

English 398N: Writing for Non-Profit Organizations

Fall 2017

Professor: Rebecca J. Holden, Ph.D.

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Office: 1220B Tawes Hall

Office Hours: T: 11:20 am -12:20 pm

Th: by appointment

Section 1301: Tu/Th 12:30-1:45 p.m.

Location: TWS 232

Section 1401: Tu/Th 2:00-3:15 p.m.

Location: TWS 232

Course Description:

While freshmen writing courses are designed to prepare you for the academic writing required of a university student, this course is designed to prepare you for writing and communication outside the university. In particular, our work here will focus on the specific demands of communicating primarily—though not exclusively—in the world of non-profit organizations. We will study the audiences and some document genres you may encounter in the field. By the end of the term, you should have a heightened sense of audience awareness and be able to navigate many of the written genres necessary for non-profit work. The numerous writing workshops and peer group tasks make this course a collaborative endeavor, which will further prepare you for the committee work common at most non-profits. The course will operate, as much as is possible, as a non-profit writing consultant group with me as your supervisor and your classmates as your colleagues.

Course Goals:

On completion of any Professional Writing course, students will be able to complete the following:

- analyze a variety of professional rhetorical situations and produce appropriate texts in response
- understand the stages required to produce competent, professional writing through planning, drafting, revising, and editing
- identify and implement the appropriate research methods for each writing task
- practice the ethical use of sources and the conventions of citation appropriate to each genre
- write for the intended readers of a text, and design or adapt texts to audiences who may differ in their familiarity with the subject matter
- demonstrate competence in Standard Written English, including grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, coherence, and document design and be able to use these skills to revise texts
- produce cogent arguments that identify arguable issues, reflect the degree of available evidence, and take account of counter arguments

For 398N, more specifically, you will also acquire the following:

- an understanding of the diverse genres of writing used in the non-profit sector
- the facility to work collaboratively in analyzing and revising varied modes of communication

In order to accomplish these goals, this course calls for a **significant amount of writing** in a short period of time. You will have to put time and effort into this class to be successful and get the most out of the course. Unlike a lecture course, this hands-on studio course **requires** your attendance.

Course Requirements:

Assignment 1: Resume/Cover Letter (10%)

This application packet will be written for an open job or internship that you are currently qualified for (or will be qualified for by the end of the academic year) in **the nonprofit sector**.

Assignment 2: NPO Choice Proposal Memo (5%)

In this memo, you will outline your first and second choice NPOs for your semester-long project.

You must persuade me that these NPOs are good choices for you and the course.

Assignment 3: Internal Program Proposal Memo (15%)

You will write an extensive, well-researched memo to the executive director/board of your chosen NPO proposing a new program that you have designed. The program you propose will serve as the basis for the rest of your assignments.

Assignment 4: Press Release/Business Letter/Blog (10%)

You will choose and then write two of these three documents for this assignment. All three will relate to some aspect of the program you proposed in Assignment 3.

Assignment 5: Grant Proposal (25%)

You will find an appropriate, real grantor and write a full grant proposal, following the outline in *Writing for a Good Cause*, seeking support for the program you proposed in Assignment 3.

Group Presentation (10%)

In this 20–25 minute small group presentation, you and your small group will make an **interactive** presentation to the class on a non-profit organization that focuses on your group's topic. Your **entire** group will be required to interview someone from the NPO and will use that NPO as a case study to illustrate topics relevant to the class's current assignment. Your group will also design a discussion post for the class blog as part of this assignment.

Peer Critiques/Peer Critique Review Memo (due in final portfolio) (10%)

You will write critique and edit your peers' written work throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, you will review your critique work and write a memo to me in which you evaluate both your group members' and your own editing work.

Professionalism (15%)

This course is designed to help prepare you for a professional workplace; thus, you must treat the classroom as a professional environment and your peers as professional colleagues. Being professional means coming to class on time and prepared for the day's work as well as being an attentive, active member of this professional writing group, both in class and online. Also included in this grade is your performance on reading reviews, reflective writing memos, in-class work, required in-class presentations—including one mini grammar presentation—and your contributions to the class discussion board.

Conferences: You will meet with me two times during the semester for formal conferences.

Evaluation: Keep in mind that here, as in the workplace, you are always making an argument about what kind of recognition or grade your overall work merits. Your attitude, work ethic, attentiveness to detail, self-motivation, **ability to follow directions and meet deadlines**, as well as the end products you submit, all affect your evaluation.

Required Texts:

1. Barbato, Joseph and Danielle S. Furlich. *Writing for a Good Cause: The Complete Guide to Crafting Proposals and Other Persuasive Pieces for Nonprofits*. New York: Fireside, 2000. (ISBN 978-0-6-8485740-4)
2. Heath, Chip and Dan Heath. *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*. New York: Random House, 2007. (ISBN 978-1-4-0006428-1)

NOTE: Both books are available at the University Book Center but can be found cheaper online.

Recommended Text: Some kind of style/writing manual

Required Materials:

1. One two-pocket folder, labeled with student name, course number, term and professor's name for portfolio.
2. Flash drive to use in computer lab for your work/Dropbox or similar

You will need a Terrapin Express account to print in the computer lab.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

See <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html> for University wide student policies including info on academic integrity and disability services. If you require any accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. Please know that these matters will remain between you, myself, and the DSS office, regardless of the accommodations you require to have a successful semester.

Food Insecurity: Being a student while being food insecure or homeless can impact health, well-being, and academic performance. UMD has resources to help. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day is encouraged to visit the [UMD Campus Pantry](#), which is located in the Health Center. Any student who lacks a safe and stable place to live is urged to contact Brooke Supple, Chief of Staff in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs at 301.314.8430 or <http://crisisfund.umd.edu/gethelp.html>.

Academic Integrity: See the link above for details on plagiarism and academic honesty. To affirm your commitment to the UMCP Honor Code I require you to write and sign the following honor pledge statement on the title page of all major assignments: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment."

Professor Contact: The best way to get in touch with me is via email, as I am only on campus on Tuesdays and Thursdays. When emailing me, include ENG 398N in the subject line and keep e-mails brief. Emailing me gives you a chance to practice professional email etiquette.

Cell Phones/Other Electronic Equipment: NO CELL PHONE (including texting) USE DURING CLASS! If you have a special situation (such as illness in the family or babysitters that may need to contact you in case of an emergency), let me know.

Food, etc.: You can drink water in a closed container in the computer lab. Please do not eat during class.

Collaborative Learning: Each student will be a member of a peer critique group. These groups will read and comment on each other's drafts as well as do other exercises during this course. This group work will allow you to hone your critical tools and writing skills as you help other students with their writing. (Remember that critical does not mean criticize, nor does it mean praise blindly.) Each group will also make a graded presentation during the semester on a non-profit organization.

Revisions: You may revise one assignment (either Assignment 1, 3, or 4) for your final portfolio. Your final grade for that assignment will be an average of your original grade and the new grade.

In addition, if you receive a **D** or an **F** on any assignment, you should meet with me to go over the assignment. I will decide on a case by case basis whether or not you will be allowed an additional revision for this assignment. (In other words, you can't just turn in a sub-par paper because you didn't put the time into it and expect to be able to revise it for a better grade.) This grade will also be an average of the two grades.

Portfolio: All of your work should be saved in a folder to be turned in at the conclusion of the course. This includes all graded work, all drafts with comments from me, as well as any revisions. At the end of the semester, you will turn in your portfolio with the requested documents. Please submit a self-addressed stamped envelope (with sufficient postage) with your portfolio if you want me to return it to you after grades have been submitted for this semester.

Portfolios should be labeled in the upper left hand corner as follows:

Last Name, First Name
ENG 398N
Section #
Fall 2017
Dr. Holden

The Writing Center: To help you with your writing assignments, peer consultants are available in the Writing Center, 1205 Tawes Hall, Monday through Wednesday from 9 am to 8 pm, Thursday from 9 am to 4 pm, and Friday from 9 am to 2 pm. The consultants can help you with all aspects of your writing process, from generating ideas to organizing your thoughts to revising your prose. Schedule appointments online at <https://umd.mywconline.com/>. Be sure to let the Center know what class you are in and bring a copy of the assignment as well as your rhetorical profile with you to the appointment.

Grade Point Breakdown:

98-100: A+	87-89: B+	77-79: C+	68-70: D+	<60: F
93-97: A	83-86: B	73-76: C	63-67: D	
90-92: A-	80-82: B-	70-72: C-	60-62: D-	

Grading Criteria: Remember that any assignment that satisfies the basic requirements will earn a C.

A (90-100): An **A** paper excels in all areas. It demonstrates original thinking as well as superior writing skill. Your supervisor would not hesitate to forward this document to the intended reader. The document fulfills its purpose by accommodating itself well to its audience. The piece anticipates and responds to possible reader questions, using a wide range of supporting evidence and rhetorical strategies. The writing itself is clear and a pleasure to read. An **A** document signals to your supervisor that you can be trusted to complete your work with no oversight.

B (80-90): This document fulfills the assignment and like the **A** paper demonstrates a strong sense of purpose and an awareness of its intended audience. It is an effective example of workplace writing and thinking. Such a paper is well supported and has few errors. It demonstrates some original ideas or support and reads smoothly throughout. It differs from the **A** paper in that it may have a few minor flaws, a glitch in organization, or is simply not as impressive as the **A** paper. Your supervisor would spend some time polishing this document before he or she sends it on to its target audience.

C (70-80): This document meets the basic requirements of the assignment and demonstrates that you have put time into communicating your ideas to your target audience. It has a stated purpose, presents support for that purpose, and follows a coherent organization. Overall, however, it represents average college-level writing and will require your supervisor to work with you extensively in order to produce a piece that is acceptable for distribution. The piece may begin well, but fails to follow through. It may be poorly organized so that the interesting points are difficult for the intended audience to uncover. It may be simply predictable with nothing to lift it above the average. It may contain numerous errors.

D (60-70): This document shows a concerted effort to follow form but is missing something key. It does not have a clear purpose or a strong sense of its intended audience. It demonstrates an effort on your part to address the assignment, but may have significant errors in form, content, or execution. The writing itself is understandable but the evidence is incomplete or fails to communicate its purpose to the audience. Your supervisor will most likely assign someone else to the project immediately.

F (below 60): This document fails to fulfill its purpose for any of a number of reasons. The purpose is unclear; the evidence is virtually non-existent or makes no sense; the organization seems arbitrary; and/or numerous errors in mechanics and style make the document difficult to read. Your supervisor may find it easier to replace you than to put in the time necessary to get you up to speed.

ISSUES THAT WILL AFFECT YOUR GRADE

1. ABSENCES: You are allowed to miss one week's worth of class meetings (2 classes) without documented excuse. You are still responsible for turning in any work that is due ON TIME and for whatever material was covered in class. **YOU CANNOT USE THIS FREE ABSENCE FOR WORKSHOP DAYS.** YOUR PROFESSIONALISM GRADE WILL BE LOWERED BY A HALF OF A GRADE (5 pts.) FOR EACH ADDITIONAL CLASS MISSED. IF YOU MISS MORE THAN 4 WEEKS OF CLASS (8 class meetings), YOU WILL FAIL THE PROFESSIONALISM REQUIREMENT OF THIS CLASS. **It is always in your best interest to maintain contact with me regarding any and all absences.**

Missing any of your required conferences will count as absences. (I will always try to make up missed conferences, but the absence will stand.)

University-wide student absence policy:

"Events that justify an excused absence include religious observances; mandatory military obligation; illness of the student or illness of an immediate family member; participation in university activities at the request of university authorities; and compelling circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g., death in the family, required court appearance). Absences stemming from work duties other than military obligation (e.g., unexpected changes in shift assignments) and traffic/transit problems do not typically qualify for excused absence."

"For medically necessitated absences: Students may, one time per course per semester, provide a self-signed excuse as documentation of an absence from a single class (e.g., lecture, recitation, or laboratory session) that does not coincide with a major assessment or assignment due date. For all other medically necessitated absences, a course instructor may request that students provide documentation from a physician or the University Health Center to verify an absence. In cases where students are asked to provide verification, the course instructor may request the dates of treatment or the time frame that the student was unable to meet academic responsibilities, but may not request diagnostic information."

Full document: <http://www.president.umd.edu/sites/president.umd.edu/files/documents/policies/V-1.00G.pdf>

You need to notify me at the beginning of the semester about any planned excused absence. **Job interviews are not excusable absences.** Please email me to let me know if you will not be in class. This does not excuse the absence, but is a professional courtesy to me and your classmates.

If you miss class, **you** are expected to find out what you missed. **DO NOT EMAIL ME TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU MISSED.** Use ELMS to get in touch with a classmate. You can also set up an appointment with me during my office hours.

2. TARDINESS OR EARLY DEPARTURES: Two late arrivals (more than 5 minutes) or early departures will convert to one absence. You should let me know if you need to leave early or will arrive late, but telling me does not excuse the late arrival or early departure.

3. MISSING DRAFTS/WORKSHOPS: Those who come to any draft workshop without a completed draft or are absent will have a FULL LETTER GRADE (10 points) deducted from that assignment's grade. If you **absolutely cannot attend** class on a workshop day, be sure to turn in your draft before class and complete your critiques on time in order to receive partial credit for the workshop.

4. LATE PAPERS: Papers are due at the BEGINNING of class. (Ten minutes late is LATE.) Late assignments will be downgraded 5 points a day for each day that they are late. Absence from class or minor illness does not change this policy. Computer/printer problems are never an acceptable excuse for late work. **I will not accept emailed papers.** No late papers will be accepted after I have returned graded papers to the class, which is usually a week after the assignment was due. Papers turned into the PWP office (Tawes 1220) must be dropped off at the student worker's desk and not in my mailbox or under my office door. Use the drop-box slot in the PWP office for dropping papers off after hours.

5. FAILURE TO TURN IN ALL REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF AN ASSIGNMENT

Course Calendar (Subject to Change due to weather and other unforeseen calamities)

Date	Topic	Required Reading	Assignments Given Out	Assignments Due
WEEK 1 8/29(T)	Syllabus and course policies review	NONE	•Diagnostic email	•Diagnostic essay (due via email by 12 pm, Thurs., Aug. 31)
8/31 (Th)	Course introduction and rhetoric review	NONE	•Assignment 1 (Resume/Cover letter) •Reading Review #1	•Diagnostic due via email by 12 pm
WEEK 2: 9/5 (T)	Overview of Semester Project/Writing	•Barbato and Furlich, Part 1 (p.19-53) (available on ELMS)	•NPO Group presentations •Non-profit organization write-up	•Rhetorical Profile and Job listings for Assignment 1 (hard copies) •Reading Review #1 (hard copy)
9/7 (Th)	NPOs/ Resume and Cover Letters	NONE	•Grammar Diagnostic	•NPO write up •Hard copy of unrevised resume
WEEK 3: 9/12 (T)	Writing Review/ Peer Review Protocols	• Peer review protocols/ worksheet	•Peer critiques for Assignment 1	•Soft copy of Assignment 1 draft •Grammar Diagnostic
9/14 (Th)	Workshop Assignment 1/Writing Review	NONE	NONE	•Soft copies of track changes for group
WEEK 4: 9/19 (T)	NPO Choice/Writing Review	NONE	•Assignment 2 (NPO Choice Memo)	•Final Assignment 1
9/21 (Th)	Workshop Assignment 2/ Meet with UTA		•Reading Review #2	•Soft copies of assignment 2 draft
WEEK 5: 9/26 (T)	Group Presentation: NPO Workplace and Jobs/ Writing Review	•Heath: Intro, Ch. 1, and Ch. 2 (3 chaps) •Barbato and Furlich: Ch. 8-10	NONE	•Reading Review #2 (hard copy)
9/28 (Th)	Program Development		•Assignment 3: Internal Program Proposal Memo	•Final Assignment 2
WEEK 6: 10/3 (T)	Group Presentation: Program Development/ More on Program Development		NONE	•Assignment 3 Initial Rhetorical Profile (hard copy) •Small group program pitches
10/5 (Th)	Program Development /Documentation	•Documentation materials on ELMS •Heath Ch. 3 and 4	• Reading Review #3	
WEEK 7: 10/10(T)	Group Presentation: Program Dev./ More on Stickiness	•Heath Ch. 5 and 6		• Reading Review #3
10/12 (Th)	NO CLASS: Conferences	NONE	NONE	•Outline and 3 page draft

Date	Topic	Required Reading	Assignments Given Out	Assignments Due
WEEK 8: 10/17 (T)	NO CLASS: Individual conferences	NONE	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Outline and 3 page draft •Electronic copy of draft due at 11:59 pm
10/19 (Th)	Workshop Assignment 3	NONE	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer critiques
WEEK 9: 10/24 (T)	Press Releases, Business Letters, Blog	NONE	•Assignment 4: Press Release/ Business Letter	•Final Assignment 3
10/26 (Th)	Group Presentation on Media Relations/ More on Press Release, Business Letter, Blog	NONE	NONE	•Assignment 4 Initial Rhetorical Profile
WEEK 10: 10/31 (T)	Group Presentation on Media Relations/ More on Media Relations	NONE	NONE	
11/2 (Th)	Workshop Press Release/Business Letter/Blog	NONE	• Writing Review Memo	• Soft copies of Assignment 4
WEEK 11: 11/7 (T)	Grant Writing/ Finding a Grant	• Barbato and Furlich, Part 2 (Ch. 4-7)	• Assignment 5 (Grant proposal)	• Final Assignment 4
11/9 (Th)	More on Grant writing	NONE	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Review Memo • Initial RP for Assignment 5
WEEK 12: 11/14 (T)	Group Presentation on Grant Seeking/ Grant budgets			•Grant budget draft
11/16 (Th)	More on Grant Budgets/Grant writing			•Electronic copies of initial Assignment 5 draft due on Sunday 11/19 by 5 pm
WEEK 13: 11/21 (T)	Workshop Grant Proposal			•Peer Critiques due
11/23 (Th)	NO CLASS:	Thanksgiving		
WEEK 14: 11/28 (T)	NO CLASS:	Individual conferences		•Grant proposal drafts
11/30 (Th)	NO CLASS	Individual conferences		•Grant proposal drafts
WEEK 15: 12/5 (T)	Workshop 2 Grant Proposal			•Complete Assignment 5 draft
12/7 (Th)	Workshop 2 Grant Proposal Peer Group Revision Work			•Completed peer critiques

FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE: 2:00 PM, Tuesday, Dec. 12