ENGLISH 420: BUSINESS WRITING
SPRING 2024 | ASYNC-ONLINE | 25198, 3 credits

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Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:30pm-2:30pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
English 420 helps students become better business writers, across multiple global audiences, for multiple purposes, and in a variety of media. The work of the course is centered on presenting business-related material in written and visual formats that demonstrate an awareness of audience needs and contexts, effectively achieve implicit and explicit rhetorical purposes, and work to effectively address workplace, social, or global problems.

COURSE OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- Use professional writing theories and approaches to analyze and solve business problems individually and in teams
- Communicate market-driven information and organizational processes via a variety of media, genres, technologies, and presentations to a range of audiences and stakeholders
- Innovate written conventions and expectations to both professional and non-professional audiences with changing organizational needs
- Apply primary and secondary research methods and strategies to produce professional documents
- Design documents with an awareness of the human needs of users, paying special attention to accessibility, cultural diversity, and global sensitivity
- Interpret, contextualize, explain, and visualize data sets in specific rhetorical contexts or problems

REQUIRED MATERIALS
Thill, J. V. and C. L. Bovee (2019). *Excellence in Business Communication 13th edition.* Hoboken, NJ: Pearson.

Additional readings provided on Brightspace.

COURSE COMPONENTS
Each project will have multiple components that contribute to the larger, final project. You must complete all of the projects in a timely manner in order to pass the course. Just like in the working world, you are expected to submit your work on time. I will count off one letter grade for each class day your work is late.

- Project 1—250 points
  The Rhetorical Analysis Project will help you understand some of the business documents you may encounter in your career and consider the best ways of to conduct yourself as a writer in professional spaces. You will analyze internally-focused company documents, externally-focused documents, and LinkedIn profiles, then write a report on these materials.

- Project 2—250 points
  One of the ways that professionals might be asked to share researched information with various audiences is through a white paper. A white paper is an informative research report that provides background information related to a focused topic. The white paper project asks you to identify a problem (social or political) or a need (product or service) for a local business, and then go on a fact-finding mission to establish the veracity of the problem or need. You will present your findings in a white paper utilizing textual and visual mediums to communicate your research.

- Project 3—350 points
  Much contemporary business writing is done collaboratively and utilizing a multimedia approach to reach and persuade a variety of audiences. For this project, you will work in teams to execute a collaborative proposal project using a variety of modes. Your team's task is to take one of the white papers you produced for Project 2, develop a solution that responds to the problem, and "sell" it to the public, persuading others to "buy in" to your idea by responding to a call for action.

- Discussion board posts—75 points

- Peer response—75 points

- Extra credit—30 points
  There is one extra credit opportunity per unit. These opportunities will be be clearly communicated, including the deadlines. There will be no additional extra credit opportunities, and late extra credit is not accepted.

Grade Scale

In this class grades reflect the sum of your achievement throughout the semester. You will accumulate points as described in the assignments portion above, with each assignment graded according to a rubric. At the end of the semester, final grades will be calculated by adding the total points earned and translating those numbers (out of 1000) into the following letters (there will be no partial points or rounding).

Letter Grades	Point Range
A+	1000-970
A	969-940
A-	939-900
B+	899-870
B	869-840
B-	839-800
C+	799-770
C	769- 740
C-	739-700
D+	699-670
D	669-640
D-	639-600
F	Below 600

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Engagement Expectations

Whether this is your first semester here at Purdue or you have already taken several courses at the University level, succeeding in a university course will often involve:
- Accessing Brightspace and actively participating in this course
- Scheduling time each week for working on this course
- Following the course schedule, rather than trying to work ahead on your own
- Reaching out to me with any questions, as early as possible

Minimum Technology requirements

- You will need a strong, reliable Internet connection on a daily basis to meet the requirements for this class.
- It is NOT recommended that students attempt to complete this course using only a mobile phone.
- Students must be able to use Brightspace and all of its features to be successful in this course.

By following each of the above tips, you will be able to make the most of this course.

Course Logistics
- You are encouraged to "mentally enroll" in this course as if it occurred on Monday mornings. In other words, our weeks will run from Monday to Sunday. I will post information (online activities, discussion starters, etc.) for the upcoming week by Sunday evening, so that when you log in on Monday, you can begin the new week.
- All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. ET on the due date listed in the course schedule.
- Deadlines are an unavoidable part of being a professional and this course is no exception. Course requirements must be completed and posted or submitted on or before the specified due date and delivery time deadline. Due dates and delivery time deadlines are defined as that used in West Lafayette, Indiana. To encourage you to stay on schedule, due dates have been established for each assignment; 20% of the total points will be deducted for assignments received 1-6 days late; assignments received more than 1 week late will receive 0 points. Extensions are granted on a case by case basis.

Office Hours
Office hours will be held via Zoom, Thursdays from 1:30pm-2:30pm, to discuss questions related to the work for the class. My Zoom link is https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/4387448210?pwd=UjMvRlVQcWxXb1RmSDMySk5YN3BuQT09. If you wish to discuss something with me at another time, you are free to make an appointment, either via Zoom or to meet in person at my office (HEAV 209).

Email
Communicating by Purdue email accounts will be the primary means of communicating outside of Brightspace. I will respond to all emails within 24 to 48 hours (usually less). I expect you to monitor your email account as well. Please send email from your Purdue email account and include a meaningful subject line and your name in your message. Because identities of senders from non-Purdue accounts cannot be guaranteed, I generally do not communicate any class or personal details when I respond to email from external email addresses (e.g. Gmail).

Federal legislation pertaining to educational privacy (FERPA) prohibits me from discussing protected information, specifically student grades, over email. If you have questions or concerns about your grade in this course or a specific grade on an assignment, please visit me during virtual office hours or request to make an appointment.

Use Purdue Email for:	Use Office Hours for:
Class questions	Questions about grades
Requests for appointments	Class questions
Requests for assignment extensions	Consultations about assignments

Diversity & Inclusion
In our discussions, structured and unstructured, we will explore a variety of challenging issues, which can help us enhance our understanding of different experiences and perspectives. This can be challenging, but

in overcoming these challenges we find the greatest rewards. While we will design guidelines as a group, everyone should remember the following points:

- We are all in the process of learning about others and their experiences. Please speak with me, anonymously if needed, if something has made you uncomfortable.
- Intention and impact are not always aligned, and we should respect the impact something may have on someone even if it was not the speaker's intention.
- We all come to the class with a variety of experiences and a range of expertise, we should respect these in others while critically examining them in ourselves.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information is submitted the greater the opportunity for the university to investigate the concern. More details are available on our course Brightspace table of contents, under University Policies.

Artificial Intelligence Policy

During this course, you may be asked to use AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Elicit, etc.) in specific contexts. However, outside of these situations, you are expected to avoid using AI tools to generate content (text or images) to be included in your assignments. Inclusion of AI-generated material outside of permitted contexts will be treated as plagiarism. If you have questions about whether your specific use of AI is permitted, please email me.

Purdue Honor Pledge

As a Boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue.

Nondiscrimination Policy

All class participants are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and sensitive manner towards others and the course material. Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. To go Purdue's nondiscrimination policy for more information.

Accessibility and Accommodation

I believe that everyone has the right to the full educational experience granted to them by admission and tuition payments to this institution, and that everyone has different needs when it comes to accessing that experience. It is my goal to make my classes as accessible as possible to any and all students who walk through the doors (or access its digital space). As a person dealing with disability, my goal here is to encourage open communication, so if you need anything to ensure you get the most out of this class, don't hesitate to contact me via email or drop by my office.

If you are seeking accommodations from the Disability Resource Center, you should contact them at their email address (drc@purdue.edu) or phone number (765-494-1247). However, I do not require accommodation letters from my students. If you have any condition that impacts your learning, diagnosed or otherwise, I am more than willing to work with you to ensure you get the most out of this class.

Likewise, if you have any major mental health issues and are looking for assistance, you have the resources available to you here on campus. If you (or someone you know) is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, please contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) via their website or by calling 765-494-6995. I am aware, however, that CAPS tends to have a long waiting list and a complex process for students to gain access to mental health care, so know that while I am not a medical mental health professional, I can work to accommodate your needs as best I can. Above all, again, if you reach out to me, we can work together to make a plan. I am happy to do what is necessary to help you succeed.

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try WellTrack. Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources:
Please see the Office of the Dean of Students, for drop-in hours (M-F, 8 am- 5 pm).

Basic Needs Security
Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. There is no appointment needed and Student Support Services is available to serve students 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Considering the significant disruptions caused by the current global crisis as it relates to COVID-19, students may submit requests for emergency assistance from the Critical Need Fund.

Major Campus Emergency
In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructors via email. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis.

Writing Lab
Many students believe the Writing Lab exists only for writers who need "extra" (or "remedial") help; however, having another set of eyes can help all writers strengthen their ideas and focus. Even the most accomplished writers need feedback. The tutors in the Writing Lab can work with students at any stage of the writing process, from planning and drafting to editing and polishing strategies. Writing Lab consultants work with undergraduate and graduate students from every department on any piece of writing from class assignments to job search documents. For more information, please visit the Writing Lab's Website or call (765)494-3723.

If you want to be successful in this class…
- Be self-motivated and self-disciplined.
- Be willing to ask questions and speak up, especially if problems arise, or ask me questions privately.
- Do the reading and come to class prepared.
- If available, use class time to complete the work for the course.
- Respect your peers and your instructor. This means being open, generous, and actively attentive.
- Be willing to step out of your comfort zone and try something new.
- Accept critical thinking and decision making as part of the learning process.
- Commit to 5 to 10 hours per week per course.

In contrast, here are some common behaviors that lead to failing the course.
- Reading or doing the work the night before a due date.
- Wait until the last day to begin assignments.

- Forget about deadlines.
- Ignore emails from the instructor and/or your peers regarding course activities.
- Don't get familiar with the grade book and syllabus.

English 420 Course Calendar

This calendar will be periodically adjusted to meet the needs of the class, and short readings may be added to supplement the textbook. See Announcements on Brightspace for updates.

	Weekly Readings	Due Sunday by 11:59 pm
UNIT 1: Understanding Professional Writings		
Week 1 Jan. 8 – Jan. 14 *What is professional?*	EBC Ch. 1 Project 1 Introduced	- Introductory Discussion Board (Sunday)
Week 2 Jan. 15 – Jan. 21 *The rhetoric of professional documents*	EBC Ch. 5 & 15 "LinkedIn Quick Tips"	- Discussion Board #1 (Sunday) - Document selection (Sunday)
Week 3 Jan. 22 – Jan. 28 *Designing professional documents*	EBC Ch. 2 & 4 "Intro to Page Design" "Principles of IDEA" "Writing for Web Accessibility" "NDA – Universal Design"	- Discussion Board #2 (Sunday) - Project drafts submitted for peer review (Sunday)
Week 4 Jan. 29 – Feb. 4 *Reflecting and responding to documents*	"Moving Beyond Diversity" "Describe-Evaluate-Suggest" "5 Words to Receive Feedback"	*- Peer responses (Wednesday)* - Discussion Board #3 (Sunday) **- Project 1 (Sunday)** **- Project 1 Process Memo (Sunday)**
UNIT 2: Research and Informational Reporting		
Week 5 Feb. 5 – Feb. 11 *Writing proposals*	EBC Ch. 12 Kelleher & Tierney Project 2 Introduced	- Discussion Board #4 (Sunday) - Project 2 Proposal (Sunday)
Week 6 Feb. 12 – Feb. 18 *Conducting research*	Stelzner "Research Method" slide deck	- Discussion Board #5 (Sunday)
Week 7 Feb. 19 – Feb. 25 *Working with data*	Segel & Heer Data slide deck	- Discussion Board #6 (Sunday) - Annotated Bibliography (Sunday)
Week 8 Feb. 26 – Mar. 3 *Designing visuals*	EBC Ch. 13	- Discussion Board #7 (Sunday) - Project drafts submitted for peer review (Sunday)

Week 9 Mar. 4 – Mar. 10 *Stylistics and revision*	EBC Ch. 6 & 7	*- Peer responses (Wednesday)* - Discussion Board #8 (Sunday) **- Project 2 (Sunday)** **- Project 2 Process Memo (Sunday)**
UNIT 3: Reporting Team-Produced Recommendations		
Week 10 Mar. 18 – Mar. 24 *Collaboration and teams*	EBC Ch. 3 Wolfe Ch. 1 & 2 Project 3 Introduced	- Project 3 Team Sign Up (Friday) - Discussion Board #9 (Sunday)
Week 11 Mar. 25 – Mar. 31 *Roles and responsibilities in teams*	Wolfe Ch. 3 & 4 "Strategies"	- Discussion Board #10 (Sunday) - Project update #1 (Sunday) - Project 3 Team Charter (Sunday)
Week 12 Apr. 1 – Apr. 7 *Writing for digital channels*	EBC Ch. 8 & 9	- Project update #2 (Sunday)
Week 13 Apr. 8 – Apr. 14 *Writing persuasive messages*	EBC Ch. 11	- Project update #3 (Sunday)
Week 14 Apr. 15 – Apr. 21 *Presenting information*	EBC Ch. 14	- Project update #4 (Sunday) - Project drafts submitted for peer review (Sunday)
Week 15 Apr. 22 – Apr. 28 *Collaborative writing and workshopping*		*- Peer responses (Wednesday)* - Project update #5 (Sunday)
Finals Week Apr. 29 – May 1 Project 3 and Project 3 Process Memo due Wednesday, May 1 by 11:59pm		