



English 407C: Advanced Professional Communication Fall 2006

Days/Time WebCampus course

Instructor [Dr. Jeff Jablonski](#)

Office FDH 624

E-mail WebCampus course mail

Phone 895-0947

Office Hours TR 3:00 -4:30 or by appointment

Course Introduction English 407 is among the core courses for the English Dept.'s [Professional Writing Certificate Program](#). This program, open to all majors, is designed to strengthen your workplace written communication skills or prepare you for a career as a professional writer. For managerial and other business and technical jobs, strong writing skills translate into increased career advancement and income. A Professional Writing Certificate makes you more marketable and enhances your career options.

You can also pursue a career as a professional writer, specializing in communicating information to diverse audiences. Professional writers work in companies or freelance, writing documents such as proposals, user documentation, reports, instruction manuals, and newsletters. Technical writers, for example, earned an average of \$62,860 in 2005. Professional writing is a good choice for English majors or science and engineering majors who want to combine an interest in writing with an interest in a technical subject.

This course therefore targets two kinds of student: (1) Those interested in becoming or who already are **professionals who write**, that is, people whose writing is job-related—managers, engineers, lawyers, teachers, etc. who write memos, letters, and reports; and (2) Students interested in becoming or who already are **professional writers**, people whose primary responsibility is writing for others, or for-hire writing (including technical writing, promotional writing, advertising and marketing, grant writing, Web writing, information architecture, etc.). These are the career writers mentioned above.

Both kinds of writing, job-related or for-hire, define what “professional writing” or

“professional communication” mean in this course. This definition sets aside other kinds of writing—specifically, creative or literary writing (poetry, fiction, and drama) and journalism (writing for newspapers and magazines)—as different kinds of professional writing. In simplest terms, this course isn’t about creative writing or journalism. But if you identify with these latter kinds of professional writing, that’s okay, because you will have the opportunity to connect your interests with the field of professional writing.

In any case, the assumption is that you are here to improve your written communication skills and further explore how professional writing relates to your personal and professional interests. English 407C presents advanced technical and business writing topics including writing and editing both paper and online documents. The course is designed as a seminar course, where you will develop your skills primarily through writing thoughtful, well crafted responses to the readings. Writing assignments will help you synthesize, analyze, and apply what you have read.

Course Goals

- To consciously and productively apply a technical understanding of rhetorical theories and techniques to new and specific writing situations
- To learn principles of organizational communication, rhetoric, genre, style, and electronic writing technologies
- To gain a broad sense of the issues, topics, and practices in the field of professional writing
- To explore the processes and practices of professional writing
- To locate yourself—your interests, questions, career plans, writing experiences, etc.—within the field of professional writing

Prerequisite

- Completion of first-year composition requirement
- Completion of ENG 407A, Business Writing or ENG 407B, Technical Writing is recommended but not required
- Admission to the Professional Writing Certificate program is not a prerequisite

Required Texts

All readings are available via **Lied Library’s e-reserves**. To access Lied Library’s electronic reserves, go to <http://ereserves.library.unlv.edu>. To enter the site you must provide your library barcode number (found on your student ID card) and your last name. Search for the readings by course number or professor’s name.

There is no required textbook you need to purchase for this class.

Assignments

You will receive a detailed assignment sheet explaining the requirements, formats, and strategies for completing each assignment listed below:

Annotated Bibliography (10%)—A key goal of the course is familiarizing you with advanced concepts of rhetoric and professional writing. To achieve this goal, you will be asked to read several selections from scholarly journals. To help you understand these readings, you will be asked to keep an annotated bibliography, which is a compilation of summaries for each article you read that will be written in your own words.

Analysis Papers (75%)—Another significant goal of this course is to help you apply these advanced concepts of rhetoric and professional writing to actual writing situations. Being able to analyze writing situations in more sophisticated ways will

make you a more effective writer. The following analysis papers will generally be 3-5 page papers written in a recursive process that includes drafting, peer review, and revision:

1. **Context Analysis** (15%)—A study of the ways that professional writing functions within a particular organization
2. **Rhetorical Analysis** (15%)—A rhetorical analysis of a particular professional writing document
3. **Genre Analysis** (15%)—A genre analysis of a particular professional writing document
4. **Stylistic Analysis** (15%)—A stylistic analysis of a particular professional writing document
5. **Tools Analysis** (15%)—An analysis of the ways tools are used in a particular professional writing context

Final Portfolio (10%)—The final assignment requires that you submit a selection of your best work accompanied by a statement that demonstrates how you have met the course goals.

Participation (5%)—You will also be held accountable for how actively you participate from week to week in the WebCampus discussion forums.

Grading Grades will be determined on a percentage basis. Major assignments will be graded on the standard letter-grade scale with plusses and minuses. These grades translate into the following scale:

A = 100 – 93 % A- = 92 – 90 % B+ = 89 – 87 % B = 86 – 83 % B- = 82 – 80 %
 C+ = 79 – 77 % C = 76 – 73 % C- = 72 – 70 % D = 69- 60 % F = 59-0 %

Grade to Points Conversion

Use the following table to convert your letter grade on a particular assignment to the corresponding point value out of the total 100 points for the course. For example, on an assignment worth 5 points, an “A-” earns 4.5 points (90% x 5 = 4.5).

	5	10	15	20	25
A	5.0	10.0	15.0	20.0	25.0
A-	4.5	9.0	13.5	18.0	22.5
B+	4.4	8.8	13.2	17.6	22.0
B	4.1	8.2	12.3	16.4	20.5
B-	4.0	8.0	12.0	16.0	20.0
C+	3.9	7.8	11.7	15.6	19.5
C	3.6	7.2	10.8	14.4	18.0
C-	3.5	7.0	10.5	14.0	17.5
D+	3.4	6.8	10.2	13.6	17.0
D	3.1	6.2	9.3	12.4	15.5
D-	3.0	6.0	9.0	12.0	15.0
F	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

WebCampus Policies **Your WebCampus Responsibility.** This course is taught in a WebCampus environment. That simply means that it is the same as a traditional course, only without face-to-face classroom interaction. As an instructor, it is my responsibility to

deliver the same information as a traditional course, in such a manner that you will achieve the same learning outcomes as if you were in the traditional course. As a student, it is your responsibility to participate in the course as if you were enrolled in a traditional course. For you, that means expect the same amount of work as traditional course and expect to keep up with the workload, including readings, projects, and deadlines. You should also expect to “participate” in the course by interacting with your instructor and fellow students via the WebCampus online environment. If you can not meet your responsibility, if you are shopping for an easy online course, then I recommend you drop this course.

Pace. I will generally run the course on a weekly schedule. I will post new information every Wednesday by 6 p.m. and expect work to be submitted on Wednesdays by 6 p.m. Most projects might take a few weeks to complete, but count on something being due every week. You can work at your own pace within this schedule.

When to Use the WebCampus Mail Tool vs. the Discussion Tool: Except for my office hours, the rest of the week is considered “class time.” If you have a question about the homework, about the material, about when something is due, you are to post that question using the **discussion tool** where everyone can see it and anyone can answer it. If another student in the class answers it before me, great for you and that student—you both will be rewarded for participating “in class” (see “class participation grade”).

I may also from time to time require that you participate in a discussion about a particular concept, lesson, reading, etc. I will initiate the discussion and you’ll take it from there. Like a traditional classroom, not everyone will have to “speak,” or respond during the discussion, but if you consistently fail to respond, then your participation grade will be lowered, just like the silent or unprepared student in a traditional class.

To contact Professor Jablonski directly, use the WebCampus **mail tool**. As I noted above, questions seeking clarification about assignments, including how to complete them and when they are due, should be posted to the discussion board. Questions seeking clarification about personal matters, such as grades, are appropriate for individual e-mails.

Type of Question	Tool to Use
Assignment-related questions (how to complete assignment, when it is due)	WebCampus Discussion Tool
Personal questions (grades, performance in course)	WebCampus E-mail Tool

Response Time. If you have questions for me, expect about a 1 day response time. Also, I don’t check my **WebCampus mail** during the weekends, so expect that I will answer late-Friday or weekend questions on Monday.

Office Hours. If you wish to “speak” with me individually, then my office hours are the time to do it. I will also respond to phone calls and, for those of you who are local, I will meet with individuals in my office. If for some reason my office hours are inconvenient for you, then we can schedule a better time for use to “meet” (by chat, phone, or in person). You can send meeting requests to me at anytime, using the

WebCampus mail tool.

Late Work. Assignments will generally be due on Wednesdays by 6 p.m. I will deduct a letter grade for each day an assignment is late.

Ethics & Plagiarism To borrow someone else's writing without acknowledging that use is an act of academic as well as professional dishonesty, whether you borrow an entire report or a single sentence. Any student who plagiarizes will receive a failing grade on the assignment, if not the course, and be reported to the appropriate disciplinary committee.

If you have doubts about whether or not you are using your own or others' writing ethically and legally, ask your instructor. Follow this primary principle: **Be up front and honest** about what you are doing and about what you have contributed to a project.

In addition to following the basic principles of fair use of others' work and honesty and forthrightness in crediting the contribution of others to your work, you are expected to adhere to another basic professional principle: *treat others with the respect that you would wish them to grant you*. "Others" includes the people you work for and with (classmates, instructors, corporation, clients); the people you write to (audiences); and the people you write about.

Paper Format You are expected to produce high-quality professional documents. Part of that quality is the appearance of your work. Neatness, visual appeal, and mechanical and grammatical correctness do matter—though they do not guarantee that a document is well written. Formal assignments should be prepared in a high-quality form. Your documents should have appropriate margins, spacing, pagination, and formatting. Assignments with careless spelling, grammatical, or mechanical errors will not be accepted.

Writing Lab Support UNLV's Writing Center (FDH 240) offers free tutoring for students who want or need extra writing help. You can make use of these services by dropping in at the Center or by making an appointment to see a writing tutor (895-3908). The Writing Center also offers online help at <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.

Documented Disability If you have a documented disability, you will need to go to Disability Services (DS) for coordination in your academic accommodations. DS is located within the Learning Enhancement Services in Reynolds Student Services Center (Rm 137). The DS phone is 895-0866 (TDD 895-0652).

407C Fall 2006 Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to revisions, adjustments, and other updates through the semester.

Wk	Days	Activity	Assignment Due
1	Aug 28-Sept 1	Introduction: Writing in Professional Contexts	
2	Sept 4-8	Organizational Communication	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anson & Forsberg, Moving Beyond the Academic Community Asay, Glimpse into Reality <p>Write: Annotation and Response</p> <p>Complete: Survey</p>
3	Sept 11-15	Organizational Communication	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pradis & Dobrin, Writing at ITD: Notes on the Writing Environment of an R&D organization Driskill, Understanding the Writing Context in Organizations <p>Write: Annotations</p>
4	Sept 18-22	Rhetoric	Context Analysis Draft
5	Sept 25-29	Rhetoric	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aristotle, On Rhetoric excerpts Corbett, Introduction to Classical Rhetoric for Modern Student Myers, Social Construction in Two Biologists Proposals <p>Write: Annotations</p> <p>Final Context Analysis</p>
6	Oct 2-6	Genre	Rhetorical Analysis of Writing Situation Draft
7	Oct 9-13	Genre	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pare & Smart, Observing Genres in Action Freeman and Medway, Locating Genre Studies Smart, Genre as Community Invention: A Central Banks Response to Its Executives Expectations as Readers <p>Write: Annotations</p> <p>Final Rhetorical Analysis</p>

8	Oct 16-20	Style	Genre Analysis Draft
9	Oct 23-27	Style	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strunk, Part II, Principles of Composition from The Elements of Style available at http://www.bartleby.com/141/ • Henrickson, The Death of Strunk and White • Jones, Technical Writing Style, ch. 1, 3, & 11 <p>Write: Annotations</p> <p>Final Genre Analysis</p>
10	Oct 30- Nov 3	Professional Writing Tools	Stylistic Analysis Draft
12	Nov 13-17	Professional Writing Tools	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baron, From Pencils to Pixels: The Stages of Literacy Technologies • Henderson, Writing Technologies at White Sands • Dayton, Electronic Editing in Technical Communications • Hayhoe, Tool Tips for the Next Millennium <p>Final Stylistic Analysis</p>
13	Nov 20-24	Professional Writing Tools	Tools Analysis Draft
14	Nov 27- Dec 1	Portfolio Preparation	Final Tools Analysis
15	Dec 4-8	Course Wrap Up	Portfolio Analysis Draft
16	Dec11-15	<i>Finals Week No Exam</i>	Final Portfolio