

Business, Professional, and Technical Writing

Course ID: BUS 210

Students in this online, accelerated MBA course develop writing skills they will later utilize in their professional careers. From the email to the grant proposal, students demonstrate a writing style appropriate to professional environments, including ethical approaches, sensitivity to the audience, appropriate tone, effective vocabulary, and correct spelling, grammar, and mechanics. This is a writing-intensive course.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Assess professional writing situations.
2. Produce clear, concise, and persuasive written documents that effectively communicate complex ideas and data to a variety of stakeholders.
3. Revise written work for clarity, coherence, organization, and tone, using appropriate research and citation methods.
4. Apply principles of ethical and cultural awareness to professional writing, taking into account the diversity of audiences and the potential impact of language and messaging on different groups.
5. Develop critical reading and editing skills through analyzing and revising the writing of others, including peer review and group feedback sessions.
6. Use technology effectively to create and publish written documents, including using various software and platforms for document design and production.

Module 1 -- Who Am I Communicating With?

Module Learning Objectives

At the end of this module students will be able to:

1. M1 LO1: Evaluate the needs, expectations, and values of a specific audience. [CLO1]
2. M1 LO2: Adapt personal writing style and tone to effectively communicate with an evaluated target audience. [CLO1]
3. M1 LO3: Recognize plagiarism, bias, and other ethical violations in order to avoid violations in their writing. [CLO4]
4. M1 LO4: Create messages that use inclusive language and avoid stereotypes and offensive language in their writing. [CLO4]
5. M1 LO5: Evaluate the impact of their online communication on their personal and professional brand. [CLO1]

Topics

- Evaluating Your Audience - (LO1, LO2)
- What are My Ethical & Cultural Considerations? - (LO3, LO4)

Learning Materials

Readings:

- Introduction in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)
- Chapter 2: Audience in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)
- Audience Analysis Overview in Purdue OWL Writing Lab
- Keeping Writing Honest & Avoiding Plagiarism in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)
- Chapter 4: Ethics in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)
- Winsor, D.A., "Communication Failures Contributing to the Challenger Accident: An Example for Technical Communicators," in IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication

Lecture (10 minute videos):

- How Can Your Audience Impact Your Message?
- Ethical and Cultural Considerations in All Writing
- Murphy, D. (2023). Ethical Writing. [Youtube] Video. <https://youtu.be/H3Eo4tRZOxM>

Learning Deliverables

- Module 1: Discussion -- Introduce Yourself: Two Truths & A Lie
- Module 1: Discussion -- Is Using ChatGPT or other AI Ethical
- Module 1: Quiz -- Knowledge Check
- Module 1: Assignment -- Audience Analysis & Initial Communications

Module 2 -- What Is My Communication Strategy?

Module Learning Objectives

At the end of this module students will be able to:

1. M2 LO1: Recognize the characteristics and conventions of various genres, such as emails, memos, proposals, reports, and presentations. [CLO2]
2. M2 LO2: Analyze the audience and context to determine the appropriate genre for a specific communication goal. [CLO1]
3. M2 LO3: Prioritize information based on the goals and objectives of the communication. [CLO2]

4. M2 LO4: Structure messages to achieve the desired impact and response. [CLO2]
5. M2 LO5: Use rhetorical strategies, such as ethos, logos, and pathos, to create persuasive and effective messages. [CLO5]
6. M2 LO6: Adapt communications for different platforms such as social media, websites, and print media. [CLO6]

Topics

- Rhetorical Strategies
- Business Writing Genres and Platforms
- Structuring Your Message

Learning Materials

- **Chapter 6: Emails, Memos and Texting in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)**
- **Chapter 9: Proposals in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)**
- **Chapter 11: Analytical Reports in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)**
- **The Writing Process in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)**

Lecture (10 minute videos): :

- Business Writing Genres and Modern Platforms
- Structuring Your Message

Learning Deliverables

- Module 2: Discussion -- Analyzing Audience, Context, and Genre - (LO2, LO3, LO4) DUE: Wednesday – Sunday
- Module 2: Quiz -- Knowledge Check - (LO1, LO5, LO6) DUE: Sunday
- Module 2: Assignment -- Audience, Context, and Genre - (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO6) DUE: Sunday

Module 3 -- How Can I Communicate Quickly?

At the end of this module students will be able to:

1. M3 LO1: Compose clear, concise, and professional emails for different business contexts and purposes. [CLO2]
2. M3 LO2: Conduct instant messaging communication, including initiating, responding, and ending conversations. [CLO1]
3. M3 LO3: Recognize the impact of digital communication on productivity and work-life balance [CLO4]

4. M3 LO4: Use appropriate headings, formatting, and tone in their memos through the use of templates. [CLO6]
5. M3 LO5: Identify and follow the etiquette and norms of business writing, when using email, instant messaging, and memo communication. [CLO1]

Topics

- Email
- Instant Messaging
- Memos

Learning Materials

Readings:

- Review - Chapter 6: Emails, Memos and Texting in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)
- Herrity, J. (2023) How to Write a Professional Email with Templates. Indeed.
- Marrtin, E. (2014) Common Email Mistakes Professionals Make. Business Insider.
- Newport, C. (2021) Email is Making Us Miserable. The New Yorker.
- Email Best Practices Infographic
- Memo Templates

Lecture (10 minute videos): :

- Professional Email Strategies in Business
- Harvard Business Review. How to Write Better Emails. Video [YouTube]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XctnF7C74s>
- Crafting clear and concise messages in instant messaging platforms
- Memos, Executive Summaries, and One Pagers

Learning Deliverables

- Module 3: Discussion -- When Email Goes Wrong - (LO3, LO5) **DUE: Wednesday – Sunday**
- Module 3: Quiz -- Knowledge Check - (LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5) **DUE: Sunday**
- Module 3: Assignment -- Composing Emails in Various Business Contexts - (LO1, LO5) **DUE: Sunday**
- Module 3: Assignment -- Instant Messaging Scenarios - (LO2, LO3, LO5) **DUE: Sunday**

Module 4 -- How Can I Make My Message Credible?

At the end of this module students will be able to:

1. M4 LO1: Identify credible sources and conduct research for different business writing purposes. [CLO5]
2. M4 LO2: Analyze research data to support their writing [CLO5]
3. M4 LO3: Complete the proposal writing process, including researching, drafting, revising, and editing [CLO2]
4. M4 LO4: Produce business writing messages that offer accurate citations and avoid plagiarism [CLO4]
5. M4 LO5: Evaluate the communication strategies and tactics of different business models [CLO1]
6. M4 LO6: Use appropriate structure, language, and style in their researched proposal. [CLO3]

Topics

- Proposals & Business Models - (LO3, LO4, LO6)
- Conducting Research - (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4)

Learning Materials

Readings:

- Review: [Chapter 9: Proposals](#) in [Technical and Professional Writing Genres](#) (2020)
- Read: [Chapter 11: Analytical Reports](#) in [Technical and Professional Writing Genres](#) (2020)
- Read: [Writing and Business Models](#) in [Business Writing Style Guide](#) (2018)
- Read: [Chapter 11: Business Proposal](#) in [Business Writing for Success](#) (2019)
- Read: [Chapter 10: Research](#) in [Technical and Professional Writing Genres](#) (2020)
- Read: [Keeping Writing Honest and Avoiding Plagiarism](#) in [Business Writing Style Guide](#) (2018)
- Read: [The Science of Strong Business Writing](#) in [Harvard Business Review](#) (2021)

Lecture (10 minute videos): :

- Writing a Business Proposal
- Kicking Off Your Proposal Research
- Citation Style Refresher

Learning Deliverables

- Module 4: Quiz -- Knowledge Check - (LO4, LO5) **DUE: Sunday**

- Module 4: Quiz -- Topic Selection & Approval - (LO1, LO3, LO4) **DUE: Sunday**
- Module 4: Assignment -- Research & Proposal - (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO6) **DUE: Sunday**

Module 5 -- How Can Visuals Improve My Messaging?

Module Learning Objectives

At the end of this module students will be able to:

1. M5 LO1: Create a business report that exemplifies clarity, conciseness, and coherence. [CLO3]
2. M5 LO2: Use appropriate charts, graphs, tables, and other visualizations to convey information effectively [CLO2]
3. M5 LO3: Use word processing software and data management software to create professional and effective business documents. [CLO6]
4. M5 LO4: Interpret business documents that incorporate data analytics and statistical analysis. [CLO5]

Topics

- Reports - (LO1, LO3)
- Data & Visualizations - (LO2, LO3, LO4)

Readings:

- Read: Chapter 11: Analytical Reports in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)
- Read: Writing Concisely in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)
- Read: Actionable Recommendations in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)
- Read: Chapter 5: Document Design in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)
- Read: Formatting a Business Report in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)
- Read: Tables and Figures in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)
- Read: Data Visualization from Reveal (2020).

Lecture (10 minute videos): :

- Business Report Draft Overview
- UniSC. (2017). How to Write a Business Report. Video [YouTube] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8uF1EoIneE>
- Reveal (2021). The Importance of Data Visualizations. Video [Youtube]. <https://youtu.be/yVykqCayV1M>

Learning Deliverables

- Module 5: Quiz -- Knowledge Check - (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4) **DUE: Sunday**
- Module 5: Assignment -- Analytical Report - Draft 1 - (LO1, LO2, LO3) **DUE: Sunday**

Module 6 -- What Revisions Should I Make To My Message?

Module Learning Objectives

At the end of this module students will be able to:

1. M6 LO1: Evaluate their own writing for clarity, coherence, conciseness, and correctness. [CLO5]
2. M6 LO2: Provide constructive feedback to facilitate the collaborative writing process. [CLO5]
3. M6 LO3: Use style guides and templates to ensure consistency in business writing. [CLO6]
4. M6 LO4: Use peer review and feedback effectively to revise their writing [CLO3]

Topics

- Giving Good Feedback - (LO2, LO3)
- Applying Feedback - (LO1, LO4)

Learning Materials

Readings:

- Read: Chapter 3: Team Work and Collaborative Writing in Technical and Professional Writing Genres (2020)
- Read: Chapter 5: Feedback and Grading in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)
- Read: Writing Essentials in Business Writing Style Guide (2018)
- Read: Decoding and Applying Feedback from The University of Arizona (2022)

Lecture (10 minute videos): :

- Peer Review Requirements
- Apply Feedback

Learning Deliverables

- Module 6: Discussion -- Templates & Style Guides (Extra Credit) - (LO3) **DUE: Wednesday - Sunday**
- Module 6: Quiz -- Knowledge Check - (LO3) **DUE: Sunday**
- Module 6: Assignment -- Peer Review - (LO2, LO3, LO4) **DUE: Sunday**
- Module 6: Assignment -- Analytical Report - Draft 2 - (LO1, LO3, LO4) **DUE: Sunday**

Module 7 -- How Can I Present My Message to Others?

Module Learning Objectives

At the end of this module students will be able to:

1. M7 LO1: Choose appropriate content and structure for a presentation based on audience, purpose, and context assessment. [CLO1]
2. M7 LO2: Design visually appealing and effective presentation slides that communicate complex ideas and data. [CLO2]
3. M7 LO3: Identify strategies to manage presentation anxiety and respond to audience questions effectively. [CLO1]
4. M7 LO4: Incorporate audio, video, and other multimedia elements into their presentations effectively. [CLO6]
5. M7 LO5: Provide clear and concise presentation notes that inform readers or audience members of additional context. [CLO6]

Topics

- Preparing Presentations

Learning Materials

Readings:

- Read: [Chapter 12: Oral Reports in Technical and Professional Writing Genres](#) (2020)
- Read: [How to Give a Killer Presentation](#) from [Harvard Business Review](#) (2013)

Lecture (10 minute videos):

- Preparing Presentation Slides

Learning Deliverables

- Module 7: Discussion -- Stage Fright? Strategies to Combat Presentation Anxiety - (LO3) **DUE: Wednesday - Sunday**
- Module 7: Quiz -- Knowledge Check - (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO5) **DUE: Sunday**
- Module 7: Assignment -- Presentation Summary of Report Findings - (LO1, LO2, LO4, LO5) **DUE: Sunday**