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Office Hours
Class: Briggs
Meeting Times: M W F 1:00-1:50

English 204: Business Writing

Required Text: Ober, Scot. *Contemporary Business Communicaton* (fourth edition). Available at the UDM Bookstore and ABC Bookstore.

Course Goals:

- 1) Provide students with instruction and practice in the various types of writing required in the workplace (memoranda, group writing, reports, etc.)
- 2) Encourage students to identify the communication models that govern written and oral communication in the workplace in order to express themselves clearly and effectively
- 3) Give students opportunities to master the proper elements of style, tone, and audience analysis that ensure success in business writing
- 4) Address issues of ethics and morality that arise in the business environment
- 5) Explore and evaluate the Internet as a communication medium and information resource in business writing
- 6) Help students fashion a résumé and prepare for the job interview
- 7) Offer a review of grammar principles and practice in their application

Achieving Course Goals

As your instructor, I will convey my own experiences as a writer for a specialized academic audience (literary journals). As a member of the University of Detroit Mercy institution, I will also discuss my own experiences as a memorandum writer, a grievance officer, a proposal writer, and a report writer. As a consumer, I will also set forth my experiences writing letters concerning product complaints or service dissatisfaction as well as the results of those efforts.

Our text will provide a common meeting ground for us to discuss the items listed under Course Goals. Those students having little experience in the business world will

probably find the text a useful introduction. Those students having more experience in the business world will probably find the text helpful in refining skills already honed in what the outside world calls “the school of hard knocks.” The second group, more seasoned veterans, will be expected to bring a more real-world perspective to the academic orientation of our text. Thus, beyond my own personal experiences and the text’s own pronouncements, the class itself will be a resource for investigating the actual world of business writing transactions.

Writing Assignments

- 1) Students will be assigned short-response exercises found at the end of each chapter in our text to complete either at home or in-class (20%).
- 2) LABtests. Students will be responsible for completing these grammar-correction exercises for each chapter listed in the syllabus (10%).
- 3) Assignment #1: Persuasive Request (10%).
- 4) Assignment #2: Bad News Message (10%).
- 5) Assignment #3: Team-Editing Report (10%).
- 6) Assignment #4: Job Application Letter (10%).
- 7) Proposal/First Draft of Report (10%).
- 8) Report (20%).

Please Note: In-class work cannot be made up. Other assignments turned in late will be penalized one full grade (e-mail submissions included).

Format of Assignments

All out-of-class assignments must be word-processed. In business, form is as important as substance, so be vigilant in your design. Use 12-point font, Times New Roman. LABtest exercises should be xeroxed so that they can be turned in separately.

Attendance Policy:

Those who miss class invariably fall behind and suffer the penalty. They also fail to contribute to the class dialogue or master the skills needed to do well in class. I am much more kindly disposed toward students with good attendance records when it comes to calculating grades at the end of the semester.

Students are expected to arrive in class on time and to attend for the full period. Think of the class as your job, with your grade constituting a performance evaluation at the end of the semester. Just do the work and avoid being pink-slipped.

Plagiarism Policy

Students should follow the rules for proper attribution of outside sources. All work other than group projects should reflect the student's own efforts. Violations of this standard will result in a failing grade for the assignment. (Consult attached sheet).

With the advent of the Internet and the easy electronic access to materials, it is tempting to simply cut material from a source and paste it into one's own work. Even if one gives proper attribution to that source, presenting another's work as one's own is plagiarism. When dealing with outside sources, take the time to outline and summarize what is in that source, using quotation sparingly. The virtue of this process is that one is able to integrate outside information into one's own original work.

Syllabus for English 204: Business Writing

First Week

9/5 Introduction to course.

9/7 Read *Chapter One: Understanding Business Communication*.

Second Week

9/10 Do Exercise 5 (last names A-D); Exercise 6 (E-H); Exercise 7 (I-M); (N-Q); Exercise 9 (R-T); and Exercise 10 (U-Z). Found on pp. 27-29.

9/12 Do LABtest (31). Also, discussion of *Continuing Case 1* (30).

Please note the following special University event:

Celebrate Spirit! Thursday, Sept. 13, from 11:30-2:00 p.m., at Calihan Hall.

9/14 Read *Chapter 2: Work-Team Communication*.

Third Week

9/17 Review for class discussion Exercises 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 (79-81).

9/19 Do LABtest (83).

9/21 Read *Chapter 7: Routine Messages*.

Fourth Week

9/24. Review Exercises 1-18 (238-45). *Continuing Case 7* (245-6).

9/26 Read *Chapter 4: Writing with Style: Individual Elements*.

9/28 In-class work on Exercises 1-18 (143-47). Assignment #1 (Routine message) due. Mandatory in-class peer-review.

Fifth Week

10/1. Read *Chapter 5: Writing with Style: Overall Tone and Readability*

10/3 In-class work on Exercises 1-11 (171-73).. LABtest due (175).

10/5 Read *Chapter 8: Persuasive Messages*

Sixth Week

10/8. Review Exercises 1-17 (276-83) for class discussion

10/10 LABtest due (284-5).

10/12 Assignment #2 (Persuasive Request) due. Mandatory in-class peer-review.
In-class work on Exercises 1-12 (171-73).

Seventh Week

10/15 In-class work on *Continuing Case 5* (174). Do LABtest (175).

10/17 Read *Chapter 9: Bad-News Messages*.

10/19 Review *Continuing Case 9* (322).

Eighth Week

10/22 In-class work on Exercises (316-22). LABtest due (324).

10/24 Assignment #3 (Bad News Message) due. Mandatory in-class peer-review.

10/26 Read *Chapter 3: Communication Technology*.

Ninth Week

10/29 Review Exercises 1-10 (108-11) for class discussion. LABtest due (113).

10/31 Review *Continuing Case 3* (112).

11/2 Assignment #4 (Team-Editing Report) due

Tenth Week

11/5 Read *Chapter 10: Planning the Report*.

11/7 Review Exercises 1 and 2 (362-64).

11/9 *Continuing Case 10* (367). LABtest (369).

Eleventh Week

11/12 Read *Chapter 12: Writing the Report*.

11/14 In-class discussion of Report topics; assigning of groups.

11/16 Group meetings, assignment of roles and duties.

Twelfth Week

11/19 Review Exercises 1 and 2 for class discussion (443-44). LABtest (456) due.

11/21 Read *Chapter 11: Collecting and Analyzing Data*.

Thirteenth Week

11/26 Read *Chapter 14: Illustrating and Delivering the Business Presentation*.

11/28 Read *Chapter 15: Employment Communication*.

11/30 In-class work on Exercises (558-61). Review *Continuing Case 15* (562).

Fourteenth Week

12/3 Read *Chapter 13: Planning the Business Presentation*. LABtest due (563).

12/5 Read *Chapter 14: Illustrating and Deliver the Business Presentation*. In-class work on Reports. LABtest due (493).

12/7 Wrap-up; course evaluations. Assignment #5 (Job Application Letter) due.

Final Exam Week: Presentations of Group Projects on Tuesday, December 11 from 2:00-3:30 p.m.