

GEB Professional Writing

Spring 2017

Instructor:

Office Hours:

Class Meeting:

COURSE OBJECTIVES

GEB 5212 is a **writing course** using business topics. Therefore, you will be graded on your writing strategies, grammar, and formatting. Through this focus, you will learn the basic principles that make writing work, gain an overview of business communication principles, and learn persuasive techniques. You will also learn how to replace some bad writing habits with good ones. By the end of this course, you should be able to

- Write action-oriented documents
- Write more clearly and concisely
- Arrange your ideas persuasively
- Deploy approaches for handling different communication forms to a variety of audiences

All of these skills will help ensure your success as managers in the workplace.

TEXTBOOK AND COURSE WEBSITE

The Business Writer's Companion, (7th edition). Gerald Alred, Charles Brusaw and Walter Oliu. Bedford/St. Martin's: 2014, ISBN: 978-1-4576-3299-0

Obtain your textbook quickly because you will begin using it the first week of the term.

The course website is located in the Canvas e-Learning system at <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>. You must access and participate in the activities online as well as in the classroom.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

UF Writing Studio in Tigert Hall: <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/hours-and-location>

Before submitting an assignment, students whose first language is other than English must have a Writing Assistant at the Writing Studio review and initial their papers.

If you would like extra grammar practice, you will find a link to the Writing Studio's online **Grammar Quizzes** on the left-hand tool bar of your Canvas course.

For issues with technical difficulties with the e-learning system, please contact the **UF Help Desk** at:

Email: Learning-support@ufl.edu	(352) 392-HELP - select option 2	https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml
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E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

Consider email communication as practice for the style you will adopt in business settings. In other words, our communication should be formal in the beginning (*Dear Professor XX –OR– Dr. XX*), and may become more informal as we continue our communication.

When you communicate with me:

- **Assure me you have read the syllabus and were unable to find an answer to your question here**
- Frontload your purpose (don't forget a concise, yet descriptive, subject line)
- Provide two or three available days and times, if requesting an appointment
- Close with your name and section number or day/time of class meeting (I teach multiple sections.)

NOTE: Papers are reviewed *in person* only, not via e-mail. Use e-mail to arrange an appointment.

COURSE CALENDAR

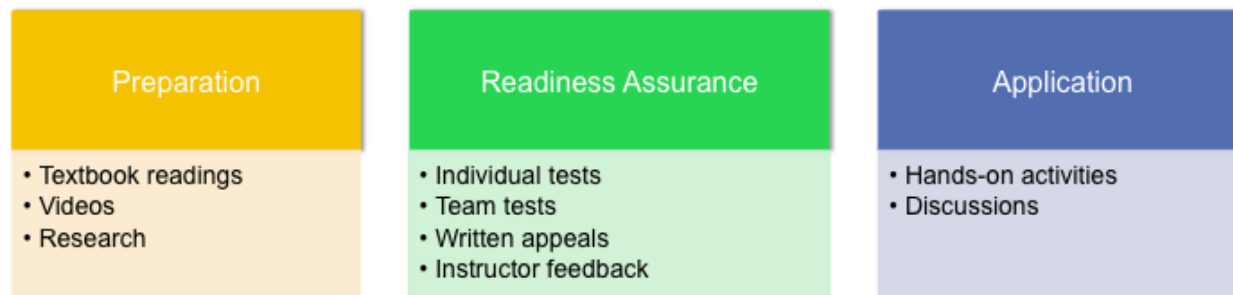
Class Topics	Preparation	In-class	Assignments
1 Rationale, Clarity, Frontloading, Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Read <i>Rank the Emails</i> under Files in Canvas. 📄 View syllabus. ✍️ Plan your term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 Intro, syllabus, TBL method 🗣️ Lecture: Rationale, Clarity, Frontloading 🗣️ Discussion 📁 Application exercises 📁 Rank the Emails 📖 Read "<i>Great Eats to the Beat</i>" 🗣️ Team discussion Assignment 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍️ Assignment 1: Email 📄 Bring two hard copies to next class 🗣️ Discussion board: Company mission statement & logo ✍️ Bring team mission statement draft & logo to next class
2 Conciseness, Grammar, Email, Reader-focused Writing, The Writing Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Readings: Chapters 1 (3-24, 31-40); 2 (47-51, 56-61); 4 (112-16); 10 📺 Video lectures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conciseness, Grammar 2. Email professionalism 3. Writing for Your Reader 4. The Writing Process 📖 Chapters 11, 12 & Appendix for reference throughout course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🗣️ Discussion 📁 Application exercises: Denotation/Connotation/Idiom /Conciseness 🗣️ Gallery walk: Company mission statement & logo 📄 Writing Workshop Peer Review: Draft email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🌟 Assignment 1: Email 🗣️ Discussion board: Principles of Persuasion
3 Paragraphing and Cohesion, Persuasion, Proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Readings: Chapters 1 (25-31); 3; 4 (131-4, 137-9); 5 (150-168) 📺 Video lectures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paragraphing and Cohesion 2. Principles of Persuasion 3. Writing Proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🗣️ Discussion 📁 Application exercise 📁 Rank the memos 🗣️ Gallery Walk: Persuasive Memo ✍️ Team Discussion Assignment 2 ✍️ Mid-term peer evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍️ Assignment 2: Persuasive Proposal 📄 Bring two hard copies to next class 🗣️ Discussion board: Principles of Persuasion
4 Document Design, Electronic Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Readings: Chapters 2 (43-46, 53-56, 61-67); & 7 📺 Video lectures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document Design and Effective Visuals 2. E-communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🗣️ Discussion 📁 Application exercises: What's wrong with this writing? 📄 Writing Workshop Peer Review: Persuasive proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🌟 Assignment 2: Persuasive Proposal 🗣️ Discussion board: Responding to a Negative Customer Review
5 Bad News, Business Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Readings: Chapter 4 (116-131, 134-137) 📺 Video lectures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business Letters 2. Using the Indirect Approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🗣️ Discussion 📁 Application 🗣️ Gallery Walk: Revise Email 1 from <i>Rank the Emails</i> ✍️ Team Discussion Assignment 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍️ Assignment 3: Bad News Letter 📄 Bring two hard copies to next class 🗣️ Discussion board: Responding to a Negative Review
6 Job Search, Social Media, Cover Letter, Résumé	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Readings: Chapter 9 📺 Video lectures <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can Social Media Get the Job? 2. Developing Your Résumé 3. Application Letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🗣️ Discussion 📁 Application exercises 📄 Writing Workshop Peer Review: Draft Bad News Letter 📄 Writing Workshop: LinkedIn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔗 Peer Evaluation 🔗 Study for final exam 🌟 Assignment 3: Bad News Letter

TEAM-BASED LEARNING

This course is delivered using a **Team-based Learning (TBL) format**, established by Dr. Larry Michaelsen at the University of Oklahoma Business School. Instructors have used this format in a variety of courses: business, engineering, medical, etc. In this course, you will be assigned to a team with 5-6 team members.

Instructors will assign teams on the principle of “resource wealth distribution” during the first class period. Consequently, we will create teams based on previous courses in writing and business, background, and work experience. Research on Team-based Learning shows that students in TBL courses actively focus on making decisions, that problem-solving improves, and that students gain a more in-depth understanding of the course concepts and are more likely to continue learning about the course topics beyond the course.

Learning modules in the course will be based on a sequence of **three distinct learning phases**.



Phase 1: Preparation. During the first phase, you will be assigned a specific reading in the textbook to complete and video lessons to watch prior to attending class. The videos are available on the Canvas course website. The purpose of Phase 1 is to prepare you for the class activities, which are based on the textbook and video materials.

Phase 2: Readiness Assurance. During the second phase, you will participate in readiness assurance tests (RAT). The tests are timed and closed book. They will measure your understanding of the information provided in the textbook and your preparation for class time. During this process, you will first individually complete the test and submit your answers on Canvas (iRAT). Then you will join your team and as a team discuss and answer the questions of the same test. The individual tests will be scored automatically and the instructor will review the scores while your team completes the team test (tRAT). The team score will be the same for all members of the team. The purpose of Phase 2 is to ensure that you and your teammates have the foundational knowledge needed to begin learning to apply the concepts in Phase 3.

Phase 3: Application. In the third phase, you and your team will use the foundational knowledge to solve problems, participate in hands-on activities, discuss good and bad writing samples, etc. The purpose of this phase is to give you a deeper understanding of the concepts while you practice writing.

GRADING POLICIES

Points

To pass this class, you must complete all required coursework. Total points for the course will be 500 points.

Course Item	Type	Points	Total Value
iRATs (x5)	Individual	10	50
tRATs (x5)	Team	20	100
E-mail	Individual	50	50
Persuasive Proposal Memo	Individual	100	100
Bad News Letter	Individual	50	50
Discussion Boards (x3)	Team	20x2+10	50
Professionalism: Final Peer Evaluation	Individual	50	50
Final Exam	Individual	50	50
POINTS POSSIBLE			500

Writing Assignments. You must type all assignments in Microsoft **Word** (unless instructed otherwise) and upload your assignment to the course website assignment link by the deadline.

If your grade on any individual assignment is below a B-, you may **e-mail me within three days of receiving your grade on Canvas to request** the option to rewrite your assignment for a potential ten percent increase in grade (remember to be persuasive and professional). You must resubmit your rewrite **within seven days** from receiving your grade.

Late Policy. Late assignments will be reduced by **one letter grade** for each day late. You may request an appointment with me to review assignments before their due date. Although such reviews are no guarantee of a specific grade, they may prove helpful in honing your writing skills.

Discussion Boards. In the discussion boards, you will have the opportunity to practice concise, thoughtful writing on a specific topic, and reinforce your lessons. You will have the chance to share your experiences and to learn from your classmates. The task is much easier if you create your posts in Microsoft **Word** first, check for errors, then copy and paste to the discussion boards.

Each post is limited to **200** words, so work on clarity and concision (no expletive constructions, nominalizations, or unnecessary passive voice).

1. Post your thoughts on the topic (post #1).
2. Make meaningful comments to each of your teammates' posts.
3. Repeat for each discussion board.
4. Your discussion board posts will be scored to contribute to your final grade.

Remember, **less is more!** Posts have a 200-word maximum

Peer Evaluation. Students will have opportunities to evaluate the members of their team at the middle and end of the course. The middle evaluation is just for feedback and has no points associated. The final peer evaluation provides up to 50 points based on how well you have worked with your team. The peer evaluation will ask you to consider how well your team members prepared for the readiness tests as well as the level and quality of their contributions to the in-class activities through applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating.

Class Participation. Class participation is a valuable part of this course. You are permitted one absence without penalty. If you have more than one absence, your final grade will be reduced by 30 points. If you miss more than the first 30 minutes of class, you will be counted as absent.

Writing Workshops. You must bring two hard copies of your draft assignment to class. Failure to have two hard copies at the start of class can result in a reduction of up to ten points on your final grade.

Grading Scale. The number of points you earn will determine your course grade.

Correct any grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors before posting.

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	S
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0

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Total Points	500-470	469-450	449-435	434-420	419-400	399-385	384-370	369-350	349-335	334-320	319-300	<299
Average	93-96	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<63

Final Exam. A final examination at the end of the course will evaluate your knowledge of the concepts covered in the course. The exam questions will come from the textbook, videos, course discussions, and class activities. The exam will mostly consist of multiple-choice or choose best answer type questions. The exam will be available online for 48 hours. You will have 115 minutes to complete the exam.

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, please turn off your devices.

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**.

Learning Goal 1: Program graduates will be effective communicators.

- 1A. Students will demonstrate the ability to write business documents clearly, concisely, grammatically correct, and with convincing analysis.
- 1C. Students will recognize and employ a variety of rhetorical styles, written and oral, appropriate to the goal and audience.

Learning Goal 2: Program graduates will have qualitative thinking and reasoning capabilities.

- 2B. Critically evaluate evidence from qualitative sources; relate evidence to appropriate theoretical models; apply critical reasoning process to advance decision-making.

Learning Goal 4: Program graduates will have competency in and across business disciplines.

- 4B. Students will apply elemental elements of core business principles to construct and implement decision-making processes in the business environment.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON CHEATING AND USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students should be sure that they understand the [UF Student Honor Code](#). Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1-4.017).

Cheating. “The improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit.” Taking of information includes copying graded assignments from another student; working together with another individual(s) on a take-home test or homework when not specifically permitted by the teacher; looking or attempting to look at another student's paper during an examination; looking or

attempting to look at text or notes during an examination when not permitted. The tendering of information includes, but is not limited to, giving of your work to another student to be used or copied; giving someone answers to exam questions either when the exam is being given or after taking an exam; giving or selling a term paper or other written materials to another student; sharing information on a graded assignment.

Plagiarism. *“The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the work is published or unpublished, or simply the work of a fellow student.”* Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on an exam, term paper, homework, or other written materials or oral presentations for an academic requirement; submitting a paper which was purchased from a term paper service as your own work; submitting anyone else's paper as your own work.

Needless to say, plagiarizing the work of others is a sign of inadequate character and insecurity about one's writing ability. Bottom line: ***all work must be original.***

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The classrooms should be 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, we will do everything we 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