

Professional Writing Essentials WRBS6202

Course Outline

Description:

Seven years ago, a misplaced comma cost Rogers Communications two million dollars. And Rogers learned the hard way that grammar matters. As a business professional, you can help your organization save costly resources and achieve growth when you have a solid command of grammar and a great writing style. Strong writing allows you to communicate your ideas effectively. It conveys credibility and confidence, and gives you an opportunity for advancement.

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 clauses, 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 credibility and confidence 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
- Encourage a discussion of the future of grammar in a digital world

Course Objectives: At the completion of this course, the student 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
- Consider the evolution of grammar in its popular and professional uses

Texts:

TBA

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Evaluation:

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

- Four assignments: 45%
- Discussion Forums: 45%
- Final Reflection: 10%

Total: 100%

Notes on assignments (papers and reports):

- Must be academic in style and content
- Must have a clear focus
- Must present ideas in a logical and well-thought-out flow
- Arguments, analysis and conclusions must be based on clearly identified research and sources
- Must cite all references from other sources
- Must be in paragraph format
- Must be double-spaced, and typewritten
- Must follow APA style

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

Online Participation Grading Chart:

The following chart will act as a guide for assessing student participation in this course.

Grade	Criteria
9-10	<p>The student participates frequently, providing relevant responses more than 25 times spread evenly over the length of the course.</p> <p>Replies to discussion questions, instructor comments as well as the responses of other students in a positive and critical manner.</p> <p>The student responds in a timely manner (allowing enough time for fellow students to respond, and not posting on the last day of the unit).</p> <p>Responses are of a high quality; an obvious effort has been made to research the answer. Responses offer new perspectives on course material and spark discussion amongst the class.</p>
7-8	<p>The student participates consistently, providing relevant responses 20-25 times over the length of the course.</p> <p>The student responds in a timely manner (allowing enough time for fellow students to respond, and not posting on the last day of the unit).</p>

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	The student offers new ideas and responds to the contributions of others.
6	<p>The student provides some relevant contributions, 15-20 times over the length of the course.</p> <p>The student responds before the end of the unit.</p> <p>The student occasionally offers new ideas and responds to others.</p>
5	<p>The student's contributions are inconsistent in both quality and timing, 10-15 times over the length of the course.</p> <p>The student's responses are not always on time.</p> <p>The student does not offer any new ideas, and responses to fellow students are few.</p>
4	<p>The student rarely provides contributions to the course, 5-10 times.</p> <p>The student does not always respond on time.</p> <p>The student has difficulty understanding the course content, and does not respond to the contributions of the other students.</p>
0-3	<p>The student provides little or no discussion, less than 5 times.</p> <p>Information is contributed only when asked to by the instructor, and responses are negative or disagreeable to the instructor/fellow students.</p> <p>Responses show little in the way of comprehension of course material. The responses are usually limited to "I agree," "Me too" or the like.</p>

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:

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>).

Western Digital Badge

If you have met the course requirements for this Western approved [micro-credential](#), you will receive an email from [MyCreds](#) to claim your digital badge. Badges are embedded with data that verifies your skills and achievements. Share them with your employer, on LinkedIn and other social media sites.

Course Schedule:

Week	Topics	Deliverables
Week 1	Grammar: Parts of speech Style: Clarity & Plain Language	Self-assessments (ungraded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining parts of speech Identifying parts of speech Discussion forums (graded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductions
Week 2	Grammar: Parts of the sentence Style: Sentence fragments and construction	Self-assessments (ungraded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complements Parts of the sentence Sentence fragments Assignments (graded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing for clarity
Week 3	Grammar: Punctuation (Part 1) Style: Appropriate Language	Self-assessments (ungraded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commas Assignments (graded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate language Discussion forums (graded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Oxford comma
Week 4	Grammar: Punctuation (Part 2) Style: Voice and tone	Self-assessments (ungraded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finer punctuation marks Discussion forums (graded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are emojis acceptable in the workplace?
Week 5	Grammar: Misplaced & dangling modifiers Style: Email Writing	Self-assessments (ungraded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modifiers Assignments (graded) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wordy Wordington email writing

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		<p>Discussion forums (graded)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a good email?
Week 6:	<p>Grammar: Consistency</p> <p>Style: Structure and flow</p>	<p>Self-assessments (ungraded)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonly confused words • Consistency <p>Assignments (graded)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing for improved flow & structure
Week 7:	Editing	<p>Discussion forums (graded)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of AI to shape grammar and style
Week 8:	Beyond the Class: Style Guides & Spelling	<p>Self-assessments (ungraded)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling <p>Discussion forums (graded)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar Love Fest <p>Assignments (graded)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini Style Guide

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