English 420: Business Writing
FALL 2020 | MWF 1:30-2:20pm
WTHR 214 | CRN: 43048 | Credits: 3

Instructor:
Ryan M. Murphy (he/him/his)

Email: murph355@purdue.edu

Drop-In Office Hours:
W 2:45-4:00; Th. 10:30-11:45

Zoom Personal Room:
https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/3893049194

Office: Virtual, Zoom Personal Room

All office hours will be held virtually in my Zoom personal room. I also offer office hours by appointment, just send me an email and suggest a meeting time.

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.

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'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

Course Logistics:
- This course is designated as a remote residential lecture class. This means class will meet, in some format, during all of our scheduled class meeting times. This also means all course content will be available on our Brightspace course page.
- Because this course is taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic, we will all need to be flexible, shifting our meeting format as necessary.
- Possible course meeting formats include meeting virtually with Zoom and meeting in small groups in our classroom, among others.
- Because our classroom cannot safely hold the whole class we will not be meeting as full class in our classroom. **Please do not come to the classroom unless I have told you that it is okay to do so.**
- Nobody in this class is required to come into our classroom in if you do not feel comfortable doing so.
- **Synchronous** meetings refer to specific times were we will all meet together (e.g. Monday at 1:30).
- **Asynchronous** course material refers to activities and work that you can complete according to your own schedule (i.e. the whole class is not working at the same time).
- I will use two main forms of communication to notify you about class logistics: memos and announcements.
  - **Memos** will be used to communicate major notifications about class meeting logistics and class-wide feedback on major assignments. I will distribute memos as an email attachment and file a copy in our Brightspace Course under the "Class Memos" module.
  - **Announcements** for smaller class details and supplementary information will be posted on the landing page in Brightspace. I will also notify you by email when I post an announcement.

COURSE OUTCOMES

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

- Use professional writing theories and approaches to analyze and solve business problems individually and in teams
- Communicate market-driven information and organizational processes via a variety of media, genres, technologies, and presentations to a range of audiences and stakeholders
- Innovate written conventions and expectations to both professional and non-professional audiences with changing organizational needs
- Apply primary and secondary research methods and strategies to produce professional documents
- Design documents with an awareness of the human needs of users, paying special attention to accessibility, cultural diversity, and global sensitivity
- 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 Brightspace.

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.

- **Project 1—250 points**
  The Professional Persona Project will help you identify your personal, professional, and academic strengths and consider the best ways of representing them in writing for various professional situations. You will produce a position analysis, skills inventory, resume, cover letter, elevator pitch, and reflection, which will function together to present your professional persona.

- **Project 2—250 points**
  One of the ways that professionals might be asked to share researched information with various audiences is through a white paper or backgrounder. A white paper is an informative research report that provides background information related to a focused topic. The white paper project asks you to identify a problem (social or political) or a need (product or service) in a specific area of interest, and then go on a fact-finding mission to establish the veracity of the problem or need. You will present your findings in a white paper utilizing textual and visual mediums to communicate your research.

- **Project 3—350 points**
  Much contemporary business writing is done collaboratively and utilizing a multimedia approach to reach and persuade a variety of audiences. For this project, you will work in teams to execute a collaborative proposal project using a variety of modes. Your team's task is to take one of the white papers you produced for Project 2, develop a solution that responds to the problem, and "sell" it to the public, persuading others to "buy in" to your idea by responding to a call for action.

- **Discussion board posts—75 points**

- **Peer response—75 points**

Grade Scale

In this class grades reflect the sum of your achievement throughout the semester. You will accumulate points as described in the assignments portion above, with each assignment graded according to a rubric. At the end of the semester, final grades will be calculated by adding the total points earned and translating those numbers (out of 1000) into the following letters (there will be no partial points or rounding).

Letter Grade	Point Range
A	1000–930
A–	929–900
B+	899–870
B	869–830
B–	829–800
C+	799–770
C	769–730
C–	729–700
D	699–600
F	599–0

In addition to my written comments on your work, you are always welcome to ask me for additional feedback, ask that I review additional preliminary drafts, or otherwise talk with me if you have questions or concerns about your grade.

There is no planned extra credit in this class; however, circumstances may arise that warrant creating an extra credit opportunity. No extra credit opportunity will be made unless it is made available to every member of class.

There is no final exam in this class.

Content Availability

I will post information (online activities, discussion starters, etc.) for the upcoming week by Sunday evening, so that when you log in on Monday, you can begin the new week.

Deadlines, Late Work, & Extensions

♦ All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. ET on the due date listed in the course schedule.
♦ Deadlines are an unavoidable part of being a professional and this course is no exception. Please complete, post, and submit course requirements on or before the specified due date and delivery time deadline. Due dates and delivery time deadlines are defined as that used in West Lafayette, Indiana. To encourage you to stay on schedule, due dates have been established for each assignment.
♦ I do not accept late work; however, due date extensions for assignments are available if you need one for religious holidays or any other circumstance. If you think you might need an extension, please contact me by email **before** the due date so we can discuss your situation and agree on an appropriate timeframe for completing assignments.

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Engagement Expectations

Whether this is your first semester here at Purdue or you have already taken several courses at the University level, succeeding in a university course will often involve:

♦ Accessing Brightspace and actively participating in this course during scheduled class days

- Scheduling time each week for working on this course, outside of class times.
- Following the course schedule, rather than trying to work ahead on your own.
- Reaching out to me with any questions, as early as possible.

Minimum Technology requirements
- You will need a strong, reliable Internet connection on to meet the requirements for this class.
- It is NOT recommended that students attempt to complete this course using only a mobile phone.
- This course will utilize video, which will require more data if using a mobile device.
- Students must be able to use Brightspace and all of its features to be successful in this course.

Responding to Technology Failure
This course relies on a variety of different technologies. If and when they don't work as expected, we will likely experience disruption to class plans. If this happens, do what you can and wait until the technology is functioning properly to resume your work. There is no need to stress. If a technology failure will cause you to miss a deadline, please send me an email as soon as you can and I will handle it as if it were a deadline extension.

Office Hours
- I will hold virtual drop-in office hours synchronously in my Zoom personal room.
- If you would like to meet with me at a different time, just send me an email and we can make an appointment.
- To protect your privacy, I will use the waiting room feature in Zoom. When you click the link to join the meeting, I will let you in. If I'm meeting with another student, you might need to wait for a moment. This will ensure that each of you can have uninterrupted meeting time with me. Group meetings are also fine if you and others in class want to meet with me at the same time.

Email
Communicating by Purdue email accounts will be the primary means of communicating outside of Brightspace. **I will respond to all emails within 24 to 48 hours (usually less). I expect you to monitor your email account as well.** Please send email from your Purdue email account and include a meaningful subject line and your name in your message. Because identities of senders from non-Purdue accounts cannot be guaranteed, I generally do not communicate any class or personal details when I respond to email from external email addresses (e.g. Gmail).

Federal legislation pertaining to educational privacy (FERPA) prohibits me from discussing protected information, specifically student grades, over email. If you have questions or concerns about your grade in this course or a specific grade on an assignment, please visit me during virtual office hours or request to make an appointment.

Use Purdue Email for:	Use Office Hours for:
Class questions	Questions about grades
Requests for appointments	Class questions
Requests for assignment extensions	Consultations about assignments

Netiquette
I will foster a safe online learning environment in this class and ask that you help me to do so. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea, but do not to attack people. Our differences, some of which are outlined in the University's nondiscrimination statement below, will add richness to this learning experience. Please consider that sarcasm and humor can be misconstrued in online interactions and generate unintended disruptions. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course ambience. Please read the Netiquette rules for this course:

- Think and edit before you push the "Send" button.
- Do not dominate any discussion. Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
- Be cautious in using Internet abbreviations or casual chat conventions. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- Keep an "open-mind" and be open to other perspectives.
- Ask for feedback if you want it.

Diversity & Inclusion

In our discussions, structured and unstructured, we will explore a variety of challenging issues, which can help us enhance our understanding of different experiences and perspectives. This can be challenging, but in overcoming these challenges we find the greatest rewards. While we will design guidelines as a group, everyone should remember the following points:

- We are all in the process of learning about others and their experiences. Please speak with me, anonymously if needed, if something has made you uncomfortable.
- Intention and impact are not always aligned, and we should respect the impact something may have on someone even if it was not the speaker's intention.
- We all come to the class with a variety of experiences and a range of expertise, we should respect these in others while critically examining them in ourselves.
- Links to the various cultural centers on campus are provided in Brightspace.

University Policies

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.

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 Brightspace and I will send an email.

In the Event a Student is Quarantined or Isolated
If you become quarantined or isolated at any point in time during the semester, in addition to support from the Protect Purdue Health Center, you will also have access to an Academic Case Manager who can provide you academic support during this time. Your Academic Case Manager can be reached at acmq@purdue.edu and will provide you with general guidelines/resources around communicating with your instructors, be available for academic support, and offer suggestions for how to be successful when learning remotely. Importantly, if you find yourself too sick to progress in the course, notify your academic case manager and notify me via email or Brightspace. We will make arrangements based on your particular situation. The Office of the Dean of Students (odos@purdue.edu) is also available to support you should this situation occur.

Attendance
Students should stay home and contact the Protect Purdue Health Center (496-INFO) if they feel ill, have any symptoms associated with COVID-19, or suspect they have been exposed to the virus. In the current context of COVID-19, in-person attendance will not be a factor in the final grades, but the student still needs to inform the instructor of any conflict that can be anticipated and will affect the submission of an assignment or the ability to take an exam. Only the instructor can excuse a student from a course requirement or responsibility. When conflicts can be anticipated, such as for many University-sponsored activities and religious observations, the student should inform the instructor of the situation as far in advance as possible. For unanticipated or emergency conflict, when advance notification to an instructor is not possible, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible by email, through Brightspace, or by phone. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor and is unable to leave word with the instructor's department because of circumstances beyond the student's control, and in cases of bereavement, quarantine, or isolation, the student or the student's representative should contact the Office of the Dean of Students via odos@purdue.edu or phone at 765-494-1747. Our course Brightspace includes a link on Attendance and Grief Absence policies under the University Policies menu.

Protect Purdue Compliance

The Protect Purdue Plan, which includes the Protect Purdue Pledge, is campus policy and as such all members of the Purdue community must comply with the required health and safety guidelines. Required behaviors in this class include: staying home and contacting the Protect Purdue Health Center (496-INFO) if you feel ill or know you have been exposed to the virus, wearing a mask in classrooms and campus building, at all times (e.g., no eating/drinking in the classroom), disinfecting desk/workspace prior to and after use, maintaining proper social distancing with peers and instructors (including when entering/exiting classrooms), refraining from moving furniture, avoiding shared use of personal items, maintaining robust hygiene (e.g., handwashing, disposal of tissues) prior to, during and after class, and following all safety directions from the instructor.

Students who are not engaging in these behaviors (e.g., wearing a mask) will be offered the opportunity to comply. If non-compliance continues, possible results include instructors asking the student to leave class and instructors dismissing the whole class. Students who do not comply with the required health behaviors are violating the University Code of Conduct and will be reported to the Dean of Students Office with sanctions ranging from educational requirements to dismissal from the university.

Any student who has substantial reason to believe that another person in a campus room (e.g., classroom) is threatening the safety of others by not complying (e.g., not wearing a mask) may leave the room without consequence. The student is encouraged to report the behavior to and discuss next steps with their instructor. Students also have the option of reporting the behavior to the Office of the Student Rights and Responsibilities. See also Purdue University Bill of Student Rights.

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 the Writing Lab's Website or call (765)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 willing to ask questions and speak up, especially if problems arise, or ask me questions privately.
- Do the reading and come to class prepared.
- 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
Last Revised: 8/23/20

This calendar will be revised as necessary to meet the needs of the class.
Any time this calendar is revised, I will notify you via announcement/email.

Assigned readings from the textbook (EBC) and additional readings posted to Brightspace (B) should be read by the beginning of class on the day they appear in the schedule. Supplemental readings (S) are not required, but encouraged. See Brightspace for more complete daily information and updates.

See Brightspace schedule details by day.

Reminders
All discussion board posts due on Wednesdays at 11:59pm and responses due on Fridays at 11:59pm.
All peer responses are due on Wednesdays at 11:59pm.
All drafts and final projects/assignments are due on Sunday at 11:59pm.

Week	Topic	Lectures/videos	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 8/24 8/26 8/28	Assessing your professional skills Course Logistics	Introduction to the course video Introduction to Project #1 video Assessing your skills video Who am I video Email etiquette slide Ch 1 pptx Ch 5 pptx	Read Prologue, Ch 1 and Ch 5 of EBC	Career planning self-assessment on p. xxxii Discussion board introduction due on Wednesday, Aug 26 Start looking for job advertisement
Week 2 8/31 9/2 9/4	The Rhetoric of Employment Documents	Rhetoric of employment documents slide deck Ch 15 slide deck Ch 16 slide deck	Read Ch 15 and 16 of EBC	Discussion board post #1 due on Wednesday, Sept 2 Start drafting skills analysis and job advertisement analysis
Week 3 9/7 9/9 9/11	Designing Professional Documents	How to use LinkedIN to get a job Intro to page design	Read Ch 2 and 4 of EBC Read Bradley and Norman	Discussion board post #2 due on Sept 9 Start drafting and revising resume and cover letter

		Ch 2 pptx Ch 4 pptx		in response to advertised position Draft of project 1 due on Sunday, September 13.
Week 4 9/14 9/16 9/18	Reflecting and Responding to Documents	Describe-Evaluate-Suggest vide0 5 words to receive feedback video How to use track changes to provide comments	Read "Moving Beyond Diversity"	Project #1 peer response due on Wednesday, September 16 Discussion board post #3 due
Week 5 9/21 9/23 9/25	Writing proposals	Introduce Project #2-video Ch 12 slide deck	Read Ch 12 of EBC Read Kelleher & Tierney, *Data Science*, Ch 5 and 6	All of project #1 final deliverables due on Monday Sept 21 Discussion board post #4 due
Week 6 9/28 9/30 10/2	Conducting Research	Research methods slide deck	Read Stelzner, *Writing White Papers*, Ch 1 and 8	Project 2 Proposal due Discussion board post #5 due
Week 7 10/5 10/7 10/9	Working with Data	Data slide deck	Read Segel & Heer, "Narrative Visualization" Read Introduction to Data Visualization	Discussion board post #6
Week 8 10/12 10/14 10/16	Designing Visuals	Ch 13 slide deck	Read Ch 13 of EBC	Discussion board post #7 Annotated Bibliography due
Week 9 10/19 10/21 10/23	Stylistics and revision	Ch 6 slide deck Ch 7 slide deck	Read Ch 6 and 7 of EBC	Project #2 peer response due Discussion board post #8
Week 10	Collaboration and Teams	Introduction to project #3 video	Read Ch 3 from EBC	Discussion board post #9

10/26 10/28 10/30		Ch 3 slide deck	Read Ch 1 and 2 from Team Writing (Wolfe)	Project #2 due Sunday, Oct 25
Week 11 11/2 11/4 11/6	Roles and responsibilities in teams	Team Charters slides	Read Ch 3 and 4 from Team Writing (Wolfe) Read "Strategies for Dealing with Slacker and Underperforming Teammates in Class Projects"	Discussion board post #10 Project 3 Team Charter due by Sunday, Nov 1
Week 12 11/9 11/11 11/13	Writing for Digital Channels	Ch 8 slide deck Ch 9 slide deck	Read Ch 8 and 9 of EBC	Project update #1 due on Sunday, Nov 8
Week 13 11/16 11/18 11/20	Writing persuasive messages	Ch 11 slide deck	Read Ch 11 of EBC	Project update #2 due Sunday, Nov 15
Class Goes Fully Online beginning 11/23 through the end of the semester.				
Week 14 11/23 Thanks-giving Break	Presenting information	Ch 14 slide deck	Read Ch 14 of EBC	Project update #3 due Sunday, Nov 22
Week 15 11/30 12/2 12/4	Collaborative writing and workshopping	Peer responses on materials Evaluating one another's work	No readings!	Project update #4 due Sunday, Nov 29 Workshop materials due Sunday, Nov 29 and peer responses due Dec 1
Week 16	Finals Week			Project update #5 due Sunday, Dec 5 Final project due Wednesday, Dec 9