

Bergen Community College  
School of English  
Department of Composition and Literature

Course Syllabus

**WRT 216 – Writing for Professional Purposes**

Instructor:  
Office  
Phone:  
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Office Hours: TBA

**Course Description**

**Writing for Professional Purposes** gives students a background in the fundamentals of professional, edited English. It is designed to build upon basic competency in writing and provide a basis for students seeking careers in fields in which a command of the technical and stylistic terminology of writing is essential.

3 Lecture Hours, 3 Credits  
Prerequisite: WRT-101

**Student Learning Objectives**

1. Identify and define terminology used by writing professionals when critiquing edited English prose.
2. Recognize prose techniques used by professional writers in a variety of fields.
3. Understand a variety of technical aspects of prose writing at the vocabulary, sentence, and complete work level.
4. Demonstrate competency in a variety of techniques used by professional writers.
5. Demonstrate competency by identifying, evaluating and using a variety of research sources specific to the field, which are relevant, appropriate, authoritative, and reliable. (PLG 6) (Gen Ed Goal 4 a, b, c, d)
6. Recognize and employ current MLA, APA, and Chicago styles for text presentation, in-text citations, and Works Cited

pages for essays and research papers. (PLG 5, 6) (Gen Ed Goal 4 a, b, c, d)

7. Use MLA, APA, and Chicago style documentation in writing assignments.

### **Course Content**

This course begins with a review of basic concepts of edited written prose. From there, more advanced concepts used by professional writers are introduced. Students learn how word choice, sentence structure, tone, style, and arrangement affect how information is conveyed through writing. Appropriate style for various disciplines will be covered. Students will read texts that explain technical concepts as well as texts that are examples of these techniques put into practice. Written work will consist of objective examinations, critiques of other writers' written work, and original work demonstrating proficiency in areas covered.

### **Recommended Texts**

Harris, *Writing with Clarity and Style: A Guide to Rhetorical Devices for Contemporary Writers*.

Kolln & Gray, *Rhetorical Grammar*

Trimble, *Writing with Style*

### **Course Requirements**

You will be required to do the following:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts on objective examinations.
2. Write at least two multi-paragraph assignments of at least 500 words.  
(Meets student learning objectives 1-5)
3. Write at least one in-class essay.  
(Meets student learning objectives 2-5)
4. Complete other writing exercises such as summaries, journals, reading responses, blogs, reading comprehension questions, quizzes on reading assignments, etc.  
(Meets student learning objectives 1-6)
5. Read, interpret, and analyze the prose of professional writers demonstrating an understanding of the stylistic and technical aspects of their writing.  
(Meets student learning objectives 1, 2)
6. Submit papers that adhere to MLA, APA, or Chicago style manuscript requirements and which demonstrate effective proofreading and editing.  
(Meets student learning objectives 1-9)

7. Participate in class discussions and other in-class (individual or group) activities necessary to produce quality expository prose.  
(Meets student learning objectives 2-7)

### **Assessment of Student Learning**

1. In-class quizzes on terminology 15%
2. Two essays written at home demonstrating competence in selected concepts covered in class 15% each
3. One essay written in class demonstrating competence in selected concepts 15%
4. At least one objective exam demonstrating knowledge of key concepts 20%
5. Participation in class discussion on textbook and other assigned readings 10%
6. A journal, blog, or online discussion 10%

### **Grading**

- A 90% - 100%
- B+ 85% - 89.9%
- B 80% - 84.9%
- C+ 75% - 79.9%
- C 70% - 74.9%
- D 65% - 69.9%
- F 0% - 64.9%

### **Class Participation**

The primary focus of this course is the student's writing. The student is expected to come to every class having completed the assignments before coming to class. The reading and discussion framework is the course's forum of education: the student benefits from the instructor's teaching, the exchange of ideas with other students, and the independent work of evolving a personal process of intellectual growth.

### **Attendance Policy**

BCC Attendance Policy: "All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes."

## **ADA Statement**

Students with documented disabilities who require recommendations by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) can request support services from the Office of Specialized Services of Bergen Community College located in room L115 of the Pitkin Learning Center.

## **Recommended Course Schedule**

### **Week #1**

Review of grammatical terms and concepts

### **Week #2**

Sentence structure: types of sentences  
Examples from textbook

### **Week #3**

Sentence structure: parallelism, active voice, passive voice  
Short selections from the prose of various writers

### **Week #4**

Sentence structure: coordination, subordination, rhythm  
Student activities on sentence construction based on readings

First essay due

### **Week #5**

Word choice: subjects and verbs

Journals/blogs collected and discussed

### **Week #6**

Word choice: adjectives, adverbs  
Essay One discussed and revised

**Week #7**

Word choice: absolutes, appositives  
Editing for word choice activities in class

**Week #8**

Style: word order, repetition  
APA and Chicago styles discussed

Second essay in class

**Week #9**

Style: antithesis, ellipsis, fragments  
Documentation activities in class

**Week #10**

Putting it all together: audience  
Examples of individual authors writing for different audiences

**Week #11**

Putting it all together: tone  
Writing for effect, examples from politics, business

**Week #12**

Putting it all together: generality and specificity  
Contemporary models from magazines

Third essay due

**Week #13**

Putting it all together: documents and presentation  
Review of role of copy editor

**Week #14**

Putting it all together: incorporation, attribution  
Polishing Essay Three

**Week #15**

Review

Final exam