

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**  
**ENGL 100WB, Section 9, Business Writing**  
**Fall 2021**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Jody Ulate
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	Via Zoom: Thursdays, 1–2 p.m. and by appointment
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:15 to 3:30 p.m.
<b>Classroom:</b>	Engineering (ENG) 327
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	A3 or equivalent second semester composition course (with a grade of C- or better); Completion of core GE, satisfaction of Writing Skills Test and upper division standing. Assessment requirement (GWAR)
<b>GE/SJSU Studies Category:</b>	Written Communication II (Area Z)

### **Course Format**

This section of ENGL 100WB meets **in person twice a week** at the above days and times. The course requires access to a tablet, laptop or desktop computer and to the Internet. We use Canvas for course materials, activities, assignments and communication. You are responsible for regularly checking the Canvas course website, Canvas messages and your SJSU email. Your enrollment in the course guarantees your enrollment in our **Canvas course website**:  
<https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1433039>

*If you encounter technical difficulties, contact SJSU's eCampus technical support: 408-924-2337.*

### **Course Description**

This hands-on course is designed to simulate actual business communication scenarios (oral and written) that are encountered by business professionals *daily* during the course of their careers. Assignments will enable students to *practice* and *immediately apply* both practical and theoretical aspects of organizational communication directly in real-life work situations. Communication mechanics and style (practical), and the appropriateness of messages and methods based on specific organizational situations (theoretical) will be emphasized. NOTE: This written communications course for business majors includes a minimum of 8,000 words of writing over the length of the semester.

### **Course Goals and GE Learning Outcomes (GELo) for 100W**

Upon successful completion of this GE course, students will be able to:

- LO1:** Produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in language use, grammar, and clarity of expression;
- LO2:** Explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse;
- LO3:** Organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences;
- LO4:** Organize and develop essays and documents according to appropriate editorial and citation standards;
- LO5:** Locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing.

## **Additional Course Learning Outcomes for ENGL 100WB**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Create texts and make presentations that are appropriate for a variety of audiences and situations.
- Analyze organizational and rhetorical situations in business communications and employ appropriate strategies for communicating based on audience, purpose, and context.
- Identify and explain genres and written and visual conventions used in business communications.
- Participate in both intra-organizational communication as well as communications with others outside of the organization.
- Explain the role of ethics in business communications.
- Understand the role of collaboration in business communications.
- Use photos, illustrations and other tools as appropriate in business communication.
- Communicate complex data.
- Understand the basic principles for document layout and design.
- Adapt a text to meet the needs of varying audiences.

## **Expectations**

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

## **Required Texts, Readings, Materials**

MacRae, P. (2019). *Business and Professional Writing: A Basic Guide*. Peterborough, Canada: Broadview Press. (ISBN: 978-1554814718) \*Digital or e-books are fine.

**Other Readings and Materials:** Online readings, videos and podcasts will be posted in Canvas.

## **Highly Recommended (but Optional)**

- Grammar usage reference such as *The Everyday Writer* by Andrea A. Lunsford, 5th edition, Bedford St. Martin's, ISBN 978-1-4576-1266-4
- Dictionary AND Thesaurus
- Join Spartan Toastmasters <http://2113833.toastmastersclubs.org>

- Join a professional career development and/or networking organization

## Assignments

In this course, you'll be responsible for online and in-class assignments, five major out-of-class assignments, and a presentation. You'll also be completing drafts of work and participating in review of your peers' work. Detailed assignment descriptions and due dates are on the Canvas class website.

### Major Assignments

Professional Biography (400 words):	75 points
Correspondence Packet (1000 words):	125 points
Employment Documents (1000 words):	125 points
Promotional Materials (2600 words):	175 points
Elevator Pitch and Proposal Report (3000 words):	175 points
Final Report Presentation:	100 points
In-Class Exercises/Online Discussion Posts:	100 points (10, 10 points each)
Grammar Quiz:	50 points
Peer Reviews:	45 points (3, 15 points each)
Attendance	30 points (1 point per class)

### Assignment Submission

You will submit major assignments via Canvas. All work should be submitted on time, and you are responsible for ensuring that I receive work. To avoid a late penalty, submit your final major assignments by the due date and time. To get credit for in-class exercises and associated online discussion posts, you must be present in class. In general, in-class exercises may not be made up.

### Peer Reviews

For peer reviews, you should have a complete or almost-complete draft of the assignment. Peer reviews will take place during class times. If you do not bring drafts, you may still sit in on your review groups, but you will not receive points for that peer review workshop. I will not be taking up and commenting on drafts, though I will make sure you have a complete draft; your peers will truly be your colleagues in this respect. However, if you would like me to look over a draft and comment, you are welcome to meet with me during office hours or set up a time for Zoom chat.

### Final Evaluation

The final evaluation for this class has three parts. You will develop a 20-second elevator pitch video, a proposal report based on your elevator pitch, and then you will be responsible for adapting this report to be suitable for a 5- to 10-minute presentation. Presentations will be given during the final examination period, Date/Time TBD.

### Grading Information

The department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale defined in the SJSU Catalog ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C= average; D= below average; F = failure.

Per university policy, 100WB must be passed with a C or better to satisfy the SJSU graduation requirement.

### **1000 pts total**

A: 940 pts and above

A-: 939-900 pts

B+: 899-870 pts

B: 869-840 pts

B-: 839-800 pts

C+: 799-770 pts

**C: 769-740 pts > Meets the SJSU graduation requirement**

C-: 739-700 pts

D+: 699-670 pts

D: 669-640 pts

D-: 639-600pts

F: 599 and below is a failing grade

*It is your responsibility to check regularly throughout the semester for discrepancies between what you believe your grade to be and what I have official posted. Any concerns you have about your grade, including final grades, should be brought to my attention immediately and no later than seven days after a grade has been posted.*

### **Grading Criteria**

In your texts, I look at six major categories:

1. **Rhetorical/Contextual Awareness:** The criterion on which all others are judged. Students are expected to demonstrate a clear awareness of the rhetorical situation and the context into which they are writing. This includes a demonstrated awareness of purpose, audience, message, constraints (legal, ethical), power structures (hierarchy), etc. In all aspects of grading, awareness of rhetorical/contextual ideas will be most important. For example, a student may write a letter that uses several supporting sources. However, if the audience for that letter has reason to distrust those sources and thus would be not persuaded by them, then the student has not used appropriate support.
2. **Focus:** Students are expected to maintain a clear and specific focus in their texts, and that focus should be clear to the reader (in some cases, it is stated directly). All supporting details should adhere to this focus.
3. **Structure and Organization:** Students should structure and organize their texts appropriately. The appropriate structure and organization will depend on the type of text the student is creating and will sometimes be outlined by the assignment itself, or by the reading in the textbook.
4. **Development and Support:** Students should provide appropriate levels of development and support in their texts. Development simply means that there is an appropriate amount of detail for the rhetorical/contextual situation. For example, an average person may not need an explanation of the technical details of a new platform, but the UX designer for that new platform certainly would need those details. Support refers to backing up claims made in the text by using additional sources (i.e., not just asking someone to take your word for it). These sources could be anything from personal experience, photos or illustrations, to

academic articles—the type of sources you use will largely be determined by your audience and purpose.

5. **Style:** Students should maintain an appropriate style for their texts, based on the rhetorical and contextual situation. Style refers to the way something is written, presented or created. Sometimes you'll change or vary your style depending on your organization's style or your relationship with the audience. Style may also refer to the way you present the information. If you're going for a playful, informal style, you may include a meme in your presentation, whereas if that's not appropriate for your formal presentation, you may stick with graphs and charts.
6. **Formatting and Mechanics:** Though formatting and mechanics is the last grading criterion, students are still expected to use appropriate formatting and mechanics. Readers in professional environments will expect texts to look the way they are "supposed" to. For example, when you send a memo to your co-workers, they might be confused if it doesn't look like the memo. They may then throw it away, thinking it is just junk mail. Similarly, if you send a correspondence that is riddled with mechanical errors, a reader may become frustrated. Keep in mind, distracting mechanical errors are different than just a forgotten comma—these errors are consistent and often interrupt the flow of the text or impede the readers' ability to understand the text.

An "A" text is excellent. It demonstrates mastery of the skills for that unit and exceeds expectations in each of the six grading criterion.

A "B" range essay demonstrates competence in the same criteria as an "A" essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of these areas.

A "C" range essay will complete the requirements of the assignment, but it may show weakness in a few of the major criteria (or some weakness in criterion 1).

A "D" range essay will neglect to meet all the requirements of the assignment or will completely disregard the rhetorical/contextual situation (criterion 1).

An "F" range essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

## Classroom Policies

Over the course of your professional career, you will hone the communication skills you will learn in this class. My goal is that you complete the course feeling like a stronger writer, prepared for the many types of business scenarios and communications you'll encounter in the future.

**Attendance and participation:** Attending class and participating in all course activities is required. Our class materials and activities comprise a course of study in the *practice of business writing and communications*. I ask that you take seriously readings and assignments, the work of your peers, and your own work.

**Classroom conduct:** Be kind to each other. You are to treat the instructor and your classmates courteously and with respect. Keep in mind that we likely come from different backgrounds, honor different belief systems, have access to different tools, struggle with different concepts, and excel at different tasks and responsibilities. And that's okay. Sleeping, watching Netflix, checking Instagram, reading, working on assignments for another class, listening to music during class, etc., are not permitted.

**Your preferred name and how you identify:** Please let me know the name you go by so I will know to call you by that name. I also invite you to let me know the personal pronouns you use. I identify with the pronouns she, her and hers.

**Arranging late work:** In the event that extenuating circumstances prevent you from meeting a due date, send me an email up to 24 hours before an assignment comes due—*I must receive your message at least 24 hours in advance*. In your message, propose an alternative date that is no more than five working days from the official due date. Choose wisely. I will not accept work from you after the date you have set for yourself. Be aware that 1) late assignments will be given a 20% deduction from the final grade and 2) I may reject your proposal if I find that you routinely submit work late and are struggling to keep pace with the rest of the class.

**Questions about grades:** I recommend that you regularly check your progress in this course and contact me if you have any questions, especially if you find a discrepancy between the record on Canvas and what you believe your grade to be. Send me any questions that you have about a specific grade no later than seven days after I have posted grades on Canvas.

**Contacting the instructor:** I am always happy to arrange a time to speak with you about assignments, grades or anything else. To contact me, you may use Canvas email or the email address listed above. These are the best ways to reach me. Please use proper email netiquette, including using an informative subject line and a clear articulation of your question, comment or concern. I will do my best to respond to emails as soon as possible. Emails received after 5 p.m. may not be answered until the next day.

## **Written Communication and Information Literacy Assessment Fall 2021**

This semester SJSU is assessing written communication and information literacy skills of students pursuing undergraduate degrees. The assessment is used to evaluate effectiveness of our General Education and writing curricula. This class has been selected for collection of student sample work. I will select random samples of work from this class to provide to a team of assessment experts. The work will be anonymized and cannot be traced back to you. The assessment will be done after the semester is over and will not affect your grade. Please let me know if you prefer to have your work excluded from this process.

## **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information page: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

## **Student Resources and Support**

### **Jack Holland Student Success Center, Boccardo Business Center (BBC) 008**

All Lucas Graduate School and College of Business students and interested students are invited to use the center for general education advising, help with changing majors, academic policy related questions, meeting with peer advisors, and/or attending various regularly scheduled presentations and workshops. Call or email for an appointment: 408-924-3435, [jackholland-center@sjsu.edu](mailto:jackholland-center@sjsu.edu). You may also visit the center's website: [sjsu.edu/lcobssc](http://sjsu.edu/lcobssc)

## **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center in Clark Hall, Room 126 is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the nine SJSU colleges. The writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. More information available at [sjsu.edu/writingcenter](http://sjsu.edu/writingcenter).

## **Library Liaison**

Ms. Jane Dodge is your reference librarian. Her contact information is 408-808-2422 and [jane.dodge@sjsu.edu](mailto:jane.dodge@sjsu.edu). Bookmark the King Library website (<http://library.sjsu.edu/>) if you have not already. If Ms. Dodge is not available, use the Ask A Librarian feature (located at <http://library.sjsu.edu/ask-librarian-0>) to chat with an on-call reference librarian even when the library is closed. For immediate assistance with any research related question, call 1-408-808-2100 during business hours.

## **SJSU Learn Anywhere Website**

SJSU has a free equipment loan program available for students. For more information, please see the Learn Anywhere website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/learnanywhere/>

## ENGL 100WB, Section 9, Business Writing Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. If changes are necessary, I will notify you. Most classes will include some sort of individual or group work that may not be denoted on the schedule. Should you miss class, always consult with a classmate about what you have missed. Complete assignment details are available in weekly modules in Canvas.

Week	Date	Description	Assignments
1	8/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome and Course Introduction: Achieving Success Through Effective Business Communication</li> <li>Impromptu Speech: Formal Business Introduction</li> </ul>	Review Syllabus  Due: Student Information Questionnaire
	8/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of Major Assignment 1: Professional Biography: The Story of You</li> </ul>	Read: Indeed.com, "How to Introduce Yourself Professionally" and "Self-Introduction Tips and Tricks with Examples"  Due: Draft Professional Biography
2	8/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plain Language</li> <li>The Seven Cs of Good Professional Communication</li> </ul>	Read: McRae, Chapter 1, Plain Language, p. 25-31  Read: McRae, Chapter 2, The Seven Cs of Good Professional Communication, p. 33-59
	9/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spotlight on Grammar</li> </ul>	<i>Due: Major Assignment 1: Professional Biography</i>
3	9/6	<b>Labor Day: NO CLASS</b>	Read: McRae, Chapter 3, The Eighth C: Learning Grammar Language, p. 61-93  Watch: SJSU Writing Center's Common Grammar and Punctuation Errors Workshop
	9/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Editorial Style: Know Your Audience and Organizational Culture</li> <li>Introduction to Major Assignment 2: Correspondence Packet</li> </ul>	<i>Due: Grammar Quiz</i>
4	9/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correspondence</li> <li>Writing Routine and Positive Messages</li> </ul>	Read: Chapter 6, Formatting for Correspondence, p. 135-148

Week	Date	Description	Assignments
			Read: Chapter 7, Emails and Memos, p. 153-160  Read: Chapter 8, Letters: Good News, Neutral, and Bad News, p. 161-175
	9/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Negative Messages—and Delivering Bad News</li> </ul>	Due: Draft Recommendation Request Email and Draft Letter of Recommendation
5	9/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing Up and Following Up</li> </ul>	Listen to Podcast: How to Get More Feedback
	9/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requesting Feedback</li> </ul>	Due: Draft Request for Feedback  Due: Draft Project Summary Follow-up Email
6	9/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Major Assignment 3: Employment Documents</li> </ul>	Read: Chapter 10, Cover Letters, p. 195-206  Read: Chapter 11: Resumes, p. 209-227
	9/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guest Speaker: Career Center</li> </ul>	<i>Due: Major Assignment 2: Correspondence Packet</i>
7	10/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview: Peer Reviews</li> </ul>	Complete: Career Center's "Resume Hacks" LinkedIn Learning Collection
	10/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Review 1: In-class peer reviews for resumes and cover letters</li> </ul>	Due: Job Search and Draft Resume and Cover Letter  Due: Peer Review 1
8	10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revising: Synthesizing Feedback</li> </ul>	Work on Revising Your Resume and Cover Letter
	10/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing for Job Interviews</li> <li>• Thank You Messages</li> </ul>	Due: Draft Thank You Email
9	10/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Major Assignment 4: Promotional Materials</li> </ul>	Due: Practice Job Interview via Career Center's "Big Interview"
	10/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building a Communications Plan</li> </ul>	<i>Due: Major Assignment 3: Employment Documents</i>
10	10/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• News Releases</li> <li>• Writing for the Web and Social Media</li> </ul>	Read: Chapter 9, Persuasive Letters, p. 177-192

Week	Date	Description	Assignments
			Read: Chapter 12, News Releases, p. 231-241 Read: Chapter 14, Promotion on the Web, p. 251-258
	10/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing to Persuade, Part I</li> </ul>	Due: Draft Communications Plan
11	11/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing to Persuade, Part II</li> </ul>	Due: Draft News Release and Social Media Posts
	11/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer Review 2</li> </ul>	Due: Draft Web Page and Guest Blog  Due: Peer Review 2
12	11/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Major Assignment 5: Elevator Pitch and Proposal Report</li> </ul>	Work on Revising Promotional Materials
	11/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Your Idea</li> </ul>	<i>Due: Major Assignment 4: Promotional Materials</i>
13	11/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals and Reports</li> </ul>	Read: Chapter 17, Informal Reports, p. 285-306 Read: Chapter 18, Formal Reports, p. 309-344
	11/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Your Idea into an Elevator Pitch</li> </ul>	Watch: LinkedIn Learning Tutorial "Pitching Your Ideas Strategically"
14	11/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elevator Pitch Workshop</li> </ul>	Due: Draft Elevator Pitch Script
	11/24	<b>Non-Instructional Day: NO CLASS</b>	
15	11/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Major Assignment 6: Presenting Your Proposal</li> </ul>	Due: Draft Proposal
	12/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation Design Workshop</li> </ul>	
16	12/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Class Discussion</li> </ul>	<i>Due: Major Assignment 5: Elevator Pitch Video and Proposal Report</i>
Final	12/9:	Thursday, December 9, 12:15 to 2:30 p.m. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Presentations</li> <li>Peer Review 3</li> </ul>	<i>Due: Major Assignment 6: Presentation</i>  <i>Due: Peer Review 3</i>