

FA 289 Business Writing and Internet Communications
Loop Campus -- Winter 2008-2009
55 East Jackson, Room
Mondays, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., January 15, 2008 through March 17, 2008

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Course Description

This course will give students a solid foundation for communicating successfully in all business writing formats and environments – business-to-business, business-to-consumers, in-house communications, and e-mail. Students will study grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, style, format, and tone. Classes will combine lecture, class discussion, and individual and small group writing projects.

About the Instructor

Nationally syndicated columnist Lindsey Novak helps employees and employers solve a wide range of work-related problems through her *At Work* column. Novak began her weekly workplace column in the *Chicago Tribune* in 1992. After its established popularity, her column was nationally syndicated in 1995. You may read her columns at <http://www.creators.com/lifestylesfeatures.html>.

Lindsey Novak is a graduate of Northwestern University with a degree in communications, and is a 2004 recipient of the Northwestern University Alumni Merit Award for Lifetime Achievement. She also served on a curriculum advisory board for Northwestern University's Division of Continuing Studies, and has taught various writing courses at Harold Washington College, Columbia2 of Columbia College, the Cooking & Hospitality Institute of Chicago, and the Illinois Institute of Art. Novak was featured in *Angels in the Workplace* (Giovagnoli, M., Jossey-Bass, California, 1998), and was chosen as one of Chicago's "100 Women Making a Difference" by *Today's Chicago Woman* 2000 annual poll.

Competencies Offered

BA-99	Pre-99	Competence Statement
H-2-G	HC-D	Can evaluate the role and impact of mass media or information technology on society.
S-3-F	HC-C	Can analyze the integration of new technology into a specific field of human endeavor from at least two perspectives.
F-X	WW	Written by student and reviewed by the instructor.

The Learning Experience

Each class will include lecture with class discussion, individual and group writing exercises, knowledge reviews, and outside writing projects. Good writing is the culmination of a solid foundation of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, organization, and creative thinking. Each class will build skills progressively, so attendance and participation is critical to the learning process. Students will learn the fundamentals of writing, editing techniques, style, and formats for all business writing.

Attendance and Participation

Regular attendance is important, and timely arrivals are appreciated. Your final grade will be based on outside writing projects and in-class writing exercises. Students who anticipate missing more than two classes should make special arrangements with the instructor or drop the course. It is up to the student to make up the writing exercises and secure class notes from another classmate.

Weekly Work Load

Everyone learns at his or her own pace, but you will get out of the class what you put into it. Creative writing is a talent; but business writing is a skill everyone can learn. Anticipate spending approximately 2 hours per week on required readings and writing assignments.

Textbooks

These books are available online through BarnesNoble.com and Amazon.com.

Required: Strunk, Jr., William and White, E.B. *The Elements of Style*. Fourth Edition, Longman Publishers 2000. (This is a short, easy-to-use reference book. Any edition is acceptable.)

Required: Cook, Claire Kehrwald. *Line by Line – How to Edit Your Own Writing*. Modern Language Association. This is an excellent book for those who wish to perfect their writing skills.

Standards and Criteria

In-Class Writing Exercises – Students will work on individual and small group writing exercises in each class.

You will be expected to demonstrate the following:

1. Ability to incorporate the information shared from lectures, experienced in the in-class writing workshops, and learned from the required readings.
2. Students will use correct grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. The work product must communicate ideas clearly, effectively, and logically, using the correct styles and tones to achieve the goals.

One outside writing project is required for each competency. Each project should be at least 4 pages, double-spaced. Projects will be evaluated based on the following areas:

1. **Content:** All papers must communicate effectively, using realistic scenarios to influence readers. Some projects may require product research.
2. **Organization:** Clear and logical development of information presented.
3. **Grammar, Punctuation, and Sentence Structure:**
4. **Style and Tone:** Correct choice of style and tone to successfully communicate purpose of document, and accurate proofreading.

Students will create their own outside project ideas. Here are some suggestions:

- A 20-minute speech (Speech to be handed in, but can be presented in the class.)
- Technical writing – Instruction sheets or manual describing a product or system and how to use it.
- Sales letters to clients/customers.
- A writing portfolio must contain various types of business letters, reports, press releases, features, and other writing samples. (This portfolio will be useful to students pursuing writing positions.)
- A job search packet: 1. one or two-page resume; 2. cover letter targeting a company that is **not** advertising a job; 3. cover letter for an advertised job; 3. after-interview thank you letter; 4. letter to former boss asking for a reference; and 5. resignation letter.
- A formal business proposal or grant.
- A public relations campaign for a nonprofit or for-profit organization. The PR campaign should consist of a 1) fact sheet; 2) a press/news release for various types of media; and a feature article about the organization and the event.

Grading and Evaluation

Participation	10 points
In-Class Writing Assignments	50 points
Outside Writing Project:	40-80 points
(One competency)	40 points)
(Two competencies)	80 points)

TOTAL: 100 points for students taking one competency; 140 points for students taking two competencies.

Policy on the Issuing of Incomplete (IN) Grades

The grade of Incomplete (IN) will be issued only in the case of exceptional circumstances that prevent the student from completing required coursework within the time frame of the quarter. Students who want the grade of IN to be issued must make a formal request by no later than the final class, using the SNL Request Form for IN Grades (the instructor will provide the form). This request will specify the final deadline by which the student may submit outstanding coursework for evaluation. In no case will this deadline be later than. Work submitted after the established deadline will not be evaluated, and the grade for enrolled competencies will be changed to an F. There will be no exceptions to this policy, and no justifiable basis for grade appeal.

Policy on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Students are expected to adhere to DePaul University's policy regarding academic integrity and plagiarism. As stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin, this policy is as follows:

Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.

Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement.

Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.

The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement. Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter.

If an instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion. Actions taken by the instructor do not preclude the College or the University taking further punitive action, including dismissal from the University.

BUSINESS WRITING AND INTERNET COMMUNICATION

Class Schedule*

* Subject to change

Date	Topics to be discussed	Assignments	Reading due on date of class
1/15	Course Introduction; syllabus review; Discuss textbooks, writing styles, and writing projects.	Diagnostic writing exercise	<i>The Elements of Style</i> : Foreward to p. 33; Read the remaining pages at own pace.
1/22	Writing Styles: The Elements of Style – Elementary Rules of Usage and Punctuation	Punctuation review <u>For next week:</u> Bring in examples of articles needing editing.	<i>Line by Line</i> – Chapters 2, 3 and 5 – read and study at own pace week to week (all pertaining to grammar);
1/29	Editing—journalistic style	In-class editing exercises; deleting redundancies	<i>Line by Line</i> – Preface, Introduction, Chapter 1- Loose, Baggy Sentences
2/5	Letters and memos: Differences in organization, style, and tone; How to deliver good/bad/neutral news	In-class writing exercises	Handouts Turn in draft of outside writing project.
2/12	Persuasive writing: proposals, grants, sales letters	In-class writing exercise	Handouts Draft returned
2/19	Resumes, cover letters	In-class writing exercises	Handouts
2/26	Technical writing: Process and Reports	In-class writing exercise	Handouts
3/5	E-mail communication	In-class email exercise with partners	
3/12	Public Relations	In-class writing exercises – press releases, headlines, features	Projects Due
3/19	Business Communications Review	Student's choice	Projecs returned

Assignments may change according to students' fields of practice.