WRIT 3303 (E90/91): WRITING IN YOUR PROFESSION

WRIT 3303 (E90/91): Writing in Your Profession
Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education Department
Fall 2025 (3 Credits)

Instructor: Matt Morgenstern, PhD (he/him/his), mmorgens@crk.umn.edu
Course Mode: Online Asynchronous
Course LMS: https://canvas.umn.edu/courses/509654
In-Person Student Hours: W 10-1130 AM CT, 210 Selvig Hall
Zoom Meetings: By Appointment

- I am usually on campus between 9 AM to 5 PM Monday through Friday. Aside from teaching and other responsibilities, we can meet and chat in my office *if* I am in the office. Otherwise, please speak with or email me to schedule a meeting. I will not be available to meet after 4 PM, and I will not answer emails sent after 6 PM until the next day.

This publication/material is available in alternative formats on request. Please contact:

Disability Resource Center, University of Minnesota Crookston
247 Sargeant Student Center, 2900 University Ave., Crookston, MN 56716
(218) 281-8587, umcdrc@crk.umn.edu

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

Writing about subjects related to students' academic disciplines and future professions. Developing persuasive writing skills for academic, personal, and professional purposes. Effective communication principles, audiences, formats, and technologies.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Writing in Your Profession surveys different genres of business, technical, and workplace writing. Across four major projects and myriad activities, you will enhance different critical writing skills, learn diverse communication conventions, and build on pre-existing research strategies. Moreover, you will improve your problem-solving skills through frequent active learning and collaboration opportunities. Writing in Your Profession therefore expands your compositional literacy through new writing skills and rhetorical situations.

COURSE SCHEDULE

A detailed course schedule will be available on Canvas. <mark>Any changes will be announced ASAP on Canvas.</mark>

COURSE LEARNER OUTCOMES

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

1. Demonstrate a process of writing that involves pre-writing, writing, organization, editing, conferencing, rewriting and revision, a personal style, audience assessment, purpose, and delivery;
2. Use communication which is clear, fluent, strategic, critical, and creative;
3. Complete a project relevant to the student's discipline incorporating appropriate documentation and research methods;
4. Present, arrange, and organize information in various genres common in workplace and professional settings;
5. Develop and practice strategies that allow appropriate engagement in communication tasks for a variety of purposes and audiences.

This class also fulfills the following program-level learning outcome for the UMC English program:

> Outcome 1.1: Invent, organize, draft, revise, and edit a paper, document, or text worthy of professional presentation.

According to 8710.4250 curriculum mapping, WRIT 3303 has four standards (A6, A8, B4a, and B4d) with "K" indicating knowledge and "A" indicating assessment.

8710.4250 Teachers of Communication Arts & Literature	Evidence of Learning Opportunities & Assessments
Standard 1, Subject Matter (8710.4250). A candidate for licensure as a teacher of communication arts and literature must complete a preparation program under subpart 2, item C, which includes the demonstration of the knowledge and skills in items A to C.	
A – 4250. A teacher of communication arts and literature understands central concepts common to the teaching and learning of communication arts and literature content. The teacher must understand and apply:	

A6. Communication which is clear, fluent, strategic, critical, and creative; (KA)	**KNOWLEDGE** Required textbook readings and sample engagement with real-world sources of effective writing. **ASSESSMENT** Students complete two essays that challenge them to conduct analysis and prepare a formal report in similar genres. Students also undertake several drafting activities while reflecting on their work.
A8. Strategies that allow appropriate engagement in communication tasks for a variety of audiences; (KA)	**KNOWLEDGE** Required textbook readings and sample engagement with real-world sources of effective writing. **ASSESSMENT** Students review real-world materials in various genres of workplace, technical, and professional writing. In addition to written work, they produce a group presentation that uses a unique slide design scheme.

8710.4250 Teachers of Communication Arts & Literature	Evidence of Learning Opportunities & Assessments
Standard 1, Subject Matter (8710.4250). A candidate for licensure as a teacher of communication arts and literature must complete a preparation program under subpart 2, item C, that must include the demonstration of the knowledge and skills in items A to C.	
B – 4250. A teacher of communication arts and literature demonstrates understanding and **skills essential to the teaching and learning** of reading, writing, speaking, listening, media literacy, and literature. The teacher must demonstrate the:	

4. Knowledge, skills, and ability to teach literature including:	
B4a. Various stages of the writing process, including prewriting, writing, conferencing, revising, and publishing used in teaching writing; (KA)	**KNOWLEDGE** Students learn about effective drafting and revision processes not only through engagements with the textbook but also multiple 1-1 conferences and peer reviews. **ASSESSMENT** Student drafts, conference attendance, and peer review engagement reflected in holistic project grades.
B4d. Conventions for presenting, arranging, and organizing information in particular genres or media; (KA)	**KNOWLEDGE** Students work with memos, group presentations, and other genres throughout the course. **ASSESSMENT** Workplace Communication Analysis, Backgrounder, Group Recommendation Report, and Course Reflection projects encompass the course's generic diversity.

UMC CORE COMPETENCIES

Core competencies as defined by UMC are dominant themes, transferable skills, and important abilities essential to an individual's success in any occupation or life setting. They are requirements across the curriculum. Specifically, you will develop and express ideas in written form (Writing Competency); work collaboratively, engage in controversy with civility, and assume shared responsibility while working with others toward a common goal (Teamwork Competency); and design, evaluate, and implement a strategy to answer a question, resolve an issue, or solve a problem (Problem-Solving Competency).

REQUIRED READING

Our required textbook is *Technical Communication Today* **(2024, seventh edition, ed. Johnson-Sheehan, ISBN: 9780137704453).** You may purchase a print copy, but I recommend you rent an eText through the Pearson+ platform. [More information about rental and purchase options can be found here.](#) The textbook should also be available through CourseWorks. We will use the book both for Reading Quizzes and as a general reference, so you should either rent or purchase it within the first few days of the semester.

In all writing classes, it is important to understand *how* to write and *what* to write about for different projects. Consistent reading not only enhances cognitive resiliency but also contributes to your understanding of different styles, forms, and genres. As intersecting practices, reading and writing fuel your skills development, increase your cultural literacy, and encourage future success in different academic and professional settings.

ONLINE COURSE CONDUCT

As an online course, our section of WRIT 3303 requires daily engagement. Most of your communication with me and your classmates will occur either through email, Zoom meetings, or on Canvas. To succeed, you should check your email on weekdays during standard business hours (8 AM to 5 PM), keep up with assigned readings and activities, and ask questions as they arise. You will NOT do well if you do not maintain a consistent work schedule. If you are struggling to keep up with the work, reach out and we can discuss time management strategies.

I encourage you to treat this course as a professional space that requires appropriate communication, which includes the following:

- Using plain, direct language, avoiding slang. If necessary, explain jargon with a clause or two
- Giving others the opportunity to join the discussion. Invite them by name, or wait for others to speak
- Reflecting on your writing before you push the "Send" button. Think of your emails, Discussion posts, and other messages as classroom contributions

Any offensive language or hostility toward me or other classmates will not be tolerated. Finally, I strive to respond to your emails within 24 hours and provide feedback on your work within five business days after submission (I will do so sooner for drafts of major assignments).

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Our course uses a points-based approach starting from zero. Canvas distinguishes between your *current* grade and your *final* grade. Your *final* grade will reflect the number of points earned out of a total across multiple assignments. Your *current* grade will reflect the total number of points assigned by that point in the semester. For example, if we have had four assignments totaling 20 points, and you have received 15 out of 20 possible points, your current grade is 75%, which is a C. If you have questions about your current grade at any point, please reach out.

Detailed rubrics for all assignments will be available on Canvas, and all assignments must be submitted to the appropriate Canvas portal by 11:59 PM CT on the assigned due date. More information about these assignments will be provided as the course progresses.

1. Shorter Writing Assignments (10 points each, 70 total)
    a. You will complete shorter writing assignments throughout the course that reflect your engagement with different materials.

2. Reading Quizzes (9 quizzes, 10 points each, 90 total)
    a. We will use *Technical Communication Today* as a touchstone for critical skills development, so you will take regular Reading Quizzes about chapter contents. You should prepare for these quizzes by completing the reading by the assigned date and identifying major components. The quizzes, which you will take through Canvas, will be open note and last for thirty minutes.

3. Peer Review (3, 20 points each, 60 total)
    a. For the Workplace Communication Analysis, Backgrounder, and Group Recommendation Report, you will complete different peer review activities and practice effective feedback delivery. You will complete peer reviews using Canvas Discussions.

4. Workplace Communication Analysis (100 points)
    a. For the Workplace Communication Analysis, you will conduct a comparative analysis of two memos. Your analysis will not only teach you more about effective workplace technical writing practices but also further your engagement with different genres of business, technical, and workplace communication. Your grade will reflect both the Rough Draft (20 points) and final submission (80 points).

5. Backgrounder (130 points)

    a. For the Backgrounder, you will write a brief memo (3-4 single-spaced pages, with additional formatting requirements in the prompt) that identifies a problem of interest to Crookston's campus, the Crookston community, YOUR community (if you are not based in Crookston), or a company you either work for or plan to work for in the future. You will not only highlight the problem through your writing but also support the problem's significance with reference to scholarly research. Your grade will reflect the Progress Report (10 points), Rough Draft (20 points), and final submission (100 points).

6. Group Recommendation Report (150 points)
    a. For the Group Recommendation Report, you will collaborate asynchronously with classmates to produce a recommendation report (7-8 pages, including specific components detailed in the prompt) that identifies solutions to the problem of ONE Backgrounder. You will draw on preexisting research and writing skills to produce the report, which will demand unique design requirements. Your grade will reflect two Progress Reports (10 points each, 20 total), the Rough Draft (20 points), a group evaluation sheet (10 points), and the final submission (100 points).

7. Reflection Presentation (80 points)
    a. For the Reflection Presentation, you will briefly present a reflection on your work in the course, considering key takeaways and transferable skills. You will record yourself delivering the presentation (lasting at least two minutes) accompanied by a well-designed slide deck. Your grade will reflect the Rough Draft (20 points) and final submission (80 points, including the video and the slide deck).

TOTAL POINTS: 680

GRADE SCHEME AND GPA

For more on UMC's grade scheme, see [Grading and Transcripts](). Your final grades will be based on the following scheme and how many points out of the total you receive:

A	100% to 93%
A-	< 93% to 90%
B+	< 90% to 87%
B	< 87% to 83%
B-	< 83% to 80%
C+	< 80% to 77%

C	< 77% to 73%
C-	< 73% to 70%
D+	< 70% to 67%
D	< 67% to 60%
F	< 60% to 0%

The A-F grading scale below charts corresponding GPA points:

Grade	GPA Points	Definitions for undergraduate credit
A	4.000	Represents achievement that significantly exceeds expectations in the course.
A-	3.667	
B+	3.333	
B	3.000	Represents achievement that is above the minimum expectations in the course.
B-	2.667	
C+	2.333	
C	2.000	Represents achievement that meets the minimum expectations in the course.
C-	1.667	
D+	1.333	
D	1.000 -	Represents achievement that partially meets the minimum expectations in the course.
F	0.000	Represents failure in the course and no credit is earned.

EXTRA CREDIT

No extra credit opportunities will be granted.

MISSED EXAMS / LATE WORK

All assignments must be submitted by the listed due date. You may request an extension of two days for all assignments EXCEPT for major projects and in-class work (exams, Reading Quizzes, etc.). You must request an extension for an assignment at least one week prior to the due date.

FINAL EXAM

We do not have a final exam.

STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER

The Student Success Center (SSC) is dedicated to the holistic development of students as they navigate their college experience. The SSC offers a variety of services, including tutoring, writing assistance, academic coaching, study skills workshops, and access to academic resources. Our aim is to help students develop the skills and strategies necessary for academic success.

Academic Support Resources Offered

- Tutoring: Individual and group tutoring sessions in a wide range of subjects
- Writing Center: Help with writing assignments at any stage of the writing process
- Academic Coaching: Sessions on time management, note-taking, exam preparation, and more

Location and Contact Information

- Owen Hall 270/170
- umcssc@crk.umn.edu
- (218) 281-8555
- https://crk.umn.edu/student-success-center

Students can schedule appointments online, by visiting the SSC in person, or by emailing or calling our office. There is no additional charge for academic support in the

SSC to currently enrolled students. You are encouraged to take advantage of these resources early and often throughout your academic journey.

STUDENT WORKLOAD

Workload expectations are an estimate of the amount of work needed for an average student to earn an average grade. Course grades are based on the quality of the work submitted, not on hours of effort (see "Grading and Transcripts: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester"). Workload expectations per credit do not vary with the method of delivery of the course or the length of the academic term.

For the Fall or Spring semesters, one credit represents an average of three hours of academic work per week (including lectures, laboratories, recitations, discussion groups, field work, study, and so on) in order to complete the work of the course to achieve an average grade. One credit equals 45 hours of work over the course of the semester (1 credit x 3 hours of work per week x 15 weeks in a semester equals 45 hours of academic work). Thus, enrollment for 15 credits in a semester represents approximately 45 hours of work per week, on average, over the course of the semester.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to do your own academic work and to cite external sources of knowledge while completing your assignments. Failing to do so is considered a violation of academic integrity, and these violations encompass the following:

- Plagiarism
- Cheating on assignments or examinations
- Unauthorized use of online learning support and testing platforms
- Engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work, including the posting of student-generated coursework on online learning support and testing platforms not approved for the specific course in question
- Taking, acquiring, or using course materials without faculty permission, including the posting of faculty-provided course materials on online learning support and testing platforms
- Submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement
- Acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement
- Altering, forging, misrepresenting, or misusing a University academic record
- Fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis

If I determined that you have cheated, you may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University (see "[Teaching and Learning: Instructor and Unit Responsibilities](#)" for more information). Additional resources pertaining to academic integrity can be found through the [Office for Community Standards](#) and the [Center for Educational Innovation](#). Please speak with or email me when you have questions about course expectations. I can respond to specific questions regarding what would constitute violations of academic integrity in the context of a particular class, when and whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, when citing sources is required and what citation method to use, or when and which electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Analyzing problems, interpreting data, and expressing your own ideas is crucial to success in this course. Although generative AI tools could supplement those abilities, using them as substitutions for critical thinking, reading, and writing will negatively impact your academic and eventually professional standing. **As such, the use of generative AI tools for submitted work is not permitted.** If I believe your submitted work demonstrates abundant generative AI usage, you and I will meet to discuss the situation and you will be given a chance to resubmit a revised version of the assignment without penalty. If, after the first instance, you are found to have used AI again, I will follow the [Academic Integrity Procedure](#) guidelines as next steps.

I understand that you may use generative AI to generate topics, locate articles, or proof your writing. Our class will provide you with several opportunities to accomplish those using preexisting methods and tools. Ultimately, if you are unsure whether a particular use of GenAI is allowed, assume it is not, and consult me before proceeding.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. To support this environment, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University, you are expected to adhere to the [Board of Regents Policy](#). Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach and/or a student's ability to learn." The classroom extends to

any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, SEXUAL ASSAULT, STALKING AND RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

The University prohibits sexual misconduct and encourages anyone experiencing sexual misconduct to access resources for personal support and reporting. If you want to speak confidentially with someone about an experience of sexual misconduct, please contact a confidential resource on your campus. If you want to report sexual misconduct, or have questions about the University's policies and procedures related to sexual misconduct, please contact your campus Title IX office or relevant policy contacts.

I am required to share information that I learn about possible sexual misconduct with the campus Title IX office that addresses these concerns. This allows a Title IX staff member to reach out to those who have experienced sexual misconduct to provide information about personal support resources and options for investigation. You may talk to me about concerns related to sexual misconduct, and they will provide support and keep the information you share private to the extent possible given their University role (for more, see "Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Relationship Violence").

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, familial status, disability, public assistance status, membership or activity in a local commission created for the purpose of dealing with discrimination, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult the Board of Regents policy ("Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action").

DISCRIMINATION

All University members are prohibited from engaging in, or assisting or abetting another's engagement in, discrimination and related retaliation (collectively "prohibited conduct"). The University of Minnesota (the "University") will take prompt and effective steps intended to end prohibited conduct; prevent its recurrence; and, as appropriate, remedy its effects. For more information, please consult the administrative policy ("Discrimination").

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact the Disability Resource Center at 218-281-8587 (or email at umcdrc@umn.edu) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with Disability Resource Center and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact me as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course. For more information, please see the Disability Resource Center website.

MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website. If health, safety, or mental health concerns are conveyed, we may consult with campus support offices to provide support and resources to a student.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.* Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. First contact me, then the Sr. Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Dr. Rosemary Johnsen, rjohnsen@crk.umn.edu.

Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students."

USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each instructor to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. (For more, see "Teaching and Learning: Student Responsibilities.")

RESPECTING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Students may not distribute instructor-provided notes or other course materials, except to other members of the same class, during the same term, or with the express (written) consent of the instructor. Instructors have the right to impose additional restrictions on course materials in accordance with copyright and intellectual property law and policy. Students may not engage in the widespread distribution or sale of transcript-like notes or notes that are close to verbatim records of a lecture or presentation.