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### **Catalog Course Description**

An introduction to the standards of business professionalism which focuses on the development of skills such as the development of interpersonal relationships, collaboration, time management, and professional communication (written and oral). Additionally, career planning and management will be addressed.

### **Prerequisites**

ENGL 101 English Composition and COMM 207 Speech Communication. This is a required course for all business majors.

### **Textbook**

A textbook is not required for this course.

### **Class Attendance and Participation**

Attendance and participation are mandatory.

### **Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes**

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

- Communicate effectively and professionally in business situations through writing, speaking, and listening.
- Construct a career development plan (roadmap) that outlines a path to a chosen career by delineating the skills required for the type of job, recognizing individual skill strengths and gaps, and identify activities that can be used to acquire the skills associated with the gaps.
- Demonstrate the skills needed to create, format and tailor a professional cover letter and resume.
- Demonstrate understanding of behavioral interview process by preparing interview questions and participating in practice behavioral interviews.
- Understand how to get a successful start in a job by demonstrating awareness of behavioral norms within a business in relationship to time management, communication, appearance, business etiquette, ethics, and day-to-day business functions.

### **Writing to Learn Statement of Intent**

This is a Writing to Learn course. In this course, you will write a minimum of 7 pages of professional writing. The course is intended to guide you through the process of creating formal business documents, including memos, letters, resumes, executive summaries, and position papers. All professional writing portfolio assignments (WL) are listed in this syllabus, along with the due dates and instructions. Grading rubrics for each (WL) assignment will be available on Canvas.

In order to pass this course, you must not only earn an average passing grade on course assignments but also on the professional writing portfolio assignments (WL).

## Philosophy of Writing

Effective written communication is essential in building business relationships with internal and external stakeholders. Clear messages help build trust and integrity between the writer and the reader. Well-written communication helps define goals, analyze problems and arrive at solutions.

If/when you use sources in your writing, you are required to give credit for the words or ideas of others by documenting your sources, using the APA style of documentation.

## Teaching Methods

In this course we will utilize a combination of direct instruction, collaborative learning, and independent analysis to create opportunities for an increased understanding of business communication and professionalism. Assignments will include, but are not limited to emails, letters, memos, reports, mock interviews, presentations and experiential learning.

Feedback on your professional writing will be shared in Canvas through comments on the rubric and/or assignment.

## Course Evaluation

Grades will be based on the following:

Professional Writing Portfolio (WL)	45%
Other Assignments	35%
Participation and Professionalism	20%

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A = 900 - 1000 points
B = 800 - 899 points
C = 700 - 799 points
D = 600 - 699 points
F = below 600 points

This is a Writing to Learn (WL) course, if you do not earn an average passing grade on the Professional Writing Portfolio assignments, you cannot pass this course.

## Course Schedule

	Date	Topic/Reading	Assignments Due by 11:59 p.m. unless noted
1	August 22	Course Introduction	
	August 24	Course Introduction	Student Introductions Due
2	August 29	First Impressions	
	August 31	Business Letter- Written Communication	
3	Sept 5	<b>Labor Day</b>	
	Sept 7	Professional Attire	<b>Self-Assessment Due (WL)</b>
4	Sept 12	Professional Email	
	Sept 14	Social Media	Professional Attire Assignment Due
5	Sept 19	Social Media & Memorandums	
	Sept 21	Time Management	<b>Discipline Assessment Due (WL)</b>
6	Sept 26	No Class- attend the Etiquette Dinner	Attend the Etiquette Dinner
	Sept 28	Networking	
7	October 3	Career Services Overview	
	October 5	Job Package	LinkedIn Assignment Due
8	October 10	Job Package Exchange	Printed copy of your Job Package- <b>bring to class</b>
	October 12	Interviewing	<b>Final Job Package Due (WL)</b>
9	October 17	Interviewing/Career Fair Prep	<b>Company Analysis Due (WL)</b>
	October 19	No Class- attend Career Fair	Attend Fall Career Fair (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
10	October 24	Business Reports	
	<b>October 26</b>	Business Reports	Career Fair Assignment Due
11	October 31	Group Presentations- Assign Groups/Topics	
	November 2	Group Presentations- Research	Agreement of Responsibility Due <b>bring to class</b>
12	November 7	Group Presentations- Prep	
	November 9	Group Presentations- Rehearsals	
13	November 14	Group Presentations	In Class Group Presentations
	November 16	Human Resources	Group Presentations Evaluations Due
14	November 21	<b>Thanksgiving</b>	
	November 23	<b>Thanksgiving</b>	
15	November 28	Gap Analysis	
	November 30	Work Place Ethics	Big Interview Due
16	December 5	Leadership (Dead Week)	
	December 7	Wrap Up (Dead Week)	
17	December 12	Last Day of Class	<b>Final Due- Gap Analysis (WL)</b>

All assignments are due by **11:59 p.m.** on the day listed unless otherwise noted.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED AND WILL RESULT IN 0 POINTS.**

## PROFESSIONAL WRITING PORTFOLIO ASSIGNMENTS (WL) - 450 POINTS TOTAL

Each section of your portfolio must be grammatically correct, free of typos and spelling errors, and properly punctuated. Writing style must be professional, using proper language (no slang) and free of wordy or meaningless expressions whose only contribution is to add to the word count. Word counts must be within the listed ranges and will be checked.

- **Self-Assessment (WL) – 50 Points** *Due Wednesday, September 7*

Write a professional business letter to the instructor of your course that provides an assessment of your **interests, abilities, and values**.

- Clearly comment on *each* of the three topics.
- The abilities portion must support your claims to any skills or talents with concrete evidence of why you can make such a claim by *giving at least* one example of something that you have done that demonstrates what you claim. More than one example is good. It must be clear why your example links to your claim. For example, if your assessment is that you are creative, it must be clear from your supporting example that creativity was involved. Examples may be drawn from employment experiences, hobbies, school, community service, or life in your home.
- Letter should be written in full block style, saved as a PDF and submitted electronically through Canvas.

For additional information regarding the format, content and style of a business letter, please see:

<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/writing-business-letters>

Word Count: 500-1000

- **Discipline Assessment (WL) – 50 Points** *Due Wednesday, September 21*

Write a business memorandum to your peers that provides an assessment of at least TWO different disciplines or fields you are interested in pursuing after college.

- The fields you choose should be ones that align with the skills and talents in your self-assessment.
- Save as a PDF and submit electronically through Canvas.

For information regarding the format, content and style of a memorandum, please see:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/technicalwriting/chapter/memos/>

Word Count 500-1000

- **Company Analysis (WL) – 50 Points** *Due Monday, October 17*

Write an informal informational report that summarizes research you perform on TWO companies, institutions, or agencies that are scheduled to attend the Fall Career Fair. Preferably the companies will align with one of the fields that you chose in your discipline assessment.

- Give the name of the company or entity and a profile of its major products or function
- Indicate the size of the organization, and its geographic reach
- Explain why you chose this particular company
- If you use quoted text, including text that is cut and pasted from a website, you must correctly cite the source. Quoted text does not count towards your word count.
- Save as a PDF and submit electronically through Canvas
  - Include the following 3 sections (use headings):
    - Introduction or Background- “the why”

- Support or Reasons- “facts, findings & data”
- Summary

Word Count: 750-1250

• **Job Package (WL)- 200 Points Total**

***Due Wednesday, October 12***

a) The Ad - 10 points

- Find an advertisement for a job or internship you would like to have, and are qualified for now or will be qualified for upon graduation.
- This should be a career-oriented position or internship.
- You will use this ad as the basis for your cover letter and resume.
- The ad you choose will need to be printed and turned in with your job package.
- Do not turn in weblinks. If your ad is not available to be printed, you will need to re-type and format the ad onto a Word Doc or PDF.

b) Cover Letter - 70 points

Create a cover letter to apply for the job advertisement you chose. Use full block style. Review the business letter assignment for guidance on formatting.

Word Count: 250-375; One page.

c) Resume - 100 points

Create a resume based on the ad you chose to summarize the qualifications, skills and experience you have to offer a potential employer. The resume should be:

- Accomplishment-oriented
- Brief and easy to read
- Comprised of concise action phrases (rather than complete sentences)
- Devoid of personal pronouns
- Well-organized with headings and presentation that encourage the reader's attention
- Balanced with the use of blank space and margins
- Limited to that information which is pertinent to the desired employment

The PSU Career Services office is available to help you with format, content and style.

Your resume should be one full page in length.

d) References - 20 points

Identify three individuals who would provide positive professional recommendations for you.

- Include their name, title, company, address, telephone number, email address, and relationship to you.
- References should not be immediate family.

*This assignment needs to be printed and turned in to the professor.*

- **Gap Analysis-Final (WL) – 100 Points**

*Due Monday, December 12*

The Gap Analysis is a critical part of your (WL) portfolio and will be graded on thoughtfulness, thoroughness, practicality, and specificity. **This will count as your FINAL for this class.**

Write an *Informal Analytical Report* of how you will continue to prepare yourself to succeed within your chosen career field. Your analysis should be based on information previously gathered in your professional writing portfolio assignments that define the characteristics important to success within the field. Indicate the qualities that you are trying to acquire or demonstrate that an employer would find valuable in a future employee. (This assignment is **NOT** a summary of skills and qualities you have already mastered.) Indicate how your future choices of coursework, continuing education and/or other activities can prepare you to meet these expectations. For example, employers might seek candidates with the following:

- Leadership experience, community involvement, campus involvement
- Problem solving skills, teamwork skills
- High energy level, personal discipline, initiative
- Demonstrated interest in, knowledge of, and involvement in the field
- Writing skills, speaking and presentation skills, interpersonal skills
- Sales skills, creativity
- Critical thinking skills (the ability to analyze situations and create strategy or solve problems)
- Ability to complete tasks and deliver results

This is only a partial list of suggestions. Your answer could include things like:

- Summer internships, work study, observation hours
- Join a campus or professional club
- Work or volunteer for a community organization
- Lead a campus project, tutor other students
- Get a job that will give you experience in your chosen field
- Attend career fairs and career services training
- Attend lectures by prominent guests of the university

Identify **at least 3 steps** you can take to be better prepared. **Be specific.** Do not just say “join a club”. Which club? Why that club? What companies will you target for an internship? What specific steps will you take to get an internship? When will you launch your search? How will you proceed on your search (use Career Services, etc.)? What networking tactics can you use? Explain how what you propose fulfills a specific need. **Indicate your planned timing.**

Your *Informal Analytical Report* should include the following four sections.

### **Introduction or Background, Recommendations, Support or Reasons, Conclusion or Summary**

This short section wraps up the report and gives a quick summary of the information provided therein. Your assignment should be saved as a PDF and uploaded to Canvas.

Word Count: 1000-1500

## OTHER ASSIGNMENTS- 350 POINTS TOTAL

### Professional Attire Assignment (25 pts.)

*Due Wednesday, September 14*

- For this assignment you will explain your plan for acquiring professional clothing suitable for wearing to the Fall Career Day, Etiquette Dinner, and your Big Interview.
- Detail what your attire will consist of AND how you will acquire it. Be very specific.
- Send this as a professional email to your professor. [hkent@pittstate.edu](mailto:hkent@pittstate.edu)
- Do not send through Canvas. Send directly from your Pitt State email account.

### Etiquette Dinner Assignment (25 pts.)

*Due Wednesday, September 28*

- Write a professional handwritten thank you note to the host of the etiquette dinner. You will turn these notes into me so that I can mail them.

### Career Fair Assignment (25 pts. + attendance points)

*Due Wednesday, October 26*

- There is no regularly scheduled class on Wednesday, March 23. Instead you are **required** to attend the PSU Spring Career Day on Thursday, March 24, sometime between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The event will be in the Overman Student Center. Please plan to dress in your business professional attire.
- You are encouraged to introduce yourself and visit with the employers (they want to meet you). Take a few copies of your resume in a padfolio.
- To earn attendance points for class and this assignment you will need to send a business email to me, [hkent@pittstate.edu](mailto:hkent@pittstate.edu), with the following:
  - If you had to make a recommendation to a student preparing for a career fair in the fall, what three things would you share that you learned through your experience? Pay close attention to the physical space and people (both recruiters and students). What did you learn by observing their appearance, posture, body language, etc.?
  - Attach a full-length picture of yourself dressed in business professional attire at the career fair. The photo should clearly show your attire and your physical presence at the fair.

### LinkedIn Assignment (50 pts.)

*Due Wednesday, October 5*

- Create a LinkedIn Account using the \*LinkedIn Profile Checklist\*
- Photo, Headline and Summary are **required** as well as 3 of the remaining 9 areas.
- Your photo (head and shoulders only) should be recent and closely represent what you currently look like.
- Follow the group Gladys A. Kelce College of Business and at least two other organizations.
- Connect with at least 10 other users.
- Add me to your “network” so that I can grade the assignment.

### Group Presentations (100 pts.)

*Monday, November 14 - in class*

- Groups and topics will be assigned by the professor. More details to come.

### Big Interview Assignment (75 pts.)

*Due Wednesday, November 30*

- Big Interview is an online system that combines training AND practice to help improve your interview technique and build your confidence.
- This assignment will require that you have a webcam to video yourself answering the questions
- Each student will complete a “Big Interview” consisting of **10 employment questions**. This mock interview will be scored on thoughtfulness of answers, poise, professional appearance, clear speech, eye contact, etc.
- You can record yourself practicing answering questions as many times as you want and then only save/submit the best ones
- You will need to go to <https://www.pittstate.edu/careers/students/interviewing.html> and find the link for “Login to Big Interview Here”, create a login and read the instructions on how to record your videos
- You can pick any virtual interviewer and question pack that you want, just make sure to submit 10 answers for full points
- You will save all ten videos and then select “share”. Share your videos by email to [hkent@pittstate.edu](mailto:hkent@pittstate.edu)

## **PARTICIPATION AND PROFESSIONALISM POINTS- 200 POINTS TOTAL**

Participation and professionalism points will be earned by participating in class and other events as assigned. Points will be deducted if the instructor deems you are not fully participating or are exhibiting unprofessional behavior in class or during class activities. Unprofessional behavior could include but is not limited to, skipping class, showing up late, inappropriate cell phone or computer use, sleeping, missing deadlines, disrespecting others, plagiarism, etc.

### **Attendance Policy**

This is a face-to-face class. Students are expected to attend class as scheduled. Class participation and professionalism will account for 20% of the final grade. Students are responsible for any work covered during an absence, either for a school function or personal reasons. For those who will be absent due to PSU related events, please submit a schedule of those dates ahead of time from your faculty-sponsored advisor.

Each student will be allowed **two (2) absences** in this class. *An absence is defined as non-attendance for any reason, whether illness or emergency, vacation, personal day, etc.* Each additional absence will result in a **30 point** reduction from your Participation and Professionalism Points.

### **Inclement Weather**

Class is cancelled when the university closes for inclement weather. Because of the time of day of this class, the instructor may cancel a class even when the university is not closed if there is a threat of severe weather. Please watch your Canvas Announcements for guidance.

### **Academic Integrity**

All Pitt State students are bound by the academic integrity policies of the university as described and outlined in the current Syllabus Supplement. Please familiarize yourself with these rules and guidelines. In addition, as a course offered through the Kelce College of Business, students in this class are obligated to adhere to the college's Student Code of Ethics as outlined below.

- Attend all scheduled class periods, arrive on time and remain until dismissed.
- Turn off cell phones, laptops or other electronic devices while in class, unless permission to use them has been granted. Refrain from class disturbances.
- Refrain from use of profane or vulgar language in a threatening or disruptive manner.
- Treat fellow students, staff, faculty, administrators, and property with respect.
- Refrain from giving or receiving inappropriate assistance.
- Prepare assignment and exams honestly, refraining from such unacceptable conduct as plagiarism or unacknowledged appropriation of another's work in any academic work.
- Obey the policies, regulations, and laws of the United States of America, the State of Kansas, The Kansas Board of Regents, Pittsburg State University, and the Gladys A. Kelce College of Business. If a student observes someone committing dishonesty in connection with academic work, the student is encouraged to report that dishonesty to the appropriate individual (ex, faculty member, or administrator).
- <https://www.pittstate.edu/registrar/catalog/archive/2022-2023/index.html>

### **Students with Disabilities**

Please inform the instructor if you have a learning or physical disability that interferes with course requirements. Assistance and/or appropriate accommodations may be available through the contacts listed on the current Syllabus Supplement.

<https://www.pittstate.edu/registrar/files/documents/syllabus-supplement-fall-2022.pdf>

*Some assignments adapted from BA 353 Professional Development, Oregon State University and COM 375. Bus. and Prof. Com., University of Southern California*

**Note:** The instructor reserves the right to amend and to reorganize this syllabus at any time.