

BUSINESS WRITING FOR LEADERS 91-717

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This asynchronous course is designed for experienced writers who want to take their skills to the next level. Assignments focus on how and when to use persuasion, positive messaging, appropriate tone, and powerful openings and closings to capture the attention of readers and motivate them into action. Whether currently in a leadership position or practicing for a future role, students produce documents within a global context to demonstrate how writing is utilized to build and maintain professional relationships, propose ideas, share data, and deliver reports.

Note: Using an individualized instructional approach, this course provides flexibility for students in our distance and MPM programs.

COURSE OBJECTIVES (using Bloom's revised taxonomy)

Students will be able to...

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| Remember: | Identify options for business correspondence. |
| Understand: | Describe leadership styles. |
| Apply: | Exhibit ability to write succinctly and logically. |
| Analyze: | Analyze word choice and tone. |
| Evaluate: | Evaluate the effectiveness of a message for an intended audience. |
| Create: | Utilize writing to build and maintain professional relationships. |

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

NASPA Competency 5: To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

- 5.1 Outcome: Prepare professional/effective documents appropriate to the objective and context.
- 5.3 Outcome: Prepare communications suitable for diverse audiences.

ACCOMMODATIONS & OPTIONS FOR DIFFERENTIATION

Accommodations: If a student provides evidence of learning for a specific topic, demonstrating an advanced level of proficiency (see rubric), a different assignment is provided. This approach to instruction enables me to meet the diverse academic needs of students in the course.

Options: At times, students have options to complete assignments that correlate with a field of study or personal interest.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

If you plagiarize, you are in violation of academic integrity. Violations of this nature are subject to disciplinary action. An automatic failing grade is assigned for that paper, and the incident is reported to program administrators. All work goes through a plagiarism detector, *Turnitin*.

Please seek writing assistance from the professor, the TA, or the Global Communications Center at CMU. We guide you through the writing process, not do the work for you.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Since the course is asynchronous, students complete assignments according to their schedule during the week. However, weekly submissions (a draft and a final copy) are recorded via Canvas to verify that students are completing work.

EXEMPTION POLICY

Exemption exams are offered twice a year. Specific information is sent to all students upon acceptance into the program. If you have questions, please contact your academic advisor.

FEEDBACK

As a reminder, you have one week to write a paper; therefore, please be patient as I take time to review it. My plan is to return your work before the next assignment is due.

Feedback Information for the TA: Provide feedback immediately upon submission of a draft or final copy. You have two days to complete this task for your group of 20+ students. Then, I will start reviewing papers. If your comments are detailed, addressing specific criteria for the assignment and highlighting common grammar/mechanics issues, I can review the papers at a faster pace. However, if I need to correct your work, along with a student's errors, this slows down my process. Please check your work carefully and complete your comments according to the weekly turn-around time. Also, do not use the highlighter tool on Canvas. Once you highlight over words on a paper, I cannot read them. Instead, use the bubble comment tool. Click this tool and place it next to the word or sentence that needs to be revised. Then, add your comments to the right side of the paper. I read every paper, and I will comment on anything that you missed.

Feedback Information for Students: If the TA is not organized or fails to submit work to me in a timely manner (see above statement), this slows down my process. Since I read and comment on every paper, you will receive detailed feedback. If you do not understand a comment or want additional feedback, please send questions via email or schedule a Zoom conference.

WRITING RUBRIC

RUBRIC ELEMENTS	Exceptional 12 points = A+	Skilled 11 points = A-	Proficient 10 points = B	Developing 9 points = C	Inadequate 0 – 8 points = R
	Professional; ready to distribute.	Professional; minor revisions are recommended prior to distribution.	Semi-professional; minor revisions are required prior to distribution.	Unprofessional; major revisions are required prior to distribution.	Unsuitable for distribution
FOCUS The document focuses on a topic to inform a reader with ideas, concepts, and information.	The document clearly stays focused on a topic that informs the reader with ideas, concepts, and information.	The document mostly stays focused on a topic that informs the reader with ideas, concepts, and information.	The document minimally stays focused on a topic that informs the reader with ideas, concepts, and information.	The document has an unclear focus; however, it has ideas, concepts, and information.	The document has an unidentifiable topic with minimal ideas, concepts, and information.
DEVELOPMENT The document presents relevant facts, concrete details, quotations (if needed), and examples. The conclusion ties to and supports the information and explanation.	The document provides significant facts, concrete details, and examples that fully develop and explain the topic. The conclusion provides insight to the implications, explains the significance of the topic, and projects to the future.	The document provides effective facts, details, and examples that sufficiently develop and explain the topic. The conclusion provides the implications, significance of and future relevance of the topic.	The document provides relevant facts, details, and examples that develop and explain the topic. The conclusion ties to and supports the information and explanation.	The document provides facts, details, and examples that attempt to develop and explain the topic. The conclusion merely restates the development.	The document contains limited facts and examples related to the topic. The text may fail to offer a conclusion.
AUDIENCE The author anticipates the audience's background knowledge of the topic.	The document consistently addresses the audience's knowledge level and concerns about the topic; it addresses the specific needs of the audience.	The document anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns about the topic; it addresses the specific needs of the audience.	The document considers the audience's knowledge level and concerns about the claim; it addresses the needs of the audience.	The document illustrates an inconsistent awareness of the audience's knowledge level and needs.	The document lacks an awareness of the audience's knowledge level and needs.
COHESION The document uses appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, creates cohesion, and clarifies the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.	The document strategically uses words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections; it explains the relationships between the topic and the examples and/or facts.	The document skillfully uses words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections; it identifies the relationship between the topic and the examples and/or facts.	The document uses words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections; it connects the topic and the examples and/or facts.	The document contains limited words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections; it attempts to connect the topic and the examples and/or facts.	The document contains few, if any, words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections; it does not connect the topic and the examples and/or facts.
LANGUAGE & STYLE The document presents a formal, objective tone and uses precise language and topic-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.	The document presents an engaging, formal, and objective tone and uses sophisticated language and topic-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.	The document presents an appropriate formal, objective tone and uses precise language and topic-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.	The document presents an objective tone and uses relevant language and topic-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.	The document illustrates a limited awareness of formal tone and awareness of topic-specific vocabulary.	The document illustrates a limited or inconsistent tone and awareness of topic-specific vocabulary.
CONVENTIONS The document uses standard English conventions of usage and mechanics along with discipline-specific requirements (e.g., APA, Chicago).	The document demonstrates advanced use of standard English conventions of usage and mechanics along with discipline-specific requirements (e.g., APA, Chicago).	The document demonstrates effective use of standard English conventions of usage and mechanics along with discipline-specific requirements (e.g., APA, Chicago).	The document generally demonstrates standard English conventions of usage and mechanics along with discipline-specific requirements (e.g., APA, Chicago).	The document minimally demonstrates accuracy in standard English conventions of usage and mechanics.	The document contains multiple inaccuracies in Standard English conventions of usage and mechanics.

Total _____ / 72

Additional Comments:

The rubric used in this class is aligned with the Heinz grading scale. If you have an issue with a grade, ask the professor (immediately) for a grade review. After the paper has been returned, you have one week to address issues. Papers will not be rescored at a later date, especially at the end of the semester.

Minimum Score / 72	Grade	Heinz %	Heinz Interpretation
70.56	A+	98 - 100	Exceptional
66.96	A	93 - 97	Excellent
64.8	A-	90 - 92	Very Good
63.36	B+	88 - 89	Good
59.76	B	83 - 87	Acceptable
57.60	B-	80 - 82	Fair
56.16	C+	78 - 79	Poor
52.56	C	73 - 77	Very Poor
50.40	C-	70 - 72	Minimal Passing
0 - 49	R	69 - below	Failing
NA	I	NA	Incomplete

Late work: If work is not submitted by the designated day/time, it is late. Add late assignments to the “Late Work” folder on Canvas. This folder is reviewed at the end of the semester (not the week you submit the assignment). For late work, grading starts at 80% of the total score for the assignment.

OFFICE HOURS

I am flexible most days to respond to questions via email or schedule a Zoom conference. This nontraditional approach to office hours enhances student/professor interactions by allowing me to address your needs as soon as possible. Students appreciate the flexibility to contact me when they have a question or want to meet.

RECOMMENDED TECHNOLOGY

The use of Grammarly (www.grammarly.com) is highly encouraged, but not required. Free and paid options are available.

TEXT (not required)

Online articles, website links, and videos are provided via Canvas.

WAITLIST POLICY

Each section is limited to twenty students. If there is an opening, students will be added from the waitlist in sequential order.

WELLNESS AND DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Wellness (adapted from <http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>): Take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many resources (people, events, and programs) available on campus, and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help when you need it.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings of anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is available to help you. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty, or family member for help, too. If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal or in danger of self-harm, call someone immediately, day or night. Do not hesitate!

- **CaPS:** 412-268-2922
- **Re:solve Crisis Network:** 888-796-8226
- If the situation is life threatening, call CMU Police at **412-268-2323** or **911**.

Diversity (adapted from <https://www.cmu.edu/student-diversity>): Diversity and inclusion have a singular place among the values of Carnegie Mellon University. This class will “enhance an inclusive and transformative student experience in dimensions such as access, success, and intergroup dialogue” through class activities, writing workshops, discussions, and assignments.

ASSIGNMENTS

A weekly content folder is released via Canvas (videos, readings, and writing assignments).

	<p>This syllabus is online for others to view; therefore, I do not post specific assignments to avoid opportunities for students to write papers in advance or seek help from outside sources. Once you are registered, you will have full access to all of the content on Canvas.</p> <p>See ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY.</p>
	Each week will focus on a specific element from the writing rubric to reinforce learning.
WEEK 1	Focus: The document focuses on a topic to inform a reader with ideas, concepts, and information.
WEEK 2	Development: The document presents relevant facts, concrete details, quotations (if needed), and examples. The conclusion ties to and supports the information and explanation.
WEEK 3	Audience: The author anticipates the audience's background knowledge of the topic.
WEEK 4	Cohesion: The document uses appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, creates cohesion, and clarifies the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
WEEK 5	Language and Style: The document presents a formal, objective tone and uses precise language and topic-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
WEEK 6	Conventions: The document uses standard English conventions of usage and mechanics along with discipline-specific requirements.
FINAL	