

## **San Jose State University**

### **Department of English and Comparative Literature**

**Course:** English 100WB, Written Business Communication (GE Area Z)

Section 01 (#30325 Seminar), Summer 2016

**Instructor:** Carlos Mujal (Office Hours: M, 8:00 – 9:00 PM; W, 8:00 – 9:00 PM)

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Class Days/ Time: M, W (6:00 – 8:00 PM), Sweeney Hall 414

### **Required Texts:**

- Kitty O. Locker and Stephen Kyo Kaczmarek, *Business Communication, Building Critical Skills*
- Daniel Yergin and Joseph Stanislaw, *The Commanding Heights*

### **Course Overview and Description:**

English 100WB is a participatory upper-division core course in which students will develop advanced proficiency in college-level writing. While reinforcing and advancing the students' understanding of the genres, audiences, and purposes of college writing developed in Written Communication 1A and 1B, English 100WB broadens and deepens those abilities to include mastery of the discourse specific to business communications. With an emphasis on critical thinking through scenario-based assignments that utilize both practical and theoretical aspects of organizational communication, English 100WB provides students with opportunities to practice both the oral and the written skills necessary for successful business communications.

This course is also designed to simulate actual business communications scenarios using a critical thinking approach. This course contains both practical and theoretical aspects of organizational communication to prepare students for "audience-oriented" communication. Both communication mechanics and style (practical), and the appropriateness of messages and methods based on specific organizational situations (theoretical) will be emphasized. Course activities provide students with opportunities to practice oral and written communication skills necessary for success in business and will require students to analyze communication scenarios, choose the appropriate methods and messages, and then properly communicate the message. Reading, writing, thinking and speaking are all parts of the communication process; all four are necessary to communicate intelligently and effectively. This is a writing-intensive course (8000 words per student, minimum) **and regular attendance is essential for your success.**

### **Prerequisites:**

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

### **Attendance:**

Students are expected to attend every class and be on time. Attendance is necessary for success in this course due to the following work: in-class weekly quizzes, in-class writing assignments, in-class weekly worksheets/handouts, and student/group presentations which are scheduled. Please notify me by e-mail at [mujal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mujal@sbcglobal.net) if you can not attend a particular class. Due to the amount of materials which will be given, there is no make-up work possible for any in-class work which was missed.

**Communication Expectation:**

Students are expected to demonstrate a high level of both professionalism and respect in all communication in this class. This includes email correspondence and class discussions.

**Course Objectives:**

Students will develop

1. the ability to analyze and interpret communication scenarios and to respond to them clearly, correctly, concisely, concretely, coherently, completely, and courteously;
2. 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;
3. a rhetorically sophisticated writing style appropriate to upper-division university discourse;
4. mastery of the mechanics of standard English.

**Student Learning Goals**

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

- write documents and make oral presentations that are clear, correct, concise, concrete, coherent, complete, courteous, and culturally appropriate;
- 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.

**GE Student Learning Objectives:** SLOs 1 - 3

[English 100WB: English 100W Learning Objectives (G.E. Area Z)]

Student Learning Objective I (SLO 1): Students shall be able to refine the competencies established in Written Communication 1A and 1B (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.*

Student Learning Objective 2 (SLO 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.

Student Learning Objective 3 (SLO 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.

### **Course Content**

- **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. This minimum requirement excludes the final examination, journal writing, quizzes, and impromptu short writing assignments. However, it can include the department diagnostic and assignments that require major revisions to a previously graded or reviewed draft; a major revision is defined as a significant rethinking and reworking of an assignment, and not simply one that “corrects” mechanical errors noted on the original. At least two graded assignments shall be written in class. How the 8000 word minimum will be met and distributed must be clearly indicated on greensheets.
- **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. Contact information for our university research librarian, Ann Agee/ Christa Bailey, is provided in this syllabus under the section entitled, "Research Projects."
- **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.
  - **Grading:** A/B/C/D/F. Grades from A – F will be given; however, this class must be passed with a C or higher for purposes of graduation. A passing grade in the course signifies that the student has developed those writing, reading, and research abilities necessary for upper-division work in those majors that comprise the College of Business.

#### Application:

Apply the mechanics of effective communication

Employ the "seven Cs" of effective communication -

Clear, Concise, Concrete, Correct, Cohesive, Complete & Courteous

Clear: Message needs to be clear to be effective.

Concise: Message needs to be brief if it is to read by busy people.

Concrete: Message needs concrete (specific) terms for accuracy and credibility.

Correct: Message must include proper spelling, grammar, punctuation and format.

Coherent: Message needs to "hang together" so that ideas flow from one to the next through smooth transitions.

Complete: Message needs to include enough relevant and useful information.

Courteous: Message should be positive to build goodwill, and focus on the audience.

#### **Assignments:**

Modules/ Chapters must be read by the beginning of the class for which they were assigned. Read closely, take notes, and be prepared to discuss the

assigned materials in class and to take a quiz on the material.

Expect a quiz and/or other in-class writing and worksheets/handouts every class meeting. These assignments will help improve your writing and are important to your learning. These assignments can not be made-up.

This is a writing intensive class; students can expect to have a typed, printed and stapled sample of writing due frequently, as well as frequent in-class writing assignments. Out-of-class class work is due at the beginning of class. Assignments will not be accepted by email. Due to the brevity of the summer session, a late assignment will **only** be accepted by the next class meeting after its original due date and the maximum amount of credit which it will be given is fifty percent of the original point value. The only exception to this policy involves the final paper. The final paper will only be accepted on the due date listed in the syllabus

Besides the main textbook, *Business Communication, Building Critical Skills* one other text, *The Commanding Heights*, has been assigned.

Business communication is not only written, it is also spoken. One short speech and two longer presentations are required for the class. Students will be expected to not only present both of these but also provide feedback on their classmates' presentations.

The final exam is used to gauge student progress in the course and is necessary for success in the course. The final exam will be given on Wednesday, August 5, 2015 at 6:00 PM. Since, the final exam is mandatory, students must take the final exam in order to pass the class.

### **Grading Standards:**

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.

[90 - 100% (A); 80 – 89% (B); 70 – 79% (C); 60 – 69% (D); sub- 60% (F)]

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.

All class assignments (written and oral) will be graded for:

**Precision** (clarity, conciseness, completeness, cohesiveness, and correct use of

grammar, punctuation, spelling, well-organized paragraphs, and appropriate diction and syntax.).

**Attention** to the importance of the message and the audience you are addressing.

**Appropriateness** and **Courtesy** of your communication, and your ability to follow directions.

### **A = Excellent Communication**

(100 – 90% A)

Demonstrates impeccable grammar, punctuation, and spelling (if written); demonstrates impeccable grammar, vocal quality, and speaking style (if oral). Excellent analysis of business situation and audience, coordinated with appropriate choice of communication style, mode and tone. Excellent composition (organization and format) of message and outstanding transitions, enabling the audience to understand and follow the writer's or presenter's logic. Message is superbly crafted, articulated and delivered to leave audience with a clear "take away." Presentation may be unique and is exciting to the audience.

### **B = Good Communication**

(89 – 80%)

(Demonstrates good grammar, punctuation and spelling (if written); demonstrates good grammar, vocal quality, and speaking style (if oral), Appropriate analysis of business situation and audience, coordinated with appropriate choice of communication style, mode and tone. Appropriate composition (organization and format) of message and outstanding transitions. The audience should be able to understand and follow the writer's or presenter's logic. Message is superbly crafted, articulated and delivered to leave the audience with a clear "take-away." Presentations may be unique or intriguing to the audience.

### **C = Satisfactory Communication**

(79 – 70%)

Grammar, punctuation, and spelling (if written) are basically acceptable; grammar, vocal quality, and spelling (if written) are basically acceptable; grammar, vocal quality, and speaking style (if oral) are basically acceptable. Demonstrated attempt to analyze business situation and audience, however, choice of communication style, mode and tone may not have been optimal. Audience should be able to determine the organizational pattern, and recognize the "take-away" message being presented. Presentation may not engage the audience.

### **D = Communication**

(69 – 60%)

Grammar, punctuation, and spelling (if written) are partially acceptable; some aspects of grammar, vocal quality, and spelling (if written) are flawed; grammar,

vocal quality, and speaking style (if oral) are also partially flawed. Demonstrated attempt to analyze business situation and audience, however, choice of communication style, mode and tone may have several problems. Audience is unable to determine the organizational pattern, and recognize the “take-away” message being presented. Presentation may not engage the audience.

### **F – Unsatisfactory Communication**

(59 – 0%)

Use of upper division quality grammar (written and oral), punctuation, and spelling (if written) is a requirement of satisfactory work. Although one major flaw will not result in an unsatisfactory grade, multiple major flaws compound to create unacceptable work. An unacceptable number of errors in either the content of the communication; the analysis of the business situation and audience, and resultant choice of communication style, mode and tone; the composition (organization, format and transitions) of the message; or the inability of the writer/ presenter to identify and craft a “take-away” message will result in unsatisfactory work.

### **SJSU Academic Integrity Policy**

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José 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 it 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 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>

**Grade Distribution**

## Group project

- Topic proposal – 600 words
- Investigative report – 500 words
- Intro paragraph and outline – 200
- Paper – 1500 words
- Presentation – (12 -13 minutes)

## Individual project

- Proposal – 500 words
- Investigative report – 500 words
- Intro paragraph and outline – 200 words
- Paper – 2000 words
- Presentation – (7 – 9 minutes)

**Value**

25 points (Assign.# 3)  
25 points (Assign.# 4)  
20 points (Assign.# 5)  
100 points (Assign.# 7)  
50 points

25 points (Assign.# 8)  
25 points (Assign.# 9)  
20 points (Assign.# 10)  
100 points (Assign.# 15)  
50 points