Workplace Writing ENG 3355

CRN: XXX

University of Texas at El Paso

Fall XXX

TR 10:30 – 11:50 (this could change)

Undergraduate Learning Center (UGLC) 236 (this could change)

**Instructor:** XXX

**Email:**  xxx

**Office:** 101A Vowell Hall

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. and by appointment\* \*Students will be notified if office hours need to change for any reason.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 1312, ENGL 1313, or ESOL 1312. Junior standing recommended.

**Course Description:**

The primary goal of English 3355 is to develop students’ effective communication in professional contexts. This effective communication is based on an awareness of and appreciation for discourse communities as well as knowledge specific to subject matter, genre, rhetorical strategy, and writing process.

This class presents an approach to communication that helps students determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different situations within the workplace. Students will produce a variety of documents and presentations while gaining more confidence and fluency in written, visual, and oral communication.

**Learning Outcomes:**

* Develop an efficient and effective writing process that includes strategies for invention, researching, drafting, revising, and editing
* Determine and analyze workplace rhetorical situations
* Understand the generic conventions of documents commonly used for workplace communication
* Create effective documents in genres commonly used for workplace communication
* Conduct research within the context of the workplace that will inform your writing
* Work collaboratively with a team to create written documents and multimedia presentations
* Consider the ethical dimensions of composing and working within organizations
* Recognize and respect various cultural attitudes toward and conventions for workplace communication

**Required Texts: (This could be different for you; check Blackboard for current texts)**

* Oliu, W., C. Brusaw, and G. Alred (Eds.). (2010). *Writing that Works*. Boston: Bedford/ St. Martin’s.
* Alred, Gerald J., Charles T. Brusaw and Walter E. Oliu. (Eds.) (2012). *The Business Writer’s Handbook*. 10th edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s.
* McCool, Matthew. (2009). *Writing Around the World: A Guide To Writing Across Cultures*. New York: Continuum. (This text is available via Amazon but is not in the University Bookstore)
* Various PDF articles on Blackboard

**Required Online Programs:**

Although this is not an online course, several aspects of the class will utilize online and computer-based tools. Thus, you will be expected to be proficient in the use of computers and the Internet. If any of the following tools are new to you, you should begin familiarizing yourself with them as soon as possible. To be successful in this course, and indeed in current or future workplaces, you will need to stay abreast of new technology and be a self-learner. There are many resources available – from Instructional Support Services at UTEP to YouTube videos – that offer information about and instruction in web technologies. You must also have reliable access to the Internet. Not knowing how to use the technology or not having access to the Internet will NOT be acceptable excuses for non-participation or late assignment submission.

**Blackboard:** Blackboard is where you will find all documents, course materials, resources, and instructions; participate in online discussion groups; submit all assignments; check your grades; and much more. You have access to Blackboard via the MyUTEP feature on the UTEP home page. When you login, you will see the modules for all of your classes. Symbols underneath each class listing indicate new activity inside the module. For example, a megaphone indicates that there is a new announcement. Understanding how to navigate and effectively use Blackboard is necessary for success in this course. For training or information regarding its use, please refer to Instructional Support Services at: <http://issweb.utep.edu/home/index.php?option=com_tag&task=tag&tag=blackboard>.

**Skype:** I will conduct some office hours via this service. You may also utilize Skype for group meetings. Oftentimes, employers will suggest a Skype interview if you are applying from another, far away location. Additionally, when traveling for business, Skype is one way to attend meetings. Thus, learning how to use Skype effectively and professionally will help with your future workplace communication goals. If you are not already on Skype, you can sign up here: <http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/home>. My Skype ID is sbartlett118.

**Google Documents:** When you are working on group projects, especially the proposal assignment, you will use a Google doc for collaborative writing. I will create the Google doc for the proposal and invite each member of each group to it. Once inside, you can write synchronously or asynchronously and chat with each other at the same time in the side bar. To get started with Google docs, go here: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and click “Documents.”

**Dropbox:** Dropbox is a cloud-based storage site that allows you to easily store and share all kinds of files and is a good way to back up your documents. I may ask you to submit some projects, such as your PowerPoint presentations, to Dropbox instead of Blackboard, since Dropbox can handle larger files. You may also want to use it to access your documents during class time. To get started, go here: <https://www.dropbox.com/>

***Writing That Works* Companion Website:** We will be using the resources and some assignments/ quizzes from this companion website throughout the semester. As soon as possible, you should register as a student. Please do provide my email address ([sblarge@miners.utep.edu](mailto:sblarge@miners.utep.edu)) on the registration page. Furthermore, this website offers many free resources, such as *Diana Hacker’s Research and Documentation Online*, which provides information regarding citation guidelines for many different styles, including MLA, APA, and CSE. To get started, go here: <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writingthatworks10e/default.asp?uid=0&rau=0>

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance:** Students are required to attend all classes. However, occasionally, unforeseeable events may prevent you from attending class. You should send me a professional email when you are absent. After four absences, each subsequent absence will reduce your final grade by 10 points (an entire letter grade). Before the withdrawal date, I will send out notification to those who are risking failure due to attendance to recommend dropping, but I will not drop you myself.\* ***No matter how well you do on your assignments, failure to attend regularly will negatively affect your grade and may even cause you to fail the course.***

\*Note: I will drop students who fail to attend at all for the first two weeks.

**Classroom Etiquette:**

* Please be on time for class. It is disturbing for the whole class when someone arrives late.
* We will be in a computer classroom and thus will be utilizing the technology for course-related purposes. However, you should not use the computers for non-class related activities, including checking email, working on assignments for other courses, or engaging with social media.
* Cell phones/ smartphones should be turned to silent and put away during class time. If you have an emergency call or text, please step outside of the classroom to conduct your business.
* Do not listen to MP3 players during class time.
* No food or drinks inside the computer classroom. The technology is very expensive and spills can be devastating.
* Sleeping in class will result in an absence.
* Please be respectful of all members of class during discussion. You will be asked to leave the classroom if you fail to conduct yourself in a professional, respectful manner.

**Online Etiquette:**

* Always consider audience. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.
* Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
* Do not use inappropriate language, all capital letters, or language short cuts. Online entries should be written in Standard English with edited spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
* When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face to face situation.
* Be sure to read everyone’s responses before posting. Avoid repetition of what someone else has already said. Add something new to the discussion.
* Do not copy another classmates’ response on a discussion board.
* No credit will be received for yes/no answers. Posts should justify positions and provide specific examples. Students must demonstrate that they have read the assignment and their classmates’ comments carefully and thoughtfully.
* Be sure to post in a timely fashion to receive credit for the discussion. Pay close attention to the posted deadlines.
* Blackboard is not a public Internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and the professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space. If students wish to do so, they have the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).

**Academic Honesty:** Academic Dishonesty is **NEVER** tolerated at UTEP. All cases are reported to the Dean of Students for Academic Sanctions. These sanctions may include expulsion. All work submitted must be original; students may not submit graded work from another course. Forms of academic dishonesty include: *Collusion—*working with others on an assignment intended to be an individual project; *Fabrication—*deliberately creating false information on a works cited page; and *Plagiarism—*the presentation of another person's work as your own, whether intentionally or not (i.e. copying parts of or whole papers off the Internet). See the Dean of Students website at <http://www.utep.edu/dos/acadintg.htm> for more information.

**Copyright and Fair Use:** The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. Students are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend students nor assume any responsibility for student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject students to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** The *Americans with Disabilities Act* requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. When students suspect they have a disability and need an accommodation, they should contact the Disabled Student Services Office (DSSO) at (915) 747-5148 or [dss@utep.edu](mailto:dss@utep.edu). The DSSO is located in Room 106, Union East Bldg. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor any DSS accommodation letters and instructions.

**The University Writing Center:** The University Writing Center (UWC) is located on the second floor of the UTEP library in Room 227 and offers free one-on-one writing assistance for students. Online tutoring is also available. Graduate and undergraduate tutors work with writers on projects for a wide variety of classes and provide help during all parts of the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Meetings with tutors are on a first-come, first-served basis, but you may also make appointments with specific tutors. Some tutors are bilingual Spanish and English speakers. Tutors will not edit your paper for you, and you are the one ultimately responsible for the work you submit and the grade you earn. Visit the website to learn more or to sign up for online tutoring, and be sure to request tutoring well before a deadline: <http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?alias=academics.utep.edu/writingcenter>

**Email:** You may email me at any time to ask a question or to discuss course material. I will also email you from time to time regarding course issues. ***If Blackboard is down for any reason, please check your email for instructions and attachments.*** You may email me at either of the email addresses listed on this syllabus or via Blackboard. I will email you at your UTEP email address or via Blackboard, so be sure to check both regularly. Emailed assignments will only be accepted on a case-by-case basis or if Blackboard is not functioning properly.

**Assignments:**

You will complete six major assignments and several smaller, weekly assignments over the course of the semester. All major and some minor assignments will be submitted using the “Assignments” feature in Blackboard. Assignments should be submitted as attachments unless otherwise specified. ***Late work will not be accepted.*** The following is a list of major assignments, brief descriptions, and point values. More detailed assignment sheets are available on Blackboard. Minor assignments will be announced weekly and will include reading, discussion posts, peer reviews, short essay responses, short multimedia presentations, etc.

1. 200 points **Minor Assignments and Class Participation:** Short weekly assignments,

discussion posts, and participation in class activities and discussions

1. 75 points **Routine/ Positive Letter:** Letter that includes a neutral tone and is

intended to convey information or present a perspective

1. 75 points **Sensitive/ Negative Letter:** Letter that is intended to convey sensitive or

negative information.

1. 250 points **Job Application Portfolio:** This portfolio will include a posting for a job

position for which you qualify now or will qualify in the future; an analysis of the organization, job position, and audience for the application; a cover letter; and a resume.

1. 100 points **Informative Memo:** This memo will inform team members about the

cultural communication style of a foreign country outside of North America. It will also analyze potential problems with communication and provide solutions.

1. 200 points **Proposal:** The proposal will include a cover letter, executive summary,

analysis of a business situation requiring a solution, proposed solution with implementation of timeline and costs, and references pages. This project will be completed as a team.

1. 100 points **Proposal Presentation:** Groups will present their proposal to the class.

The presentation will assume the audience is a group within the studied organization who can take some action regarding the proposed recommendations.

**Grades:**

You must complete all major assignments to pass the course. The following grading system will be used:

900 – 1000 points = A

800 – 899 points = B

700 – 799 points = C

600 – 699 points = D

Below 600 points = F