

San José State University

Department of English

English 100WB, Written Communication: Business

Instructor:

Dr. Mark Thompson

Office Location:

Faculty Office Building 110

Telephone:

408-924-4433 (I don't check voice messages)

Email:

mark.thompson@sjtu.edu

Office Hours:

Tues 3:00–4:30 and by appointment. Zoom and in-person meetings are available.
(Link on Canvas)

Class Days/Time:

T/TH 1:30–2:45

Prerequisites:

UD standing (60+ units completed) & completed A3, ENGL 1B, HUM 1B, or equiv 2nd sem comp course with a C- or better Or GRAD/PBAC. UDW-DSP recommended (sjtu.edu/wac/wst/). Declared Majors: Business, Engr Technology, Prof & Tech Writing, Public Relations, Org. Studies

Course Category:

Writing in the Disciplines (Satisfies GWAR requirement)

Course Description

English 100WB is a participatory course that offers a practical approach to business communication, emphasizing situations that require both oral and written communication. Assignments enable students to practice and apply both practical and theoretical aspects of workplace communication.

Students will develop advanced proficiency in college-level writing and appropriate contemporary research strategies and methodologies to communicate effectively to both specialized and general audiences. This course reinforces and advances the abilities developed in other writing courses, and it broadens and deepens these to include mastery of the discourse peculiar to business communications.

Course Goals

Writing in the Disciplines

Writing in the Disciplines (WID) courses develop students' abilities to communicate effectively in their major course of study and in their careers. With an emphasis on critical thinking, these upper-division core courses advance students' understanding of the genres, audiences, and purposes of college writing while preparing them for successful communication in their chosen professions.

Pedagogical Approach

This course uses a simulated workplace approach that will ask you to write as if you are "on the job" and doing projects for specific clients.

Assignments utilize research and oral and written communication skills. This course promotes reflective processes and critical analysis.

This course operates as a seminar/workshop, with lotsa discussion and very little lecture. You are expected to come to class prepared to participate every single day.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students shall write complete texts that demonstrate college-level proficiency. Students shall be able to:

1. produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in:
 - language use
 - grammar
 - clarity of expression
2. explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse
3. organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences
4. organize and develop essays and documents according to appropriate editorial and citation standards
5. locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing

Additional Information is Available Online

You are responsible for reading the following information online at

<http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policy/index.html>

- Course guidelines
- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and AEC policies)
- Estimation of Per-Unit Student Workload
- Recording policies
- Adding and dropping classes

Required Texts/Materials

The Business Writer's Companion, Eighth Edition. By Gerald J. Alred, Charles T. Brusaw, Walter E. Oliu.

Publisher: Bedford/St. Martin's.

ISBN-10: 131904476X

ISBN-13: 978-1319044763

Effective Data Visualization: The Right Chart for the Right Data, Second Edition. By Stephanie Evergreen.

Publisher: Sage.

ISBN10: 1544350880

ISBN 13: 9781544350882

Classroom Protocol

Students are expected to arrive on time and be ready to work at the beginning of class.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Introductory Memo and Short Presentation (100 points)

Usability Project (650 points total)

Planning Report (200 points)

Planning Report Informal Internal Presentation (50 points)

Usability Study Findings and Recommendations Report (300 points)

Usability Study Findings and Recommendations Formal Presentation (100 points)

Employment Documents (150 points)

Application Letter

Resume

Cover Memo

Participation and Reading Quizzes (100 points)

All written assignments will include drafts and feedback.

Grading Policy

Grades on projects will be assigned numerical scores and weighted according to the project. Final grades will be reported as A+/A/A-/B+/B/B-/C+/C/C-/D+/D/D-/F.

The department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale defined in the SJSU Catalog (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure.

A passing grade in the course signifies that the student has developed those writing, reading, and research abilities necessary for upper-division work in those majors that comprise the College of Business.

This course must be passed with a C or better as a CSU graduation requirement.

All projects and assignments are due on the announced due dates. Late projects will be penalized one full letter grade for each day the project is late.

In a participatory class like this one, participation is crucial and will be graded accordingly. In its simplest form, good participation is defined as active contribution to class discussion and workshop sessions, including giving and receiving well thought out and considered feedback.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is a fabulous free resource dedicated to helping you with your writing. All Writing Specialists at the Center have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit Peer Connections website at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

Classroom Policies

Understanding. I understand that we live in a world of total chaos seasoned with fires, heat waves, power outages, earthquakes, rising fascism and floods. I also understand coming back to a physical classroom and interacting with real people remains a challenge for some of us. I get it. If you need anything, let me know.

Attendance. I guarantee that missing more than a few days will significantly affect your understanding of the material. Please notify me if you are unable to attend class. **DO NOT DISAPPEAR ON ME.** In the past, students who have vanished without explanation for more than two or three classes have failed this class. If you are experiencing an ongoing issue, please let me know and we'll figure it out.

Lateness. I understand that we're all late every now and then, but a routine failure to arrive on time will significantly affect your participation grade in this class. If there is something that will make you late to class, whether reoccurring or not, please let me know. *That being said, don't let potential lateness keep you from coming to class.*

Grading class participation. I expect everyone to participate during class. This means you are awake and engaged, having done the readings and the homework, are actively participating in discussion and are working constructively when we break into small groups. A participation grade allows me to reward those students who are actively engaged in each class, while being able to account for students who are routinely late, absent, sleepy, or engaged in non-class related activity during our brief time together. An "A" means always engaged. A "B" means mostly engaged. A "C" is sometimes engaged.

Late work. I don't accept it. Part of being a business writer is, though the Earth itself may be aflame, you meet your deadlines. All of them. I understand your life is complicated, with many responsibilities pulling you in multiple directions. If you are unable to attend on a day that an assignment is due, it is up to you to make sure that you get me your work

before the beginning of that class. If there is something unavoidable in your schedule/life, you may request an extension with 48-hours' notice; otherwise, no extensions will be granted.

Acting with academic integrity. In both your academic and professional careers, you are expected to act with integrity. You are in this class for more than a grade, you are here to emerge with actual skills—skills which are not developed through cheating. Though it most likely will not be an issue, any plagiarism will earn you an automatic “F” in my class. This includes recycling work from students from previous semesters. Just do your own work. If you are ever in a position where you feel the need to cheat, please let me know and we can work it out.

Technology use. I realize the temptation to refresh your Instagram feed as we delve into the intricacies of dangling participles may be strong. Emailing, texting, swiping right, decapitating orcs, and engaging in unrelated activities are discourteous and distracting to me and your classmates. Stay focused! When potential employers ask about you, they ask if you goof off during class. And I am always honest.

Use of AI. We have designated AI assignments in this class. AI is cool and has tons of helpful potential for writing. BUT, AI use needs to be limited while you are learning the basics of writing. I especially have an issue with students copy-and-pasting AI responses and turning them in as their own thoughts, especially for daily discussion assignments. The business world is trying to replace writers with AI. If you can't do better than ChatGPT, there's no reason to hire you. Most major assignments will have a “Statement of AI Use” where I clarify what you can use AI for and where you will disclose what tools you used and how you used them. Saving time is great. Brainstorming aids are great. Turning in machine-generated work as your own is a waste of everyone’s time. If you have any questions about legit use of AI, please ask me.

First Violation: A warning and a 0 on the assignment.

Second Violation: You will enter the “slop zone” for two weeks. Everything you turn in will be scanned for AI use and you are prohibited from working with groups on class assignments.

Third Violation: I will report you to the university for cheating and stop giving feedback on assignments.

Food and beverages. Feel free to eat and drink during class. Coffee (black, no cream, no sugar, no spit) and food bribes gladly accepted.

My open-door policy. I want you to succeed in this class. I’m happy to talk with you at any time about the readings, assignments, any other aspect of the course, job advice--whatever. Just talk to me after class, send me an email, or arrange to meet with me outside class. **COME TO MY OFFICE HOURS!** My highest compliments from students have always come from the one-on-one help I give outside of class. In addition to teaching, I’ve worked as a professional writer and editor for the past 20 years. I’m here to mentor you and help you transition into the workplace. Come talk to me!

Contacting me. Please use email to contact me (My office phone isn't connected to anything). I check email at 10 am and 2 pm Monday-Thursday and 3pm on Fridays. So, don't expect a response from a panicked email sent at midnight about an assignment due the next day.

After this class. In addition to my assistance in this class, I extend to all my students an offer to help with any future writing issues which may arise once this class is over. In the past, I have assisted former students with cover letters, updated resumes, grad school applications, and have even helped with the abstract of a scientific paper. Additionally, for all students who receive an A in this class, I will happily write a letter of recommendation for any grants, schools, programs, or internships you may be applying to. Also, if you receive an A in this class, you may include me as a reference in any jobs you might apply to.