

WRT 380: Professional Writing in International Contexts

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Credits:	3-Lecture/Discussion
Prerequisites:	WRT 150

Course Overview

This course will help students understand the theory, principles, and research of effective professional writing in international contexts. Students will research and write individually and collaboratively to address and solve communication problems typically encountered by international non-government organizations. Students will develop the research, writing, and communication skills to excel at creating professional grants, proposals, brochures, and other workplace documents for specific audiences and contexts.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- apply rhetorical principles of professional writing
- research the needs and opportunities of non-governmental organizations
- practice intercultural competence in an international context
- identify the generic requirements of selected international business documents
- participate in the collaborative planning and executing of a writing project
- determine how ethical issues influence professional writing

Sample List of Materials

- Selected chapters from
 - Paige, R.M. (2006). *Maximizing Study Abroad*. Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis.
 - Glover, J. (2015). *Transcultural competence: Navigating cultural differences in the global community*. Washington, DC: APA.
 - Johnson-Sheehan, R. (2008). *Writing proposals*. 2nd ed. New York: Pearson Education.
 - Locker, K. & Kienzler, D. (2015). *Business and administrative communication*. 11th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
 - Olu, W.E., Brusaw, C. T., & Alred, G. J. (2016). *Writing that works*. 12th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins.
 - Wolf, Joanna (2010). *Team writing: A guide to working in groups*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins.

- Additional short reading assignments (available by PDF).

SWS Credit

This course is designated SWS. Completion of WRT 150 with a grade of C or better (not C-) is a prerequisite. SWS credit will not be given to a student who completes this course before completing the prerequisite. SWS courses adhere to certain guidelines. Students turn in a total of at least 3000 words of writing. Part of that total may be essay exams, but a substantial amount of it is made up of essays, reports, or research papers. The instructor works with the students on revising drafts of papers, rather than simply grading the finished piece of writing. At least four hours of class time will be

devoted to writing instruction. At least one third of the final grade in the course is based on the writing assignments.

Since the content focus of this course is on writing, expect to write much more than 3,000 words and receive extensive instruction on writing. You will be provided with instruction on strategies for brainstorming and drafting, rhetorical dimensions of writing, style and word choice, as well as revision strategies. During each major writing assignment, you will be asked to complete and submit a draft for peer review feedback as well as instructor feedback. You are then expected to re-evaluate your draft and revise it for the final submitted version.

Assignments/Evaluation

Reading Assignments

Reading assignments will be essential to your progress because they are all related to theory, research, and writing of proposals and other professional documents. Therefore, you should plan on completing all reading assignments. Come to class prepared to discuss material or complete activities based it. You may be given short quizzes on reading assignments. Reading quizzes cannot be retaken if you are absent when they are administered.

Professionalism Expectations

Because regular attendance and punctuality, professional demeanor, deadline adherence, and satisfactory performance are required in the workplace, these behaviors are required to do well in this course.

Major Assignments

For each assignment, I will provide a description that outlines the expectations. These assignment descriptions will always be available on Blackboard. Please read them carefully and follow the guidelines. If you have any questions about an assignment, please schedule a time to meet with me.

Assignments are due at the start of class, so do not come without a final version. All work completed outside of class must be typed. Major assignments will be penalized one letter grade (from B to C) for every class period they are late. If you will be absent on the day an assignment is due, then your responsibility is to submit your assignment ahead of time. Please also be aware that assignments not submitted count as a zero, not an F. Finally, make sure you have a backup copy of all work before you turn it in to be graded.

Because teamwork is an essential part of today's international workplaces, at least one assignment will be completed in groups. Normally, each member of the group receives the same grade. Some of the group work may require you to meet together outside of class depending on your group's dedication and efficiency.

The major assignments for this course as well as percentages of your final grade of each assignment are outlined in the following table.

ASSIGNMENT	GRADE %
Professional Document Analysis	15
Funder Research Report	5
Team Proposal	20
Professional Writing Genre Fact Sheet	15
Professional Writing Genre Fact Sheet Presentation	10
Short Homework Assignments	10
Professionalism/Participation/Quizzes	15
Professional Writing Portfolio and Presentation	10

Professional Document Analysis

(1200-1400 words)

Students will select a professional document and write a detailed analysis of its audience, writer, purpose, context, and the rhetorical strategies it employs. In other words, students will explain in detail how the document functions and why it is/isn't effective given its professional contexts.

Funder Research Report

(500-600 words)

Students will conduct research on funding agencies and opportunities and compile their findings into a one-page designed research report.

Team Proposal

(3000-4000 words; roughly 1,000 words per student)

Teams will collaboratively write a proposal in response to an actual situation: a research opportunity in their academic field, a civic issue about which they feel strongly, or a problem faced by one of their team members at work. The team will investigate, select, and respond to an actual "request for proposals" issued by an agency. The proposal should follow the agency's guidelines with regard to formatting, vocabulary, and other criteria. Students will also write an individual memo that evaluates their team's proposal presentation performance after they review it online. The memo will also reflect on the team process for creating the proposal and presentation and evaluate individual team members.

Professional Writing Genre Fact Sheet

(800-1000 words)

Students will each select a different genre from professional writing. They will research the genre and then write a fact sheet on its conventions, how to create this genre, and how it functions in the workplace. These fact sheets will be kept on Blackboard in a repository so that students can draw on them once they begin their internships abroad and are asked to produce various professional workplace genres.

Professional Writing Genre Fact Sheet Presentation

(250-400 words)

Students will present their genre fact sheets in order to educate the rest of the class about a specific professional writing genre. Students will prepare a PowerPoint presentation to accompany the oral delivery.

Short Homework Assignments

(125-300 words)

Professional Writing Portfolio and Presentation

(300-400 words)

Students will assemble a portfolio of documents they created during an internship with an NGO by writing short pieces contextualizing the artifacts. They will deliver a presentation that reflects on the research and writing experience they gained.

Course Outline

- Week 1** Introductions. Discuss expectations. Introduction to research for nonprofits. Introduction to rhetoric and professional writing genres. Introduction to brainstorming and drafting strategies. Introduction to South Africa's history & culture. Introduction to team writing. Introduction to Professional Document Analysis.
- Week 2** Genre Fact Sheets student presentations. Go over Team Proposal assignment. Research workshop. Effective team writing strategies. Revision strategies. Editing process.
- Week 3** Introduction to Funder Research Report. Finalize Team Proposal. Travel abroad. Research & writing assistance as needed based on NGO work projects.
- Week 4** Travel abroad. Research & writing assistance as needed based on NGO work projects.
- Week 5** Travel abroad. Research & writing assistance as needed based on NGO work projects.
- Week 6** Prepare professional writing portfolios and presentations.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves using another author's work without giving accurate and due credit to that author. If you use the words, images, or research of another writer (including those of your classmates), document that material appropriately. You must thoroughly acquaint yourself with what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty by referring to your GVSU Student Code Booklet. Plagiarism is a serious legal and ethical breach, and it is treated as such by GVSU. According to section 223.02, I am required to turn in all cases of plagiarism to the Dean's Office. You will receive a zero for that particular assignment if found guilty. If you have any questions about documentation, please see me before you turn in an assignment.

Class Attendance

You are required to attend and be punctual. Regular attendance and active participation are important because they directly relate to your comprehension of material; to your ability to participate; and to your performance on quizzes, exercises, and assignments. Given the nature of the condensed class schedule and the traveling aboard component, students are not allowed to miss any class, except for a documented emergency.

Disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me to discuss your specific needs. Please also contact Disability Support Services at 616-331-2490 to coordinate reasonable accommodations. Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.

Inclusion Statement

Grand Valley does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a veteran. This class adheres to those guidelines. Alternative viewpoints

are welcome in the classroom. However, statements that are deemed racist, sexist, homophobic, classist, or otherwise discriminatory toward others in the class will not be tolerated.

Writing Center

The Fred Meijer Center for Writing, with locations at the Allendale and Pew/Downtown Grand Rapids campuses, is available to assist you with writing in any of your spring/summer classes. Writing consultants, who are fellow GVSU students, are trained to assist you with all stages of your writing process, from brainstorming to organizing to editing your papers. The Center's services are free and appointments are available, but not necessary. Simply bring a draft of your paper, the assignment sheet, and your questions/concerns about the writing to any of the Center's locations:

- Allendale, LOH 120, 331-2922, Mondays - Thursdays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., with appointments available between 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.
- Pew/Downtown Grand Rapids, Steelcase Knowledge Market, DeVos building A, Mondays - Wednesdays, 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. with appointments available between 2 p.m. - 4 p.m..
- Google Docs - Monday - Wednesday, 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Also, through your Gmail account, you have access to online consultations through Google Docs. From Monday-Wednesday between 8pm-10pm, students can share their papers through Google Docs and get real-time feedback on their drafts. Students taking online courses (or branch campus and hybrid courses) can submit their papers for feedback through email by filling out a [web form](#). Within 72 hours of submission, a consultant will respond to the draft with embedded comments and general feedback. For up-to-date information about hours and appointment availability as well as a variety of resources and links that may be useful for students, please visit the Writing Center website: <http://www.gvsu.edu/wc/>