



Course: Professional Communication: Writing (GRAD710)
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Overview

The 1.5-credit **Professional Communication: Writing** course is designed to help you learn how to write audience-centered messages in professional settings. The writing-intensive, seminar-style course meets weekly and will focus on crafting effective email messages, short reports, and executive summaries. The course does not have a mid-term or a final exam.

Over the course of the term you will learn how to:

- Craft effective, efficient audience-centered messages
- Select content based on audience, purpose, and desired outcome
- Explain complex topics using plain language
- Organize material strategically
- Incorporate accessibility strategies to enhance reading efficiency
- Apply style techniques that result in efficient, concise prose and appropriate tone
- Punctuate for clarity
- Design and incorporate value-added graphic displays of information

Course Materials

Required Text:

Alley, M. (2015)*. *The Craft of Scientific Writing*, 4th ed. New York: Springer. (ISBN: 978-1441982872)

(Note: We will use the 3rd edition if the 4th edition is delayed, but it should be available December 2014.)

Readings will also be available on the course Canvas site and distributed in class.

Participation & Attendance

The *Professional Communication: Writing* course is a working seminar, and you will frequently work on your writing during class. **You should always bring your laptop to class, so you're prepared to make full use of the time that's available.** You'll also be participating in workshop groups, during which you will be expected to make a contribution to your peers' efforts. Active participation in this course will help you develop the writing, revising, and editing skills you will need to succeed professionally.

In order to fully participate in the course, you should make every effort to attend all class periods. If you must miss a class, please contact Dr. Harms ahead of time, and then work with a colleague to catch up with the material. Arriving late or leaving class early will negatively impact your final grade.

Office Hours

I hold in-person and virtual office hours by appointment. If you have a specific question(s), email me and I'll be happy to meet with you about the area of concern.

Honor Code

The honor code is in effect in this class and all others at the University. I am committed to treating honor code violations seriously. Please check out the honor code terms that are described at <http://instrument.unc.edu>. If you have questions, it's your responsibility to ask me about the honor code's application. *Note: Draft workshops and class activities designated as collaborative constitute permissible collaboration.*

Grading & Evaluation

Please review the "Evaluation Criteria" section at the end of each assignment to understand how I'll grade the assignments. Here are the numerical equivalents and ranges for the letter grades:

H = 4.0

H- = 3.8 to 3.9

P+ = 3.4 to 3.7

P = 3.1 to 3.3

P- = 2.8 to 3.0

L = 2.0 to 2.7

F = 0.0

I reserve the right to adjust final grades based on attendance and participation.

Overview of Assignments & Assignment Weights

Participation (includes thoughtfully participating in class and in exercises; providing quality feedback to colleagues; bringing in solid drafts; engaging in class exercises; turning in a detailed baseline message, etc.)	Expected
Baseline message	required for credit
Email message 1 (informative message)	10%
Email message 2 (article selection for executive summary assignment)	10%
Short report 1 (plain language analysis)	15%
Executive/Informative Summary	25%
Short report 2 (includes visual) (Recommend a novel methodology or process and include a plan for incorporating the process into a work flow)	40%