms of cheating and plagiarism. Students may not engage in any form of academic misconduct, and are responsible for learning how to present the ideas of others in their own work, and avoid all other forms of academic misconduct. For current documentation practices, consult the instructor or a style manual (e.g., APA, MLA). All violations will be handled under the procedures established in the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#).





Office of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

The Office of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is open Mon - Fri, 8am – 5pm. Any enrolled Eastern student may request confidential counseling services from CAPS by calling (860) 465-0181 or coming to 182 High Street to make an appointment.

Same day urgent appointments are offered Mon - Fri, 1-3 on a first come, first serve basis. Be prepared for special accommodations to adhere to social distancing. If you are experiencing a mental health emergency outside of CAPS office hours, please contact Public Safety at (860) 465-5310 or 911.

If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts, please call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255) or text HOME to the Crisis Text Line at 741 741 for free 24/7 crisis support in the US. Other Mental Health Hotlines you may contact:

- 211 (United Way) in CT for a variety of resources including mental health services
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline: 800-662-HELP (4357)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Helpline: 800-950-NAMI (6264)



Disability statement

Eastern Connecticut State University is committed to following the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADA Amendment Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998.

If you are a student with a disability (or think you might have a disability) and require accommodations or assistance evacuating a building in the case of an emergency, please contact the Office of AccessAbility Services (OAS) at 860-465-0189 to discuss your request further. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and must be communicated through a Letter of Accommodation, which is drafted by the OAS. **In light of the COVID-19 virus, you are strongly encouraged to visit OAS if you require special accommodations that may interfere with your ability to wear a mask during on-ground class time.**

COURSE SCENARIO, COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADING

Course scenario

Working in two person teams, you will create a series of business documents (highlighted below). All your documents must be written for any of the industries listed at the bottom of the page, **with the exception of the resume and interview/profile assignments.**



These are the industries that you can choose from for all your assignments:

Information Technology
Security/Cybersecurity
Communication
Travel and Tourism
Automotive

Healthcare
Financial/Investment
Military Defense
Education
Aerospace

Course assignments

Assignments	Points	Start date	End date (due date)
Proposal w/cover letter	150	Sep 5	Sep 25
White paper	125	Sep 19	Oct 9
Prospectus	120	Oct 3	Oct 23
Report or Public Service Announcement (PSA)	120	Oct 17	Nov 6
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs - technical)	150	Oct 31	Nov 20
Resume w/cover letter	85	Nov 14	Dec 4
Interview/profile (major project)	200	Oct 10	Dec 7
Portfolio of all work for the course (presentation to the class)	50	-----	Dec 10
TOTAL	1000		

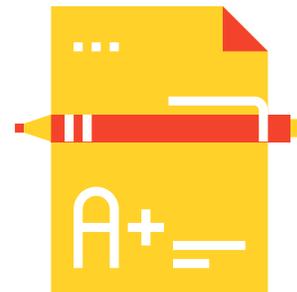
Course schedule is attached to this syllabus (click on paperclip icon).

Instructor reserves the right to change this syllabus at any time.

Grading - Proving ground grading system (IMPORTANT)

When you got skin in the game, you stay in the game
But you don't get a win unless you play in the game
Oh, you get love for it; you get hate for it
You get nothing if you wait for it, wait for it, wait...

—From the Broadway show "Hamilton"



What does proving ground grading mean? It means the stick-and-carrot type of grading will not be used for this course (work submitted = grade that reflects quality of work).

Instead, you will learn to master the art and skill of writing through repeated submission of drafts for feedback from me until you arrive at the final product.

Letter grade	Point Ranges
A	940-1000
A-	930-939
B+	910-929
B	830-909
B-	820-829
C+	800-819
C	720-799
C-	710-719
D+	690-709
D	610-689
D-	600-609
F	0-599

How it all works

1. You will be given three weeks to complete each assignment with the exception of the website project, which will be worked on throughout the semester.

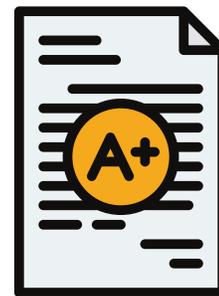
During those three weeks you will submit: two (2) status reports with rough draft(s) of script for feedback from instructor.



The final grade for the assignment will depend on your level of effort. With each draft you will improve upon the last one and take it one step further. No grade will be given for these drafts, only feedback for improvement.

Proving ground grading system (con't)

2. When you submit the final product on the end date (see page 11 for end dates), you will also submit a self-evaluation that answers a series of questions in essay format provided in the assignment guidelines.



a. Along with this self-evaluation you will submit the point value (grade) you believe reflects the effort taken to complete the assignment. In other words, YOU are grading YOUR OWN work based on your efforts and mastery of the task.

Example

You will see on page 11 that the public service announcement assignment is worth 120 points. When you submit the final product along with your self-evaluation of your work, you will also present the points you think reflect the quality of your work. You will break down YOUR grading point scale for the assignment.

So if you feel that your assignment is worth receiving the full 150 points ("A" grade), then that is the "grade" you will submit. I caution you to be very honest about your writing and work ethic.

3. I will either accept the grade or reject the grade. You will receive feedback VIA BLACKBOARD LEARN whether the grade you submitted was accepted or rejected. If your grade is rejected, from there, and I'll quote from the movie Clueless, "[the] grade is just a jumping off point to start negotiations." You read correctly; you will negotiate with me as to why you feel the grade that you submitted is justified.

The negotiation must take place within seven days of the rejection via Zoom/Web Ex/Skype at a mutually agreed upon date and time.



Be sure to bring all your evidence to the negotiation table to support your position. Whatever is finally negotiated is the official grade for that assignment, and it is irrevocable. You will sign a statement signifying you agree with the final offer.

If no negotiation occurs, I will grade the work appropriately.