

Written Communication: Business

ENGL 100WB

Fall 2025 Section 09 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/17/2025

Contact Information

instructor(s):	Dr. Anne F. Walker
office location:	Dr. Walker's 2025 zoom room (Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/88423804462)
email:	anne.walker@sjsu.edu - I prefer email over Canvas messaging as email can embed links and images
student hours:	T/Th 1:15-2pm, and by appointment, in Dr. Walker's 2025 zoom room (Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/88423804462)
class days/time:	Mondays and Wednesdays, 3-4:15
classroom:	Boccardo Business Center 221

Course Information

This class is meant to give you skills to support your business interests. It is project-based and designed to be front-loaded, leaving the end as light-lifting. If you keep up you will have spaciousness at the end for other courses' finals. In-class work supports graded assignments. Much of this class will focus on how you best learn, digest, and express ideas with unfolding business cultures and communities.

Course Description and Requisites

Written communications for business majors; includes minimum of 8,000 words of writing spaced throughout the semester.

Writing in the Disciplines: Satisfies the CSU Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) if passed with "C" or better.

Prerequisite(s): A3 or equivalent second semester composition course (with a grade of "C-" or better); completion of core GE; and upper division standing. Or Graduate or Postbaccalaureate level. Allowed Declared Majors: All Business Administration majors, Industrial Arts, Industrial Technology, Professional & Technical Writing, Public Relations, Hospitality Management, Organizational Studies.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

a note about questions: It is always best to ask questions openly in class time. If you are thinking a question, chances are that seven other students will benefit from you asking the question out loud in class. Please do ask questions: it helps everyone.

attendance: It just is better for you and the class if you come. Attendance and participation connects you to your peers, your teacher, and the collaborative processing mind of the group. It will offer interesting new ways to learn. I will, also, take attendance. Still...

... if you feel sick: stay home. Get better. Check the week's Canvas page for work. Email me (with a clear subject heading referring to absence) to let me know what's up and how I can help. Coordinate completion of activities and assignments with your peers. Complete work listed online. We are in strange times, let's keep healthy to meet them.

consultations: There are 2 consultations. Each consultation is weighted like any of your "participation" assignments. All you have to do is show up. Not only do I look forward to meeting with you, but I'm trying to help you to get comfortable with showing up to office hours. It will help your academic progress in all classes and in professional settings. It's a secret code to success. And (low-stakes) practice helps.

AI/ChatGPT: in many ways, the act of writing is a way to think further on a topic and to organize or clarify those thoughts. The connection between writing and thinking is crucial to your development as a communicator, and it is a skill that will serve you well in all your future endeavors. Using AI to respond to essay prompts is cheating: it is cheating you out of the education you are paying for. If I see that you used AI for any significant percentage of any written assignment, I will not provide feedback, nor will you receive a passing grade for the assignment. Repeated infractions will result in a plagiarism report to the University.

plagiarism: success in this class will be measured by how well you understand the materials as presented in lectures or through class discussion. Repeating material found on secondary sources online is not acceptable, unless you are conducting research and providing proper documentation, and it will result in failure for the assignment, and possible failure in the course. Further action may be taken by the University per [F 15-7](#).

Program Information

Writing in the Disciplines (WID) courses develop students' abilities to communicate effectively in their major course of study and in their careers. With an emphasis on critical thinking, these upper-division core courses advance students' understanding of the genres, audiences, and purposes of college writing while preparing them for successful communication in their chosen professions. Completing Writing in the Disciplines with a C or better is an SJSU graduation requirement.

Writing in the Disciplines Learning Outcomes Upon successful completion of a Writing in the Disciplines course, students should be able to:

1. explain, analyze, develop, and critique ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse;
2. organize and develop complete discipline-specific texts and other documents for both professional and general audiences, using appropriate editorial and citation standards; and
3. locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing;
4. produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in language use, grammar, and clarity of expression.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

Course Goals

This course is meant to help you understand how you best receive information, digest it, and express yourself. Your own best practices may change over time. It is meant to help you articulate your own thoughts. We use multiple modalities as well as exploring various ways to approach business writing.

Finnish schools excel, with worldwide recognition, through the use of through less homework, classes that go all year, and shorter class time. [This. \(https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/09/10-reasons-why-finlands-education-system-is-the-best-in-the-world\)](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/09/10-reasons-why-finlands-education-system-is-the-best-in-the-world) [this. \(https://www.educationcorner.com/finland-education-system/\)](https://www.educationcorner.com/finland-education-system/) and [this. \(https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/why-are-finlands-schools-successful-49859555/\)](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/why-are-finlands-schools-successful-49859555/) have details. Something to think about.

This class is meant to give you skills to support all of your other classes and, in keeping with the ideal, is designed to be front-loaded, leaving the end of each semester as light-lifting. If you keep up you will have spaciousness at the end for other courses' finals. In-class work supports graded assignments. Again, much of this class will focus on how you best learn, digest, and express. Some of it will focus on naturalizing good writing practices that will help you through your professional career.

In addition to creating a substantive term project, you will create a LinkedIn page, resume, cover letter, an elevator pitch, executive summary, update memo, update presentation, original and updated timelines, effective internal messaging system missives, a final discussion of your term project, and post-game

analysis. All of these help to develop your term project and give you practice in these specific forms of business communication. Through the process you will also practice positive peer feedback techniques and ways to declutter your sentences and get right to the point in your writing.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

See "Program Information" above.

Course Materials

The Writer's Diet: A Guide to Fit Prose (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing), 2nd Edition, by Helen Sword, ISBN-10: 022635198X. You can access this through our library at [The writer's diet : a guide to fit prose. \(https://csu-sjsu.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/01CALS_SJO/citation/9866313420002919?auth=SAML\)](https://csu-sjsu.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/01CALS_SJO/citation/9866313420002919?auth=SAML). Only two people can access it at a time. If you choose to use the library copy make sure you give yourself plenty of time in case it's checked out. Also, if you use the library copy, download the chapter and log out. That way someone else can access it. Also, I upload the full chapter PDF with each chapter's assignment. So, it's a good resource, buy it if you want it. But that's not needed.

Adobe Creative Cloud: you have free access to it through SJSU. We will get you signed up and will be using it through the semester.

examples of materials: you will be asked to find examples of materials relevant to your project and present them.

Workload Expectations

"Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

From SJSU [Academic Senate Policy S12-3 \[pdf\] \(https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf)

Course Requirements and Assignments

assignment	CLO	point value
in-class participation	1 - 4	40
LinkedIn, resume, cover letter	1 - 4	10

elevator pitch with feedback on others' pitches	1 - 4	10
executive summary	1 - 4	5
first of two presentations on final project - ideating - with feedback on others' presentations	1 - 3	10
detailed draft of text for final project	1 - 4	5
completed final project	1 - 4	5
second of two presentations on final project - demonstrating final project - with feedback on others' presentations	1 - 4	10
reflection	1 - 4	5

The easiest way to see assignment dates is on the syllabus navigation page.

Each week we will use page that starts with "week" and then the correct week number as a primary organizing tool.

✓ Grading Information

Like many writing teachers at SJSU, I utilize minimum grading. For a description of this philosophy you might check out [Promising Approaches: Grading Scales and Equity in Physics](#). This also class uses low-stakes process-based grading, the idea being, by doing the work you learn and your learning is the focus of this class. Each assignment receives a grade connected to the associated rubric. Often I also add comments in the "Assignment Comments" in Canvas. Canvas calculates your grade. More about my use of low-stakes process-based grading is [here](#).

grading criteria:

- "A" range describes you completing the course work thoroughly and on time. It means you have presented detailed original ideas that clearly responded to the prompts. It reflects you giving yourself the most abundant opportunities of staying in the flow of idea development, enjoying collaboration, and learning through the class. You probably feel really good about the work and learning you did.
- "B" range demonstrates good completion in the same categories as an "A," but it also notes some late, incomplete, or partial work. This means you didn't get as much out of the class as you would have with

more engagement, but you were still largely participatory. You probably developed your skills and had some fun.

- “C” range shows you did enough work with prompts and principles to pass, but frequent late work, incomplete participation, and/or missing assignments were likely a barrier to many benefits offered by the curriculum and community.
- “D” range demonstrates minimal engagement.
- An “F” is due to a significant lack of submitted material and participation.

Letter Percentage and Associated Grade: A+ 97-100, A 94-96, A- 90-93, B+ 87-89, B 84-86, B- 80-83, C+ 77-79, C 74-76, C- 70-73, D+ 67-69, D 64-66, D- 60-63, F 0-65. By checking the “Grades” module you should be able to track your progress. Please do ask me for updates any time.

I love assigning A's. Just keep up with the work, and do it fully, to get there.

For late work policy and other details please read [extra details about grading](#).

If you use AI in an assignment where we have not discussed and noted it, you may receive a failing grade. Undocumented AI use is a form of plagiarism.

That said, we will explore how AI can be fruitfully used in class through explicit exercises and tracking use.

Using any idea that is not yours, without noting its source, is plagiarism. Don't do it. Note your sources.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

week	focus
Week 1: August 20	hellos and business introductions - inhabit your strengths consultations
Week 2: August 25	LinkedIn and resume consultations

Week 2: August 27	LinkedIn and resume consultations
Week 3: September 1	Labor Day
Week 3: September 3	jumpstarting digital literacy event
Week 4: September 8	the cover letter
Week 4: September 10	the cover letter - study hall
Week 5: September 15	defining and developing your project interest
Week 5: September 17	defining and developing your project interest
Week 6: September 22	elevator pitches
Week 6: September 24	elevator pitches
Week 7: September 29	developing executive summaries - study hall
Week 7: October 1	developing executive summaries
Week 8: October 6	executive summaries, timelines, and video updates
Week 8: October 8	executive summaries, timelines, and video updates with peer feedback- study hall
Week 9: October 13	detailing and smoothing final project

Week 9: October 15	detailing and smoothing final project
Week 10: October 20	the way detail work supports the larger movements and moments
Week 10: October 22	the way detail work supports the larger movements and moments
Week 11: October 27	focus on explanation of substance
Week 11: October 29	focus on explanation of substance - study hall
Week 12: November 3	practicing supervisor updates
Week 12: November 5	practicing supervisor updates
Week 13: November 10	project and presentation preparation
Week 13: November 12	project and presentation preparation - study hall
Week 14: November 17	final project presentations with peer feedback
Week 14: November 19	final project presentations with peer feedback
Week 15: November 24	final project presentations with peer feedback 2
Week 15: November 26	Thanksgiving holiday

Week 16: December 1	<u>final presentation overflow, reflections, consultations, and course evaluations</u>
Week 16: December 3	<u>final presentation overflow, reflections, consultations, and course evaluations</u>
Week 17: December 8	<u>consultations, reflection infographic, and QR code(s)</u>
December 9	all semester work due by midnight
December 12	all grades posted in Canvas for student review
Week 18: December 13-17	student opportunity to seek clarification or correction on Canvas grades
December 19	final grades submission to the university