ENGLISH 407A: Business Writing

Spring 2016

Instructor	Carl Lindner
Office	CDC 3-322 (or SU Starbucks)
Email	███████████████
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Office Hours	MW 2:00-3:30PM and by appointment

Section 1004: W 10:00-11:15AM CBC 311

Course Description

English 407A aims to help you develop the skills you will need to write successfully in the workplace. The course introduces you to the rhetorical principles and compositional practices necessary for writing effective business letters, memos, and reports.

Prerequisites:
- Completion of first-year composition requirement (ENG101 and ENG102).
- Junior or senior status **strongly** recommended, but not required.
- Previous experience with Adobe and Microsoft productivity software recommended, but not required.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, you'll be able to:
- Identify conventions of business memos, letters, reports, and presentations
- Write to multiple audiences, for various purposes (e.g. inform, persuade, earn/maintain good will)
- Plan and manage short- and long-term writing projects
- Draft, design, revise, and edit documents in both content and visual appeal
- Design and implement appropriate research strategies
- Write collaboratively (e.g., co-authoring, peer revising)
- Follow and adjust to business writing conventions, including style and tone
- Use writing to help prepare and deliver oral presentations
- Write ethically and responsibly within a business organization and as a member of society

English 407A/B uses a *significant* online component to facilitate the teaching and learning of technical writing. In this course you will be expected to participate successfully in both online and in the classroom.

Required Materials

- *Business and Technical Writing*, 5th Edition by Jeffrey Jablonski
- A UNLV ACE account – to access UNLV public and teaching computer labs as necessary
- At least a 4GB USB flash drive – to easily move files between computers
- Other TBA readings to support particular projects will be provided on Web Campus

Grading

Grades will be determined on a percentage basis. Your overall grade is based on the following percentages:

A = 100 – 92 %	A- = 91 – 90 %	B+ = 89 – 88 %	B = 87 – 82 %	B- = 81 – 80 %
C+ = 79 – 78 %	C = 77 – 72 %	C- = 71 – 70 %	D+ = 69 – 68 %	D = 67 – 62 %
D- = 61 – 60 %	F = 0 %			

Assignments

All major assignments will be evaluated on the standard plus/minus letter-grade scale which will total 100 points overall and have multiple components. Use the table below to track your performance in the class.

Assignments	Components	Overall %	Points
Intro Project	Introductory Memo	5%	5.00
Case Project	Letter, Memo, Situational Analysis	15%	15.00
Job Project	Cover Letter, Resume, Job Analysis Memo	15%	15.00
Group Project*	Proposal, Project Plan, Progress Report, Report, PCE	35%	35.00
Assessments	10 Reading Quizzes	10%	10.00
Exercises	10 Writing Exercises	10%	10.00
Miscellaneous	Discussion Responses, Peer Reviews, CAF	10%	10.00
*Individuals receive separate grades for collaborative assignments		**100%**	**100.00**

Quizzes and Exercises

There will be ten (10) reading-comprehension quizzes administered on WebCampus, totaling 10% of the overall grade. Each quiz will contain ten (10) questions. **There are no make-up quizzes.** There will also be ten (10) exercises assigned during the semester, totaling 10% of the overall grade. These exercises are designed to help you practice and apply the principles discussed throughout our course readings and our class discussions.

Miscellaneous Grade

Your miscellaneous grade is determined on your attendance, in-class participation, and completion of day-to-day assignments not listed as major projects. Examples of miscellaneous assignments include planning assignments, peer review, and completion of document drafts. Generally, miscellaneous assignments are graded pass/fail. Your grade will be lower if you are absent repetitively or fail to perform well on miscellaneous assignments.

Project Submissions

You are expected to produce high-quality professional documents. A part of that quality is the appearance of your work. ALL your documents must be typed or word-processed and should have appropriate margins, spacing, pagination, and formatting. ALL major projects also require submission of a Project Assessment Memo (PAM). Failure to complete/submit a PAM is an automatic letter grade reduction for that particular project.

Furthermore, assignments must be submitted electronically through the **Assignment Dropbox** in **Web Campus** by the scheduled deadline. Each Dropbox is automated and will close at the appointed time indicated on the syllabus. The boxes will not re-open for any reason. Assignments submitted in the wrong location, in an improper format, or with an incorrect filename **will not be graded.**

Attendance

Class attendance is required, and absences will be recorded. Keep in mind that the allowed absences are intended for unavoidable absences due to illness or emergencies. If you have a medical or otherwise legitimate reason to have a missed class excused, discuss it with me *beforehand*. Students who will miss class because of religious holidays or official activities should refer to http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=839.
- Absences exceeding the equivalent of **three (3)** classes result in a final grade reduction of **one letter grade**.
- Absences exceeding the equivalent of **five (5)** classes result in a grade of **F**.

Students who are late, leave early, or are unprepared for class will be penalized **1/2 absence**. It is possible to have a grade deduction or to fail the class simply by being late consistently. This is department policy and I have no authority to bend the rules for lazy students. **You've been warned.**

Late Work

Unless there's a good reason, this class operates much like the real work world does, where employees who habitually turn in their work late tend to be ex-employees. If you miss class for any reason, you are still responsible for content of the day and for any assignment given for the next class. There is **no way** for you to "make up" missed exercises or quizzes. Asking me repeatedly to make up work will not change this policy. If illness or emergency prevents you from completing an assignment by its due date, contact me *beforehand*. Computer problems, related to either PC malfunction or network access, are not a valid excuse for late work or incomplete assignments.

NOTE: Late major assignments will be downgraded **one letter grade per day late**.

Class Participation

The participation grade consists of your attendance, in-class participation, and completion of day-to-day assignments not listed as major projects. You are expected to participate in class discussion and during group activities. Your grade will be lowered if you fail to submit assignments, meet group-established deadlines, or perform poorly during class. In addition, you will complete project tracking documents and post-project assessment memos for each project. The instructor will use these documents to further assess your individual understanding and/or contributions to projects. Group project grades are assigned individually and *I reserve the right to adjust individual grades for group projects AND participation on a student-by-student, case-by-case basis*.

Class Conduct

Another aspect of participation is classroom conduct. You are expected to act professionally: Respect your classmates and teacher as you would have them respect you. The class is only an hour and fifteen minutes long—if you have business to conduct, please do it before entering the classroom. Interrupting people, vulgar language, and general rudeness toward others or myself will not be tolerated. *I reserve the right to administratively drop any student who disrupts the harmony of the classroom.*

Review Policy

Most writing in business and technical contexts must be *professional quality* (i.e. excellent), so document review and revision is commonplace. You will have the opportunity to receive help from your peers and to submit your projects to your instructor for review and comments before you submit the project for a grade. While you are **required** to participate in peer review, the submission to your instructor for review is **optional**.

Use of Samples

This course includes numerous examples of the kinds of documents you will write for this course, including several samples from previous English 407A/B students. **Do not copy or apishly imitate the models!** Why not? Because:
1. Direct copying from models is considered plagiarism and will not be tolerated.
2. Not all the models are samples of *good* writing: you could imitate inappropriate structure and/or style
3. The models are *not* good in *all* respects: you could imitate an ineffective tactic or format

Grade Disputes

If you disagree with my evaluation of an assignment and the grade you earned, I am always willing to discuss it with you and to reevaluate my assessment. I will ask that you do two things before we talk:
1. Take the time to carefully read and consider my comments on your paper and to reread your paper
2. Define the specific reasons that you feel that the assignment deserves a different grade

Then, we will be able to discuss and evaluate the essay together.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, you accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. For a complete list of definitions, procedures, and sanctions, see: http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=845#Stud_Acad_Misc

Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism – using the words or ideas of another, from the internet or any other source, without proper citation of the source – **constitutes grounds for failure in this course.**

Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment sheet (if possible), and two (2) copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/

Special Accommodations:

If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137. Their numbers are: (702) 895-0866/Voice; or (702) 895-0652/TDD; and (702) 895-0651/Fax. For additional information please visit: http://drc.unlv.edu/.

Last Date to Drop:

The final date to drop or withdraw from the course without a grade being recorded is **April 1st**.
No withdrawals will be permitted after this date.

A Syllabus is a contract. Your continued attendance in this class means that you have read and understood the rules, policies, and guidelines that this syllabus details.