

Business Grammar and Style: Fundamentals of Writing

WRBS6202

Course Outline

Description: In order to be credible and professional your business writing must be clear, succinct, and of course, correct. This intensive course introduces you to the essential elements of grammar: punctuation, style and mechanics. In addition, you will learn to use writing manuals in order to continuously improve your business writing. This course will provide you with the fundamental building blocks of an effective written communications skill set.

Course Goals:

- To increase participants' knowledge of the essential elements of grammar, punctuation, mechanics, style and usage
- To improve participants' business writing skills through the application of the rules of these essential elements
- To increase participants' knowledge of and to provide practice writing clear, succinct and correct material
- To develop an effective writing process that promotes clear, succinct and correct material

Course Objectives: At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Write grammatically correct sentences
- Punctuate sentences correctly
- Use plurals and possessives correctly
- Use words precisely and accurately
- Write to a specific audience and for a specific purpose
- Differentiate between writing tasks and editing tasks

How the Course Works:

Since this is an online course, you will be doing the work on your own time. Time management skills, therefore, are important, and if you have any questions about the material or the assignments, it is important to speak up. In my experience, if you have a question, there will be a few others who have the same question (or a similar one). I am always available to answer questions by email or on the discussion board, and I answer within 24 hours.

Each week there is reading (one or two chapters) from the course text: The McGraw-Hill 36-Hour Course Business Writing and Communication by Kenneth W. Davis. A question that is related to the reading will be posted on the discussion board, and everyone is expected to respond to it. Your goal for the discussion board is to move the conversation forward: offer your perspective, add to a peer's comment, relate the question to your personal experience, ask more questions, and respond to your peers. Writing three to five sentences (generally) is a good length to encourage further comments.

You will also find a handout on the grammar point that we will cover for the week, as well as some links for further reading if you are interested in learning more. There is a separate forum on the discussion board to ask questions about the grammar lesson for the week. By the end of each week, you will also need to complete the posted quiz.

The ultimate goal is to improve our business writing communication. In week 8, everyone will edit pieces of business communication.

There is no formal grade in this course. In order to pass:

- **You must earn 100% on each grammar quiz.** You can take each quiz as many times as you need to.
- **You must participate on the discussion board every week.** Minimum participation is two posts that contribute to the conversation. The description of the discussion board above sets out the possibilities for moving the dialogue forward.
- **In week 8 you will edit business documents.**

It is my hope that you will apply the lessons to your daily work as you learn from the text and as you review these grammar lessons. The goal for this course is that you will acquire new writing habits and become a better communicator, and the best way to do this is by practicing what you are learning everyday.

Code of Student Conduct

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For the complete Code of Student Conduct: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>

Western Continuing Studies

Course Schedule:

Week 1
Introduction Course Outline and Course Expectations Grammar: Parts of Speech: Nouns, Pronouns, Verbs, Prepositions, Adjectives Writing: Introduction: <i>Manage Your Writing</i>
Week 2
Grammar: Parts of Sentence Sentence fragments Writing: Chapter One: <i>Find the "We": Manage Your Relationship with Your Reader</i>
Week 3
Grammar: Run-on Sentences, Comma Splices Writing: Chapter Two: <i>Make Holes, Not Drills: Manage Your Purpose</i> Chapter Three: <i>Get Your Stuff Together: Manage Your Information</i>
Week 4
Grammar: Punctuation Writing: Chapter Four: <i>Get Your Ducks in a Row: Manage Your Structure</i> Chapter Five: <i>Do It Wrong the First Time: Manage Your Drafting</i>
Week 5
Grammar: Subject-verb agreement Writing: Chapter Six: <i>Take a Break and Change Hats: Manage Your Internal Writer and Editor</i> Chapter Seven: <i>Signal Your Turns: Manage Your Paragraphs</i>
Week 6
Grammar: Pronouns and Pronoun reference errors Writing: Chapter Eight: <i>Say What You Mean: Manage Your Subjects and Verbs</i> Chapter Nine: <i>Pay by the Word: Manage our Sentence Economy</i>
Week 7
Grammar: Parallelism Capital letters and numbers Commonly confused words Writing: Chapter Ten: <i>Translate into English: Manage Your Word Choices</i> Chapter Eleven: <i>Finish the Job: Manage Your Spelling, Punctuation, and Mechanics</i>
Week 8
Grammar: Proofreading and Editing Pulling it all together: Summary Exercises Writing: Chapter Twelve: <i>Manage Your Writing: Evaluate Your Writing Process</i>