

EH 240W: Business and Technical Writing

Spring 2008

KHIC 035

MWF 9 - 9:50 a.m. (Sec. 1) or 10 -10:50 a.m. (Sec. 2)

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Office Hours: MWF 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; other days and times by appt.

COURSE GOALS:

Communication plays a central role in the contemporary workplace. In this course you will learn to analyze and produce various kinds of business and technical communications from memos, through presentations, to promotional documents for both internal and external audiences. While we will review textbook advice about business and technical communications, much of your learning will come from your study of and service to specific organizations. This focus enables us to examine how organizations, through their cultures and communication practices, create an image for their members to both see and be. By individually and collaboratively producing a series of written, oral, and visual texts about and for an organization, you will gain crucial workplace communication skills in collaboration and rhetorical analysis/production (or the ability to adapt communications for specific audiences, purposes, and contexts). As a class, we will also examine issues about nonprofit organizations, technologies of communication, and business ethics.

In this service-learning version of EH 240W, you will extend your business and technical communication skills beyond the classroom into the world of community action as you think about writing as an instrument of social change. By conducting at least two site visits volunteering at a local nonprofit agency, you will learn about the nonprofit world and, specifically, gain knowledge and practical experience needed to manage philanthropic funding. By engaging in student philanthropy projects, you will learn how to be engaged citizens and to understand the important role philanthropy plays in the health of our communities, or our nation, and of the world. Your experiences onsite and in the classroom will provide a framework for the writing you do both for your community partner and for classroom assignments.

Service-learning courses (unlike field experiences or internships) ask students to do practical, onsite work with a community partner and to reflect on connections among your classroom work, onsite experience, and social issues related to your partner organization. (For more information about service learning at MUC, see <http://www2.muc.edu/Academics/service%5Flearning/>.) In your time onsite with your community partner, you will learn about contexts for writing that are different from the ones you've become familiar with in academic classrooms. And you will produce one or more pieces of writing that your community partner will be able to use (a brochure, a needs statement, a report, etc.). In your time in the classroom, you will not only work on business communication skills that will help you do your community writing, but you will also reflect on issues of public policy that help or hinder the work of your community partner.

To be successful in this course, you should have a schedule that is flexible enough to work with your community partner's needs. At the beginning of the course, we will all work together to match up every student in the class (in groups of four or five) with a community partner who would like to work with MUC students. Then it will be your responsibility to make initial contact with your partner, to arrange for

transportation to the site, and to write a contract that will outline the specific tasks you will complete as well as their deadlines.

Project Description: This class will participate in the Campus Connects Student Philanthropy Project, which grants funds to courses that challenge students to collaborate with each other and with nonprofit leaders. Students will:

- form student Community Boards (small work groups)
- identify a community need
- interact with people in the nonprofit sector (interviews, site visits, writing projects)
- respond to reflective questions
- issue and evaluate Requests for Funding Proposals (RFPs)
- engage in group decision-making to select one or more nonprofits able to meet the identified need
- present awards to funded agencies

This project addresses community needs in Northeast Ohio, specifically Canton and Alliance. 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND SUPPLIES:

Locker, Kitty O. Business and Administrative Communication. 7th Edition: McGraw-Hill, 2006.
(ISBN: 0-07-296446-4)

Readings on reserve

You will need:

A flash drive/memory stick

Paperclips or a stapler

To make copies of your papers for peer response

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Formal Writing Assignments: You will write five assignments individually (one ungraded) and two collaboratively. You will receive an assignment memo for each. See the course schedule for due dates.

Problem 1.6 (Introductory Memo)

Problem 2.7 (You-Attitude and Positive Emphasis)

Problem 7.23 (Announcement Memo—positive message)

Group Research Presentation of Community Partner (analysis of organizational culture and communication practices—collaborative)

Problem 9.30 (Performance Appraisals—persuasive and negative messages)

Fund-Raising Document(s) for Community Partner (collaborative)

Resume and Application Letter Assignment (job hunting)

Informal Writing Assignments: You will maintain an online journal about ethics in business communication. Five times this semester (out of ten opportunities), you will respond to a prompt posted to the class' Angel site (<http://angel.muc.edu>). (You'll receive a handout with instructions for reading and responding to prompts using Angel.) This prompt will often be an issue raised in BAC; therefore, be sure to have your textbook with you when you sit down at the computer to write. This is an online discussion, so you need to read your classmates' discussion postings prior to composing your own. Then you may choose to respond to my prompt directly, another student's posting, write about an unmentioned ethical issue that you would like to discuss, or even raise questions about any of the above to which you'd like your classmates to respond. Each posting should also help the class get a head start on discussion before

our Friday face-to-face class meetings. Postings should be at least one solid paragraph long (5-7 sentences). Each is worth 2 points; to earn 2 points you must not only make a claim, but also support that claim with evidence using specific examples. These **Angel discussion postings must be posted by 5 p.m. Wednesday night**, so we can all review them before Friday's class.

We always communicate to some audience (even ourselves); therefore, you will read and comment on your peers' work and receive comments on your own papers that will help direct you in the revising process. You are required to participate in peer response. You will also complete peer response worksheets (in and out of class) in response to other students' work. You will also be assigned short homework assignments, to be completed in and out of class.

Collaborative Assignments: You will complete two collaborative assignments: (1) a collaborative oral presentation to the class (the Group Research Presentation) and (2) a written assignment (Fund-Raising Document(s) for Community Partner). For these assignments, you will be evaluated based on not only the final product, but also your group process skills. You will evaluate your group member's contributions—and be evaluated—in Group Process Performance Appraisals (persuasive and negative messages). Furthermore, for the Fund-Raising Document(s) assignment, I will collaborate with your community partner to determine your grade.

Readings: You will have reading assignments throughout the semester from BAC and a few articles on reserve. We will not discuss all the material in each chapter. It's your responsibility to check your understanding against the questions at the beginning of the chapter and to ask questions in class about anything that seems unclear or incomplete. Read the example problems carefully; they'll help you with your writing assignments. You will also be given several timed in-class "Key Concepts" quizzes for chapters assigned that class period.

EVALUATION:

Your final grade in EH 240W will be based on the following four components.

<i>1) Individual Assignments</i>	50%
Problem 1.6 (Introductory Memo—ungraded)	0 points
Problem 2.7 (You-Attitude and Positive Emphasis)	20
Problem 7.23 (Announcement Memo)	100
Problem 9.30 (Performance Appraisals)	100
Resume and Application Letter	100
<i>2) Collaborative Assignments</i>	25%
Group Research Presentation	70 points
Fund-Raising Document(s) for Community Partner	100
<i>3) Groups Process Skills*</i>	15%
Peer Appraisal Grades	100 points
Self-Appraisal	0
Instructor Evaluation	100
<i>4) Informal Writing Assignments</i>	10%
Ethics Discussion Postings	10 points
Key Concepts Quizzes	50
Homework	10

*Your group process grade measures how helpful you are to other group members and how easy you are to work with. This grade will be partly based on the evaluations of other members of your group and partly on my evaluation.

The final grading scale will be:

	B+ = 87-90%	C+ = 77-80%	D+ = 67-70%
A = above 93%	B = 83-87%	C = 73-77%	D = 63-67%
A- = 90-93%	B- = 80-83%	C- = 70-73%	D- = 60-63%
			F = below 60%

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Attendance is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. You are expected to be on time and prepared for each class, community partner site visit, and individual conference with me. **There are no unexcused absences in this class, only those without penalty.** You may miss class up to five times without penalty. Lateness—arrival to class after I take attendance—is also absence; three tardies equals one absence. Each absence after five will result in the lowering of your final grade by one-third of a letter. (For example, a final grade of B- with six absences becomes a C+.) Eight absences will reduce your final grade by one full letter (e.g. B to C). Ten absences or more may result in automatic failure for the course. Enrolling in the course late (after the first day) does not make any absences “excused.” If you must miss class, you are responsible for materials presented in class during your absence. If you cannot attend class for any reason, you are responsible for finding out from a classmate what you missed; I do not give make-up lessons or repeat assignments. Missing class is no excuse for not turning in an assignment.

Two conferences with me are required this quarter—toward the beginning of the quarter and after mid-term—but you are always welcome to conference with me to discuss your work in progress or any aspect of the course.

Student Work must be complete and handed in on time. It is incredibly important to adhere to the due dates because each assignment builds on the previous one. Not completing assignments on time will prevent you from being able to effectively move forward on your projects; therefore, **late assignments will not be accepted** unless we have negotiated prior to the due date, genuine emergencies notwithstanding. **Hard copies of assignments are due at the start of class**; therefore, an assignment is late if it is turned in after the start of class on the due date. If it is turned in the following calendar day, it is two days late, and so on. Be responsible—prevent late work by starting early and prepare all printing/typing ahead (keep a spare ink cartridge for your printer). Computer/software incompatibility, not saving documents properly, and printer problems do not qualify as viable reasons for not handing in work on time. **You must submit each required draft to pass an assignment, and each draft must be complete.** I reserve the right to return drafts (without responding to them) that do not meet an assignment’s minimum standards (e.g. not proofread, not stapled, etc.) Retain all drafts of all your assignments, even after you’ve received a grade on them.

Plagiarism is the unauthorized use of the words or ideas of another person. Any paper with your name on it signifies that you are the author—that the words and ideas are yours, with exceptions indicated by quotation marks and citations. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with MUC codes of conduct, will be reported to the English department chair and then to the dean of the College. Plagiarism and/or any other form of cheating or dishonesty will subject the student involved to punitive action ranging from failure of an assignment, through failure of the course, to possible suspension or dismissal from the College. If you are having trouble with an assignment, please see me—don’t take the shortcut of plagiarism. The severe penalties outweigh any benefit you think you’ll receive.

Collaboration is an essential component of this class. You will be collaborating with your peers and a community partner. About 40% of your grade will be based on two collaborative assignments, including your performance as a group member and your evaluation of others in your group. Several hours of class time are reserved for group meetings. Each group will probably need to meet another 10-12 hours outside class, in addition to the time that individuals spend reading, thinking, researching, writing, and revising. Be a responsible group member. **Contact someone in your group in advance if you must miss class or a group meeting. And contact your community partner well in advance if you must miss a site visit.**

ADDITIONAL POLICIES:

- *Always bring assignments, books/readings, and any other necessary materials to class.
- *Word process all formal writing assignment drafts.
- *Arrive to class prepared to participate actively in class activities.
- *Please do not check e-mail, surf the Internet, etc. during class. We convene in a computer classroom, not a lab. Neither eating nor drinking is allowed in the computer classroom.

RESOURCES:

Please feel free to ask **me** for help outside of class. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, difficulties, concerns, or confusions, please let me know. You may leave me a note in my mailbox, send me an email, call me, or see me during my office hours or by appointment. I am available during my office hours to discuss your writing and/or the course, so please feel free to stop by. If you have a scheduling conflict with my office hours, I am available to set up individual appointments at a mutually convenient time.

Located in room 233 of the KHIC, the **Writing Center** offers tutorial assistance to MUC students across disciplines, academic levels, and abilities. Staffed by peer tutors, it provides responsive support adaptable to the needs of most student writers. The Writing Center can help student writers in any stage of the writing process, anywhere from thinking about an assignment to editing and proofreading a paper. Schedule an appointment online (<http://raider.muc.edu/owl/webpage/>) or call 823-3560.

Disability Support Services (DSS) offers a variety of services and accommodations to students with disabilities based on appropriate documentation, nature of disability, and academic need. In order to initiate services, students should meet with the Director of DSS at the start of the semester to discuss reasonable accommodation. If a student does not request accommodation or provide documentation, the faculty member is under no obligation to provide accommodations. You may contact the Director of DSS at ext. 7372 or through e-mail at saracuka@muc.edu.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

All readings and assignments are due on the day listed. This schedule is subject to change, often upon student request. If so, you will be notified at least one class period in advance. ***Remember that Angel ethics discussion postings are due Wednesdays by 5 p.m. (see page 2).***

Week	Dates	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
1 Introductions	Jan. 14 - 18	Introductions; Course overview; Discussion of experiences in groups	BAC Chapter 1	Intro to Problem 1.6; Prep for ethics postings
2 Rhetorical Strategy and Audience Analysis	Jan. 21-25	NO CLASS-MLK Holiday	BAC Chapter 2 <i>Homework due:</i> Problem B.1 (Appendix B) <i>First Angel Ethics Posting due 5 p.m. (optional)—Social Responsibility</i>	You-attitude <i>Assignment due:</i> Problem 1.6 (Intro Memo)
3 Building Goodwill	Jan. 28 – Feb. 1	Positive emphasis	Practicing YA and PE (prep for Problem 2.7) <i>Homework due:</i> Problem 2.6 <i>Angel Posting—Ethics of PE</i>	Tone, power, and politeness; Reducing bias <i>Assignment due:</i> Problem 2.7
4 Organizational Culture	Feb. 4 - 8	BAC Chapter 3	Reader Benefits <i>Angel Posting—Ethics of Image</i>	BAC Chapters 5 and 7; Intro to Prob. 7.23
5 Informative and Positive Messages	Feb. 11 - 15	Drafting Problem 7.23	Reader Benefits for 7.23 <i>Homework due:</i> Problem 3.8 <i>Angel Posting—Changing an Organization's Culture</i>	Peer Response Workshop; Intro to Collaborative Assignments <i>Assignment due:</i> Draft of Problem 7.23 (Announcement Memo)
6 Working in Collaboration	Feb. 18 - 22	Researching and Serving an Organization;	BAC Chapters 11 and 12; Conflict resolution	Group work; Individual conferences to

		Group/Partner Assignments <i>Reading due: TBA (on reserve)</i> <i>Assignment due:</i> Revised draft of 7.23	<i>Homework due:</i> Problem 4.8 <i>Assignment due: E-mail group members your revised Problem 1.6 (Intro Memo)</i>	discuss 7.23
7 Styles and Formats/Oral Presentations	Feb. 25 - 29	Group work; Individual conferences to discuss 7.23	BAC Chapter 4 <i>Bring to class revised draft of 7.23 for editing workshop</i> <i>Homework due:</i> Problem 4.14	BAC Chapter 16
8 Visual Rhetoric	Mar. 3 - 7	Group work <i>Assignment due:</i> Final of Problem 7.23	BAC Chapters 6 and 15 <i>Homework due: B.4 Angel Posting— Ethics of Document Design</i>	Group work <i>Due: Service-Learning Contracts</i>
9 Spring Break	Mar. 10 - 14	NO CLASS	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
10 Negative and Persuasive Messages	Mar. 17 - 21	Performance Appraisals BAC Chapters 8 and 9 <i>Homework due:</i> Problem B.8 <i>Angel Posting— Ethics in Performance Appraisals</i>	Group Research Presentations Groups 1 and 2; Peer response	NO CLASS— Good Friday
11 Group Process; Fund-Raising Messages	Mar. 24 - 28	Group Research Presentations Groups 3 and 4; Peer response	Group process day <i>In-class assignment:</i> Problem (12.20) <i>Homework due:</i> Problem B.13 <i>Angel Posting— Ethics in Direct Mail</i>	Service Reflection and RFP Overview <i>Assignment due:</i> Drafts of Problem 9.30 (Mid-Term Performance Appraisals)

12 Fund-Raising Projects	Mar. 31 - Apr. 4	Fund-Raising Document Strategies BAC Chapter 10	Group work/Conferences <i>Homework due:</i> Problem B.9 <i>Angel Posting—</i> <i>Emotional Appeal</i> <i>in Direct Mail</i>	Peer Response Workshop <i>Assignment due:</i> Drafts of Fund- Raising Projects
13 Job Hunting	Apr. 7 - 11	BAC Chs 17 and 18; Intro to Resume and Application Letter assignment	Drafting resumes and application letters <i>Homework due:</i> Problem 4.10 <i>Angel Posting—</i> <i>Ethics in Resumes</i>	BAC Chapter 19
14 Usability Testing	Apr. 14 - 18	Peer Response Workshop <i>Assignment due:</i> Draft of Resume and Application Letter assignment	Group work <i>Angel Posting—</i> <i>Making Ethical</i> <i>Choices</i>	Peer Response Workshop <i>Assignment due:</i> Revised drafts of Fund-Raising Documents
15 Reflection	Apr. 21 - 25	Vote for funding awards/group work	<i>Homework due:</i> Problem B.15 (letter b) Group work/conferences <i>Bonus Angel</i> <i>Posting--</i> <i>Philanthropy</i>	Service Reflection <i>Assignment due:</i> Final Resume and Application Letter (including job ad and first draft)
16	Apr. 28 - May 2	Last Day of Class Course wrap-up and evaluations <i>Assignment due:</i> Revised drafts of Fund-Raising Documents (including reflective memo and all previous drafts)		FINAL EXAM PERIOD (Sec. 1) 8 – 11 a.m. <i>In-class</i> <i>assignment:</i> Self- Appraisal; Make-up quiz opportunity; Campus Connects Student Online Survey <i>Assignment due:</i> Problem 9.30 (Final Performance Appraisals—two hard copies with grades)

17	May 5 - May 9	FINAL EXAM PERIOD (Sec. 2) 8 – 11 a.m. <i>In-class assignment:</i> Self-Appraisal; Make- up quiz opportunity; Campus Connects Student Online Survey <i>Assignment due:</i> Problem 9.30 (Final Performance Appraisals—two hard copies with grades)		