Advanced Business Writing for Accountants
University of Florida
Fall 2013

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Office Hours: MW   Period 5 and by   appointment
*Note: syllabus is subject to change

Course: ENC   5236, Section 0817
Room: Gerson Hall (GER) 228
Time: M Period 3-4   9:35am-ll:30am
                         W Period 3-4   9:35am-ll:30am

Course Description
In this course we will focus on the kinds of documents often found encountered in the working lives of accountants: emails, memos, letters, proposals, and reports. While these kinds of texts are often thought of as formulaic or impersonal, every text is created for a particular rhetorical situation. You will learn ways to examine your and others' writing rhetorically, so you can write texts that respond appropriately to the situations in which they occur.

Course Objectives
We will be focus on developing "audience-centered" writing. To do this effectively, you will participate in in-class writing workshops, peer review sessions, and collaborative group work. Throughout the semester we will examine methods of revising prose for clarity, beginning with an examination of what it means to write in plain English, as the SEC, AICPA, and other bodies increasingly emphasize. Course outcomes are also listed in the Graduate Handbook at:
http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/files/handbook.pdf

Required Texts
- □ Aired, Gerald **J.,** Charles T. Brusaw, and Walter E. Oliu. *The Business Writer 's Companion.* 6th edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011.
- □ Securities and Exchange Commission. *A Plain English Handbook: How to Create Clear SEC Disclosure Documents.* Available at http://www.sec.gov/pdf/handbook.pdf.
- □ Reading handouts on Sakai

Assignments and Grading

Letters (2) These letters will address different audiences, contexts and dilemmas, and will demonstrate revised and professionally polished "plain" English. You will be given prompt for each letter assignment.	200	points
E-mails and Memos (3) Like the letters, you will be given a prompt for each email/memo. Required length	300	points

be specified on the prompt.		
Website Critique You will complete an informal, internal report analyzing an accounting related web your choice as if you are were a member of that company/group.	100	points
Group Report / Proposal You will work in a group to write an external proposal in the form of a formal repoi based on the situation of your group's choosing. You may select among a feasibility/recommendation report, investigative report with recommendations, or a proposal. You will compose this document for multiple professional audiences and needs to be context specific.	150	points
Group Presentation Your group will give a 15 minute presentation. You will take on the role of a team accountants working for a corporation. Your team will deliver an informational or persuasive report related to a specific issue in accounting. Your goal will be to eitht inform your audience on an important but little-understood topic, or identify a prob company policy and propose a solution.	100	points
Participation Participation includes your in-class contributions during discussions, satisfactory completion of in-class assignments and activities, and appropriate conduct throughc semester. *Most important is your daily contribution to class discussion demonstraţi critical engagements with the texts and concepts.* Also, be sure your attitude creates respectful and collaborative classroom atmosphere.	150	points
TOTAL	1000	Points

Grading Scale

A	930-1000		C	730-760
A-	900-920		c-	700-720
B+	800-890		D+	670-690
B	830-860		D	630-660
B-	800-820		D-	600-620
c+	770-790		E	0-590

Course Policies

Absence/ Tardiness Policy

This is a participation-oriented course, which means much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class. Therefore, prolonged absences will not be excused. Discussion of assignments is a key part of the course content.

Consequently:

- □ You may miss a maximum of two classes without a penalty.
- □ Every unexcused absence after the first two will lower your final mark by one-half grade.

- □ Missing more than four classes means that you will fail the entire course.
- □ Only absences involving university-sponsored events or illness are excused. Appropriate documentation is required for each absence. This means that you will not be penalized for the absence, but are still responsible for the timely completion of all work.
- □ More than 10 minutes late = you will be marked absent. If you are late, it is your responsibility to see me after class and make sure I change your attendance record. Chronic tardiness will result in accrued absences.

If you are absent:

- □ It is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all assignments and due dates. Remember, our syllabus is subject to change.
- □ It is your responsibility to contact a classmate to get any missing information, assignments, or syllabus changes. Do not request the information from me.
- □ You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

Preparation
You are expected to be prepared for every class, including completing all reading and writing assignments on time. Your opinions, comments, and questions are integral to creating a respectful and dynamic classroom culture. By completing course readings and assignments, you fulfill half of your commitment to the class. The other half consists of your involvement in class discussions and activities.

Mode of Submission
Without permission from the instructor no late work will be accepted. All papers must be typed, doubled spaced, written in 12 point Times New Roman, and have one-inch margins, all around. Your papers must be stapled and have the correct heading by the time you arrive at class. Any paper not following these guidelines will not be accepted.

Communication with Your Instructor
The best way to contact me is via email. Please allow at least 24 hours for me to respond to all requests/questions/inquiries by email. I will only open e-mails from your assigned UF e-mail accounts, so please be sure to contact me using your school account. Reserve e-mail communication for quick responses; anything requiring more than a paragraph response should be addressed during office hours.

Technology Use in Class
All cell phones and hand-held devices must be turned off during class. Laptops are allowed for note taking purposes only; if a student uses technology for alternate purposes then they forfeit their right to bring their equipment into our classroom.

Academic Honesty
All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:
http://www.dso.ufl.edU/studentguide/studentrights.php#studenthonorcode_____

Graded Materials

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to have and make available this material.

Classroom Behavior
Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

Statement of Student Disability Services
I will gladly accommodate your needs. Please see me after your first day of class to discuss what these might be. The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/

Statement of Harassment
UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: http://www.dso.ufl.edU/studentauide/studentconductcode.php#s4041

Course Schedule
* Schedule is subject to change
**Always bring texts to class

Week	Day: Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments/Notes
1	W: 8/21	Course Introduction		
2	M: 8/26	Accountants as writers	Zinsser; BWC 2-38	
	W: 8/28	Professional emails	BWC 44-49, 274-275; Send 17-34	
3	M: 9/2	No class	No class	No class
	W: 9/4	Audience centered writing	Send 56-89, 99-116, 225-23(	
4	M: 9/9	Plain English - Basics	PEHch. 1, 3, 6	Email 1
	W: 9/11	Plain English - design and organization	PEHch 4, 5, 7; BWC 211-21	
5	M: 9/16	Memos and audience	BWC 190-198, 209-211	Email 2

	W: 9/18	Selecting a medium, repurposing, and voice	BWC 55-58, 53-55, 119-121 301, 352-354	
6	M: 9/23	Workshop	In-class workshop	Memo draft
	W: 9/25	Letters	BWC 203-208, 213-215, 199-200, 185-188	Memo
7	M: 9/30	Intro to Ethics	Stout & Weiss; BWC 276-277, 277-279	* * * **YgJ)**
	W: 10/2	Ethical Scenarios	BWC 272-274, 280-282; Markel; McBride	
8	M: 10/7	Style and Usage	BWC 324-325, 296-297	
	W: 10/9	Workshop	In-class workshop	Letter 1 Draft
9	M: 10/14	Word choice, sentences, and ethics	BWC 300, 299, 292-293, 297-299, 291	Letter 1
	W: 10/16	Logic, evidence, and organization	BWC 286-288, 288-290	
10	M: 10/21	Workshop	In-class workshop	Letter 2 Draft
	W: 10/23	Rhetoric and the web		Letter 2
11	M: 10/28	Informal reports and web design	BWC 118-119, 58-64	
	W: 10/30	Evaluating web communication	BWC 167-182	
12	M: 11/4	Group web project		Website Informal Report
	W: 11/6	Job Application Materia	May & May 223-232	
13	M: 11/11	No class	No class	No class
	W: 11/13	Audience and Job Materials	Enlow; BWC 126-153, 107-115, 101	
14	M: 11/18	Formal reports, proposa and presentations	BWC 259-268, 251-252	
	W: 11/20	Group project preparatie	In- class workshop	
15	M: 11/25	Conferences		

	W: 11/27	No Class	No Class	No Class
16	M: 12/2	Group Presentations		Reports and Formal Presentations
	W: 12/4	Course Wrap-up		Discussion of Class Outcon