

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**  
**Fall 2012**  
**English 100WB, Written Communication: Business**  
**SECTION 11**  
**T/TR 12 – 1:15**  
**SH 444**

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**Course Description:**

This is a participatory course that offers a practical approach to business communication, emphasizing situations that require both oral and written communication. During the course of the semester, students will develop a rhetorically sophisticated writing style appropriate to upper-division university discourse.

**Required Texts and Materials:**

*The Business Writer*, Van Rys et al  
*Nickel and Dimed*, Ehrenreich, Barbara  
A full-volume dictionary  
Blank paper/notebook for notes and in-class writing assignments

**Communication and Research Objectives:** Students will develop

- the ability to analyze and interpret communication scenarios and to respond to them using the 7 Cs of effective communication: clear, correct, concise, concrete, coherent, complete, and courteous;
- advanced proficiency in both traditional and contemporary research strategies and methodologies necessary for research-informed writing and oral presentations that communicate complex ideas effectively and appropriately to both general and specialized audiences;

## **English 100WB Learning Objectives:**

**Learning Objective 1:** Students shall be able to refine the competencies established in Written Communication IA and IB (as summarized below).

IA Student Learning:

- Students should be able to perform effectively the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).
- Students should be able to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively.
- Students should be able to use correct grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication.
- Students should be able to write for different audiences (both specialized and general)

IB Student Learning:

- Students should be able to use (locate, analyze, and evaluate) supporting materials, including independent library research.
- Students should be able to synthesize ideas encountered in multiple readings.
- Students should be able to construct effective arguments.

**Learning Objective 2:** Students shall be able to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.

**Learning Objective 3:** Students shall be able to organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences, including appropriate editorial standards for citing primary and secondary sources.

## **English 100WB Content Objectives:**

English 100WB students will be expected to demonstrate the ability to

- \* format, compose, and revise written documents for a variety of organizational situations;
- \* identify and articulate the audience “take-away” message in every communication;
- \* utilize a variety of communication tools, techniques, and modes;
- \* communicate numerical and statistical data appropriately and effectively in both written and oral formats;
- \* employ advanced research strategies and methodologies and incorporate research appropriately and effectively into both written and oral communications for a variety of organizational and rhetorical situations;
- \* appreciate the importance of timely communication in organizational settings;
- \* recognize a variety of organizational communication needs and constraints and employ appropriate communication strategies to meet those needs and/or constraints in a variety

- of business situations;
- \* analyze various audiences and compile appropriate options and strategies to communicate effectively with those audiences;
  - \* evaluate and critique communication strategies and techniques for their effectiveness, including the strategies and techniques of their classmates;
  - \* make common-sense communication decisions and use logic to defend those decisions;
  - \* recognize when imagination and “vision” are appropriate to business communications;
  - \* communicate appropriately and effectively in cross-cultural situations;
  - \* create documents and make oral presentations that are ethically and legally defensible.

**Diversity:** Assignments (both reading and writing) shall address issues of race, class, age, and gender when appropriate, and the perspectives of women and diverse cultural groups shall be incorporated into course instruction and materials in an inclusive and comprehensive manner whenever appropriate. At least one graded assignment, oral or written, shall address cross- or inter-cultural, -generational, or -gender communications.

**Writing:** Assignments shall emphasize those analytical and interpretive skills and activities in writing and thinking that produce types of writing useful in business communications, which include but are not limited to the following: both formal and informal correspondence for various purposes and audiences (email, memos, letters); employment application materials (resumes, cover letters, follow-up letters); formal and informal reports; white papers; abstracts, summaries, annotated bibliographies; proposals. Graded writing assignments will be appropriately sequenced throughout the semester and will total a minimum of 8,000 words; at least one of those assignments will be significantly informed by research.

Students shall receive frequent evaluations of their writing from their instructor. In evaluating student writing, instructors shall comment on specific features of individual assignments. Comments shall encourage and acknowledge student success as well as note errors and suggest ways to correct them.

- **Reading:** Assigned reading will address issues of business communications. Instructors may choose from several department-approved Business Communication textbooks that contain models of effective business communication and from several department-approved comprehensive writing handbooks; instructors may also create a short course reader that contains journalistic and/or scholarly writing in the field of business. Other appropriate reading may include texts that address the global marketplace, online communication, visual communication, and collections of business scenarios.
- **Research:** English 100WB shall provide advanced instruction in both traditional and contemporary research strategies and methodologies, including locating and evaluating materials, using them effectively (e.g., quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing), and citing them properly. At least one substantial writing assignment shall be informed by research. As part of this requirement, at least one class session of English 100WB shall include a presentation by a university librarian.

- **Active Learning:** Class sessions shall provide ample opportunities for active student learning in the following ways: formal and/or informal large- and small-group discussion and collaborative writing and thinking activities designed to develop and provide repeated student practice in exercising those rhetorical, analytical, and interpretive skills that produce stylistically appropriate, intelligent, and critical written and oral responses to business-communication scenarios; both formal and informal oral presentations; organizational role-playing and interviewing simulations.

**Prerequisites:** Passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST), upper-division standing (56 units), and completion of CORE GE.

This course satisfies the upper division, GE writing requirement. Anyone remaining in the course without meeting the above criteria will receive an NC grade, regardless of course performance.

### **Grading Procedure:**

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU *Catalog* (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure.

In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

**Grading for this course is A – F.**

Grades will be assigned according to the following rubric :

**A:** Message is clear, i.e. writing demonstrates clear understanding and appropriate response to the assignment. Paragraphs are well organized and sentences show syntactic complexity and precise word choice. Tone is professional and appropriate to the audience. The piece is free of grammatical errors, superfluous language, and redundancy.

**B:** Message is clear – no details are missing. Tone is appropriate to the message. Paragraphs may be slightly choppy. Language is professional but not as sophisticated or as varied as the language in an A paper. Grammatical errors and redundancy are minimal. Sentences may need tightening.

**C:** Message is weak but exists. Language and/or ideas may be repetitive and not always suited to professional discourse. Writing is clear but lacks energy and variety. Paragraphs likely have organizational issues. Sentences lack variety. Grammar needs work but does not distract the reader from the message.

**D:** Message is severely weakened by grammatical or syntactical errors that distract the reader and cause ‘noise’ or ‘clutter.’ Details may be missing and paragraphs may need fixing. Language is not rhetorically sophisticated and does not demonstrate an understanding of professional discourse. Syntax is not varied.

**F:** Errors in grammar or word choice make the piece very difficult to understand.

**SJSU Academic Integrity Policy:** Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University, and the University’s Academic Integrity Policy require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty are required to report all infractions to the office of Judicial Affairs. The policy on academic integrity can be found at <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.htm>. The SJSU rules against plagiarism are set forth in the SJSU Catalog, which defines plagiarism as the act of representing the work of another as one’s own (without giving appropriate credit) regardless of how that work was obtained, and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements. Plagiarism at SJSU includes, but is not limited to: (1) the act of incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, or the specific substance of another’s work, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as one’s own work. It is the role and obligation of each student to know the rules that preserve academic integrity and abide by them at all times. This includes learning and following the particular rules associated with specific classes, exams, and/or course assignments. Ignorance of these rules is not a defense to the charge of violating the Academic Integrity Policy.

**Campus Policy on Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act:** If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with DRC to establish a record of their disability. The DRC website is <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu>.

### **Information available online**

Students are responsible for reading the following information online at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policyforsyllabi.html>

- Course guidelines
- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and DRC policies)
- Adding and dropping classes

### **Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester’s [Catalog Policies](#) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the [current academic calendar](#) web page located at [http://www.sjsu.edu/academic\\_programs/calendars/academic\\_calendar/](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/). The [Late Drop Policy](#) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes. Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

## Grading scale:

Written assignments (totaling 3500 words)	180 pts *
3 blog entries (totaling 2000 words)	60 pts
2 Quizzes	20 pts
Collaboration evaluation	20 pts
Presentations (one group, one individual)	50 pts
Formal Report (3000 words)	120 pts (including 5 pts for lib.)
Final Exam	50 pts

\*In-class assignments are valued at 10 pts while out-of-class assignments are worth 20 pts.

**Late work:** Students must be in attendance to complete in-class assignments. Written assignments cannot be handed in late without prior consent of the instructor; any assignment arriving after the class period has ended is considered late. There are no exceptions.

**Success:** To succeed in this course, students must participate in class activities, complete assignments both in and out of class, ask questions, and commit themselves to improving the effectiveness of their written and oral communication.

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## COURSE SCHEDULE

TR 8/23	Course introduction, overview	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 8/28	What it means to be a writer 7 C's, 5 R's Effective/Ineffective writing	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 8/30	Letters <i>TBW</i>	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 9/4	*Intro letter assigned Good writing (article handout)	SLO 1, 2, 3

TR 9/6	<p>Clear copy  Concise writing  <i>TBW</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Intro Letter DUE</li> <li>*In-class writing</li> </ul>	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 9/11	<p>Blogs  Communicating in a group  Myers-Briggs  (handouts)  <i>TBW</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Blogs assigned</li> <li>*Groups assigned</li> </ul>	SLO 2, 3
TR 9/12	<p>E-mails  Good news/bad news  <i>TBW</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*In-class writing</li> <li>*E-mail assigned</li> </ul>	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 9/18	<p>Job Search  Cover Letters  <i>TBW</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*In-class writing</li> <li>*E-mail DUE</li> </ul>	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 9/20	<p>Resumes  Interviewing  <i>TBW</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Resume assigned</li> </ul>	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 9/25	<p>Resume workshop</p>	SLO 1, 2
TR 9/27	<p>Elevator Pitches  (handouts)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*In-class writing</li> </ul> </p>	SLO 1, 2, 3

T 10/2	Press Releases <i>TBW</i> *Press Release assigned *Resume DUE	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 10/4	Formal Reports Executive Summary Design and Visuals Annotated Bibliography <i>TBW</i> *Formal Report assigned *Annotated Bibliography assigned *Topic E-mail for Report assigned	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 10/9	Preparing and giving presentations <i>TBW</i> *Presentation topics assigned *Press Release DUE	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 10/11	Library session	
T 10/16	Group Presentations *Topic E-mail for report DUE	SLO 1, 2
TR 10/18	Group Presentations	SLO 1, 2
T 10/23	Proposals <i>TBW</i> *Proposal assigned *Collaborative Survey in-class	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 10/25	<i>Nickel and Dimed</i> "Introduction" "Serving in Florida" *Quiz	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 10/30	Individual presentations *Proposal DUE	SLO 1, 2
TR 11/1	Individual Presentations *Annotated Bibliography DUE	SLO 1, 2

T 11/6	Progress Reports <i>TBW</i> *Progress Report assigned	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 11/8	Individual Presentations	SLO 1, 2
T 11/13	Individual presentations	
TR 11/15	“Scrubbing in Maine” “Selling in Minnesota” <i>ND</i> *Quiz	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 11/20	Global communication	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 11/22	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – CAMPUS CLOSED	
T 11/27	Update on Formal Report *Progress Report DUE	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 11/29	Summarizing and synthesizing (handout) *In-class assignment	SLO 1, 2, 3
T 12/4	Professional Communication Strategies <b>*Formal Report DUE</b>	SLO 1, 2, 3
TR 12/6	Preparation for final exam	
SAT 12/8	FINAL EXAM, 12 pm	

\*NOTE: Assignments, but not due dates, are subject to change