

## **Business 300: Writing Communication for the Business Professional**

**Janice Marshall** ([jmarshall@uwsp.edu](mailto:jmarshall@uwsp.edu)) Please always include **Bus 300** in subject line of emails for faster service and resend or communicate in class if I don't respond in 24 hours to an email.

**Textbook (required):** *Business Communication Today*, 12<sup>th</sup> edition, Bovee & Thill

**Classroom:** CCC 226 (12:35 section) or CCC 104 (Wed. 5:00 section)

**Office:** CCC 424

**Office hours:** Mon. 11:00-11:30, Wed. 3:00-4:30. Please make an appointment whenever possible (even during office hours) so that I can be prepared to meet with you. A more convenient method of contact is email. I check email at least twice daily. Many students like email and can ask quick questions and get quick responses. Just remember to put **Bus 300** in the subject line.

**Course description:** Gain a broad and comprehensive understanding of the importance of effective writing within the field of business. Focus on developing writing skills as a management and communication tool for business students. An analysis of the psychology, semantics, planning, and principles of effective business writing are covered. Skills will be developed and applied through a variety of projects applicable to business, including global situations.

**SBE Mission:** The UWSP School of Business & Economics educates and inspires students and prepares graduates for success in positions of leadership and responsibility. Our students achieve and understanding of regional opportunities that exist within the global economy. Evidence of our graduates' level of preparation is evident in their ability to

- \*analyze and solve business and economics problems
- \*understand the opportunities and consequences associated with globalization
- \*appreciate the importance of behaving professionally and ethically

As a member of the SBE, remember your additional opportunities and responsibilities including the SBE Events:

The School of Business & Economics has an exciting series of speakers, discussions, workshops and field trips called **SBE Events**. It is important to take advantage of these learning opportunities outside the classroom. The events are designed to help you make the most out of your time as a student and to prepare for a successful career.

For this course, you must attend **two** official SBE Events. One event must be before the mid-semester cut-off of **Mar. 10**; a second event must be before the end-of-semester cut-off (May. 12). If you go to extra events before Mar. 10, those credits will carry over into the second half of the semester. Attendance at each event will count for 10 points towards your final grade.

Visit the SBE Events web site (<http://business.uwsp.edu/events>) for announcements of upcoming SBE Events. You can also follow us on social media:

- Facebook: [UWSP School of Business & Economics](#)

- Twitter: [@UWSPBusiness](https://twitter.com/UWSPBusiness)

When you attend an event, it is your responsibility to sign in with your Point Card. Attendance at SBE Events will be confirmed with automatic emails to you and updated on the SBE Events web site. Please allow a week for confirmation of attendance at events held outside the SBE, such as Career Services events.

If you have multiple courses with SBE Events requirements, it is your responsibility to make sure you have attended enough events for each course. If you have not attended enough events to cover all of your courses, your attendance will be allocated to your courses in alpha-numeric order.

After March 10 and the end of this semester’s events, I will receive reports confirming your attendance. You do not need to do anything else.

**Course Outcomes:**

- \*Follow instructions accurately, promptly, and completely
- \*Establish document purpose
- \*Critically analyze target audience
- \*Research, synthesize, and document information from outside sources in APA documentation styles
- \*Select, prioritize, organize, and format information strategically, based on logic, evidence strength, and audience needs
- \*Use ethical, logical and well-supported persuasive techniques
- \*Write naturally, using vocabulary appropriate for the audience
- \*Write clearly, precisely, and correctly (spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure)
- \*Write, revise, and edit documents through multiple drafts
- \*Process/provide feedback ethically and accurately
- \*Work cooperatively in groups to achieve greatest possible shared outcomes

**Grading components:**

Homework/active reading	150 points
Participation—in class	25 points
Participation—discussion boards	50 points
Grammar exam	100 points
2 grammar quizzes	40 points
Email packet	75 points
Business letter packet	150 points
Resume/cover letter project	100 points
Group project Proposal	
Proposal document	200 points
Group allocation of points	50 points
Presentation	75 points

Interview questions	50 points
Phone interview	100 points
Self evaluation	20 points

\*\*\*Extra credit IS readily available, BUT 10 points will be deducted for each absence.\*\*\*

#### Grade distribution:

A	93%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	83%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	73%
D	70%
D+	66%
D	59%

#### Policies/Philosophies:

1. If you wish to or need to record class sessions, please ask. University classes cannot be recorded without permission.
2. You have already been schooled in effective techniques for academic writing in English 101 and 202. You have learned about topic sentences, thesis statements, explication, support, and persuasion. These skills are key to academic success, and now you are going to use those skills and adapt them for success in the workplace. You will not discard what you have already learned, but much as we must learn how to dress appropriately for the workplace (and it may be very different from how we dress in other circumstances), we must learn to refine our writing style so that it is appropriate and effective at work. Your background in academic writing will provide you with the groundwork for this new style of writing.
3. Part of dressing your writing for success is appropriate formatting for various types of business writing, and we will explore and practice these techniques. Part of the grade for each different writing tasks will come from correct format. Correct grammar is another element to improve the power and first impressions that your writing conveys. We will spend some time reviewing and reinforcing your grasp of correct grammar, and a grammar exam will assess your skills in this area as well as being graded in the writing that you produce.
4. Your regular, prompt, attentive attendance is mandatory for success in this class. A sign-in sheet will be passed each class period to document your timely attendance. If you attend but don't arrive in time to sign in, this will be documented. **For each absence, you will be docked 10 points. Three tardies will also cost you 10 points.**

5. Rather than “excused absences,” you will have a couple methods to accrue extra credit (sort of like PTO or Paid Time Off at work). One segment of your grade is based on homework/in class work/quizzes. This segment is officially “worth” 150 points, but more than 150 points will be offered. The exact amount of total extra credit varies, but there are often 30 extra points or more available.
6. Another PTO/extra credit line comes from participation. There will be 25 points “possible” for in class participation, but again, you can surpass it. For each useful comment or question that you supply in class, you will earn a point with a maximum of 5 per class. Realize that not every day has an equal amount of discussion options, so participate on all opportunities offered. If you exceed 25 points, you can earn extra credit/PTO. Management reserves the right to deduct participation for inappropriate talking, working on other schoolwork, failure to have completed work or textbooks, inappropriate use of technology in class or other distracting, unfocused behavior.
7. The second aspect of participation is done on the D2L discussion boards. For each meaningful contribution of 3 or more sentences, you will earn a point. These can be direct responses to my questions OR thoughtful discussions of other students’ postings. You can exceed the required 50 points by an additional 25 of extra credit. That means that you can post a total of 75 for credit. Please feel to continue to contribute to these boards for the simple value they can add to your educational and professional experience.
8. You will further be able to hone your workplace skills by working with your classmates to improve the group’s performance. Periodically in class, you will be put in groups to practice the skills we are working on. While this can be a challenging experience for a number of reasons, learning to work cooperatively is critical in most jobs. Whether you need to work with bosses, coworkers, or subordinates, there are few ways we can earn a living without helping others and depending on others. Ask for help from me and your classmates, and offer it to others. Work on composing effective questions to get the help you need, and practice how you explain your ideas to others. A job means being part of a community, and a community can only thrive with the support of all its members.
9. While you will sometimes be working in groups, usually your work will be independent. Therefore, remember the importance of doing your own work. Plagiarism, whether in the form of using the words OR ideas of others without using APA documentation, will result in a *minimum* of a zero for the plagiarized work. I want you to learn to avoid unintentional plagiarism. Most students plagiarize without realizing that they are doing it in many cases, and we will strive to figure out how to be original and effective in your business writing and how to document your work correctly. If you have questions on what constitutes plagiarism, check out “Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures” in Chapter 14 of the UWSP Rights and Responsibilities document. By now in your education, you are responsible for the integrity of your work.
10. Another key component of integrity is a respect for deadlines. The expectation is that you will have worked through multiple drafts PRIOR to the due date and will be able to turn in superior work BY the due date. Due dates are not negotiable, unless prior permission is requested and granted in writing, a minimum of 24 hours before the due date. That means you must ask AND

receive permission at least 24 hours prior to the due date. Extensions will be at my discretion to grant or deny and will provide you with only an additional 48 hours (2 days) to submit the work without penalty. Without such an extension, late work is worth zero points. In order to avoid unexpected roadblocks, never print work the same day it is due or submit via D2L at the last hour. Technical problems and unexpected delays can happen to anyone at any time, and you need time to resolve them. There are usually not “do overs” on the job, and meeting due dates in a timely way will create positive impressions on others and give you a sense of confidence and competence (both very valuable on the job and in life). Also note the major projects (not including the homework/daily work category) must all be submitted in order to earn a passing grade in the course. Failure to complete major projects at work often lead to dismissal.

Consider your coursework to be practice for the job.

11. Equally important as meeting deadlines is the understanding that the work you present at the due date is the FINAL work. You will not be allowed to revise for a better grade. Revision and feedback from me and/or tutors in the tutoring center happen BEFORE the due date to allow for your best work to be produced BY the due date. I enjoy working with students one on one, so please take advantage of the opportunity to consult with the “boss” before points are at stake.
12. D2L and/or university email will be utilized for a number of purposes in the course. Please make sure to check for updates. Some work will be submitted via D2L; some will need to be printed and brought to class. The schedule will specify which method should be used. Grades will be recorded on D2L, but they will only be updated at approximately 2 week intervals. Sometimes it may be more frequently updated, but sometimes it may take longer. Remember that patience is a virtue.
13. Taking a class is the equivalent of “on the job training.” You are not expected to come into this course with world class skills in all the areas we will be covering. If you do have those skills, this is a lucky opportunity for you! You will have the chance to earn a high score without intense effort. And you will be a valuable asset to the groups you are a part of. However, for most people, it is normal and expected that your scores will start out lower than they will end up. You will learn, practice and hopefully perfect the skills that will enrich your business communications throughout your working life. Your success will hinge on your willingness to invest adequate time, try new things, process and follow instructions correctly, revise, and consult me or tutors. It may sound hokey, but my purpose in life (and one of the greatest joys in my life) involves helping people improve their communication skills and learn to have faith in themselves and their organizations. We can achieve these goals together. Let’s get started!