

ENGL 3040, Business Writing: Creative & Critical Approaches

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Office: 511 Strode Tower Office Hours: T/Th: 8-9:30 a.m. &
4:45-5:30 p.m. (by appointment only)

Course Description & Pedagogical Methods: This course is designed to expose students to studying, practicing, and creating various forms of workplace communication. We will be partnering with a local small business, thus this course is a Client Based Class. The rationale of this approach allows students to work in an already professional environment and create deliverables that impact the current business world. Projects in this course provide students with opportunities to practice writing and produce communication that solves a specific problem. Along the way, we will talk about how writing functions within a professional environment and learn strategies students utilize to make their communications more effective. Emphasis is placed on teamwork, evaluation, response, and communication problem-solving strategies.

Additionally, this course is participating in Clemson's "CT2" campus-wide Quality Enhancement Plan to target undergraduate critical thinking, an invaluable skill for you to develop during your college career. Dr. Peter Facione defines critical thinking as, "Critical thinking is not about bashing what people believe just to show how clever we are. Critical thinking is skeptical without being cynical. It is open minded without being wishy washy. It is analytical without being nitpicky. Critical thinking can be decisive without being stubborn, evaluative without being judgmental, and forceful without being opinionated." We will focus on consciously practicing critical thinking skills throughout the semester: in our discussions, assignments, reviews, and reflections. You will complete two versions of the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) and submit an artifact of your progress in critical thinking at the end of the semester. The CCTST will be administered in class on Thursday, January 21 and again at the end of the semester.

LEARNING OUTCOMES (INCLUSIVE WITH CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS): THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES WILL BE MEASURED AND IMPROVED UPON THROUGH IN-CLASS DISCUSSIONS, DAILY CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISES AND PROJECTS.

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- 1. Explore complex challenges and analyze multi-dimensional problems:** Students will explore, analyze, and evaluate diverse audiences, purposes, contexts, and constraints, and write and design technical documents that provide content specific to an audience's needs.
- 2. Extrapolate from one conceptual context to others:** Students will explore and use appropriate technologies to facilitate communication goals.
- 3. Synthesize alternative solutions to multidimensional challenges:** Students will collaborate with peers to evaluate one another's work and articulate the projects' strengths and weaknesses in an effort to appropriately and effectively revise.
- 4. Communicate complex ideas effectively:** Students will present and defend their approaches to subject matter in regards to audience, purpose, context, and constraints. Students will effectively communicate complex ideas in various technical communications genres as individuals and in a group.

*Discussions, peer reviews, projects, presentations, and reflections are used as the measure of mastery of these learning objectives.

Required Texts:

Business Communication Essentials, Bovee & Thill, Seventh Edition

Classroom Policies: The following are a set of guidelines and expectations for our class.

Daily Preparation: Always bring a writing utensil, paper and the texts (hard copy) we will be discussing to class. If you do not have the reading materials for the day you will be asked to leave class.

Late Work: I expect all assignments to be turned in on the due date. *Late assignments will be docked one full letter grade (10 points) per late day including weekends.* For example, if an assignment is due on Thursday and it is turned in on Monday, it is four days late. This equals 40 points so the highest you could possibly make on the assignment would be a 60, assuming that the assignment is perfect.

- Extensions must be approved 24+ hours before the assignment is due.

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- If you turn in an assignment late or you are granted an extension on an assignment, you forfeit the right to view my comments on your assignment before the next assignment is due.

Technology and Communication:

- Blackboard: You will need to be able to access Blackboard for grades.
- Laptops, etc.: I will let you know in advance if/when you need to bring a laptop to class. You are not allowed to use your laptop in class any other time. It is your responsibility to purchase a hard copy of the books and print all course documents needed for class.
- Cell phones: These are not a piece of technology allowed in class. When class starts please put your phone away. For no reason should you have your phone on your desk or in your hand during class. If I see you using your cell phone you will be asked to leave lose participation points.
- Email: check at least once a day for any class updates.
- If/When you email me use email etiquette (subject line, address the recipient, use complete sentences, etc.)
- Email Responses: I will respond within 24 hours to your emails (except on weekends). If you email after 5 p.m. I will not respond to your email until the following day. If you have questions about an upcoming assignment, to insure a timely response from me, I suggest that you ask the question at least two days ahead of when the assignment is due.

Attendance: Your job is to be a student. I expect you to treat it as a job; one you treat with all seriousness, both in performance and in attendance. You are expected to attend each class meeting because I record attendance at each meeting. I do not distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. You may miss three class meetings throughout the semester for any reason and without penalty. However, missing that much class is likely to put you very far behind the rest of the class. If you have additional absences, beyond the three, your course grade will be lowered one full letter per absence. At the beginning of class I will take attendance for the day. If you miss being called please see me after class if you feel you have a valid reason for being late to negotiate your presence in class that day. (I would highly advise you to contribute consistently to class discussion that day.) Also, if you are 5 minutes or later from class, you will be counted absent. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to get class notes, etc. from a fellow classmate. Please do not email me asking what you

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missed in class, rather, contact a classmate. Lastly, being in attendance means you have read the materials for the day and have them with you. If you come to class without your readings and materials you will be counted absent.

University Policies: The following are policies applicable to all courses at Clemson University.

General Education Requirement: In meeting the requirements for this course, students will demonstrate an understanding of the arts and humanities in historical and cultural contexts. Although all assignments demonstrate competency in the Arts & Humanities, the papers written and researched in this course are particularly appropriate for use in students' collection of academic artifacts.

Disability Access: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should make an appointment with Dr. Margaret Camp (656-6848), Director of Disability Services, to discuss specific needs within the first month of classes. Students should present a Faculty Accommodation Letter from Student Disability Services when they meet with instructors. Accommodations are not retroactive and new Faculty Accommodation Letters must be presented each semester.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson's vision of this institution as a "high seminary of learning." Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form.

When, in the opinion of a faculty member, there is evidence that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the faculty member shall make a formal written charge of academic dishonesty, including a description of the misconduct, to the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies. If you have any questions whatsoever about what constitutes plagiarism, see me before you turn in final drafts of your work. Students are not allowed to submit work from other classes for credit in this course.

How this course handles cheating:

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- The first time you are caught cheating, I will discuss it with you, and you will fail the assignment.
- If you are caught a second time, I will formally report to the Associate Dean for Curriculum in the Office of Undergraduate Studies, and you will fail the course.

Clemson University Title IX (Sexual Harassment): University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, veteran's status, genetic information or protected activity (e.g., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in any complaint process, etc.) in employment, educational programs and activities, admissions and financial aid. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment and sexual violence as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This policy is located at <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/title-ix/>. Mr. Jerry Knighton is the Clemson University Title IX Coordinator. He also is the Director of Access and Equity. His office is located at 111 Holtzendorff Hall, 864.656.3181 (voice) or 864.565.0899 (TDD).

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

Jan 6, W: Classes Begin

Jan 12, Tu: Last day to register or add a class, declare Audit or Pass/No Pass

Jan 18, M: Martin Luther King Jr. holiday

Jan 20, W: Last day to drop a class or withdraw from the University without a W grade

Mar 11, F: Last day to drop a class or withdraw from the University without final grades

Apr 25-29, M-F: Examinations

Grade Break Down:

Client Based Projects	70%	Individual Work	30%
1: Business Message	10% /70%	Critical Thinking Assessment (1)	2.5%

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2: Presentation to Client	15% / 70%	Critical Thinking Assessment (2)	2.5%
3: Visit Facility	15% / 70%	Class Participation	10%
4: Formal Proposal Due	15% / 70%	Employment Materials Portfolio	15%
5: Final Presentation	15% / 70%	Total	100%

A = 100-90

B = 89-80

C = 79-70

D = 69-60

F = 59-0

NOTE I will not round up to the next point bracket. I will not add additional points to your grade for any reason. Grades must be earned.

Client Based Projects: Details to come.

Critical Thinking Assessment(s): At the beginning and end of the semester you will individually participate in an assessment to measure your critical thinking skills. For completing this assessment you will receive a 100 no matter what score you earn as long as you answer each question thoroughly. If you merely rush through the test and select answers you will earn a 0. The goal of this course is to improve your ability to think constructively and creatively and therefore your score should increase from the beginning to the end of the semester.

Participation: This course requires that you read the texts assigned carefully, interpret them, and come to class prepared to discuss them (respond to and ask questions about them) with your classmates and me. You do not start off with an A in participation. That grade is entirely up to you and your daily preparedness and willingness to contribute to class discussions. I want to see you actually thinking about you've read and either formulating opinions or—at the very least—asking good questions.

Hearing a variety of voices, thoughts, and opinions makes class interesting. If you are shy or have fears about public speaking, here is your opportunity to

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work on those issues. No one will laugh at your ideas—least of all me. We are here to learn from one another.

In that vein, I do not tolerate disrespect — toward me or anyone in our classroom. We might disagree, but that's no reason for the belittlement or disparagement of someone's ideas. Blatant disrespect is cause for dismissal from class. Positive non-verbal communication is vital to good participation as well. Listen attentively. Stay alert.

Taking good notes as you read before each class is crucial to aiding your participation. Highlight, underline, write in margins—make note of what seems important to you and what questions you have so that you have something to reference while you're sitting in class.

The following is a basic guide for how you may expect to be graded on participation:

- A-** contributes to class discussion regularly and dependably, multiple times every class period; contributions are thoughtful, not merely repetitious; participates fully and enthusiastically in all in-class activities; is always prepared for class.
- B-** contributes to class discussions regularly, at least once a class period; contributions are thoughtful; participates in all in-class activities; is usually prepared for class.
- C-** occasionally contributes to class discussions, at least once a week; participates during in-class activities; is generally prepared for class.
- D-** rarely contributes to class discussion, may go 2 class periods without interacting with the material verbally; perhaps does not participate fully during in-class activities; perhaps is engaged in non-class-related activities or provides a distraction for classmates; has problems being prepared for class.

Note: It is possible to earn an F in participation: not only never contributes to class discussion, but also is a distraction to classmates and/or is consistently

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engaged in non-class-related activities during class times; is almost never prepared for class; excessive absences.

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Syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the Instructor.

Tuesday, January 12	Syllabus & Introductions
Thursday, January 14	Chapter 1 "Business Communication Foundations" "15 words to eliminate from our vocabulary to sound smarter": https://www.themuse.com/advice/15-words-you-need-to-eliminate-from-your-vocabulary-to-sound-smarter
Tuesday, January 19	Chapter 2 "Collaboration, Interpersonal Communication, and Business Etiquette" "The Rhetorical Situation" PPT (In Class)
Thursday, January 21	CT2 Assessment (bring your laptop to class)
Tuesday, January 26	Client to Class
Thursday, January 28	Form Groups Chapter 4 "Writing Business Messages" Project 1: Business Message
Tuesday, February 2	Group Work Day
Thursday, February 4	Chapter 3 "The Three-Step Writing Process" "Audience Analysis" PPT (In Class)
Tuesday, February 9	Chapter 12 "Developing and Delivering Business Presentations"
Thursday, February 11	Client To Class Project 2: Presentations to Client
Tuesday, February 16	Group Work Day
Thursday, February 18	Project 3: Visit Facility
Tuesday, February 23	Project 3: Visit Facility
Thursday, February 25	Chapter 10 "Understanding and Planning Reports and Proposals"
Tuesday, March 1	Group Work Day

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Thursday, March 3	Chapter 11 "Writing and Completing Reports and Proposals"
Tuesday, March 8	Group Work Day
Thursday, March 10	Group Work Day
Tuesday, March 15	Spring Break
Thursday, March 17	Spring Break
Tuesday, March 22	Chapter 13 "Building Careers and Writing Resumes"
Thursday, March 24	Chapter 14 "Applying and Interviewing for Employment" Resumes & Cover Letters Continued
Tuesday, March 29	Peer Review Day
Thursday, March 31	Employment Materials Portfolio Due
Tuesday, April 5	CT2 Assessment (bring your laptop to class)
Thursday, April 7	Group Work Day
Tuesday, April 12	Follow Up With Client Day
Thursday, April 14	Group Meetings
Tuesday, April 19	Group Work Day
Thursday, April 21	Project 4 & 5 : Final Presentation to Client & Formal Proposal Due