

Business Grammar and Style: Fundamentals of Writing

WRBS6202

Course Outline (Online)

Description

A command of grammar is vital to being recognized as a credible and confident business professional. Strong grammar skills combined with style allows you to communicate your ideas effectively and support others in their efforts to do the same. When your writing is clear, concise and correct, you and your organization save costly resources and achieve desired results with greater efficiency.

To help you improve your writing skills this course will focus on the essential elements of grammar, with an emphasis on common errors and myths. Topics will include: parts of speech, parts of the sentence, punctuation, consistency, and more. You will learn how to construct words, sentences and paragraphs to clarify meaning, improve flow and use language to achieve an appropriate tone—and you will discover the topic of Plain Language. This course will also ensure that you know how to get the grammar answers you need once you're back at your desk!

Course Goals

The goals of this course are to:

- Increase your confidence and credibility in the workplace through strong writing skills and your ability to help others improve their skills
- Improve your knowledge and application of the essential elements of grammar
- Improve the clarity, flow and language of your writing so that your audience understands what you are trying to say
- Provide you with a list of helpful grammar resources you can use when you are out in the real world

Course Objectives

At the completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Write grammatically correct sentences
- Punctuate sentences correctly
- Use words precisely and accurately
- Construct clear sentences and paragraphs
- Write to convey the appropriate tone for your audience
- Write using Plain Language
- Find answers to your grammar questions quickly and easily

Textbooks

There is no required textbook for this course. However, the following books provide excellent additional reading and will be regularly referred to by the instructor:

- *Woe Is I*, 3rd edition, by Patricia T. O'Connor.
- *Eats, Shoots & Leaves*, by Lynne Truss

This course outline is a sample only and is subject to change.

Western Continuing Studies

Evaluation

The evaluation of this course will be broken down as follows:

- Assignments: 45%
- Discussion Forums: 45%
- Final Reflection: 10%

Grading

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

Discussion Forum Grading Chart

Grade	Quantity (i.e. # of posts over the course)	Quality	Timeliness
9-10	25+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high quality • Includes further research • Consistently offers new ideas and sparks positive discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very timely • Allows time for lively discussion to build throughout the unit
7-8	20-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality • Consistently offers new ideas and sparks positive discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely • Allows time for fellow students to respond before the end of the unit
4-6	10-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality • Sometimes offers new ideas • Contributes to the discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always responds before the end of the unit
2-4	5-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality • Rarely offers new ideas or contributes to the discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not always respond before the end of the unit
0-2	Less than 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality reflects little understanding of the course content • Responses limited to "I agree," "Me too," or the like 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely responds before the end of the unit

Submitting Assignments

All assignments must be submitted electronically through OWL using the assignment tool. Failure to meet deadlines without the instructor's written permission will be subject to the late assignment policy. If you experience difficulty in submitting assignments through OWL, you are responsible for contacting the instructor and arranging an alternate method of delivery (e.g. email).

Policy on Late Assignments

Late assignments will receive a 2% per day deduction, including weekends, up to a maximum of 7 days, after which assignments will not be accepted and a grade of zero will be assigned, unless documentation for accommodation has been provided in advance.

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Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct

Academic honesty is a cornerstone of conduct at Western University. We cannot have freedom of expression without integrity. Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences; please refer to the section on “Scholastic Offences” in the current University Academic Calendar, or on the web at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca>. Such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in this University or elsewhere (without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom the work is submitted). Students enrolled in non-degree courses are expected to abide by the University’s code of conduct.

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/pdf/board/code.pdf>.

Plagiarism

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

When will I receive my grades?

Final grades will be available two weeks after the last scheduled day of the course. A grade report can be printed from myWCS.

Course Schedule

Topics	Self-Assessments	Discussion Forums (graded)	Assignments (graded)
Grammar: Parts of speech Style: Clarity	1. Defining parts of speech 2. Identifying parts of speech	Introductions	<i>Making It Clear</i> (re-write)
Grammar: Parts of the sentence Style: Sentence fragments & construction	1. Complements 2. Parts of the sentence 3. Sentence fragments	Reflections on <i>Making It Clear</i>	
Grammar: Punctuation (Part 1) Style: Flow	1. Commas		<i>Apartment Plan Deferred</i> article (re-write)
Grammar: Punctuation (Part 2) Style: Appropriate language	1. Finer Punctuation Marks	Does wordiness <i>really</i> matter?	
Grammar: Misplaced & dangling modifiers Style: Voice & tone	1. Modifiers	Are emoticons acceptable in workplace email?	<i>Wordy Wordington</i> email (re-write)
Grammar: Consistency Style: Clichés and euphemisms	1. Commonly confused words 2. Consistency		
Plain Language		Rate TD's update	Iva Cheong's comic
Beyond the Class	1. Summary		Final Reflection

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