# San José State University Department of English, School of Humanities & Arts English 100WB, Business Writing, Section 01, Fall 2018

### Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Sara West

Office Location: FOB 128

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Email: sara.west@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 9-10am (and by appointment)

Class Days/Time: Mondays & Wednesdays,10:30am-11:45am

Classroom: Clark 111

Prerequisites: A3 or equivalent second semester composition course (with a grade of C- or better);

Completion of core GE, satisfaction of Writing Skills Test and upper division standing. Note:

Must be passed with C or better to satisfy the CSU Graduation Writing Assessment

requirement (GWAR).

GE/SJSU Studies Category: Written Communication II (Z)

### Course Format

# Canvas and MYSJSU Messaging

You are responsible for checking your email and the Canvas course page regularly. Online readings, copies of major assignments, and important announcements will be posted on Canvas. If, for any reason, Canvas is not working or a link/document is not working, please contact me as soon as possible.

You should also check your SJSU email regularly. Please use this account when contacting me through email, not your personal account. Since this is a business communications class, you should use proper email netiquette, including using an informative subject line and a clear articulation of your question, comment, or concern. I will try to respond to emails on the day they are received, but emails received after 7 pm may not be answered until the next day. Emails received on weekends may not receive replies on the same day.

If you want a send a quick question or comment without composing a formal email, you can text me using the number above. Text messages should be related to the class. If you do not feel comfortable with communicating via this means, then rely on email instead.

# **Technology Use**

You are welcome to use laptops or tablets to take notes and to look up information for this class. Cell phones should not be used in class unless you are given explicit permission. For some quick activities, cell phones may be used in lieu of laptops.

# **Course Description**

Written communications for business majors; includes minimum of 8,000 words of writing spaced throughout the semester.

This hands-on course is designed to simulate actual business communication scenarios (oral and written) that are encountered by business professionals daily during the course of their careers. Assignments will enable students to practice and immediately apply both practical and theoretical aspects of organizational communication directly in real-life work situations. Communication mechanics and style (practical), and the appropriateness of messages and methods based on specific organizational situations (theoretical) will be emphasized.

# Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

# **GE Learning Outcomes**

- **Learning Outcome 1 (GELO1)**: Produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in language use, grammar, and clarity of expression
- **Learning Outcome 2(GELO2)**: Explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.
- Learning Outcome 3 (GELO3): Organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences.
- **Learning Outcome 4 (GELO4)**: Organize and develop essays and documents according to appropriate editorial and citation standards.
- **Learning Outcome 5 (GELO5)**: Locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing.

# **Course Learning Outcomes**

- After successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:
- Create texts and make presentations that are appropriate for a variety of audiences and situations
- Analyze organizational and rhetorical situations in business communications and employ appropriate strategies for communicating based on audience, purpose, and context
- Identify and explain genres and written and visual conventions used in business communications
- Participate in both intra-organizational communication as well as communications with others outside of the organization
- Explain the role of ethics in business communications
- Understand the role of collaboration in business communications
- Use photos, illustrations, and other tools as appropriate in business communication.
- Communicate complex data
- Understand the basic principles for document layout and design
- Adapt a text to meet the needs of varying audiences

# Required Texts/Readings

### **Textbook**

MacRae, P. (2016). *Business and Professional Writing: A Basic Guide for Americans*. Peterborough, Canada: Broadview Publishers. (ISBN: 978-1554812202)

\*Digital or e-books are fine.

# Other Readings

Online readings posted on Canvas.

# Course Requirements and Assignments

In this course, you'll be responsible for in-class assignments, four major out-of-class assignments, and a presentation. You'll also be attending at least two conferences with me, completing drafts of work and participating in review of your peers' work, and, finally, taking part in a series of post-unit reflections.

According to <u>University Policy S16-9</u>, "Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

# **Assignment Submission**

For the major assignments, you will submit your written assignments via Canvas when possible. If Canvas will not accept a file because of file type or file size, you may email the file to me.

All work should be submitted on time, and you are responsible for ensuring that I receive the paper. **To avoid a late penalty, you must submit your final projects no later than the beginning of the class period, unless otherwise specified**. Remember, these major assignments are due online, and you can submit them from home: they are still due even if you are unable to attend class on the day they are due, and even if class is canceled for some reason. If you need to submit a paper early, that is fine.

### Peer Review

For peer review, you should have a complete or almost-complete draft of the assignment. Groups will determine whether they will 1) send their texts to each other before the peer review date, then discuss the projects during class time, or 2) read AND discuss projects during the peer review.

If you do not bring drafts, you may still sit in on your review groups, but you will not receive points for that peer review workshop.

I will not be taking up and commenting on drafts, though I will make sure you have a complete draft; your peers will truly be your colleagues in this respect. However, if you would like me to look over a draft and comment, you are welcome to meet with me during office hours, make an appointment, or set up a time for a phone call or Zoom chat.

### Final Examination or Evaluation

The final evaluation for this class is two-fold. Students will complete a report as the final assignment for the course, and they will be responsible for adapting this report to be suitable for a 5-10 minute presentation. Presentations will be given during the final examination period, Tuesday, December 18, 9:45am-12pm.

# **Grading Information**

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.

### **Assignment Grade Distribution**

Major Assignment 1 (Correspondence packet)	150pts
Major Assignment 2 (Job documents)	150pts
Major Assignment 3 (Promotional materials)	200pts
Major Assignment 4 (Report)	200pts
Final Report Presentation	100pts

In-Class Assignments/Homework 100pts (10pts each; extra assignments = extra credit)

Peer Review Workshops 40pts (10pts each)
In-Class Reflections 40pts (10pts each)
Conferences 20pts (10pts each)

### **Final Grading Scale**

A: 940 pts and above A-: 939-900 pts

B+: 899-870 pts B: 869-840 pts B-: 839-800 pts C+: 799-770 pts C: 769-740 pts C-: 739-700 pts D+: 699-670 pts D: 669-640 pts D-: 639-600pts

F: 599 and below

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

# **Grading Criteria**

In texts, I look at six major categories:

- 1. **Rhetorical/Contextual Awareness:** The criterion on which all others are judged. Students are expected to demonstrate a clear awareness of the rhetorical situation and the context into which they are writing. This includes a demonstrated awareness of purpose, audience, message, constraints (legal, ethical), power structures (hierarchy), etc. In all aspects of grading, awareness of rhetorical/contextual ideas will be most important. For example, a student may write a letter which uses several supporting sources; however, if the audience for that letter has reason to distrust those sources and thus would be not persuaded by the, then the student has not used appropriate support.
- 2. **Focus:** Students are expected to maintain a clear and specific focus in their texts, and that focus should be clear to the reader (in some cases, it is stated directly). All supporting details should adhere to this focus.
- 3. **Structure & Organization:** Students should structure and organize their texts appropriately. The appropriate structure and organization will depend on the type of text the student is creating and will sometimes be outlined by the assignment itself, or by the reading in the textbook.
- 4. **Development & Support:** Students should provide appropriate levels of development and support in their texts. Development simply means that there is an appropriate amount of detail for the rhetorical/contextual situation. For example, an average person may not need an explanation of the technical details of a new platform, but the UX designer for that new platform certainly would need those details. Support refers to backing up claims made in the text by using additional sources (i.e., not just asking someone to take your word for it). These sources could be anything from personal experience, photos or illustrations, to academic articles—the type of sources you use will largely be determined by your audience and purpose.
- 5. **Style**: Students should maintain an appropriate style for their texts, based on the rhetorical and contextual situation. Style refers to the way that something is written, presented, or created. Sometimes you'll change or vary your style depending on your organization's style or your relationship with the audience. Style may also refer to the *way* you present the information. If you're going for a playful, informal style, you may include a meme in your presentation, whereas if that's not appropriate for your formal presentation, you may stick with graphs and charts.
- 6. **Formatting & Mechanics:** Though formatting and mechanics is the last grading criterion, students are still expected to use appropriate formatting and mechanics. Readers in professional environments will expect texts to look the way they are "supposed" to. For example, when you send a memo to your co-workers, they might be confused if it doesn't *look* like the memo. They may then throw it away, thinking it is just junk mail. Similarly, if you send a correspondence that is riddled with mechanical errors, a reader may become frustrated. Keep in mind, distracting mechanical errors are different than just a forgotten comma—these errors are consistent and often interrupt the flow of the text or impede the readers' ability to understand the text.

<sup>\*</sup>The student is expected to attend at least two one-on-one conferences with the professor in her office, via phone call, or via Zoom, either during office hours or by appointment. These conferences can be whenever the student wants as long as they are scheduled beforehand, but only count for points if they are for two separate assignments.

More specific grading rubrics are provided with each major assignment.

An "A" text is excellent. It demonstrates mastery of the skills for that unit and exceeds expectations in each of the six grading criterion.

A "B" range essay demonstrates competence in the same criteria as an "A" essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of these areas.

A "C" range essay will complete the requirements of the assignment, but it may show weakness in a few of the major criteria (or some weakness in criterion 1).

A "D" range essay will neglect to meet all the requirements of the assignment or will completely disregard the rhetorical/contextual situation (criterion 1).

An "F" range essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

# Late Work Policy

Major assignments for this class will only be accepted one class period late (i.e., if the assignment was due by the beginning of class on Monday, it will only be accepted by the beginning of class on Wednesday) and will be given an automatic 20% deduction from the final essay grade. After next class period has passed, the major assignment will not be accepted, and for that assignment the student will earn a 0.

In general, in-class writings cannot be turned in late or made up. Since there will be additional in-class writings for extra credit, this should make up for any unavoidable absences.

Exceptions to this late work policy may apply if the student communicates with the professor ahead of time.

### Extra Credit

In addition to the potential for extra credit through in-class assignments, students may also revise one of the first three assignments for a higher grade. Revision is more than just editing and improving grammar and sentence structure; the final revised product should demonstrate substantial changes and improvements. The revised assignment is due on the last day of classes, Monday, December 10.

# Classroom Conduct

Be kind to each other. You are to treat the instructor, any guests or substitute instructors, and your classmates with respect and courteous behavior. Keep in mind that we likely come from different backgrounds, honor different belief systems, have access to different tools, struggle with different concepts, and excel at different tasks and responsibilities. And that's okay.

Sleeping, watching Netflix, checking Facebook, reading, working on assignments for another class, listening to music during class, etc., are not permitted. Please do not wear headphones or ear buds in class, even if they are not in use, and not even if they are draped around your neck. If you forget and engage in these activities, you will be asked to stop, marked as absent, and/or asked to leave. To avoid any of these possibilities, simply be respectful of your instructor, your classmates, and yourself.

### **Basic Needs Security**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact SJSU Cares. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess. SJSU also has the following initiatives:

- CalFresh Outreach Program
- Emergency Funds
- Emergency Housing
- Food & Shelter Program
- Mental Health Services
- Other: <u>Food Resources</u>

### Student Health Services

# My open-door policy

I'm happy to talk with you at any time about the readings, assignments, and any other aspect of the course. Just talk to me after class, send me an email, come by during office hours, or arrange to meet with me. I understand that sometimes office hours are difficult to get to, so I'm always happy to meet with you at another time if you contact me. I can also accommodate phone or Zoom meetings when needed.

# **University Policies**

### General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. To learn important campus information, view <a href="University Policy S16-15">University Policy S16-15</a> and SJSU current semester's <a href="Policies and Procedures">Policies and Procedures</a>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as the next step.

# **Timely Feedback on Class Assignments**

Per <u>University Policy F13-1</u>, all students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.

### Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

<u>University Policy S14-7</u> states that San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed.

# **Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the <u>Academic Calendars webpage</u>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes (<u>Late Drop Information</u>). Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub.

# Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

<u>University Policy S12-7</u>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- "Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material."
- In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- "Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared
  publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course
  such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent."

# Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The <u>University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7</u> requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. Visit the <u>Student Conduct and Ethical Development</u> website for more information.

# Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. <u>Presidential Directive 97-03</u> requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) to establish a record of their disability.

# **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs and other resources for student use are available in:

- Associated Students Print & Technology Center at http://as.sjsu.edu/asptc/index.jsp on the Student Union (East Wing 2nd floor Suite 2600)
- The Spartan Floor at the King Library at http://library.sjsu.edu/about/spartan-floor
- <u>Student Computing Services</u> at http://library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services-center
- Computers at the Martin Luther King Library for public at large at https://www.sjpl.org/wireless
- Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from <u>Collaboration & Academic Technology</u>
<u>Services</u> located in IRC Building. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

# SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center has two locations: scheduled appointments are in MLK library, while drop-in appointments are in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists 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 at 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 Counseling and Psychological Services

The SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Carlos in the new Student Wellness Center, Room 300B. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide confidential consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit <a href="Counseling and Psychological Services">Counseling and Psychological Services</a> website at <a href="http://www.sisu.edu/counseling">http://www.sisu.edu/counseling</a>

# English 100WB, Section 01, Fall 2018, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. If changes are necessary, I will notify you of any changes to the schedule in class, and I will upload a new schedule document on Canvas. I will make sure that there is ample time for you to make any changes to your schedule that you might need to.

Most classes will include some sort of individual or group work that may not be denoted on the schedule. Should you miss class, always consult with a classmate about what you have missed.

# **Course Schedule**

Week	Date	Topics & Assignments	Due
1	Wed 8/22	Introductions, syllabus FOR NEXT TIME:  • Read Introduction p. 15-21; Chapter 1, Plain Language, p. 25-31.	
2	Mon 8/27	Introduce Assignment 1, What's business communication anyway?  FOR NEXT TIME:  • Read Chapter 2, p. 33-59	
2	Wed 8/29	The seven Cs of communication, Intro to professional correspondence, rhetorical situations FOR NEXT TIME:  Read Chapter 7, Emails & Memos, p. 151-158 Read Chapter 8, Letters: Good News, Neutral, and Bad News, p. 159-174 Read Chapter 9, Persuasive Letters, p. 175-187 Take notes on Chapters 7-9, things you think are helpful and things you disagree with	
3	Mon 9/3	Labor Day—No class meeting	
3	Wed 9/5	Good, bad, and ugly correspondence Guest speaker, Sara Doan, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee FOR NEXT TIME:  Read Chapter 6, Formatting for Correspondence, p. 133- 146 Work on drafts	DUE: Notes on correspondence chapters
4	Mon 9/10	Formatting your correspondence FOR NEXT TIME:  • Prepare your draft for review  • Read performance review texts (Canvas)	

Week	Date	Topics & Assignments	Due
4	Wed 9/12	Formatting for correspondence, Workshop Assignment 1 FOR NEXT TIME:  Review and incorporate your team's feedback Revise and edit your texts Complete Assignment 1	<b>DUE</b> : Draft of Assignment 1 (10 pts for draft + participation in peer review)
5	Mon 9/17	Reflection on Assignment 1, Introduction to Assignment 2 FOR NEXT TIME:  Read job ad analysis texts (Canvas)  Read Chapter 10, Cover Letters, p. 191-200	DUE: Assignment 1 (before class begins)
5	Wed 9/19	Analyzing job ads, writing cover letters  FOR NEXT TIME:  Read Chapter 11, Resumes, p. 203-220 Read Chapter 5, Basic Document Design, p. 107-130	
6	Mon 9/24	Creating effective resumes, document design, in-class activity FOR NEXT TIME:  • Read interview texts (Canvas)	<b>DUE</b> : Example of either a good resume or a bad resume (not your own)
6	Wed 9/26	Resume design review, interviews, post-interview expectations Guest Speaker under negotiation, 9/26 or 10/1 FOR NEXT TIME:  • Read interview texts (Canvas)	<b>DUE</b> : Draft of resume for <i>design</i> review (due on this day if speaker is scheduled for 10/1)
7	Mon 10/1	Resume design review, interviews, post-interview expectations Guest Speaker under negotiation, 9/26 or 10/1 FOR NEXT TIME:  • Complete draft of Assignment 2	<b>DUE</b> : Draft of resume for <i>design</i> review (due on this day if speaker is scheduled for 9/26)
7	Wed 10/3	Workshop for Assignment 2 FOR NEXT TIME:  Review and incorporate your team's feedback Revise and edit your texts Complete Assignment 1	<b>DUE</b> : Draft of Assignment 2 (10 pts for draft + participation in peer review)
8	Mon 10/8	Reflection on Assignment 2, Introduction to Assignment 3 FOR NEXT TIME: (see next page)	DUE: Assignment 2 (before class begins)

Week	Date	Topics & Assignments	Due
		<ul> <li>Read Chapter 12, News Releases, p. 223-232</li> <li>Read Chapter 13, Brochures, p. 235-242</li> </ul>	
8	Wed 10/10	Creating promotional materials: Print promos, document design FOR NEXT TIME:	
		<ul> <li>Read Chapter 14, Promotion on the Web, p. 243-247</li> <li>Take notes on things you do and do not agree with</li> </ul>	
9	Mon 10/15	Creating promotional materials: Online promos, websites, social media FOR NEXT TIME:  Read working with clients texts (Canvas)	DUE: Notes on Chapter 14
9	Wed 10/17	Working with clients, collaborating with production teams, form production teams  FOR NEXT TIME:  Complete your rough	
10	Mon 10/22	production schedule  Meet with teams, brainstorm, begin	<b>DUE</b> : Production schedule
10	WOII 10, 22	writing & designing if you're at that point  FOR NEXT TIME:  Continue collaborating outside of class	<b>BOL</b> . I Toddecion schedule
10	Wed 10/24	Meet with teams, continue with writing/designing promotional materials  FOR NEXT TIME:  Continue collaborating outside of class	
11	Mon 10/29	Meet with teams, continue with writing/designing promotional materials  FOR NEXT TIME:  Complete draft of Assignment 3	
11	Wed 10/31	Workshop for Assignment 3  FOR NEXT TIME:  Review and incorporate your team's feedback Revise and edit your texts Complete Assignment 1	<b>DUE</b> : Draft of Assignment 3 (10 pts for draft + participation in peer review)
12	Mon 11/5	Reflection on Assignment 3, Introduction to Assignment 4 FOR NEXT TIME: (see next page)	DUE: Assignment 3 (before class begins)

Week	Date	Topics & Assignments	Due
		Read Chapter 17, Informal Reports, p. 273-297	
12	Wed 11/7	All about reports: Informal Reports  FOR NEXT TIME:  Read Chapter 18, Formal Reports, p. 299-328	
		<ul> <li>Read Chapter 19, Formal</li> <li>Report Example, p. 331-350</li> </ul>	
13	Mon 11/12	Veteran's Day—No class meeting	
13	Wed 11/14	All about reports: Formal Reports, form teams, brainstorm  FOR NEXT TIME:  Determine topic and report type	
14	Mon 11/19	Form teams (if applicable), brainstorm report topics, determine report type FOR NEXT TIME:  • Have a good break.	DUE: Topic & report type (verbally)
14	Wed 11/21	Non-Instructional Day—No class meeting	
15	Mon 11/26	Meet with teams (if applicable), begin outlining major report sections, begin drafting proposal FOR NEXT TIME:  • Complete brief proposal	
15	Wed 11/28	Meet with teams (if applicable), finish brief proposal FOR NEXT TIME: Work on report draft	DUE: Brief Proposal
16	Mon 12/3	Meet with teams, revising and editing  FOR NEXT TIME:  Work on report draft	
16	Wed 12/5	Workshop for Assignment 4 FOR NEXT TIME:	<b>DUE</b> : Draft of Assignment 3 (10 pts for draft + participation in peer review)
17	Mon 12/10	Final reflection, presentation meetings, have food!!	DUE: Assignment 4 (by midnight) Revised assignment (optional)
Final Exam	Tuesday, December 18, 9:45am-12pm	Final presentations	DUE: Final presentation