Workplace Writing

RWS-3355 14649 **ONLINE**

Dr. Maria Isela Maier

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Virtual OfficeHours: Tues 10:30-12:30
(also available by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary goal of Rhetoric & Writing Studies (RWS) 3355: Workplace Writing is to develop students' effective communication in professional contexts. This effective communication is based on an awareness of and appreciation for discourse communities as well as knowledge specific to subject matter, genre, rhetorical strategy, and writing process.

This course presents an approach to communication that helps students determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different situations within the workplace. Students will produce a variety of documents and presentations while gaining more confidence and fluency in written, visual, and oral communication.

A secondary goal of RWS 3355 is to strengthen your self-learning skills. This means that you will be required to work independently to be fully prepared for class and for the writing projects you must complete.

COURSE INTERFACE

This course will use Blackboard as the primary online interface. In addition to posting and course communication, Blackboard will also serve as a private and secure space for you to access up-to-date grades. You can access it from my.utep.edu. If you need help working with Blackboard, please contact me or seek help at one of the University's computer labs. There are also resources available in this class' course shell. This syllabus is available on Blackboard. While the syllabus is a binding document, portions, such as the course calendar, are subject to change by written notice. A current draft of the syllabus and calendar will always be available on Blackboard. Any modifications to the syllabus will be announced on Blackboard, as well.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
- Develop an efficient and effective writing process that includes strategies for invention, researching, drafting, revising, and editing
- Understand the generic conventions of documents commonly used for workplace communication
- Create effective documents in genres commonly used for workplace communication

- Conduct research within the context of the workplace that will inform your writing
- Consider the ethical dimensions of composing and working within and with organizations
- Recognize and respect various cultural attitudes toward and conventions for workplace communication,
- Gain proficiency in the use of online tools necessary for effective workplace communication and the conventions that attend them

REQUIRED TEXT

This course will use Oliu, Brusaw, & Alred's *Writing That Works* as the guiding textbook. The textbook will be required for class readings and activities. Below is the textbook for this course:
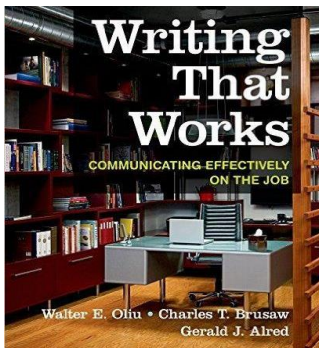
Oliu, W. E., Brusaw, C. T., & Alred, G. J. (2016). *Writing That Works* (12th ed.). Bedford/St. Martin's: Boston, MA.

ISBN: 978-1319019488

Link to text on Amazon.com

ATTENDANCE

Logging in regularly is a must for an online course. I recommend logging in at least once per day as there may be updates. If logging on or internet access is a problem, you may wish to consider withdrawing and enrolling in a face-to-face section. Since this is an online course, access to the internet is a requirement. Missing more than 3 weeks' worth of postings will result in automatic failure of the course, regardless of your progress on major assignments. Students who do not log on or post on to Blackboard by the end of Week Two will be dropped from the course --no exceptions.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE COURSE

If home access to the internet is not possible, arrangements can be made to use a computer regularly on campus in order to complete the work. There are computers available for student use in the UTEP library as well as at the Technology Support Center, located on the third floor of the library. A great deal of work will be done online, and not having access to a computer will not be an excuse for incomplete or late assignments. Technology problems are also not an excuse for work that is late or missing. Students need to get into the habit of completing assignments for this course well before the due date to allow time for dealing with technology problems. Expect that at some time, the

network will be down, computers will go on the fritz, or some other small catastrophe will occur. If students are prepared ahead of time, they can go to plan B. Contact the instructor for any foreseen issues you will be having with technology, and I will work with you. I also highly recommend using a google account for typing your documents (google docs) and saving your documents (google drive).

ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS

Assignment sheets will be posted to Blackboard before the class in which the assignment is introduced. All assignments are to be submitted via the Blackboard "Assignments" section by the end of the day (11:59 PM) of the due date (see course calendar for information on each assignment specific due date). All major assignments are required to be submitted in DOC, DOCX and PDF formats unless otherwise noted. This is the only form accepted. Assignments submitted in other formats will automatically receive no credit. Please double-check before submitting your assignments. **Do not email assignments to me either in Blackboard email or my personal UTEP email. Assignments sent to my email will not receive credit or be graded.** Emailing an assignment is never an option. Keep in mind that, as with any technology, you may experience issues with Blackboard. It is your responsibility to plan for this and submit your assignments in a timely manner. Waiting until minutes before the deadline is a risky and I advise submitting your assignments well ahead of the deadline to account for any issues you may experience. **Late work is not accepted**. Please note that Chapter Responses are due on specific days (usually Tuesdays before midnight), to help prepare you for the work assigned each specific week. Peer Reviews documents are due on Wednesdays and should be completed (reviewed) by Friday to give students enough time to revise before turning the assignment in for a grade.

Announcements: Be sure to check announcements every day you log into the course. This is how I will notify the

class of important changes to the course, assignments, due dates, projects, etc.

This course works on a 1,000-point scale and final grades will be determined using the scale below. Grades will be posted to Blackboard. Please see me during my virtual office hours if you wish to discuss your grades.

<center>

A=900-1,000 points

B=800-899 points

C=700-799 points

D=600-699 points

F=599 or below

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This course assignments and their associated point value is as follows:

- Participation (to include quiz/peer reviews/discussions) - 200 points

- Chapter Responses - 100 points
- Unit 1: Letters - 200 points
- Unit 2: Informative Memo - 100 points
- Unit 3: Job Application Portfolio - 200 points
- Unit 4: Proposal - 200 points

COMPOSITIONS

Your written work is a reflection of your capabilities and efforts and comprises the majority of your final grade. You are therefore expected to produce high-quality, sophisticated documents. A part of that quality is the appearance of your work. Neatness, visual appeal, and mechanical and grammatical correctness are important, although they do not, alone, guarantee a well-made text (or a good grade). Your written documents should have appropriate margins, spacing, pagination, and formatting. Your productions in electronic and other media should be well-designed. In short: **take pride in your writing and aim to produce high quality documents.**

NETIQUETTE

Since this is an online course, it is important that you familiarize yourselves with netiquette-- or online etiquette. Here are some important items to keep in mind:

- **Consider the purpose, audience, and content of all your online discussions.**
  Something about cyberspace makes it easy for people to forget that they are interacting with other real people
- **Be respectful of others' differences**
  Be sensitive to the fact that there will be various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs.
- **Be aware of how things can be misinterpreted**
  Slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted. Don't use all capital letters when composing your responses as this is considered "shouting" on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. Also, be clear when abbreviating with acronyms, as they can be confusing (ex. RWS [Rhetoric and Writing Studies]).

COMMUNICATING WITH THE INSTRUCTOR:

- Please feel free to consult with me through Blackboard at any time during the semester or come see me during my office hours with any concerns you may have about your class performance. If at any time you begin to feel lost, don't just disappear, come see me please. I prefer that students contact me using the **Blackboard email** tool. In this manner, I am able to see what class you are in and can better address your question(s). I may not receive emails from other accounts. In addition, please do not ask a question about an assignment within 24 hours of the due date. I will not respond.

COURSE POLICIES

Please refer to the following policies for this course. If you have any questions, please see me during my virtual office hours or send me an email and I'll be happy to help.

- UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER (UWC): I encourage you to make use of the UWC during the planning, drafting, and/or revising phases of writing any assignment in this class. The trained writing consultants can help give you a fresh perspective on ideas and help you with things like correctness, formatting, etc. The UWC is located on the main floor of the library, to the right of the elevators and computer lab.
- RESOLVING ISSUES: It is your responsibility to manage your workload, complete all assignments and stay on top of your grades. It is also your responsibility to arrange a virtual office meeting with me to discuss questions/concerns. The earlier you contact me with questions/concerns, the better we can deal with them.
- PLAGIARISM is an issue I take very seriously. An act of plagiarism (or other form of academic dishonesty) will result in an 'F' for the course, and may include other University disciplinary action, such as suspension or expulsion. You should become familiar with the ethical guidelines for conduct spelled out in the [Student Affairs](#) section of the [Handbook for Operating Procedures.](#) Additionally, please be aware that you may not submit work for this class that was produced for another class. You must produce your own original work in this class and appropriately identify and portion of your work which is collaborative with others, borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts. Always cite your information. If you have doubts as to whether or not you are using your own or others' work legally and ethically, ask me or stop by the UTEP Writing Center. Follow this primary principle: Be upfront and honest.
- ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need accommodation, please contact The Center for Accommodations & Support Services (CASS) at (915)747-5148 or at [cass@utep.edu.](#) The CASS office is located in Room 106, Union East. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor with any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.