

Syllabus: ENGL 433, Writing Proposals & Grants, Spring 2024

X This class has concluded. If you're looking for a current course, visit [Dilger's teaching page](#).

Spring 2024 || CRN 16657, Section 001 || Heavilon Hall 227, Tue & Thu, 1:30p to 2:45p

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Schedule an appt: <https://calendly.com/cbdilger/>

Grant writing is challenging. Most grants go unfunded, and sometimes decision-makers provide little or no rationale for their decisions.

Effective grant writers confront this challenge by reflecting about their work, being systematic, and seeking ways to measure their effectiveness over time. In this course, I hope to help you develop skills, experiences, and knowledge useful in many writing contexts, and I'm eager to learn more as you all share your approaches and experiences with me.

Such work is essential as demand for extramural funding increases, especially in the humanities and social sciences. The old model—"Here's your money"—has been replaced by "Show me you deserve some money." And of course **grant writing is, like all writing, discipline and context-specific**: so the processes, rhetorics, genres, and content of grants varies widely.

As in all of my classes, **I am eager to shape this course to meet your needs.** Hence my request for you to [complete this survey](#) about your grant writing experience and overall goals. I further invite you to continue offering feedback throughout the semester, targeting issues large and small.

Goals & objectives

With a tight focus on grant writing, we are able to develop focused goals and objectives:

1. Learning similarities and differences between grant writing and other forms of technical communication;
2. Developing writing skills and knowledge critical for grant writing;
3. Finding, reading, and responding to requests for proposals;
4. Developing short summaries of grant projects, such as abstracts & one-pagers;
5. Learning typical grant proposal components, such as narratives, budgets, & timelines;
6. Learning complex genres often associated with grant writing, such as environmental scans, checklists, & reviews;
7. Becoming aware of essential skills that do not directly involve writing, such as developing and sustaining relationships with funders, attending to sustainability, evaluating capacity, and working in distributed teams.

Prior experience in at least one advanced writing course (e.g. COMM 314, 453; ENGL 304, 309, 421, or 432) is not required, but is highly recommended.

Readings

We have two principle course texts. Please purchase them immediately. **Ensure you purchase the correct editions (fifth, for both).** Hard copy or electronic textbooks are both fine.

1. Karsh, E. & Fox, A. S. (2019). *The only grant-writing book you'll ever need: Top grant writers & grant givers share their secrets* (5th ed). Basic Books. ISBN: 9781541617810
2. O'Neal-McElrath, T., Kanter, L., & English, L. J. (2019). *Winning grants step by step* (5th ed). John Wiley and Sons. ISBN: 9781119547341

Recommended texts

3. Redish, G. (2013). *Letting go of the words: Writing web content that works* (2nd ed). Morgan Kaufman. [Accessible through Purdue Libraries](#) (using SS0).
4. The style manual for your discipline (AP, APA, Chicago, CSE, IEEE, MLA, etc.).
5. A technical communication textbook such as *Technical Communication* or *Writing Today*. I will give you one if you don't already have one.

We will supplement these books with articles, examples, and other texts linked from the [detailed schedule](#), with context and guidance intended to make your reading efficient.

Contacting Dilger

Bradley Dilger, he/his/Dilger, dilger@purdue.edu, +1-309-259-0328, dtext.org. You're always welcome to email or text me. I do not use voice mail.

Make an appointment: <https://calendly.com/cbdilger>

Student consultation hours: TBD, Heavilon 302 or [Dilger Zoom](#).

Digital infrastructure for the class focuses on [Google Drive](#). We have a [Brightspace instance](#), but will use it minimally.

Assignments

There are four assignments, two that begin in week one and continue throughout the semester:

1. **Reading responses:** By Monday morning of each week, write a short (350± word) response that engages the readings and which we can use to stimulate discussions and activities.
2. **Engagement & participation:** Support active learning by engaging and discussing issues relevant to our readings and the course with me and your colleagues. Evaluated three times during the semester.

3. **Annotating an RFP:** Annotate a request for proposals (RFP) to identify important content for grant writing.
4. **Grant proposal development:** Draft a grant proposal that repeats the process of finding and annotating an RFP, then developing key proposal components.

Most project milestones and participation evaluations are due at the end of the day (EOD) on Fridays, and delivered via Google Drive. See assignment sheets for specifics.

Guide to success

Your success is the most important thing about our class. Imagine this as a checklist — do as many as you can:

1. **Communicate with me.** If you don't hear back, try again in a day or so — I'd rather get a couple more messages than miss hearing from you all.
2. **Engage and participate.** There is a direct correlation between engagement and transforming our reading and projects into skills and knowledge.
3. **Use the detailed course schedule** to plan your work and better engage the readings.
4. **Read carefully, early, and often.** Always bring the texts we're discussing on a given day to class. If you forget, please share with someone else.
5. **Take notes.** Turn reading into writing. Good things will happen. Take notes on the readings, in class, in group work, and as you complete your projects.
6. **Get help when you need it.** Think of asking for help as seeking consultation, a second opinion, or a fresh perspective—it's an essential skill for writers. Seek help from me, peers in and out of class, and/or the [On-Campus Writing Lab](#).
7. **Use a laptop or your phone in class as needed**—indeed, I ask that you bring one—but keep your focus.
8. **Try to be on time for class and appointments.** If you are late, enter class quietly. If you must miss an appointment, please let me know.
9. **Begin work on the projects immediately.** Effective writers develop ideas and hit targets over time. That goes double for grant writers.
10. **Ask if you need more time for any assignment**—in advance if possible.
11. **Read the feedback you get on drafts carefully.** Please ask if any of my feedback is unclear.
12. **Keep everything (drafts, notes, redos).** Be prepared to show your work.

Policies

Cultivate respect. I want everyone to feel welcome in face to face and electronic spaces. Please be generous in your responses to your colleagues. Always treat them with respect, grace, and courtesy. If I ever say or write something that you find disrespectful or problematic, please tell me

or ask one of my colleagues ([Dr. Robyn Bartlett](#), [Dr. Al López](#)) to do the same. Here's [Purdue's relevant policy](#).

If you need learning accommodations, just ask. I am happy to work directly with you and/or the [Disability Resource Center](#) as needed. You are welcome to ask for accommodations at any point in the semester. I will assume your accommodation needs are private unless you explicitly say otherwise.

Attendance is expected. I hope you will attend most if not all classes. Any necessary class cancellations or modifications will be announced with as much advance notice as possible, and reflected on the detailed schedule as well. So please check your messages before coming to class. If you miss a class, use the [class slides](#) and [class notes](#) to review the material and complete activities.

Your mental health and personal welfare are important to me. If you are feeling anxiety or stress about our course, other Purdue classes, or work, or having any trouble with food, housing, or well-being, I would like to know. I will help you and/or help you get help through Purdue and the Lafayette community. Information about [WellTrack](#), [CAPS](#), [CARE](#), and similar services is available from the [Office of the Dean of Students \(ODOS\)](#). For a list of community-based services, see [Lafayette Urban Ministries](#).

Academic integrity and professional ethical behavior are expected. Please strive for the highest level of ethical conduct in all matters related to class: careful and complete citation; accurate representation of your work; and respect for community partners. Here's the [Purdue academic integrity policy](#).

Privacy matters. Purdue is serious about [FERPA](#); I respect your privacy, too. I don't need to know your PUID. I will ask that we have conversations about your progress in my student consulting hours or other private spaces. I always assume personal information shared with me is in confidence. However, know that I am a [mandatory reporter](#) given my administrative role; this limits my ability to keep conversations about harassment or discrimination private.

Emergencies. We will monitor [Purdue Alert](#) and act accordingly if an emergency occurs during class. If we must leave Heavilon Hall because of an emergency, we will exit via the staircase immediately east of our classroom and regroup by the fountain on the northwest side of Grissom Hall. If we are asked to shelter in place, we will stay in Heavilon 227.

Grading

Grading uses a checklist approach intended to increase student agency and instructor time dedicated to providing feedback, while offering multiple paths to high grades. Complete all coursework on time, or with permission for modified deadlines, and you will earn a grade no lower than a B.

To earn a grade of **B** or higher, begin by satisfying two core requirements:

1. Complete all project milestones, demonstrating understanding of class content;
2. Complete all final projects, demonstrating improvement and development over time.

For the grade of **A**, students have two additional requirements:

3. Complete 11 or more reading responses;
4. Engage and participate intensively.

For the grade of **B**, students have two options. The first focuses on engagement & participation:

3. Complete 8 or more reading responses;
4. Engage and participate intensively.

The second path to a **B** emphasizes reading:

3. Complete 11 or more reading responses;
4. Engage and participate occasionally.

Grades of A and B can be raised to **A+** or **B+**, respectively, for students who complete the four requirements corresponding to those letter grades, and also:

- Complete projects that demonstrate exceptional understanding of class content, **or**
- Demonstrate exceptional participation and engagement.

Grades will be **dropped one half letter** (e.g. from B to a B-) for students who skip a draft milestone.

Grades of **C** are earned by students who:

1. Complete all project milestones, demonstrating understanding of class content;
2. Complete all final projects;
3. Complete 8 or more reading responses;
4. Engage and participate occasionally.

Students are welcome to take the class on a pass/fail (**P/NP**) basis. To earn a **P** grade, satisfy the **C** standards. Requests to take the class as P/NP must be made by Fri Feb 02.

I hope to assign no D or F grades. These grades are assigned only if:

- **D:** Students miss two draft milestones, **or** complete fewer than 8 reading responses, **or** engage and participate minimally.
- **F:** Students miss a project final, **or** commit academic dishonesty, **or** disrupt the class.

Following Department of English policy, grades of **I** (Incomplete) will be possible only in circumstances where students face challenges beyond their control, are making satisfactory progress, and extra time to complete course requirements is both warranted and sensible. A contract with a strict schedule will be developed and signed, with no extensions possible past December 15, 2024.

Purdue policies

All policies regarding Purdue coursework apply to this course: [Academic Regulations & Student Conduct](#). The following are included in Purdue Brightspace course instances by default.

- [Academic Regulations: Attendance](#)
- [Amorous Relationships](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness](#)
- [Nondiscrimination Policy Statement](#)
- [Purdue's Student Guide for Academic Integrity](#)
- [Office of the Dean of Students: Class Absences](#)
- [Violent Behavior Policy](#)
- [Use of Copyrighted Materials](#)

Official course description: Writing Proposals and Grants is a professional writing workshop that teaches students to write workplace proposals and grants in for-profit and not-for-profit companies and organizations. Students will also learn how to write business plans, a specialized form of proposal. No prerequisites. Three credit hours.

Overview calendar

Please see the [☰ detailed-schedule-ENGL433-GrantWriting](#) for specific, up-to-date prompts about readings, activities, and assignments.

Week	Dates	Content & assignments
1	Jan 9 & 11	Elements of grant writing
2	Jan 16 & 18	Grants, funders, & proposals
3	Jan 23 & 25	Reading RFPs
4	Jan 30 & Feb 1	Finding grants & researching funders Checklist & notes for annotating an RFP project Fri Feb 2
5	Feb 6 & 8	Writing goals & objectives First engagement & participation evaluation Fri Feb 9
6	Feb 13 & 15	Developing budgets & timelines Prospectus for grant proposal project Fri Feb 16
7	Feb 20 & 22	Writing proposal narratives
8	Feb 27 & 29	Writing one-pagers

9	Mar 5 & 7	Reviewing First draft of grant proposal project Fri Mar 8
10	Mar 12 & 14	Spring break; no classes, activities, or assignments
11	Mar 19 & 21	Evaluation Second engagement & participation evaluation Fri Mar 22
12	Mar 26 & 28	Sustainability
13	Apr 2 & 4	Content TBD
14	Apr 9 & 11	Content TBD Second draft of grant proposal project Fri Apr 12
15	Apr 16 & 18	Content TBD
16	Apr 23 & 25	Studio week: Conferences + in-class work Third engagement & participation evaluation Fri Apr 26
Ex	starts Apr 29	Exam week; no classes or activities Final grant proposal project Wed May 1

Document history

2024-0101: Ready to share.

2023-1227: Original created.