2111G: Writing in the World: Introduction to Professional Writing

Distance Studies; Winter 2020 Section 654

Instructor: Professor Freeborn

Course Description and Objectives

Instructor postings on section Sakai site.

class (defined as logging into our Sakai section) and participate by introducing yourself, and posting questions and thoughts during the first week, and by posting (by participating in a given week's set discussion topic) in subsequent weeks where there is a Discussion topic as indicated

Schedule

<u>Diagnostic Paper: Audience Analysis (Memo. to Instructor; up to 500 words/);</u> due midnight Friday Week 3

<u>Discussion Topic</u>: Are there qualities in Lyn Smith's letter that might (wrongly) tempt you to be dismissive and/or condescending in your reply? What other qualities or features might you notice that would help you avoid falling into that trap?

Unit/Week Three

Writing Clearly: Introduction to the Grammar and Conventions of 'Standard Written English'

Objectives:

- To encourage you to develop a critical self-awareness of your writing practice
- To understand the distinction between grammatical 'conventions' and 'rules'
- To understand the notion of 'Standard Written English'

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- The basic rhetorical principles underlying the drafting of informative, positive, and negative messages
- The formatting of letter, memorandum, and email messages
- The basic principles applicable to trying to take an essentially 'negative' message and give it a 'positive' spin
- An analysis of a case: 'Statstar'

Read: Locker/Findlay, Chapters 7 and 8, and "Statstar" (pdf on 'Lectures' page); Assignment Case for Assignment 2: "Globe"

Assignment #1: Negative Message with positive emphasis; up to 1000 words/ 20%. Due midnight Friday Week 6

<u>Discussion Topic</u>: As discussed in the Unit 4 lecture, assume that in the 'Globe' scenario you are instructed to write a purely 'negative' message to Lyn Smith, turning down all her requests. What kind of intangible but positive 'alternative' ('reader benefit'), that might override her obvious anticipated negative response to the main message, can you come up with? Your answer will be contingent in large part on your analysis of her as your 'primary' audience.

Unit/Week Five

Writing Positive and Negative Messages (cont.)

Read: Locker/Findlay, Chapters 7 and 8, and "Statstar" (pdf on 'Lectures' page)

<u>Discussion Topic</u>: refer to Exercise 8.5 on page 200 of your text. As instructed there, compose a brief message to your boss correcting the figures. Use 'correct numbers' (b), and assume the second of the two variations. Post your message, and explain why you wrote it the way you did!

Unit/Week Six

Overview of Basic Principles of Document Design and Use of Visuals

Objectives:

Through this Unit's readings, you should be familiar with the following topics:

- The importance of 'design'
- The concept of 'white space'

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Read: Locker/Findlay, Chapter 9 and "TeknoSport" and "Rocky Mountain Fitness" (pdfs on 'Lectures' page); Assignment Case: "Just Clean Your Hands" in Create coursepack

Assignment #3: (Formal Report, research based. Approximately 1250 words excluding front and back matter/40%) due end of term – last day of classes. See end of this 'Schedule'.

<u>Discussion Topic</u>: Your aim in TeknoSport would be to construct an argument (a case) in which you use reasons and data to support a Claim. Your Claim is that the STP should be retained, in at least more or less its present form. Your Warrant for this Claim will involve some assumptions ('common ground') that you need to define, and that you can reasonably expect Karvinen to share with you. What might these Warrants look like?

Unit/Week Nine

Overview of Issues in Cross-Cultural Communication; Brief Introduction to Assignment #3: Final Assignment: A Formal Report

Objectives:

Through this Unit's readings, you should be familiar with the following topics:

- The concept of 'cultural difference' and its significance for communication
- The importance of recognizing cultural variations
- Cultural context as part of the rhetorical context of any message
- Mapping 'difference' in cultural context: six key categories
- Defining 'cultures' as high- or low-context
- The importance of a clear sense of 'purpose' in Assignment #3

Read: Locker/Findlay, Chapters 5, 10, and 11; and Assignment 3 Case: "Cross-Cultural Negotiation: Americans Negotiating a Contract in China" (in Create coursepack)

*Assignment #2 submission due midnight Friday, Week 9

Unit/Week Ten

Writing Proposals and Reports

Objectives:

• The individual components of a formal report

Read: Locker/Findlay, Chapters 10 and 11; Assignment Case: "Cross-Cultural Negotiation: Americans Negotiating a Contract in China" (in Create coursepack)

Unit/Week Eleven

Employment Communications – an Overview