

WRIT 3140: Workplace Writing Online

General Information

Instructor: Laura Howard, PhD

Instructor email: lhowar40@kennesaw.edu

Office Hours: weekly online (weekly office hours TBA) and by appointment via phone or Zoom

Class location: online only

Class meeting times: asynchronous (no required weekly meetings)

This course emphasizes strategies for producing effective documents in a variety of professional contexts. Students gain practice with common workplace forms as they master writing clearly with the needs and expectations of their audiences in mind. This course is particularly valuable to students preparing for careers in business, government, and nonprofit organizations.

- 3 Class Hours Credit Hours
- Prerequisite: ENGL 1102

The course syllabus is a contract. Students remaining in the class beyond the drop/add period agree to abide by the policies detailed here and will be held accountable for them.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Explain the relevance of ethics to workplace writing;
- Plan and organize your workplace documents appropriately;
- Write more clearly, correctly, and concisely;
- Write more knowledgeably about and in a variety of workplace genres;
- Evaluate your documents privately and with the help of collaborators;
- Criticize the documents of others constructively;
- Communicate your ideas comfortably in a professional group setting;
- Collaborate effectively within a group;
- Give an effective presentation in a workplace setting;
- Identify the theoretical issues influencing workplace writing.

To meet the course objectives, it is necessary for you to do the following:

- participate actively in class and online;
- read any assigned texts;
- take notes when reading/viewing class texts;
- think critically about the texts and contexts you encounter;

- explore the knowledge and skills of your classmates;
- consult with your professor when having difficulties.

Course Texts

This course utilizes Open Electronic Resources (OER) in lieu of a textbook. All course materials are free, accessible, and made available in accordance with their Creative Commons licenses. Please find links to all course resources below.

[Alt Text Tutorial](#). Web Accessibility Initiative. ([link to copyright info](#))

Arnett, E.J. [Audiovisual Presentations Made Easy\(-ier\): Tips for Creating an Effective PowerPoint, Prezi, or Keynote](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC License](#))

Gregg Learning. [Ethical Writing at Work](#). [Video file]. Retrieve from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vcTfcefoC34>.

Hodges, L. A. [Email Guidelines for Students](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC License](#))

Hodges, L.A. [Memos](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC License](#))

Jurgenson, S. [How to Write a Business Proposal](#). [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oc24JQqRi3Y&feature=youtu.be>.

Eward-Mangione, A. [Professional and Technical Writing Processes: Composing](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC License](#))

Eward-Mangione, A. [Professional and Technical Writing Processes: Planning](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC License](#))

Eward-Mangione, A. [The You-centered Business Style](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC license](#))

McCaughey, J. [Diplomacy, Tone, and Emphasis in Business Writing](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC license](#))

Moxley, J. [Good Business Writing](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC license](#))

Phelps-Hillen, J. [Proposal Writing Basics](#). Writing Commons. ([Link to CC license](#))

Powell, T. et al. (January 8, 2020). [Open Technical Communication](#) ([Link to CC license](#))

Roy, S. [Why Do Ethics Matter?](#) [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yesE4mcv4CM>.

Phillips, D. [How to Avoid Death by PowerPoint](#). [Video file]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwpi1Lm6dFo>.

[Video Captions](#). Web Accessibility Initiative ([link to copyright info](#))

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is expected. Our class meets online only. To be counted present for the week and receive credit for attendance, please review all module content and respond to the “attendance” forums built in to each module of the course. Students who do not review weekly materials and “attend” class will quickly fall behind, so please be sure to log in often. Weekly attendance and activities are not accepted late.

Email Policy

- Assignments must be submitted in D2L.
- Please email me at lhowar40@kennesaw.edu whenever you have questions or concerns. I am here for you! Use only your KSU student email to communicate with professors and others about KSU-related issues and concerns. **Note that D2L does have an email feature, but we will not be using it for our course.**
- I will respond to emails promptly during the week, usually within 24 hours or so. Resend your email if you don't hear back within this time frame. Allow up to 48 hours on weekends (after 12 pm noon on Fridays until 9 am on Mondays).

Final Grade Calculation

- Attendance (5%)
- Discussions and activities (25%)
- Correspondence Suite (20%)
- Proposal and Presentation (30%)
- Workplace Writing Artifact Analysis Group Project (20%)

Overview of Major Assignments

Major Assignment #1: Correspondence Suite

This project consists of five parts and offers the chance to plan and organize workplace documents in various genres :

- An email revision (include the original email and your revision--be sure to label these!)
- An inquiry or special request letter (based on a real-life scenario)
- A complaint letter (based on a real-life scenario)
- A memo to me explaining and reflecting on your process for creating these deliverables, including specific references to course readings, lessons, and resources

Additional details and specifics about grading will be located in the instructions for this assignment located in the course shell.

Major Assignment #2: Proposal and Presentation

For this two-part assignment, each student will write a proposal on a topic related to their major or their community and present it to the class. Proposals will include specific sections, correct formatting, and properly labeled images. Additionally, students will plan a PowerPoint or Prezi to present the ideas from the proposal both orally and visually. Student will use voice narration in PowerPoint or Prezi to record their presentations. Captioning will be required. Presentations will be submitted in a discussion forum where students will respond to one another's ideas.

Major Assignment #3: Workplace Writing Artifact Analysis

You will work in small groups to complete this project. Groups will be assigned. Your group will need to work together to establish communication methods, a timeline for the project, individual responsibilities, and a plan for submitting the project on time. Additionally, each group member will write a reflection on this collaborative workplace writing experience.

The first part of this two-part assignment asks groups to compose a memo supported by research (internet, books, trade magazines, interviews, observations, and so on) that identifies and discusses the ways writing functions within a specific career field. This assignment offers the opportunity to learn more about various workplace writing genres and to write clearly and concisely about workplace writing in a field of your group's choosing.

Here are some questions your group's analysis should answer:

- How much writing will you need to do and what specific kinds of writing will you need to do?
- What rhetorical situations (audience, purpose, context) will you be addressing?
- What genres will you write? Memos? Reports (what types of reports)? Websites? Blogs? Proposals? Progress reports? Journal articles? Emails? What will you need to know about/demonstrate in these areas to be successful?
- From the genres you will have to write, which genre will be the most important and why?

For the second part of the assignment, your group will select an example of workplace writing from a specific career field. Additional details and information about grading will be available in the instructions for this assignment located in the course shell.

General Grading Guidelines

Expectations for grade levels are generally outlined below. Please note that rubrics are provided for each of the major assignments in the "rubrics" module on the course home page. The following is a general description of expectations for each grade:

A: Professional quality work (considered exemplary in a real-world setting). Content and design are appropriate for the audience, purpose, and context. May contain only a minor flaw.

B: Professional quality work (considered adequate in a real-world setting). Your project is of high quality in most of the major areas. Content and design are appropriate for the audience, purpose, and context. May contain a few minor errors.

C: Marginal professional quality (your supervisor would likely ask you to redo parts of it). Content and design consider audience, purpose, and context, but need adjustments to be clear, appropriate, well-developed. Contains a single major deficiency or many minor errors.

D: Not of professional quality and would need major revisions to become of professional quality. Content and design barely consider audience, purpose, and context. Contains some major deficiencies and/or many minor errors.

F: Unacceptable quality that ignores the standards of professional quality. Content and design lack consideration of audience, purpose, and context. Contains many major deficiencies.

Activity/Discussion Grades

Throughout the term, there will be weekly activities due, which could include quizzes, reflections, short compositions, discussions, etc. These are generally graded for completion, except for discussions, which are graded using a rubric (see additional discussion grading information below).

Discussion Grades

When discussions are assigned, students should compose an initial post of roughly 200-250 words each week. They should include references to weekly reading and course concepts. Discussion also includes a response to at least one classmate per thread (100 words+). **All posts in the discussion forum should be substantive, thoughtful, organized, proofread, and critically aware.** Note that a good strategy for advancing our class discussion is to ask open-ended questions of classmates in discussion. Students should respond to the instructor's and classmate's questions.

Finally, please note that students should respond to discussion prompts as early in the week as possible. This means there will be posts to which classmates can respond (if everyone waits until the last minute, things don't work so well...). Note that all online assignments are due no later than 12 pm noon on Mondays unless otherwise instructed. Late discussions are not accepted. **Discussion posts will be graded for completion based on the following:**

100 points=all requirements met; at least two peer responses posted
50 points=partial requirements met; may have responded to one or no peers
0 points=requirements not met

Late Work

Because this is a summer course, there is not much leeway with deadlines. All major assignments are due on the date specified on the schedule and in the assignment instructions. Our course week runs from 11:59 pm ET on Mondays to 11:59 pm ET the following Monday, with occasional deadlines for specific activities occurring during the course week (for example, you will be asked to post a draft for peer review by Wednesday of our course week). Major assignment submitted after the deadline will be accepted with a -15 point deduction per 24-hour period they are late up to 48 hours. After 48 hours, late major assignments are no longer accepted. Discussions and activities are not accepted late. Attendance confirmations are not accepted late.

Students experiencing documented emergencies preventing them from submitting major assignments should contact me as soon as possible: lhowar40@kennesaw.edu.

Academic Integrity Statement

Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate catalogues. Section II of the code addresses the university's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to university materials, misrepresentation/falsification of university records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/ intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled according to the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing, which may subject a student to the code's minimum one-semester suspension requirement.

Here is what will happen if I discover a student has plagiarized an assignment:

1. I will stop grading the work in question and ask the student to contact me.
2. I will meet with the student to discuss the incident.
3. I will determine if the plagiarism is egregious (work copy-and-pasted from a website; submitting someone else's paper; copying directly from a peer in the online course shell; etc.)
4. If I determine that the plagiarism is egregious—the student is representing work he or she did not complete as his or her own in an effort to deceive—the student will automatically fail the assignment in question and the case may be turned over to the University for further investigation and possible disciplinary action.

4. If I determine that the plagiarism is accidental or the result of some sort of confusion, I may decide to treat the case as a “teachable moment,” and the student may be allowed to revise the work in question, though he or she will receive an 50% point deduction on the revised work.
5. If a student plagiarizes more than once, he or she will automatically fail the assignment and the case will be turned over to the University for further investigation and possible disciplinary action, which may include failure of the course.
6. If a student plagiarizes more than twice, he or she will automatically fail the course and the case will be turned over to the University for further investigation and possible disciplinary action.

Every KSU student is expected to uphold the [Student Code of Conduct](#), as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Review the Student Code of Conduct within the first week of the term: you are responsible for its content.

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and choose to do self-identify, please provide me with your accommodation memo/documentation within the first week of class. I will comply with all accommodations recommended by SDS for students with disabilities that have been documented by KSU. Please reach out to me promptly if you feel accommodations are not being met, and I will consult with SDS immediately to make sure the issue is resolved. Please find SDS resources here: <https://sds.kennesaw.edu/>

General Statement on Choosing Appropriate Topics

Please note that you will be completing college-level, academic writing on a topic of your choice that will be read by your classmates and instructor. You are responsible for selecting suitable and appropriate topics. The following topics are off limits for ALL assignments and class activities: explicit sexual activity, criminal/illegal activities, prejudicial/hate-based ideas, abortion, capital punishment, and the legalization of marijuana.

Please note that neither our classroom nor our written or in-person communications should be considered confidential. As an employee of the state of Georgia, I may be required to report criminal activity in specific instances (i.e., you confess to a crime verbally or in writing). I may also be required to report victimization, particularly if the incident occurred recently and/or occurred on or near KSU’s campus or was committed by a KSU student. Students exhibiting threatening or worrisome behavior may be reported to the Behavioral Response Team on campus.

If you are in crisis, there are many resources on campus that can help. Please see the sites linked below:

<https://counseling.kennesaw.edu/index.php>

<https://care.kennesaw.edu/index.php>

<https://police.kennesaw.edu/>

<https://tellksu.kennesaw.edu/help/domestic-violence.php>

Classroom Behavior

Expectations for online classroom behavior are based on expectations for professional workplace behavior and netiquette (see textbook pages 81-84 for guidelines). "Flaming," which refers to harassing or threatening online commentary and behavior, will not be tolerated in any part of the course.

Additionally, please review the KSU Student Code of Conduct, which is based on the following core values:

- Integrity: Kennesaw State University students exemplify honesty, honor and a respect for the truth in all of their dealings.
- Community: Kennesaw State University students build and enhance their community.
- Social Justice: Kennesaw State University students are just and equitable in their treatment of all members of the community and act to discourage and/or intervene to prevent unjust and inequitable behaviors.
- Respect: Kennesaw State University students show positive regard for each other, for property and for the community
- Responsibility: Kennesaw State University students are given and accept a high level of responsibility to self, to others and to the community.

All students are responsible for knowing the information, policies and procedures outlined on the website listed below. Kennesaw State University reserves the right to make changes to this code as necessary and once those changes are posted online, they are in effect. Students are encouraged to check online

<https://web.kennesaw.edu/scai/content/ksu-student-code-conduct> for the updated versions of all policies.

Disruption of Campus Life

It is the purpose of the institution to provide a campus environment that encourages academic accomplishment, personal growth, and a spirit of understanding and cooperation. An important part of maintaining such an environment is the commitment to protect the health and safety of every member of the campus community. Belligerent, abusive, profane, threatening and/ or inappropriate behavior on the part of students is a violation of the Kennesaw State University Student Conduct Regulations. Students who are found guilty of such misconduct may be subject to immediate dismissal from the institution. In addition, these violations of state law may also be subject to criminal action beyond the University disciplinary process.

Electronic Communications

Please contact me at lhowar40@kennesaw.edu only. Please do not email from your D2L account. Be sure you use your KSU student account to email professors. Please include your class day and time in the subject line of any emails. Please check your KSU email and our D2L class page before you come to class.

*I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, schedule, and class policies at any time.
Changes will be announced in the announcements area of our course.*

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