



Fall 2016

Section 407A-1001
Days/Time Online
Place Online

Instructor XXXXXX
Office XXXXXX
E-mail Webcampus Mail
Phone XXXXXX
Office Hours XXXXXX

Description

English 407A aims to help you develop the skills you will need to write successfully in the workplace. The course introduces you to the rhetorical principles and compositional practices necessary for writing effective business letters, memos, and reports.

Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Identify conventions of business memos, letters, reports, and presentations
- Write to multiple audiences, for various purposes
- Plan and manage short- and long-term writing projects
- Draft, design, revise, and edit documents
- Design and implement appropriate research strategies
- Write collaboratively (e.g., co-authoring, peer editing)
- Follow and adjust to business writing conventions, including style and tone
- Design documents for both content and visual appeal
- Use writing to prepare and deliver oral presentations
- Write ethically and responsibly in business contexts

Prerequisites

- Completion of first-year composition requirement.
- Junior or senior status strongly recommended, but not required.

Required Materials

- *Business and Technical Writing* 6th ed. by Jeffrey Jablonski (2016)
 - Less expensive e-book versions can be purchased direct from publisher at <https://he.kendallhunt.com/jablonski>
- A UNLV ACE Computing account, to access UNLV public and teaching computer labs
 - See <http://oit.unlv.edu/accounts/ace-students>

Calculating Grades

Grades will be determined on a percentage basis. Major assignments will be graded on the standard letter-grade scale with plusses and minuses. Your overall grade and project grades are based on the following percentages:

A = 100 – 92 %
C+ = 79 – 78 %
D- = 61 – 60 %

A- = 91 – 90 %
C = 77 – 72 %
F = 0 %

B+ = 89 – 88 %
C- = 71 – 70 %

B = 87 – 82 %
D+ = 69 – 68 %

B- = 81 – 80 %
D = 67 – 62 %

Assignments

Assignments will be evaluated on the standard plus/minus letter-grade scale and total 100 points. Use the table above to track your performance in the class.

| Assignment | Components | Overall % | Points | Your Grade |
|------------------------------|--|-----------|--------|------------|
| Intro Memo | Memo | 5% | 5 | |
| Case Project | Case document | 10% | 10 | |
| Job Project | Cover letter Resume | 15% | 15 | |
| Report Project | Report Presentation | 15% 5% | 20 | |
| Assessments | 10 reading quizzes | 15% | 15 | |
| Drafts & Planning | Timely submission of drafts in preparation for peer editing; completion of planning assignments | 5% | 5 | |
| Peer Edits | Quality of feedback on student drafts | 10% | 10 | |
| Discussion | Quality of required and optional Webcampus participation. NOTE: Your Discussion grade is relative to overall student participation in the course. If you meet minimum requirements but someone else posts twice as much as you, that person will earn a higher discussion grade. | 10% | 10 | |
| Final Exam | Assessment | 10% | 10 | |
| | | 100% | 100 | |

Grading Criteria

The instructor will explain specific criteria for each major assignment. Generally, however, three overarching criteria of professional quality writing will be used to assess your written work:

- **Purpose: *How effectively does the document accomplish its intended task?*** The overarching aim of all business writing is to maintain and improve relations between people. Your documents will foremost be graded according to how well your documents: meet your goals and the demands of the writing situation; solve a problem or need; meet readers' needs; provide relevant, useful, and accurate information; and provide sound arguments in support of claims.
- **Product: *How well constructed is the document?*** Your documents will also be graded according to orderly and coherent presentation of material, professional tone, business style, page formatting, visual design, and correctness (mechanical issues of grammar, spelling, and punctuation).
- **Production: *How effectively was the document produced?*** Careful planning is required to produce professional quality writing. Your documents will be graded according to evidence of effective planning, collaboration, research, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. Your instructor will also assess how well you apply course principles and terminology in your documents and project assessments.

NOTE: Special Grading Policies

- You must submit for evaluation all project components listed above to pass the course.
- Late major assignments will be downgraded one letter grade per day late
- Computer problems, related to either PC malfunction or network access, are not a valid excuse for late work or incomplete assignments
- In group projects, students receive *separate grades* (poor participation can hurt your grade!)
- An act of plagiarism (or other form of academic/ethical dishonesty) will result in an F for the project and, if deliberate, for the course

Webcampus Policies

You are expected to know and adhere to the following guidelines for participating in this Distance Education course:

Your WebCampus responsibility: A significant portion of this course is taught in a WebCampus environment. That simply means that it is the same as a traditional course, only without face-to-face classroom interaction. As an instructor, it is my responsibility to deliver the same information as a traditional course, in such a manner that you will achieve the same learning outcomes as if you were in the traditional course. As a student, it is your responsibility to participate in the course as if you were enrolled in a traditional course. For you, that means **expect the same amount of work as a traditional course and expect to keep up with the workload**, including readings, projects, and deadlines. You should also expect to participate in the course by interacting with your instructor and fellow students via the WebCampus online environment. If you cannot meet your responsibility, if you are shopping for an easy online course, then I recommend you drop this course.

Electronic file submission format: All writing assignments must be submitted in an MS Word compatible format. Files with *.docx file extension are preferred. Apple, MS Works, or other non-MS Word compatible word processing programs will not be accepted.

Begin all documents with your last name. All files submitted in this course **must begin with your last name**. For example, if your name is "Jane Doe," and you were turning in the Introductory Memo assignment, you should name your file: "**doe_introductory_memo.docx**." If your name is Doe and you are reviewing Smith's draft, you should name the file "Doe_review_of_Smith_memo_draft.docx"

WebCampus mail versus the discussion tool: The Discussion tool of this course simulates "class time" in a traditional face-to-face classroom, so questions appropriate for a classroom setting should be posted to the discussion section. If you have a question about the homework, about the material, about when something is due, you are to post that question using the discussion tool where everyone can see it and anyone can answer it (see Figure 1). If another student in the class answers it before me, good for you and that student—you both will be rewarded for participating in class (see Figure 1 below; see also "Discussion" grade).

| Type of Question | Tool to Use |
|--|---------------------------|
| Assignment-related questions How to complete assignments, when assignments are due, etc. | WebCampus Discussion Tool |
| Personal questions Grades, performance in course, etc. | WebCampus E-mail Tool |

Figure 1: Discussion vs. Email. Use Email only for personal questions. All other questions about assignments in the course should be posted to the Discussion section in this course.

Use the Webcampus mail tool to contact the professor only for personal and private questions related to grades and your standing in the course. As I noted above, questions seeking clarification about assignments, including how to complete them and when they are due, should be posted to the discussion board. Questions seeking clarification about personal matters, such as grades, are appropriate for individual e-mails.

You may also from time to time be required to participate in a discussion about a particular concept, lesson, reading, etc. I will initiate the discussion and you'll take it from there. Like a traditional classroom, not everyone will have to "speak," or respond during the discussion, but if you consistently choose not to respond, then your participation grade will be lowered, just like a silent or unprepared student in a traditional class.

Response time: If you have questions for me, expect about a 1 day response time. Also, I may only occasionally check my WebCampus mail during the weekends, so expect that I will answer Friday or weekend questions on Monday.

Office hours: Webcampus mail is the best way to reach me. If you need to schedule an office visit, contact me via Webcampus mail to arrange a meeting time.

Late work: I will deduct a letter grade for each day an assignment is late.

Plagiarism, Academic Dishonesty, & Ethics

You must do your own original work in English 407A, and appropriately identify that portion of your work which is collaborative with others, or borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts. Whenever you borrow graphics, quote passages, or use ideas from others, you are legally and ethically obliged to acknowledge that use, following appropriate conventions for documenting sources.

If you have doubts about whether or not you are using your own or others' writing ethically and legally, ask your instructor. Follow this primary principle: *Be up front and honest* about what you are doing and about what you have contributed to a project.

UNLV Academic Misconduct Policy—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Act Professionally: In addition to following the basic principles of honesty and forthrightness in crediting the contribution of others to your work, you are expected to adhere to another basic professional principle: *treat others with the respect that you would wish them to grant you*. "Others" includes the people you work for and with (classmates, instructors, corporation, clients); the people you write to (audiences); and the people you write about.

Use of Samples: Caution!

This English 407A course includes numerous samples of the kinds of documents you will be writing in the course, including samples from previous English 407A students. It is important that you understand how to use these models in this class. Generally, your instructor will lead class discussions of samples, critiquing them to discern their strengths and weaknesses and generating from this discussion principles and tactics for business writing. You should then apply the principles and tactics you learn to your own projects.

Do not copy or apishly imitate the models! Why not? 1) Because direct copying from models could be plagiarism. 2) Because not all the models are samples of *good* writing; you could imitate a bad sample or an ineffective tactic. 3) Though most of the samples are generally good ones, they are not good in all respects: you need to develop the judgment necessary to discriminate between effective and ineffective tactics.

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves **with** and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Religious Holidays Policy

Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student's control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving "I" grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.

Rebelmail

By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Library

Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the subject librarian is https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject. UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students' access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.

Professional Writing Minor

In addition to a required course for most business majors, ENG 407A is also a requirement for the English department's Professional Writing Minor. If you feel your writing skills could be improved, or you are convinced by arguments made in this course about the importance of strong communication skills for succeeding in business, then you should consider completing the Professional Writing Minor, which includes ENG 407A, Business Writing or ENG 407B, Technical Writing; ENG 400, Document Design; ENG 406B, Electronic Documents and Publications; ENG 407C, Advanced Professional Communication; and three other 200-level or above English courses. For more on the minor see <http://english.unlv.edu/undergraduates/minors>.