

AEC 3033C  
Research and Business Writing ONLINE  
§ 05EF, §3591 Syllabus, Spring 2019

Dr. Linda M. Perry



**AEC 3033C Research & Business Writing in Agricultural and Life Sciences** focuses on strategic written communication for agricultural and life sciences. Students can hone their writing skills and gain experience in effective professional and scholarly writing. Emphasis is placed on science communication, ethics, responsibility, accuracy, clarity, brevity, and style as well as American English grammar and spelling. This course establishes the importance of effective communication to success in both educational and professional environments; emphasizes writing as a primary form of communication; examines the elements of effective written communication in organizational and scholarly areas; and explores the causes of ineffective writing and ways to correct them.

**Course objectives** are to enable students to (1) write effectively in scientific, business, and academic contexts, (2) write in a variety of genres using accurate grammar, spelling, and punctuation, and (3) communicate information tailored to the needs and expectations of target audiences.

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**TAs:**

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**Textbook:** Johnson-Sheehan Richard, *Technical Communication Today 6<sup>th</sup> ed.*, Pearson, (2018)  
ISBN: 9780134425733 (The fifth edition of this book is acceptable).

**Recommended:** L. Faigley (2012), *The Brief Penguin Handbook with Exercises 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, Boston: Longman.

**Other materials:** Lecture notes as well as assignment instructions will be posted on Canvas. The lecture notes are *not* a substitution for viewing the recorded lectures.

**Class expectations:** The instructors are committed to helping you improve your writing and critical thinking skills. To that end, **you can expect** constructive feedback on your writing assignments and opportunities to apply that feedback with **rewrites** for four of the assignments. The rewrites can help you improve both your writing and your scores for those assignments. **We expect** collegial and timely class participation via the Canvas discussion boards, on-time submission of assignments, and honest effort. **To succeed in this course, you must complete all requirements for each module.** You are responsible for all information delivered in class, including information given in lectures that does not appear elsewhere in Canvas. Make-up quizzes and assignment-deadline extensions are granted only in cases of *documented* excused absences consistent with university policies:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

**Academic Honesty:** Academic honesty is expected, just as high ethical standards are required professionally. There will be zero-tolerance for anything less. That includes not giving, accepting or taking unauthorized aid, plagiarizing websites; plagiarizing others' *or your own previous work*; or doubling on assignments without the permission of all involved professors and instructors.

**Plagiarism and Copyright:** Plagiarizing includes taking **verbatim phrases of more than a few words** without permission or full attribution. When writing for science and business, we base our work on **facts** obtained from a variety of sources. We **cite our sources** so others can access the information we present. We give credit where it is due. We are very careful to ethically and lawfully use others' *unique expression* of that information. *Unique expression* can be a phrase of a few words or a simple moniker. We must obtain permission to use our sources' expression or give full credit for a *limited, fair use*. Assignments submitted via Canvas are automatically vetted for plagiarism with Turnitin. Violations will be pursued according to university guidelines. University of Florida's statement on academic honesty is on page 4 of this syllabus.

**Assignments:** You will **submit assignments electronically** in Microsoft Word via Canvas, following the instructions in Canvas Assignments. **Late work** is penalized 10% of the available points for that assignment *per day* unless you have a documented, excused absence. You must notify Dr. Perry two weeks in advance and provide documentation for any UF-approved activity.

**Optional rewrites**, when available, must be submitted for credit *within one week* after the graded assignment is returned to you. **Late rewrites will not be accepted.** You are **responsible** for submitting assignments correctly, assuring they have uploaded successfully, and checking Canvas for their *return*. If English is your second language, you may seek specialized help in the UF Writing Studio: <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/for-students/esl-assistance/>.

Major Assignments	Due Date	Word Count	Points Available
1. Letter of Introduction (R)	Jan. 22	500	100
<i>Module 3 Discussion Board</i>	Jan. 27 & Feb. 3	250	40
2. Tech Description & Explanation/Instructions	Feb. 17	700	100
<i>Module 7 Discussion Board</i>	Feb. 24, Mar 1, 10	250	50
3. Cover Letter and Résumé (R)	Mar. 1	700	110
4. Personal Statement (R)	Mar. 17	700	100
5. Persuasive Letter on Science Issue (R)	Mar. 24	500	100
6. Web Article, Headline & Tweet	April 7	400	100
7. Research Report & Proposal	April 22	2,000	200
<i>Quizzes</i>	Variable	0	100
<b>Totals</b>		<b>6,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>

**(R) = Rewrite available**

**Grading:** Your assignments are graded according to course rubrics located in Canvas: Files. If you have questions or concerns about your grade, please **speak with your grader first within one week** of the assignment's being returned to you before appealing to Dr. Perry.

The number of **points** you earn determines your final grade. Rewrites (available for four assignments) can help you earn up to half the points you missed on the draft. To receive **Writing Rule credit**, you must earn C (730 points) or better. **The grading scale** follows:

<b>A</b>	950 to 1000	<b>C</b>	730 to 769
<b>A-</b>	900 to 949	<b>C-</b>	700 to 729
<b>B+</b>	870 to 899	<b>D+</b>	670 to 699
<b>B</b>	830 to 869	<b>D</b>	630 to 669
<b>B-</b>	800 to 829	<b>D-</b>	600 to 629
<b>C+</b>	770 to 799	<b>E</b>	599 & Below

Information on UF policies for assigning grade points:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

**The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary.**

**Reading & Assignment Schedule:**

- Readings are from the **sixth edition** of textbook. (**Fifth edition** readings are specified where they differ.)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
I • Jan. 7	Welcome video Module 1: Introduction, Overview, Issues & Letters <b>Module 1 Discussion Board:</b> Introduce yourself (Jan. 11) <i>Quiz 1:</i> Formal Business Letters (due Jan. 14)	Canvas Ch. 6 (5 in 5 <sup>th</sup> ), 19
II • Jan. 14	Module 2: Writing Well • Grammar <i>Quiz 2:</i> Grammar (due Jan. 22) <b>DUE Jan. 22:</b> 1. Letter of Introduction	Appendix A Ch. 16: pp. 449-465 (421-437in 5 <sup>th</sup> )
III • Jan. 22	Module 3: Audiences • Writing Styles <i>Quiz 3:</i> Audiences (due Jan. 28) <b>Module 3 Discussion Board:</b> Audience Analysis (Jan. 27+) Jan. 21 is Martin Luther King Day — NO CLASS	Ch. 2
IV • Jan. 28	Module 4: Technical Writing: Definitions & Descriptions <i>Quiz 4:</i> Technical Descriptions (due Feb. 4) <b>DUE Jan. 27 &amp; Feb. 3:</b> Discussion Board 3	Ch. 1, 7 (6 in 5 <sup>th</sup> )
V • Feb. 4	Module 5: Explanations, Instructions & Documentation <i>Quiz 5:</i> Technical Explanations & Instructions (due Feb. 11)	Ch. 8 (7 in 5 <sup>th</sup> )
VI • Feb. 11	Module 6: Cover Letter, Résumé & Personal Statement <i>Quiz 6:</i> The Job Search (due Feb. 18) <b>DUE Feb. 17:</b> 2. Technical Description & Explanation/Instructions	Ch. 5 (11 in 5 <sup>th</sup> )
VII • Feb. 18	Module 7: Science Communication • Brainstorming <i>Quiz 7:</i> Science Communication (due Feb. 25) <b>Module 7 Discussion Board:</b> Brainstorming a Science Issue <b>DUE Feb. 24, March 1, 10:</b> Discussion Board 7	Ch. 3, 12, Handouts
VIII • Feb. 25	Module 8: Persuasive Writing <i>Quiz 8:</i> Persuasion (due March 4) <b>DUE March 1:</b> 3. Cover Letter & Résumé <b>DUE March 1 &amp; 10:</b> DB7	Ch. 13, 16: p. 465-475 (p. 437-445 in 5 <sup>th</sup> )
<b>March 3-8</b>	<b>****SPRING BREAK****</b>	
IX • March 11	Module 9: Research Reports and Proposals <i>Quiz 9:</i> Research Reports and Proposals (due March 18) <b>DUE March 17:</b> 4. Personal Statement	Ch. 9, 11, 14 (8-10 in 5 <sup>th</sup> )
X • March 18	Module 10: Annotated Bibliographies • APA Style <i>Quiz 10:</i> APA style (due March 25) <b>DUE March 24:</b> 5. Persuasive Letter on Science Issue	Ch. 15, Appendix C
XI • March 25	Module 11: Writing for the Web & Social Media <i>Quiz 11:</i> Writing for Web & Social Media (due April 1)	Ch. 23-24
XII. • April 1	Module 12: Message Design • Presentations <i>Quiz 12:</i> Message Design and Presentations (due April 8) <b>DUE: April 7:</b> 6. Web Article & Tweet	Ch. 17-18
XIII • April 8	Module 13: Law & Ethics	Ch. 4

*Quiz 13: Law & Ethics (due April 15)*

XIV • April 15

Work Week

**DUE: April 21:** 7. Research Report & Proposal

XV • April 22

Classes end Wednesday, April 24

***Communication About this Course***

**Questions about class content**, including assignments and grading, should be directed to Dr. Perry at [Imperry@ufl.edu](mailto:Imperry@ufl.edu) or your graders, once they are announced for each assignment.

**Questions about Canvas** should be directed to our instructional design specialist, Ms. Kellie Goughnour, at [goughnourkl@ufl.edu](mailto:goughnourkl@ufl.edu) or to the Canvas Help Desk at <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>.

**Complaints about this course** may be directed to: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>.

**UF Academic Honesty, Software Use, Campus Helping Resources, Services for Students with Disabilities*****Academic Honesty***

The UF student body has enacted an honor code and has committed itself to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. When students enroll at the university, they commit themselves to the standard enacted by students.

The **Honor Pledge**: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

Students should report any condition that facilitates dishonesty to the instructor, department chair, college dean, Student Honor Council, or Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution in the Dean of Students Office.

(Source: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>)

It is assumed all work will be completed independently unless the assignment is defined as a *group project*, in writing by the instructor. This policy will be vigorously upheld at all times in this course.

**Software Use:** All faculty, staff and students of the university are required to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

***Evaluation of Online Courses***

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two to three weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

***Campus Helping Resources***

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university’s counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems, lacking clear career or academic goals, or experiencing other problems that may interfere with their academic performance.

**University Counseling & Wellness Center**, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

Counseling Services

Groups and Workshops

Outreach and Consultation

Self-Help Library

Training Programs

Community Provider Database

**Career Resource Center**, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, [www.crc.ufl.edu/](http://www.crc.ufl.edu/)

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** The Disability Resource Center — 0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) — coordinates accommodations needed for students with disabilities. Students requesting special accommodations must first register as early in the semester as possible with the [Dean of Students Office](#), which will provide documentation. It is the *student's responsibility* to assure the documentation is delivered to the instructor. Accommodations include registering disabilities, accessing special adaptive equipment, providing interpretation services, and mediating faculty-student disability-related issues.