ENGL 391 Advanced Composition:

Asynchronous Online Spring *2018*

Instructor (all sections): Kara Pleasants; email: pleasant@umd.edu, office: Tawes 1204; phone: 301-405-3762 (PWP main office); available for online conferences:Tu/W 3:30-5:30 pm on the WEB and by appointment.

Required Texts: [NOTE: Alternate editions will **not** correspond to the assignments]

1. *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*. Chip Heath and Dan Heath. New York: Random House, 2007. ISBN 978-1-4-0006428-1 [kindle/ebook version HERE].
2. *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, 12th Edition, by Joseph M. Williams and Joseph Bizup. Pearson, ISBN-13: 978-0134080413 [cheapest option is to rent or buy the ebook from Bookholders at UMD].

Minimum Technical Requirements: You must be comfortable using an updated internet browser and accessing/using online resources, including digital media and applications. You will need a working microphone on your computer or smartphone to complete some activities. For additional support, access the UMD Division of Technology's Help Desk here. **You must check ELMS every day and turn ON notifications** to receive updates on course announcements, conversations, and comments on discussions, assignments, and grades.

Prerequisites: ENGL101; students who have taken courses with comparable content may contact the department. Restriction: you must have earned a minimum of 60 credits.

Course Description: In this course you will acquire the professional writing skills needed for the workforce. Strong written communications skills are paramount to success in the professional world, and are highly valued by employers. You will develop your skills through a series of linked essays, supported by independent reading, writing, and collaborative activities. You will research and write about real-life situations, learning to develop the strongest and most appropriate rhetorical strategies for your audience. By deepening your understanding of rhetoric, you will become a more critical reader and thinker, more able to make sound judgments and accurately evaluate information. English 391 is a studio course in which writing and participation constitutes the core of the class; thus, regular and timely participation is required. As

an asynchronous online version of English 391, lectures, readings, and discussions happen at different times for everyone rather than in a single meeting.

Course Goals: On completion of a Professional Writing course, you will be able to:

- 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 (including the use of the visual) and be able to use this knowledge to revise texts.
- Produce cogent arguments that identify arguable issues, reflect the degree of available evidence, and take account of counter arguments.

Expectations: As your instructor, you can expect me to: treat all students with respect; respond to your questions promptly and courteously; provide meaningful assignments and prompt feedback; use a variety of learning techniques; facilitate student-centered learning. I love teaching. Do not hesitate to ask for help.

As students, I expect you to: follow the university and course policies and procedures; invest the appropriate time and energy into this course; communicate with me and fellow students respectfully; actively engage in the class. Past students report that Professional Writing is a demanding course that makes them stronger and more confident writers. Your contributions should be polished, engaging, and original. Edit and revise ruthlessly. Pursue writing topics that are not only relevant to your desired profession, but interesting to you as a person.

On average all college-level courses require 2-3 hrs worth of outside work for every hour in class. In an asynchronous online course counting for 3 credits, that translates to roughly **9-12 hrs per week** on this course (remember you have to substitute three in-class hours).

Assignments: For this course, as for all PWP courses, you will produce **a minimum of 6,250 words of newly generated writing** (approximately 12.5 single-spaced or 25 double-spaced pages). All writing must be original and cannot be adapted from ANY past courses or overlap with a current course. The majority of your writing will take place in the form of **four major assignments** and their supporting assignments. You will submit all assignments through ELMS. Your final grade will be calculated based on the following categories:

Five Major Assignments (70% total):

1. Targeted Job Application (5%): This application packet includes a resume and cover letter newly composed for an actual open job or internship that you are currently qualified for (or will be qualified for by the end of this academic year) in the field you are pursuing.

2. Report (20%): The first of the linked assignments, you must address the report to the person in the organization who would be your direct supervisor (or boss). This report must 1) use a definition argument to explain the nature of the problem (or need), 2) analyze the facts and possible causes of the problem as you have outlined it. This paper requires formal citation and a works cited page (your choice of MLA, APA, or Chicago style depending on what is more appropriate for your field of study).

3. Opinion Article (15%): For this second linked assignment, you must choose a publication local to the organization from Report paper, and compose an opinion article exploring your particular situation, problem, or trend through an evaluative analysis . This paper requires informal citation using signal phrases only, and an annotated works cited page (your choice of MLA, APA, or Chicago style depending on what is more appropriate for your field of study).

4. Proposal (30%): Write a formal proposal of a specific course of action to your organization in response to the situation that you have characterized and evaluated in the two previous linked assignments. This paper requires formal citation and a works cited page (your choice of MLA, APA, or Chicago style depending on what is more appropriate for your field of study).

Planning / Drafting / Peer reviews (15% total): includes audience analysis memos, outlines, discussions, drafts, peer reviews, conferences.

Supporting Assignments (15% total): includes your performance on short writing assignments such as reading responses, reflections, discussions, language exercises, Voice Thread assignments.

Grading: Formatting guidelines and rubrics for each **Major Assignment** are provided in the assignment descriptions for each linked assignment (view now in ELMS). For all smaller assignments, including Planning, Drafting, Peer Review and Supporting Assignments, see assessment [rubrics](#)).

I follow [UMD's marking system](#); grades will be denoted as follows:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
97-100	94-96	90-93	87-89	84-86	80-83	77-79	74-76	70-73	67-69	64-66	60-63	0-59

Decimal points will be rounded to the nearest whole number. For example, a 79.5 = 80, but 79.3 = 79.

Course Communication: Everything you need to know about this course will be communicated through the university email system and ELMS. Communicate with me through the same avenues: always use your university email or ELMS. For every email, include a 1) subject line for the email; 2) salutation; 3) body paragraph; 4) close.

Today, turn on notifications in ELMS so that you receive emails for every announcement, upcoming assignment due date, grades and comments on grades, and comments on discussions. You can do this by going to ELMS, clicking on "Account" and then "Notifications." Here is a [handy guide.](#) Failing to check and update your notification settings will mean that you miss crucial course information and announcements.

Expect responses to emails promptly during regular business hours Monday-Friday (i.e. if you need a question answered for Monday, make sure you ask before 5 p.m. the Friday before). Email during this time frame, and you can expect to hear back within 24 hours. Major assignments will be graded and returned on the class session BEFORE the next major assignment is due (often about two weeks).

Attendance and absences: As an asynchronous online course, there are no synchronous class meeting days, in class or online. There will be one mandatory voice/video conference during the semester, which counts as an Independent Assignment, and will be scheduled as conveniently as possible. Occassionally, I might provide the opportunity to participate in a live online class meeting, but if you are unable to attend "live" you may watch the presentation on your own time. However, there are designated due dates for all assignments. Illness or emergencies, and other

circumstances that fall under excused absences, might necessitate an extension on an assignment. These are granted on a case by case basis following the excused absence policy.

Events that justify an excused absence include: religious observances; mandatory military obligation; documented illness of the student or 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.

Students claiming an excused absence must notify the course instructor in a timely manner and provide appropriate documentation. The notification should be provided either prior to the absence or as soon afterwards as possible. In the case of religious observances, athletic events, and planned absences known at the beginning of the semester, the student must inform the instructor during the schedule adjustment period. All other absences must be reported as soon as is practical. The student must provide appropriate documentation of the absence. The documentation must be provided in writing as an attachment to an email or ELMS conversation.

Late work (without approved extension): Late MAJOR assignment

submission will be penalized by deducting 10% off the top of the grade after the initial late submission (starting exactly after the time for submission). For each DAY your essay is late, an additional 10% will be deducted until you can no longer receive credit for that assignment.

Due dates for Supporting Assignments are also important, particularly those which require group participation. Review the rubrics for the late submission policy.

Revisions: Revisions are expected to take place during the drafting and peer review

process before submission of the final draft; rewrites and resubmission are not permitted after a final major assignment has been submitted.

Academic integrity: The University of Maryland is committed to academic integrity;

its student-administered Honor Code and Honor Pledge prohibits you from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. As a deterrent against cheating, the assignments for this course are designed to be relevant, current, and useful to you in your desired professional field. Students who engage in academic dishonesty in this course will receive no points

(zero) for the assignment in question, and will be immediately reported to the [Honor Council and Office of Judicial Programs](#) for further action.

At the end of every major assignment, you must write and sign the following pledge (either as the last page to the document, or as a comment on the submission): I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment). You may choose not to write the pledge, but I will discuss with you your reasons for not writing it.

Diversity: Along with the University, I am wholly committed to providing a classroom atmosphere that encourages the equitable participation of all students regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Students with disabilities: Along with the University, I am also committed to providing appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with a documented disability should inform the instructors within the add-drop period if academic accommodations are needed. To obtain an Accommodation Letter prepared by Disability Support Service (DSS), a division of the University Counseling Center, please call 301-314-7682, e-mail dissup@umd.edu, or visit the Shoemaker Building for more information.

Academic accommodations for students who experience sexual misconduct: The University of Maryland is committed to providing support and resources, including academic accommodations, for students who experience sexual or relationship violence as defined by the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy. To report an incident and/or obtain an academic accommodation, contact the Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct at 301-405-1142. If you wish to speak confidentially, contact Campus Advocates Respond and Educate (CARE) to Stop Violence at 301-741-3555. Faculty are required to report any disclosure of sexual misconduct, i.e., they may not hold such disclosures in confidence. [More information](#).

Additional Resources

- You are **strongly encouraged** (and also required once per semester) to use the Writing Center for further development of your writing skills. [The Writing Center](#) is located in 1205 Tawes Hall (phone: 301-405-3785).
- The [University Library System](#). is a phenomenal (and required) resource for you.
- For further academic, emotional, and/or psychological support, take advantage of the [UMD's counseling services](#).

- My favorite (free) grammar sources on the web are [OWL at Purdue](#) and [Grammar Girl.](#)

Emergency protocol: In case of inclement weather, visit UMD's [main webpage](#) for updates on delays and closures. If the University is closed, you will receive instructions via ELMS.

Course evaluations: Course evaluations are a part of the process by which UMD seeks to improve teaching and learning. Your participation in this official system is critical to the success of the process, and all information submitted to CourseEvalUM is confidential. (Instructors can only view group summaries of evaluations and cannot identify which submissions belong to which students.) The Professional Writing Program uses its own evaluation for each of its courses, distributed during the last week of class.

Copyright notice: Class lectures and other materials are copyrighted and they may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from the instructor. I would also like to acknowledge the following fellow professors who influenced the construction of my syllabus and course material: Scott Wible, Mark Forrester, Robert Crane, Elizabeth Fixen, Scott Moses, and Rebecca Holden.

Final notes: This syllabus is subject to change. Students will be notified in advance of important changes. See here for UMD's [Course Related Policies](#) for all undergraduate courses.

View the **[COURSE SCHEDULE via "Syllabus"](#) in ELMS (each assignment is listed chronologically).**