

English 420: Business Writing

FALL 2019 | Tuesday/Thursday 3:00-4:15

BRNG B280 | CRN:43020 | Credits: 3

Instructor: Ryan M. Murphy

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Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 1:30-2:30, and by appointment

Course Description

English 420 helps students become better business writers, across multiple global audiences, for multiple purposes, and in a variety of media. The work of the course is centered on presenting business-related material in written and visual formats that demonstrate an awareness of audience needs and contexts, effectively achieve implicit and explicit rhetorical purposes, and work to effectively address workplace, social, or global problems.

COURSE OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- I. Use professional writing theories and approaches to analyze and solve business problems individually and in teams
- II. Communicate market-driven information and organizational processes via a variety of media, genres, technologies, and presentations to a range of audiences and stakeholders
- III. Innovate written conventions and expectations to both professional and non-professional audiences with changing organizational needs
- IV. Apply primary and secondary research methods and strategies to produce professional documents
- V. Design documents with an awareness of the human needs of users, paying special attention to accessibility, cultural diversity, and global sensitivity
- VI. Interpret, contextualize, explain, and visualize data sets in specific rhetorical contexts or problems

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Thill, J. V. and C. L. Bovee (2019). Excellence in Business Communication 13th edition. Hoboken, NJ: Pearson.

Additional readings provided on Blackboard.

COURSE COMPONENTS

Each project will have multiple components that contribute to the larger, final project. You must complete all of the projects in a timely manner in order to pass the course. Just like in the working world, you are expected to submit your work on time. I will count off one letter grade for each class day your work is late unless you have contacted me before the due date to discuss an extension.

Project 1—250 points

Professional Persona project

Project 2—250 points

Backgrounder project: Research focused, report writing

Project 3—400 points

Team project: Collaborative action plans and proposals

Short in-class writing assignments—100 points

EVALUATION

| Letter Grades/Point Range |
|---------------------------|
| A+ = 1000-970 |
| A = 969-940 |
| A- = 939-900 |
| B+ = 899-870 |
| B = 869-840 |
| B- = 839-800 |
| C+ = 799-770 |
| C = 769- 740 |
| C- = 739-700 |
| D+ = 699-670 |
| D = 669-640 |
| D- = 639-600 |
| F = Below 600 |



GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Attendance:

A class roster will be circulated at the beginning of each class; sign in to mark your presence. You are allowed three absences, no questions asked. For each class absence over three, your final grade will be lowered by one letter grade. More than six absences will result in a failing grade for the course. You are responsible for obtaining all information about missed class meetings from a classmate and for submitting work on time. Three tardies equals one absence. If you enter the class more than 30 minutes late, you will be counted absent.

Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information that is submitted provides the greatest opportunity for the university to investigate the concern. Incidents of academic misconduct in this course will be addressed by the course instructor and referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) for review at the university level. Any violation of course policies as it relates to academic integrity will result minimally in a failing or zero grade for that particular assignment, and at the instructor's discretion may result in a failing grade for the course. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct will be forwarded to OSRR, where university penalties, including removal from the university, may be considered.

Purdue Honor Pledge: As a Boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue.

Nondiscrimination Policy:

All class participants are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and sensitive manner towards others and the course material. Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Purdue's nondiscrimination policy can be found at http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html.


Inclusive Learning Statement:

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently, and I am committed to making this class an inclusive learning space. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we will develop strategies to both meet your needs and the requirements of this course.

Accessibility and Accommodation

Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.

If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (765)494-6995 and <http://www.purdue.edu/caps/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office of the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.



If you find yourself beginning to feel stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed: Try WellTrack, <https://purdue.welltrack.com/>. Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources: Please see the Office of the Dean of Students, <http://www.purdue.edu/odos>, for drop-in hours (M-F, 8 am- 5 pm).

Major Campus Emergency

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading are subject to change that may be necessitated by a revised calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted on Blackboard and I will send an email.

Writing Lab

Many students believe the Writing Lab exists only for writers who need “extra” (or “remedial”) help; however, having another set of eyes can help all writers strengthen their ideas and focus. Even the most accomplished writers need feedback. The tutors in the Writing Lab can work with students at any stage of the writing process, from planning and drafting to editing and polishing strategies. Writing Lab consultants work with undergraduate and graduate students from every department on any piece of writing from class assignments to job search documents. For more information, please visit https://owl.purdue.edu/writinglab/the_writing_lab_at_purdue.html or call 494-3723.

Cultural Centers on Campus

The following cultural centers are open at all students at Purdue University. They help promote learning and community spaces beyond the classroom; I encourage you to visit them.

[Asian American and Asian Resource and Cultural Center](#)

[Black Cultural Center](#)

[Latino Cultural Center](#)

[Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Center](#)

[Native American Educational and Cultural Center](#)

If you want to be successful in this class, it helps to...

- Be self-motivated and self-disciplined.
- Be willing to ask questions and speak up, especially if problems arise, or ask me questions privately.
- Do the reading and come to class prepared.
- If available, use class time to complete the work for the course.
- Respect your peers and your instructor. This means being open, generous, and actively attentive.
- Be willing to step out of your comfort zone and try something new.
- Accept critical thinking and decision making as part of the learning process.
- Commit to 5 to 10 hours per week per course.

English 420 Course Calendar

This calendar will be periodically adjusted to meet the needs of the class. Assigned readings from the textbook (EBC) and additional readings posted to Blackboard (BB) should be read by the beginning of class on the day they appear in the schedule. Readings marked as “Supplemental” are not required but encouraged. See Blackboard (BB) for more complete daily information and updates.

| | Tuesday | Thursday |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Week 1 Aug. 20 & 22 | Welcome to Class! Rhetoric & Business Writing Personal and Professional Introductions | Read EBC Chapter 15 Project 1 Overview Skills Inventory Searching for Position Announcements |
| Week 2 Aug. 27 & 29 | Read EBC Prologue and Chapter 1 Analyzing Announcements Professional Language and Etiquette Document Design, Part I Resume Drafting | Read EBC Chapter 6 Resumes Audience Awareness, Rhetorical Situation Accessible Design Studio Time |
| Week 3 Sept. 3 & 5 | Read EBC Chapter 16, pages 520-528 Read EBC, Chapter 4 Application Letters Document Design, Part II Studio Time | Read EBC Chapter 5 Writing Processes Rhetorical Choices Memo Studio Time |
| Week 4 Sept. 10 & 12 | Read EBC Chapter 8 Professional Ethos in Digital Channels Supplemental Reading: Personal Statements (BB) | Project 1 Drafts Due in Class Read EBC Chapter 7 Peer Response Workshop Editing/Revising |
| Week 5 Sept. 17 & 19 | Project 2 Overview Read Case Studies for Topics (BB) | Project 1 Due, upload to BB Read Case Studies (BB) |
| Week 6 Sept. 24 & 26 | Read EBC Chapter 12 Report Planning Primary & Secondary Research | Backgrounders and Business Reports Writing to Inform Ethos/Credibility |
| Week 7 Oct. 1 & 3 | Read EBC Chapter 13 Data Visualization | Digital Class Meeting |
| Week 8 Oct. 8 & 9 | FALL BREAK (No Class) | Project 2 Drafts Due in Class Peer Response Workshop |
| Week 9 Oct. 15 & 17 | Readings from EBC Chapters 9 & 10 Microgenres: Brief Business Messages | Project 2 Due, Upload to BB Collaboration and Team Writing |
| Week 10 Oct. 22 & 24 | Project 3 Overview Read EBC Chapter 3 | Readings from Team Writing (BB) Team Forming and Charter Drafting |
| Week 11 Oct. 29 & 31 | Project and Time Management Team Schedules | Team Projects |
| Week 12 Nov. 5 & 7 | Read EBC Chapter 11 Persuasive Writing | Team Projects |
| Week 13 Nov. 12 & 14 | Team Projects | Team Projects |
| Week 14 Nov. 19 & 21 | Team Projects Supplementary Reading: EBC Chapter 8 | Read EBC Chapter 14 Modes of Presentation |
| Week 15 Nov. 26 & 28 | Project 3 Drafts Due in Class Peer Response Workshop | THANKSGIVING BREAK (No Class) |
| Week 16 Dec. 3 & 5 | Team Project Presentations | Team Project Presentations |
| Finals Week | Project 3 Due by Monday, Dec. 9 | |