

# ENG 306 - Business Writing

## Course Description

Business Writing serves to introduce students to writing situations and genres common in business and professional contexts; use rhetoric to analyze and appropriately respond to situations and audiences; and to practice writing individually and collaboratively in business genre such as memos, emails, reports, and portfolios so that students will know how to approach writing situations in business and professional contexts.

## Course Outcomes

Upon completing ENG 306, students should be able to:

- Articulate how key concepts such as rhetorical situation, context, genre, and community of practice influence their approach to business writing.
- Identify the rhetorical facets of business writing such as audience, purpose, and appeals.
- Identify and produce business genres such as memos, reports, proposals, presentations, and portfolios.
- Respond to wicked problems and complex contexts through appropriate genres and relevant composing technology.
- Utilize appropriate project management skills and approaches to collaborative problem solving such as agile and design thinking.
- Write individually and collaboratively in clear, concise, and cohesive prose.

## Online Instruction and First Day Tasks

This course is going to challenge you in a number of ways and will likely be different in content and delivery method from other classes you have taken in the past. The format of an online writing course is different from a face-to-face class, and different from other online classes. Given the social nature of writing and learning to write, we will engage in synchronous and asynchronous modes of learning, and a variety of activities both individual and collaborative. In order to be successful in this class you will need to engage frequently, read carefully, respond intentionally and in a timely manner, and communicate empathetically.

By the end of the first day of class you should:

- Carefully read the syllabus – familiarize yourself with the course policies and the assignments
- Sign into Blackboard and familiarize yourself with the course. It has been organized into Learning Modules that will unfold throughout the term
- Familiarize yourself with the strategies for successful online learning at the [WKU's Tools for Online Learners](#)

## Course Info

**Course/Section:** ENG 306-701

**Class Time:** Asynchronous Online

**Course Site:** Blackboard

## Contact Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Michael Healy

**Office:** Cherry Hall 7E

**Office Hours:** M 2-3, T/Th 1-2, and by appointment.

Please Come and See Me!

**Email:** [michael.healy@wku.edu](mailto:michael.healy@wku.edu)

**Zoom:**

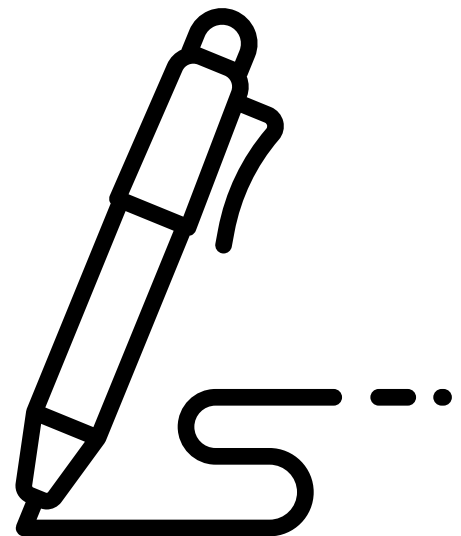
[wku.zoom.us/j/9123456789](https://wku.zoom.us/j/9123456789)

**Calendly:**

[calendly.com/michael\\_healy/](https://calendly.com/michael_healy/)

## Required Texts and Materials

- Oliu, Walter E., Charles T. Brusaw, and Gerald J. Alred. *Writing that Works*. 13th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-319-36152-5
- Daily, reliable access to a computer with a secure, high-speed internet connection
- PDFs and hyperlinks available on Blackboard



## Regular and Substantive Interaction

The U.S. Department of Education requires that distance education courses must include regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty. For more information about Regular and Substantive Interaction at WKU, please visit the [Regular and Substantive Interaction in Online and Distance Learning webpage](#).

In this course, regular and substantive interaction will take place in the following ways:

- Bi-Weekly detailed announcements
- Two synchronous conferences, at least one individual and one group, held via Zoom
- Regular Zoom office hours and appointment times
- Timely and detailed feedback on assignments provided within 7-10 days of submission

## Email Policy

Please email with the subject line “ENG 306 – Your Name – Subject,” and I will respond within 24 hours Monday-Friday. If you do not use this naming convention, I can’t guarantee how quickly I will get back to you (if ever). You run the risk of your email getting eaten by my inbox-monster. Be respectful in your email communications with me and with your peers. For questions, make sure you have attempted to answer them yourself by consulting the syllabus and course documents.

Any time you send an email to someone with a question, concern, or request, it is expected that you acknowledge their response. A quick “thank you” would suffice.

## Engagement

**You should check into Blackboard regularly. I will be checking in, and I’ll notice if you’re not.**

You should always inform me, ahead of time when possible, if you have concerns about your ability to check into the course. For the class to function--and for you to maximize your experience--you’ll need to check into Blackboard at least three times each week in order to be timely with your engagement in the discussions and submission of assignments (including drafts and peer reviews). **Work is due Wednesdays and Sundays by 11:59pm Central Time.**

## Late Work Policy

Students are responsible for keeping up with assignment due dates. Assignments such as exercises, workshops, discussion boards, and quizzes will receive up to half credit when late. Major assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized 10% for each day, not class period, after the assignment’s due date. Late work will always be accepted but may only earn up to half-credit after being over four days late. The extension of deadlines in the case of extreme circumstances will be determined at the instructor’s discretion.

## Drafts and Workshops

Students will take all major assignments through a series of drafts and workshops. In order to earn a passing grade on the project, all drafts must be submitted. Each workshop is required for students to successfully complete the assignment at hand. Students who are unable to attend workshop dates have the option to participate digitally. Students’ participation grade is influenced by presence in class, actively engaging in discussion (both in class and digitally), and being prepared for the workshop.

## Important Dates

Last day to add or drop a course: August 28

Failure for Non-Attendance Date (F/N date): October 22

Last day to withdraw with a W: October 30

## Grade Calculation

Persuasive Memo = 15%

Wicked Problem Collaboration = 35%

Professional Portfolio = 15%

QQCs = 10%

Workshops and Peer Review = 10%

Assignments and Exercises = 10%

Online Engagement = 5%

## Grading Scale

A = 100-90    B = 89-80    C = 79-70    D = 69-60    F = Below 60%

Please Note: grades are not rounded up

## Chat GPT and Generative AI

In general, I expect that the work you submit in this class will be your own and you are not authorized to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Google Bard, and Dall-e. However, there will be specific assignments or activities in which we will utilize these tools to enhance your learning experience. In these instances, I will provide you with additional information about the assignment and how AI will be employed and cited. Again, unless permission is granted, you are expected to complete assignments without substantive assistance from others, including AI tools.

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Google Bard, and Dall-e may be used for research, brainstorming and invention, and for stylistic inquiry with appropriate citation, but not for the final composing of memos, reports, or the proposal. If you are unsure if you are using AI tools appropriately in this course, I encourage you to visit with me. Examples of how to cite AI tools are available at <https://libguides.wku.edu/stylewrite/ai>.

## Plagiarism/Academic Integrity

The penalties for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious because such behaviors undermine the basic purpose of education. As the WKU Student Handbook states, “The maintenance of academic integrity is of fundamental importance to the University. Thus it should be clearly understood that acts of plagiarism or any other form of cheating will not be tolerated and that anyone committing such acts risks punishment of a serious nature” (“Academic Integrity”).

In addition, the Handbook reminds us of this description of plagiarism:

to represent written work taken from another source as one’s own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of a student must be his/her own. One must give any author credit for source material borrowed from him/her. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage without reference to the source after having changed a few words is also plagiarism.

Notice that, if any material in your work lacks appropriate citation, you are claiming that material is your own, original ideas and language. If this is not the case, then you are plagiarizing. As the Handbook states, “Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the course work in which the act is detected or a failing grade in a course without possibility of withdrawal” (“Academic Offenses”). Any student who submits plagiarized work will receive an F for plagiarized assignment, at minimum. The penalty may also include an F for the course.

## ADA Accommodation

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at [sarc.connect@wku.edu](mailto:sarc.connect@wku.edu). Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

## Mental Health in College

College can be stressful. Many students deal with a range of issues involving time management, completing coursework, relationships, finances, and general anxiety. If you ever feel that stress, anxiety, or depression are interfering with your daily life or your ability to succeed in your classes, don't ignore it. Please take advantage of the campus resources available to you. Information for the WKU Counseling Center can be found here: <https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/>

## Title IX / Discrimination and Harrasment

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's [Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) (#0.070) and [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Executive Director, Office of Institutional Equity/Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir, 270-745-6867 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact [WKU's Counseling and Testing Center](#) at 270-745-3159.



## Acknowledgements and Intellectual Property

I'd like to thank those who have helped me in putting this syllabus and course together, including but not limited to Jessi Thomsen, Daniel Liddle, Angela Jones, and Jeff (JA) Rice.

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## Indigenous Land Statement

In this class, we honor and acknowledge the Indigenous peoples on whose land this university was built. This region of Kentucky was home to both the Shawnee and Cherokee East tribes.

# Brief Assignment Descriptions

## QQCs

A two part discussion board that provides space to work through the assigned reading, consider the relationship to course content, and to further discussions on the topics of the course. You are responsible for an initial QQC post to the appropriate discussion board on Blackboard by Wednesdays at 11:59 PM CST that consists of the following:

1. **An initial post which includes at least one quote from the reading** that you found interesting or challenging. This could be something that you agreed with, disagreed with, made you consider things in a different way, or something else that made you think through it.
2. **A discussion of the quote and the connections you see** to our course content and context. You might discuss what you learned from the reading, how it connects to an assignment, an insight you had to another context such as a class, internship, job, hobby, sport, or other activity. This discussion should be at least a paragraph in length
3. **At least two specific and direct questions** that are relevant to the reading for us to consider.

You will then respond to at least two of your peers' posts by Sunday at 11:59 PM CST in a way that furthers the conversation. It will do more than just say "I agree" or "good point."

## Persuasive Memo

An internally focused memo that persuades your audience to take action, change a position, or agree to a plan. Use the concepts of rhetorical situation and design thinking to address specific audiences with a problem, issue, or need.

## Addressing a Wicked Problem

A multi-part cooperative and collaborative project in which you will identify, research, and report on a wicked problem that your group identifies on or intersecting with WKU, and then collaboratively writing and presenting a formal proposal for an intervention to the problem. This project will be completed in two stages. The first stage is an informal report that defines, describes, and presents primary and secondary research into the problem. The second stage is a formal proposal for an intervention to the problem and a presentation on the proposal for interested stakeholders

## Professional Portfolio

Compose a portfolio of materials related to your work as a business writer and geared towards a specific job ad. The portfolio will include a resume, cover letter, and relevant example materials. Portfolios will be shared and reviewed by a small group of peers in a job review/interview scenario.

## Weekly Updates

Each week you will submit an update on your progress through the class. There are three main components to these reflective updates. The first is a description of what you done over the past week. The second is a discussion of successes and challenges that you have faced in the past week with this class. The final is a look forward, considering what you might continue, drop, and/or change moving forward.

## Small Assignments

This weighted category includes assignments such as quizzes, emails, response letters, design documents, homework, and other exercises.