

Full-Time MBA ♦♦♦ Mod 1, 2015
GEB 5212—Section 11B7 - Professional Writing
Dorothy McCawley, MBA, Ph.D.

E-mail	Office	Hours	Phone
dorothy.mccawley@warrington.ufl.edu	Bryan 233C	After class and by appointment	352-273-3213

REQUIRED TEXT

- ✍ **The Business Writer’s Companion**, 7th edition
Gerald Alred, Charles Brusaw and Walter Oliu.
Bedford/St. Martin’s: 2014
- ✍ **ISBN: 1-457-3299-3**
- ✍ **ISBN13: 978-1-4576-3299-0**
- ✍ Course Pack posted to Canvas

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✍ Additional resource for *International Students*. **Send me your UFID for access.**
- ✍ **UF Writing Studio in Tigert Hall:**
<http://writing.ufl.edu/students/writing-help>

DESCRIPTION

Presidents of Fortune 500 companies and top CEOs consistently place good written and oral communication among the top five must-have skills for employees. This course will improve your writing skills as you prepare to advance your careers.

In this course, you will learn strategies that will enable you to write memos, emails, reports, and other documents that will sell your ideas, clinch that promotion, or nail down that ideal job.

ASSURANCE OF LEARNING

Each program at the Warrington College of Business Administration has developed goals and objectives that express the most valued skills and knowledge that students should be able to demonstrate upon completion of the total learning experiences in that program. The following goals and objectives are specifically mapped to **GEB5212**. The **MBA** program goals and objectives that apply to this course are:

Learning Goal 1: Program graduates will be effective communicators.

1A. Our students will produce professional quality business documents.

OBJECTIVES

You will learn the basic principles that make writing work and how to read an audience so that you can persuade and influence them consistently and powerfully. You will learn how to replace some bad writing habits with good ones.

By the end of this course, you should be able to

- Write better documents in less time
- Write more clearly and concisely
- Arrange your ideas logically and persuasively
- Understand approaches for handling different forms of communication
- Use psychology to ensure readers act on the documents you send them

REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATIONS

To pass this class, you must complete all required coursework. Individual assignments and other components of the course will be evaluated using the following point system:

Proposal	100	Final team in-class writing	
Cover letter	100	w/individual posts, ICEs, quizzes	100
Total Points		300	

You must do in-class work in class on the assigned day and may not make it up another time. You must create all out-of-class work in the appropriate format and submit it on the course management site by the specified deadline.

Late assignments will be reduced by one letter grade for each day late. Once the assignment has been submitted, no re-writes are permitted. You may request an appointment with your instructor to review assignments before their due date, though. Such reviews will be no guarantee of a specific grade, but may prove helpful in honing your writing skills.

GRADING SCALE

A	285-300		B-	230-239
A-	270-284		C+	220-229
B+	255-269		C	210-219
B	240-254		C-	195-209

REQUIRED ATTENDANCE

This course requires you to do more than listen to lectures. You'll lose the true value of the course—your classmates—if you do not attend class. You are responsible for submitting assignments on their due dates. If you are absent, you must still turn in assignments on time. Unlike classes in which you receive information, this course trains skills, and you have to practice to learn those skills. This course relies heavily on work-shopping your peers' work, a process that enables you to recognize in others' work the principles we cover in class. Eventually, the critical skills you acquire from workshops will enable you to become a better reader, editor, and writer of your own work.

You may miss one class for any reason. For every additional absence, you'll lose 20 points from your total in the course. To receive credit for full attendance you must attend at least 90 minutes of a class meeting. Arriving late or leaving early will cost you 5 points each time.

If you miss more than one class, meet with me and, if possible, make plans to make up your work or retake the course. I will work with you to help you keep up with the course. However, if you miss three classes, you will automatically fail this course.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

University policy requires that we remind you of the common sense values embodied in the University Honor Code. We assume that you are all familiar with the policy on academic honesty as stated at http://www.reg.ufl.edu/01-02-catalog/student_life/. This pledge pertains to all work you submit in this and all courses at UF: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." Needless to say, plagiarizing the work of others or of online documents is not only a sign of inadequate character, but unnecessary insecurity about one's writing or speaking ability.

STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

The classrooms used for your class should prove effectively accessible, but please let me know if you require any special accommodations. The official statement on ADA issues states: "Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation." Moreover, I will do everything I can to support your individual needs and concerns.

STUDENT COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Campus resources are available for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals which interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

- [UF Counseling & Wellness Center](#) (CWC): (352) 392-1575 for documentation, stress and wellness, mental health screening, concerns about a classmate, self-help, sexual or physical abuse
- [Career Resource Center](#): First floor, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance

SOFTWARE POLICY

All faculty, staff and students of the University must obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Students are expected to use computers, tablets and cellphones only when instructed by the instructor. At all other times, turn off your devices.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

*schedule is subject to change

MEETING TIME: Wednesday, 5-6 (11:45 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.) in HGS 340

Before the first class: Read the e-mails on pages 4-6 of the course pack (posted to Canvas)



MEETING 1 (August 24)

- ◇ Intro: schedule, syllabus
 - ◇ Audience, Purpose & Frontloading
 - ◇ Proposals
 - ◇ Persuasion
 - ✍ ICE: Review poorly written proposal
 - ✍ ICE: Rank the e-mails
- 📖 **FOR NEXT WEEK**
 - 📖 Read *The Business Writer's Companion (BWC)* pp. xxxix-xxxvi, Chapters 1, 11, 12 and Appendix
 - 📖 Read PPT: clarity, memos, negative news, persuasion, and proposals (Dr. Jane Douglas)
 - 📖 Draft Proposal Due at next class (post to Canvas)
 - 📖 [Watch video on visuals](#)
 - 📖 [Watch video on word choice](#)
 - ✍ Post to first discussion board by August 29

MEETING 2 (August 31)

- ◇ Writing Process
 - ✍ Begin peer review (make an appointment for a review with me, as well)
 - ◇ **Final version** Proposal due Sep. 7 @ 11:55 p.m.
- 📖 **FOR NEXT WEEK**
 - 📖 Read *BWC* Chapters 5, 7 and 10
 - 📖 PPT: coherence
 - 📖 [Watch video on executive summary](#)

MEETING 3 (September 7)

- ◇ Bad News & Letters
 - ✍ ICE: Bad news message
 - ✍ ICE: Executive Summary
- 📖 **FOR NEXT WEEK**
 - 📖 Read *BWC* Chapters 2, 3, 4, 6 and 9
 - 📖 PPT: Concision, Email and Crisis Communication
 - 📖 Read Carnival Cruise case files

MEETING 4 (September 14)

- ◇ Electronic Communication
 - ◇ Crisis Communication
 - ✍ ICE: Rewrite poorly written email
- 📖 **FOR NEXT WEEK**
 - 📖 Draft Cover Letter and Résumé (post to Canvas)
 - 📖 [Watch video on LinkedIn](#)

MEETING 5 (September 21)

- ◇ Résumé & LinkedIn
 - ✍ LinkedIn Profile/Résumé & cover letter review
 - ✍ Review graded papers (make an appointment for a review with me, as well)
 - ◇ **Final version** Cover letter due Sep. 26 @ 11:55 p.m.
- ◇ Post to second discussion board by September 27
Course Evaluations (bring laptops)

MEETING 6 (September 28)

- ◇ Résumé & LinkedIn
 - ✍ LinkedIn Profile/Résumé & cover letter review
 - ✍ Review graded papers

MEETING 7 (October 5)

Final Exam (team writing assignment: case analysis, individual postings to discussion board, video quiz results, in-class exercises)

Writing Checklist – use to review your writing before submitting

NOTE: GEB 5212 is primarily a *writing* class. Business topics are the content, but you must still display exemplary *writing* techniques and avoid errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In addition, you'll notice that your writing must be clear and properly formatted. Poor writing techniques can damage your credibility in the workplace as much as poorly thought-out content.

Clarity

- Did you replace all vague/filler subjects (pronouns or expletives such as there is/there are/this is/it is) with concrete subjects?
- Did you use active voice 75-80 percent of the time?
- Did you properly format lists?
 - 2-6 items in list
 - Introductory phrase and concluding sentence
 - List parallel in specificity and grammar

Structure and Coherence

- Is the purpose frontloaded?
- Did you provide a preview in the first paragraph?
- Did you provide a reader roadmap by using properly formatted headings?
- Did you follow head→body→foot formatting in your paragraphs?
- Are your paragraphs just the right length (fairly short)?
- Did you use transitions to connect the ideas in your paragraphs?
- Is your concluding paragraph a summary and personalized?

Concision

- Did you delete any redundant phrasing?
- Did you transform nominalizations into energy-filled verbs?
- Did you get the “not”s out of your writing?
- Did you eliminate all hedging and throat-clearing language (I believe, I feel)?

Other

- Did you picture your audience as you wrote so you used the right words and tone for your audience?
- Did you double-check your formatting for correctness?
- Did you proofread to catch those small grammar/mechanical errors that could damage your credibility?
- Did you provide specifics to support your generalizations?
- Did you use the appropriate writing style (direct vs. indirect)?
- Did you develop your thoughts/argument logically in each paragraph and in your paper as a whole?

Formatting for “GEB5212, Inc.”

- ◇ **Word** document
- ◇ 1-inch margins on all sides, 8.5 x 11 inch
- ◇ 11- or 12-point businesslike font
- ◇ Ragged right margin (left justified only)
- ◇ Block formatting (no indented paragraphs)
- ◇ Single spaced, with an extra space between paragraphs
- ◇ Paragraphs → spacing → before (0 pt.), after (0pt.)
- ◇ Saved as yourlastname_assignmentname

Page	Topic
74-81/82-86	APA/MLA Citation for Articles in a Journal
165-166	Formatting titles
181	Title page of report
215	Figure 7-14. Using Headings
214	Checklist: Using Headings
222-223	Lists
128	Letter format
133	Memo format
397	Dates
403	Numbers
404	Percent vs. %

Style Guide **Correct use of commas**

USE a comma

- a. after introductory information
- b. to set off nonessential elements (can you remove the phrase from the sentence without changing its meaning? Then the phrase is nonessential and should be surrounded by commas)
- c. between coordinate adjectives (if you can put *and* between the adjectives and not change the meaning they are coordinate adjectives). Today is a hot, muggy day = Today is a hot and muggy day.
- d. to separate items in a series (unless the items include commas, then separate with semicolon)
- e. in a compound sentence (i.e. two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction: FANBOY [for, and, nor, but, or, yet])

Comma Splices. AVOID comma splices – which is joining two complete sentences (or independent clauses) by only a comma – remove comma, read both sides; complete sentence on both sides? Add semi-colon or connective or make two sentences. REMINDER: a complete sentence includes a subject and verb without any subordinating clauses preceding the subject and verb.

Academic degrees

<http://stylebook.urel.ufl.edu/list-of-terms/list-of-terms-a/>


For materials other than news releases, B.A. *Bachelor of Arts*, M.A. *Master of Arts*, M.S. *Master of Science*, Ed.D. *doctor of education*, Ph.D. *doctor of philosophy*. No space after periods in abbreviations. The word degree should not follow a degree abbreviation: *he has a B.A. in history*, NOT *he has a B.A. degree in history*. Use *bachelor’s* and *master’s* degrees, never *bachelors* and *masters* degrees. When referring to degrees in general, lowercase the first letter of the degree and use the ‘s’ ending *they all had master’s degrees in engineering*. Capitalize formal names of academic degrees *Bachelor of Science*, *Bachelor of Arts in Accounting*, *Doctor of Philosophy*.

Assignment 1: Write a Persuasive Proposal

Final version due via course management site on September 7

Save the document as lastname1.doc

- ✍ **Length:** roughly 1-2 pages, single-spaced, double spaced-between paragraphs. Follow correct memo format (see p. 133 of textbook). Address memo to your “boss.” Note that this length is merely a guideline, not a limit.
- ✍ Write a memo that proposes a new procedure, purchase of new equipment, organizational restructuring at your workplace, new flex-time policies, or any means of boosting efficiency, cost-effectiveness, or employee morale. Your proposal must require internal approval.



Incorporate at least one visual, of your own original design, and properly reference the visual in the text of the proposal.

- ✍ Ensure you observe all concision, clarity and continuity principles on this assignment. Oh, and persuasion!

Value: 100 points

Assignment 2: Write a Résumé and Cover Letter
Final version due via course management site on September 26

Save the document as lastname2.doc

For this assignment, you will revise your résumé according to the FAB format covered in class or using the Career Services format. During class, I'll cover which format is appropriate for which scenarios.

Write a detailed cover letter in response to an actual job advertisement. Attach a copy of the job description—or a text version of it—to your submission, along with the résumé. I will evaluate only your cover letter, but, if you want feedback on your résumé, please indicate that you want feedback, and I'll suggest revisions.

Cover letter: see p. 128 of textbook

Value: 100 points

Assignment 3: Participation

Total: 100 points

- Final exam (team crisis management assignment): 40 points
- Two discussion boards (maximum of 20 points): 5 points per post
- Office hours (maximum of 20 points): 10 points per visit
- In-class exercises (email, bad news re-writes, peer reviews): 20 points