



Introduction to Business Writing
WRIT 122 Sections 001 & 005
Fall 2011

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Office hours: TTH 9-9:30, W 4-4:30 and by appointment

Catalog Description

Provides instruction in the preparation of business memos, letters, reports, oral presentations, and computer-assisted writing in business contexts. This course was formerly ENGL 140—Business Writing.

Student Learning Outcomes

WRIT 122 introduces you to important types and strategies of business writing and provides opportunities for you to apply those types and strategies. After completing the course, you should be able to

- apply the theories and concepts of communication to business contexts,
 - develop logical, effective approaches to solving business problems through communication,
 - inform and convince others in written form by developing a clear, concise, and appropriate writing style adapted to the reader(s)/audience of the message, and
 - apply basic techniques of report preparation, including the collection, evaluation, analysis, organization, interpretation and presentation of data in written and oral messages.
 - identify and eliminate common errors in punctuation, spelling, and grammar, including but not limited to subject/verb agreement, noun/pronoun agreement, and parallelism.
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Prerequisite

To meet the prerequisite for this class you must have fulfilled one of the following:

1. Satisfactory completion of WRIT 104 Workplace Communications (formerly ENGL 102),
 2. Qualifying score on the COMPASS placement exam,
 3. Satisfactory completion of approved college writing course, or
 4. Qualifying scores on either the ACT or SAT college placement exams.
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Texts, Supplies, & Computer Access

Required

- Kaczmarek, Stephen and Kitty Locker. *Business Communication: Building Critical Skills*, 5th edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill Irwin, 2011.
- Flash drive and/or network storage
- Email account (MSU-Billings email is optional)
- Microsoft Word 2003 or 2007

Optional

- English handbook/office reference manual e.g. *Gregg Reference Manual*. This manual by William Sabin is a useful investment if you expect to do more writing later in your career.



Other Resources

The web site for your textbook has a variety of useful information—an online learning center, Internet links, and sample letters and memos—to help you work through the material covered in this class. Click on the **Student Edition** to access those materials at http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073403156/information_center_view0/

Another useful site, The Online Writing Lab at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>, has information on numerous writing issues including exercises and answer keys for topics like punctuation, spelling, and sentence construction. Purdue University sponsors this site.

An online dictionary can be found at <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>. Encyclopedias, thesaurus, and other literary references can be found at www.bartleby.com and <http://www.wordsmyth.net/>

Course Requirements

Reading Assignments

Your textbook assignments are listed on the course calendar. Read the assigned modules before coming to class and be ready to join discussions of the material. The lectures and class discussions supplement the readings and do not necessarily cover the same material the textbook covers. You are responsible for all assigned modules.

Writing Assignments

This course requires that you produce various types of written business communication including

1. letters and memos--informative and persuasive, positive and negative
2. reports--planning, proposing, researching, and citing sources
3. email messages
4. résumés and job application letters

Evaluation of writing assignments Before the class begins work on each assignment, you will receive a detailed assignment sheet. Read the instructions and details carefully. You have to apply the principles and strategies we discuss in class to your own writing. *Your assignments will be evaluated based on a clearly laid out set of criteria included on each assignment sheet.*

Late-paper policy A major assignment is due on the day listed on the assignment sheet at the beginning of the class period unless for some reason I announce a change or unless you have made special arrangements with me. Writing assignments turned in late lose 5 points for each day late. *Major assignments will not be accepted if they are more than five days late. (Weekends and holidays are not counted.)*

Rough drafts For all out-of-class major writing assignments, you will be required to do a rough draft, which is considered part of the assignment. *Your rough drafts must be word-processed and printed out on the days we do peer-editing. If you don't include a peer-edited rough draft (2 classmates as editors) when you turn in one of these assignments, your assignment will not be graded. Be sure that your assignments are saved & accessible in class!*

Peer Review/Workshop Etiquette Your reviews of your classmates' drafts count as Participation in this course. Your classmates will want fair and honest feedback. They need to know what works in their papers and what doesn't. Both positive and negative comments are necessary, and *your comments must be specific*. Be concrete in offering suggestions for improvement and in praising what has been done well.

Exams

Three mid-term exams—your lowest grade will be dropped.

Final exam (in-class writing)

The mid-term exams will be objective: multiple choice, short-answer, and fill-in the blank questions and will cover both material covered in the text and class lectures. The final exam will require in-class writing. Tests will be given at the scheduled times unless prior arrangements are made. **No make-up exams will be given.**

Quizzes and Exercises

To encourage you to keep up with your reading and to promote informed discussions, quizzes over the reading and lecture material **may** be given periodically at the beginning of the class period.

Assigned exercises must be turned in when they are due to be eligible for full credit. Exercises turned in by the next class will be eligible for no more than half credit. Exercises turned in later than that will not receive credit.

Policies and Comments

Academic Honesty

All course work must be your original writing. Do not use templates or pre-formatted documents and do not copy from others without citing your sources. Evidence of cheating will be followed by disciplinary action as outlined in the MSU-Billings Student Handbook. Do not download other students' assignments and use them as templates and do not copy the outline or organization of their work. You may use spelling and grammar checkers—in fact it is expected, but make sure to double-check and proofread your work. A copy of the Student Handbook is available online at <http://www.msubillings.edu/studenthandbook/>

Professionalism

As students in a college-level course and a business communication class, you are expected to communicate as professionals. All emails and writing projects will be written using complete and grammatical sentences, correct spelling, and standard formats. Professionalism is expected in all emails and writing projects in this course. Write as you would if you were communicating on the job with customers, patients, or your boss. "Careless" writing or an abbreviated style (as one would use in texting or informal online chats) is unacceptable.

Attendance

Satisfactory completion of this course requires consistent daily attendance and active participation. I assume that you will be punctual and attend class regularly—as if you are "on the job." If you cannot attend class for any reason, you are responsible for finding out from a classmate what you missed.

Respect

Treat your classmates and instructors with respect, with integrity, and with honesty.

- Nondiscrimination: MSU-Billings COT has a policy of nondiscrimination in access to and conduct of educational programs. Discrimination is prohibited on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or parental status.
- Turn off your cell phone, iPod and other personal electronic devices during class.
- Playing computer games, surfing the Internet or working on assignments for other classes during discussions is unprofessional and means that you are "absent."

- Disrespectful language: Rants, flaming, expletives, and foul language are not acceptable in any academic environment.
- Code of Student Conduct: Infractions will be handled as described in the Student Handbook, <http://www.msubillings.edu/studenthandbook>
- Use gender-neutral language in your speaking and writing. Since the language we speak and write leads us to perceive in certain ways, gender-neutral language will help all of us perceive women and men on equal terms, participating equally in the world. For example, use "he or she" instead of "he" when the person to whom you are referring could be of either sex. Similarly, use "people" or "humanity" instead of "man" or "mankind."

Grading Standards

COURSE GRADES

A = 90 - 100%	(superior)
B = 80 - 89%	(above average)
C = 70 - 79%	(average)
D = 60 - 69%	(below average)
F = 59% or less	(unacceptable)

**You'll note that only two exams are listed since your lowest exam score is dropped. You should be able to calculate your grade percentage by dividing the points that you have earned by the total number of current possible points.

	POSSIBLE POINTS	POINTS EARNED
#1 Introductory Memo	25	
#2 Creating Good Will	50	
#3 Research/Citations	50	
#4 Informative Message	50	
#5 Negative Message	50	
#6 Persuasive Message	50	
#7 Résumé	50	
#8 Application Letter	50	
**Exam #1	50	
**Exam #2	50	
Final	100	
Quizzes & Exercises	+/-50	
Total	+/-625	

An excellent paper offers an effective solution to the problem based on good audience analysis; it fulfills minor as well as major purposes. Its overall pattern of organizations is appropriate; the internal organization of ideas is effective; transitions are smooth. Reader benefits and logic are well developed. The message is well written, interesting, and easy to read. It may show originality in visual impact, reader benefits, details, or word choice. **45-50 points or A**

A good paper offers an effective solution to the problem. Both the overall pattern of organization and the internal organization are good. Reader benefits and logic are developed adequately. The writing style is clear, concise, and friendly. It may have a few minor mechanical errors or some awkward spots, but basically it is well written and has good visual impact. **40-44 points or B**

A satisfactory paper offers a solution that is basically acceptable; it uses an acceptable pattern of organization; the writing follows the conventions of standard English and the principles of business writing. There may be minor errors in style, tone, internal organization, or mechanics; reader benefits or logic may not be developed fully. *or* A good "B" (3) paper with a major flaw in one of the following: the solution, organization, tone, or writing style. **35-39 points or C**

An unsatisfactory paper has a major flaw in one of the following: the solution, organization, tone, or writing style. *or* A paper which shows some evidence of attempting to solve the problem, but which has many minor errors in organization, development, word choice, style, tone, and mechanics. None of these alone would necessarily doom the paper; however, together they make the paper unsatisfactory. **34 points and below D or F**

Support Services

Library

You will want to familiarize yourself with the COT library. In addition to the library here at the COT, your student fees also gain you access to the library on the main campus and to the library at Rocky Mountain College. You will need your student ID card for the college libraries. The MSU-Billings library web site is <http://www.msubillings.edu/library/>. To access the MSU-B web site from home, follow the instructions for “Off-Campus Access” on the library home page.

Disability Support Services

MSU Billings is committed to providing equal access. If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that disability-related accommodations are necessary, please contact Disability Support Services (247-3029—located in the Tech Building, room A008) or on the other campus (657-2283—located in the Academic Support Center). We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations. Disability-related information is confidential, falling under medical information, Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Academic Support Center

Free tutoring services are available through the COT Academic Support Center, Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Tutoring is offered in MATH (061, 090, 095, 105, 108, 111, 114, 121, 143), READING, WRITING, COMPUTERS, CHEMISTRY, A&P, DRAFTING & DESIGN, ACCOUNTING, MEDICAL CODING, and ACCESS. The ASC is located on the **WEST side** of the commons in the “Learning Commons” area.

The Academic Support Center on the senior campus is open from 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. -5 p.m. Friday, and 9 a.m. – noon Saturday. Tutors are available to assist students with math, writing, reading, anatomy and physiology, and other specialty areas for specific majors. Online tutoring is also available at www.msubillings.edu/asc (click on “Online Tutoring”), but the hours have yet to be determined. They will be posted on the webpage when determined.

Important Dates

September 15	last day to add
September 27	last day to drop with partial refund
October 25	last day to drop without penalty for failing (no refund)
November 22	last date to drop with approval of advisor and course instructor (no refund)
December 21	Grades due in Registrar’s office