Course: U48-203 Writing for Business Communication  
Semester: Fall 2014  
Michele Ryan  
Office hours by appointment – Please e-mail to schedule a time.  
Phone: 314.314.3636  
E-mail: mryan@wustl.edu

REQUIRED READING  
Business Writing: What Works, What Won’t  
Writing That Works: Communicating Effectively on the Job (Eleventh Edition)  
PowerPoint Downloads, links, and handouts  
Writing with Sources: A Guide for Students (Gordon Harvey)

THE COURSE  
Writing is one of the most critical skills for communicators and professionals. Learn how to examine the fundamentals of effective written communication. Explore how creative processes can improve writing. And develop methods to tackle writer’s block, establish clarity, and tune in to your reader. Electronic and hard copy formats -- e-mail, web writing, memos, proposals, and reports -- are reviewed. Guest speakers will provide information on niche areas of writing.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION  
This online class begins with our Orientation on Monday of the first week. Weekly online discussions equate to class attendance. Discussions are posted no later than Wednesday and class posts, including responses to one or more students’ posts, needs to be completed by that next Monday.

Participation in the discussions is part of the participation grade. To provide meaningful discussion read the assigned chapters and uploaded instructor or guest lecturer materials prior to posting to the discussion streams. Additionally, posting to other students’ posts reflects strong participation. The participation grade is based on activity and content. Two or more missed class discussions may impact your participation grade.

GRADeS  
Your course grade will be reflected by the following:  
• Class participation 20%  
• Short Papers 20% (highest grade of the two submitted papers)  
• Final Project 20%  
• Midterm Exam 20%  
• Final Exam 20%
MIDTERM and FINAL
Both the midterm and final exam will be “take home” versions. They will be short answer and essay questions. The honor system and compliance with academic integrity is required. Complete exams independently without input from fellow students or other individuals. Tests must be e-mailed to the instructor no later than midnight of their due date. You will receive a confirmation of receipt from the instructor. The e-mail is not an auto receipt so do expect a short window of time before the response.

SHORT PAPERS and FINAL PROJECT
Each student is required to prepare two papers and a final project. Deadlines, indicated on the syllabus, are expected to be met.
Two grades are given for the short papers and final project:
● Content grade – 2/3 of overall grade
  Refer to the assignment instructions. Use the textbook and guest lecturer notes as references.
● Mechanical grade (spelling, grammar, writing) – 1/3 of overall grade
  Grading deductions:
  - Since timeliness is a critical factor in the communications field, one full letter grade from the mechanical grade will be marked down for each day a paper is late.
  - Since accuracy is a critical factor in communications, each three spelling or grammatical errors drops the mechanical grade a full letter grade.

FORMAT/DELIVERY METHOD:
Double-space all papers and be sure to include a header and page number in your formatting. Papers must be provided in a Microsoft Word format. Please name your document with your name and the relative assignment (micheleryanfinalexam.doc). E-mail your assignment to me at mryan@wustl.edu

ORIENTATION – First Week
Monday, August 25-Wednesday, August 27
• Print/read syllabus
• Obtain course texts and review announcements
• Become familiar with necessary technology/Blackboard
• Introductions discussion
• Complete Academic Integrity agreement on Blackboard by August 27 (left column)
• Review Announcements on class Blackboard
• Begin First Week Materials – Wednesday, August 27
• Weekly Discussions will run from Wednesday through the next Monday
• See full class schedule on pages 5-7
• Each week additional detail will be provided through Announcements.

I. Technology
a. Web address for Blackboard and/or other course websites (bb.wustl.edu)
b. Notice on java updates and supported browsers (see appendix)
c. Technical support (see appendix)
d. “Netiquette” statement on Internet communication (see appendix)
II. UC Policies
   a. Statement Regarding Academic Honesty: Students are bound by the University College policy on academic integrity in all aspects of this course. All references to ideas and texts other than the students' own must be so indicated through appropriate footnotes, whether the source is a book, an online site, the professor, etc. All students are responsible for following the rules outlined in the document regarding the university academic integrity policy:  
   http://ucollege.wustl.edu/faculty/academic_integrity
   
b. Student Accommodations Washington University is committed to providing equal opportunity for students with disabilities. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) assists students with disabilities by providing services and arranging for reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access and equal academic opportunities. Students wishing to request services or accommodations must register and provide appropriate documentation to the DRC at cornerstone.wustl.edu. The DRC serves as a resource and advisor to students with disabilities and welcomes opportunities to consult with students, families, faculty, and staff.

III. Appendix: Other Information to Consider

   Notice on Java Updates and Supported Browsers
   
   • Blackboard works best in Mozilla Firefox. Some Blackboard features will not work well in Chrome or Internet Explorer. You can visit https://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1_SP_12_and_SP_13/Student/040_Browser_Support_for_SP_13 and click on “Browser Support” for more detailed information on which browser works best for Blackboard, based upon your computer's operating system.
   
   • Be sure you have downloaded the most recent version Java. This is free software program which helps you to be able to access Blackboard. You can check which version of Java you currently have and update it (if necessary) by visiting www.java.com. Keep Java updated for best results.

   Technical Support
   This is a fully online, technology-based course. Because computers are not perfect, plan on having technical issues at least once during the term. While this can cause some incredibly frustrating moments, the overall benefits of the technology do outweigh any issues that may arise. Just be ready to contact technical support in the event of difficulties. Send an email to blackboardhelp@wustl.edu with any questions/problems concerning Blackboard. (This is technical support for any problems you experience within the Blackboard classroom only, not other external software). For additional Blackboard resources and assistance, visit the Blackboard Answers &Support page on the University College Website.

   “Netiquette” Statement on Internet Communication.
   • Remember your audience. If you would not say it in a face-to-face classroom, do not include it in the online discussions either. Use courtesy and common sense in all your electronic communications.
   
   • Write in complete sentences and check spelling before you post anything in class.
   • DON’T TYPE IN ALL CAPS. This is hard to read and is considered "shouting.”
Respect the opinions of others and be sensitive to the diverse nature of people in the class. Keep in mind that although you cannot "see" your classmates, you can show respect for individual differences. Diversity issues may include the following and others: race, ethnicity, religion, disabilities, gender, sexual orientation, age, social class, marital status, urban vs. rural dwellers, etc.

Avoid profanity to be sensitive to your classmates.

Expectations for Student Attendance (Bb log-ins, response to emails, discussions, hours per week students should expect to devote to the class, etc.)

You are expected to have an active presence within Blackboard (our online classroom) and that is one of the ways in which I will monitor your attendance in the course. I am able see when last you logged into Blackboard and how much time you’ve spent in various areas of the classroom. Lack of participation in discussions or not answering email messages sent to you will be considered lack of attendance and will result in a loss of points.

General Tips for Success in the Online Classroom:

Welcome to our online course! The following is a list of helpful information that represents habits of students who have succeeded in previous online courses. These tips should help each of you to have a positive experience as well.

1. **GET STARTED**: Remember that this online course begins on day one of the semester. Log in early during the first week to print the syllabus, become oriented to the online classroom, and get to know your professor and classmates.

2. **STAY ORGANIZED**. Bookmark our course websites (Blackboard, Online Dictionary, other websites indicated by professor etc.) Create a special binder or folder to organize any printed materials.

3. **INTERACT WITH YOUR CLASSMATES**. Students who study in small groups or pairs tend to be more successful. You can help each other to understand content in the weekly materials simply by participating regularly in the Discussion Forums.

4. **SHOW UP & ASK QUESTIONS**. Make an appointment and we can talk in real time via phone. You can also email me any questions.

5. **DO THE READING**. The assigned reading is a valuable part of the course. Students who consistently stay up to date on the reading tend to receive higher grades than those who do not. In this class, the reading will consist of... which will prepare you to participate in the classroom discussion forums.

6. **STUDY “OFFLINE” SOMETIMES**. Although this is an online course, you need not do all of your studying online. Spend time studying away from the computer by taking notes on the readings.
7. **DON’T PROCRASTINATE.** Get started right away and enjoy the learning experience. Missing discussions, being late on discussions and assignments will also result in grade deductions.

8. **HANG IN THERE!!** If this is your first online class, the experience may challenge you at first, but as long as you keep up with the reading and follow your professor's instructions, you will develop an understanding of the rhythm of the course after the first unit. See me for help as needed, I am your resource and I want to see you succeed and enjoy this course!

**Guidelines for Discussion Forum Participation**

1. Be sure to write in the **subject** line to whom your message is addressed. Changing the subject line is the number one way to make sure your post is noticed by the intended recipient.
2. Be sure to **sign your name** at the bottom of your messages. Writing your name at the end of each message helps to clarify the author and helps your classmates remember who you are.
3. Before responding to a particular discussion topic, be sure to **complete the reading assignment** of the corresponding unit. Remember that the discussion topics are specifically tied to the readings. Be sure to take your time and write meaningful discussion forum postings. Your ideas and content are important. Do use proper spelling and grammar. The online forum is not intended to mirror social media or texts.
4. Participate in each discussion over **several days** within the lesson and avoid waiting until the due date to get started. Each discussion requires several posts from you, including replies to one or more of your classmates. Waiting until the last day to participate minimizes the opportunity to interact and makes discussion participation much less meaningful for you. It will also result in a loss of points.
5. Finally, the discussion forums are meant to be engaging! Your participation makes our class more meaningful.

**U48-203 CLASS SCHEDULE**

**ORIENTATION – First Week**
**Monday, August 25-Wednesday, August 27**
- Print/read syllabus
- Obtain course texts and review announcements
- Become familiar with necessary technology/Blackboard
- **Introductions** discussion
- **Complete Academic Integrity agreement on Blackboard by August 27**
- **Review Announcements on class Blackboard**
- **Begin First Week Materials – Wednesday, August 27**
- **Weekly Discussions will run from Wednesday through the next Monday**
- **See full class schedule on pages 5-6**
- **Each week additional detail will be provided through Announcements.**
### Syllabus

- **Please note that these Wednesday dates are online and can be viewed anytime on that day or thereafter.** If you have a Wednesday class, this will not cause a schedule conflict since this online class is asynchronous. You will have until the following Monday to complete your discussions and reading assignments (unless otherwise noted).

#### Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 27</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION TO CLASS/TECHNIQUES &amp; DRAMAS</td>
<td>Chapters 1-3 Business Writing</td>
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<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td>WRITER’S REVIEW &amp; THE WRITING PROCESS</td>
<td>Chapter 1-2 Writing That Works</td>
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<td>Chapter 15 Business Writing</td>
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<td>Assignment: Favorite Writing Excerpt</td>
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<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td>PAGE FRIGHT</td>
<td>Chapters 4-5, 16 Business Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td>BASICS – GRAMMAR &amp; SPELLING</td>
<td>Chapters 11-12 Business Writing</td>
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<td><strong>Paper 1 Assigned</strong></td>
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<td>Sept. 23</td>
<td>ORGANIZATION &amp; STRUCTURE</td>
<td>Reading: Chapters 6-8, 13 Business Writing</td>
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<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>WORDS, TONE &amp; STYLE</td>
<td>REVISING YOUR WORK</td>
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<td>Reading: Chapters 3-4 Writing That Works</td>
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<td>Chapters 9-10 Business Writing</td>
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<td>Oct. 8</td>
<td>EFFECTIVE E-MAIL AND MEMOS</td>
<td>Reading: Chapter 14 Business Writing</td>
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<td>Chapters 8-9 Writing That Works</td>
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<td><strong>Paper 1 Due</strong></td>
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<td>Oct. 15</td>
<td><strong>MIDTERM</strong></td>
<td>Due Oct. 18 no later than Midnight</td>
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<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>COLLABORATIVE WRITING &amp; RESEARCH</td>
<td>Speaker: Suzanne Holroyd, Pentagon (pending)</td>
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<td>Reading: Chapters 5-6 Writing That Works</td>
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<td><strong>Final Project Assigned - Due Dec. 6/Workshop draft or outline Nov. 19</strong></td>
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Washington University
U48-203 Writing for Business Communication
Syllabus

Oct. 29  PROPOSALS AND REPORTS
         Reading: Chapters 10-11, 13 Writing That Works

Nov. 5   SPEECHWRITING
         Reading: Downloads
         Paper 2 Assigned

Nov. 12  DESIGNING EFFECTIVE DOCUMENTS
         Reading: Chapter 7 Writing That Works
         Paper 2 Due

Nov. 19  Final Project Drafts Review

Nov. 26  THANKSGIVING BREAK

Dec. 3   WRITING FOR WEBSITES
         Reading: Chapter 15 Writing That Works

Dec. 6   Final Project Due – No extensions

Dec. 10  FINAL EXAM
         Final Exam Due December 13