



# PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL WRITING

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ENGLISH 3900

M/W 5:00-6:15

3 CREDITS

ARTS &amp; SCIENCES G 114

COURSE PREREQUISITE:  
ENGL 1102 (C)COURSE ID:  
80073

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Ritter

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NEVER USE D2L EMAIL)

OFFICE: ARTS & SCIENCES G 110M

OFFICE HOURS: MW 11:00-12:30, AND BY APPOINTMENT

OFFICE PHONE: 678-466-4879

COURSE WEBSITE: [HTTPS://CLAYTON.VIEW.USG.EDU/D2L/HOME/1177455](https://clayton.view.usg.edu/d2l/home/1177455)

## Introduction

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Technical communication is communication about techniques – in other words, work – or communication that itself does work. Professional communication occurs in and about the workplace, presenting information clearly and persuasively to professional audiences, in multiple contexts, for work-related purposes. As a professional who communicates technical information, you will connect ideas, people, and their activities by composing documents, presentations, visuals, and websites.

This is a PACE (Partnering Academics and Community Engagement) course, meaning that it is designed to involve you in service to your community as part of your learning of technical and professional communication. (Your “community” in this case can be a civic or professional organization.)

The other unique element of this course is that it employs a three-tiered system in which each student chooses their level of engagement. At the most basic level – the Core level – you will understand the essential concepts and practice the essential skills. At the optional Bonus level, you’ll have the chance to interact with your peers through peer reviews of drafts as well as syntheses and responses to forum discussions. At the optional Advanced level, you will complete a service project for an actual nonprofit, startup, or small business, helping them solve a real communication problem.

## Definition of Service Learning

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Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

## Rationale for Service Learning

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The organization you serve will gain strength by your volunteer labor; and more importantly, you will see how technical and professional communication is tied to action in the world and gain real-world experience that you can put on your résumé.

What kinds of experience will you gain, and how will that be valuable to you in your career? Almost every single one of the attributes employers seek on a candidate's resume, according to a recent poll of hundreds of employers and managers:

Attribute	% of respondents
Leadership	80.1%
Ability to work in a team	78.9%
Communication skills (written)	70.2%
Problem-solving skills	70.2%
Communication skills (verbal)	68.9%
Strong work ethic	68.9%
Initiative	65.8%
Analytical/quantitative skills	62.7%
Flexibility/adaptability	60.9%
Technical skills	59.6%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	58.4%
Computer skills	55.3%
Detail-oriented	52.8%
Organizational ability	48.4%
Friendly/outgoing personality	35.4%
Strategic planning skills	26.7%
Creativity	23.6%
Tactfulness	20.5%
Entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker	18.6%

Source: *Job Outlook 2016*, National Association of Colleges and Employers

## Course Catalog Description

An advanced study and application of principles for effective professional and technical writing. Topics to include audience and context analysis, ethical communication, and writing for international readers. Students put these concepts into practice by writing and designing several professional and technical documents for both specialist and non-specialist readers. While open to students from all majors, the course includes entry assessment of writing skills for the baccalaureate degree program in Communication and Media Studies. Required to earn at least a C in the course, based on the program-entry-level assessments of writing skills built into the class.

## Prerequisite

ENGL 1102 with minimum grade of C.

## Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Category	Outcome: by the end of this course, you will be able to...
<p><b>Rhetoric</b> Rhetoric focuses on conscious strategies and tactics for communication, considering the synergy of context, audience, purpose, role, argument, organization, design, and grammar.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Address rhetorical exigencies:</b> Craft artifacts that address the exigencies of various professional contexts, exhibiting effective and appropriate persuasive strategies.</li> <li>• <b>Address diverse audiences:</b> Communicate with tact and sensitivity to the cultural, ethical, and legal concerns of each audience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Process</b> Processes for communication—for example, creating, planning, drafting, designing, rehearsing, revising, presenting, publishing—are recursive, not linear. Learning productive processes is as important as creating products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Compose iteratively:</b> Improve artifacts by drafting and revising in multiple iterations.</li> <li>• <b>Compose reflectively:</b> Demonstrate self-assessment and self-reflection, indicating the value of strategic processes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Design</b> Activities and assignments should use a variety of modes and media—written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal—singly and in combination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Compose multimodally:</b> Integrate WOVEN (Written, Oral, Visual, Electronic, and Nonverbal) content to achieve maximum usability and persuasiveness in your compositions.</li> <li>• <b>Use conventions strategically:</b> Follow the generic and stylistic conventions that your audience values.</li> </ul>

## Required Textbook

Anderson, Paul V. *Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2014.  
ISBN 978-1-1333-0981-9.

# Computer/Technology/Materials Requirements

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Each CSU student is required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for the student's academic program. Students will sign a statement attesting to such access. For further information on CSU's Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to <http://www.clayton.edu/hub/itpchoice/notebookcomputerpolicy>.

## Desire2Learn (Online Classroom)

Online activity will take place in Desire2Learn, the virtual classroom for the course. You can gain access to Desire2Learn by signing on to the SWAN portal and selecting "D2L" on the top right side.

If you experience any difficulties in Desire2Learn, please email or call The HUB at [TheHub@mail.clayton.edu](mailto:TheHub@mail.clayton.edu) or (678) 466-HELP. You will need to provide the date and time of the problem, your SWAN username, the name of the course that you are attempting to access, and your instructor's name.

Desire2Learn requires certain software to be running on your computer, and certain settings to be checked in your Internet browser. Go to the D2L System Checker web page to make sure your system is setup:

<http://www.usg.edu/usgweb/d2lchecker/>

## Technical Support

In case something should go wrong with the learning management system, computer software, or computer hardware, contact CSU's HUB for technical support: <http://www.clayton.edu/hub>

# Computer Skills Prerequisites

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Students enrolled in this course should possess the following technology skills:

- The ability to access information via the Internet
- The ability to use GeorgiaView/D2L and associated tools, including discussion boards, chat rooms, online testing and assignment submission features
- The ability to use Microsoft Word software and to save in alternate formats
- The ability to send, receive and include attachments using email
- The ability to participate in online meetings via WebEx, Google Hangout, Skype, etc.
- The ability to demonstrate netiquette (appropriate online conduct)

# Course Assignments/Tracks

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There are 3 assignment categories, representing increasing levels of engagement and potential grades.

## Core Track (75%)

Core assignments will teach you to understand the essential theories and concepts of the course. They will consist primarily of reading assignments, which involve reading the textbook and answering a set of questions in a discussion forum in D2L.

These assignments will all be **graded for their level of completion**: complete attempts to fulfill the assignment will earn full credit; partially completed assignments will earn partial credit.

You may **choose to do only the Core** assignments, which will **guarantee you a C** in the course (if you complete them according to their instructions).

## Bonus Track (10%)

Bonus assignments involve interacting with your peers via the class's D2L website. They will consist of:

- **Responses**, which involve dialoguing with classmates' entries in discussion forums.
- **Syntheses**, which involve reading all of your classmates' entries in a given discussion forum and identifying trends and outliers in what your peers are saying.
- **Peer review assignments**, which involve giving feedback to classmates' Advanced Project drafts.

Like the Core assignments, Bonus assignments will be **graded on completion**.

If you **complete all** of the Core and Bonus assignments **according to directions**, you are **guaranteed a B** in the course.

## Advanced Track (15%)

The Advanced Project is a client-based service project, part of CSU's Partnering Academics with Community Engagement (PACE) initiative. It requires you create or revise some kind of documentation for a real nonprofit organization or business. You will be acting as a professional writing consultant who will propose and compose a text to meet this organization's need.

There are two ways to find a client:

1. **Find them on your own.** Acceptable organizations include an activist group, a school club, your church, a startup, or your employer.
2. **Write a proposal for my community partner.** This organization has provided a request for proposals, which is in our class D2L site in Content > General Course Information.
  - Proposals for this client is **competitive**: anyone may write a proposal, but the client will pick only the best one to work with. This competition adds an element of realism (this is how proposals work in the real world), but it also adds an element of risk. Therefore, **all proposals written for the community partner** will get a **5% bonus**, and the **winning proposal** will get a **10% bonus**.

Acceptable projects include but are not limited to:

- Strategy guides for social media or other types of marketing
- Instruction guides for software or organizational procedures
- Feasibility reports
- Webpages
- Crowdfunding proposals
- Annual reports
- Brochures
- Flyers
- Email templates
- Videos
- Presentation decks (e.g., PowerPoint slides for the client to use)

The Advanced Project will consist of the following pieces:

1. PACE Pre-Test survey
2. Baseline Reflection
3. Client interview notes
4. Proposal
5. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
6. Your work hours, tracked through CSU's Volgistics system
7. Progress Report
8. Deliverable(s) (i.e., the document(s) required by the client, to be defined by you in your Proposal)
9. Postmortem Report
10. PACE Post-Test survey
11. PACE Course-Completion Form

The Proposal, Progress Report, and Deliverables will be **graded on performance, with rubrics**, and assessed for their **performance** using the evaluation key in the section below. The other assignments will be **graded on completion**.

## TO REITERATE: YOU CHOOSE YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT, SO CHOOSE WISELY.

What is this track in a nutshell?	Why should I follow this track?	Why shouldn't I follow this track?
<p><b>Core → C</b></p> <p>To earn a C, you must do all of the Core assignments according to directions.</p>	<p>If you need to pass this course, but you have a full-time job, children, or other life commitments that prevent you from being a full-time student.</p>	<p>If you want a GPA above 2.0 (which matters if you're on your way to law, medical, or graduate school).</p>
<p><b>Core + Bonus → B</b></p> <p>To earn a B, you must do all of the Core assignments, as well as all of the Bonus assignments, according to directions.</p>	<p>If you're busy, but you want to interact with your classmates.</p>	<p>Same as above, but if you want a GPA above 3.0. Also, don't choose the Bonus Track as a fallback in case your Advanced Project doesn't work out – you'll just feel disappointed or angry about your B, which is a fine grade to earn.</p>
<p><b>Core + Bonus + Advanced → A</b></p> <p>To be eligible for an A, you must do all of the Core assignments, all of the Bonus assignments, and all of the Advanced assignments. (You need to achieve scores above Developing on the performance-graded Advanced assignments).</p>	<p>If you want real-world experience you can put on your résumé, and you have 5-15 hours per week to devote to this project.</p>	<p>If you lack the time, ambition, or tenacity to see the project all the way through.</p>

## Course evaluation highlights

Below are comments my recent students have made about this class, with my responses to the negative ones, which usually arise from a misunderstanding of how the class works.

### Compliments

- The course does teach how to prepare an influential proposal, a useful skill in the work place.
- The client engagement assignment was by far the highlight of the course.
- I enjoyed the concept of creating a project that was mine at the end of the course. Felt a sense of accomplishment.
- This class was well-organized and gave students the opportunity to gain hands on experience interacting with career professionals face-to-face and through the use of rhetoric writing.
- The PACE component made this course a worthwhile and satisfying experience. It taught practical skills that have tangible applications outside academia.

- It gave me the opportunity to improve a program at my place of work.
- The writing assignments were broken up instead of being long cumbersome half dozen page essays, there were weekly page long writing topics related to that weeks learning objective, which made the assignments feel more focused.
- English 3900 was a great class. The Advanced Project is challenging. Dr. Ritter is helpful and always answers questions in a very timely matter.

## Complaints

- Your ability to receive an A in the course should not be tied to whether or not you perform community service. Some of your students are actual adults with families to take care of and do not have the time for unnecessary busy-work.
  - Response: First, the Advanced Project is not “community service” in the way a judge would order it as a punishment; it’s volunteerism, an opportunity to use your skills to help good people do good work. It is the exact opposite of “busy-work,” which is work that serves no greater purpose. Second, your client does not have to be a volunteer organization; it can be your employer at your job. (One of my recent students did her Advanced Project for her part-time employer; the employer was so impressed with her work ethic that they promoted her to full-time with benefits.) Finally, the Core and Bonus Tracks are expressly designed for busy adults.
- While I understand and appreciate the need for volunteering, the volunteer work plus the required writing make the contents overwhelming.
  - Response: Yes, the Advanced Project will probably double your time commitment to the course. However, one of the secondary goals for the Advanced Project is to practice the art of estimating how much work you can reasonably do for someone, based on your time and skillset. Some Advanced students only have to spend 1-2 hours a week on their projects; others have to spend upwards of 10 hours per week.
- I got right on board with an attempt an an A and found my schedule too full to really reach the potential i could with the advanced assignment. everyone should have a fair chance of working towards an A and not have to do such an incredible amount of extra work to do so. i guess i just went above and beyond for my project and gave it real world application unlike many other students who did the minimum to receive an A.
  - This happens to a few students every semester, some of whom blame the course for their problems with completing their projects. But just because they didn’t succeed doesn’t mean they didn’t have a fair chance. Simply put, it is impossible to slouch into an A in this course; you must work for it. (*That’s what an A means.*)



## Evaluation Key

The Advanced assignments will each have customized rubrics with criteria that are specific to each of them. The rubrics will be graded qualitatively, with the following scale.

Level	Description	Point values
<b>Exemplary</b>	<i>Exemplary communication</i> is marked by originality of expression, particularized strategies to engage the audience, and scrupulous attention to detail. <i>Exemplary communication</i> performs creatively, requiring little or no revision.	98-100
<b>Mature</b>	<i>Mature communication</i> is marked by an audience orientation, a clear grasp of the rhetorical situation, consistency, directness, strong supporting evidence, thorough editing, and an easy-to-follow structure. <i>Mature communication</i> performs fully, requiring only minor revision.	93-97
<b>Competent</b>	<i>Competent communication</i> is marked by clarity of purpose, workable organization (if somewhat mechanical), an effective general purpose, acceptable style, and no distracting errors in usage or conventions. <i>Competent communication</i> performs adequately, requiring limited revision.	85-92
<b>Developing</b>	<i>Developing communication</i> is marked by some serious weakness that, despite promising choices in other areas, ultimately prevents the communication from succeeding. This weakness may be in a faulty assumption about the situation or audience, underdeveloped content, a confusing organization, vague word choices, etc. This level could also be marked by excessive generality and predictability that fail to engage the audience. <i>Developing communication</i> performs inappropriately in some way(s), requiring focused revision.	75-84
<b>Beginning</b>	<i>Beginning communication</i> is marked by failure to address some key element(s) of the communication situation. For example, evidence may be scant and/or inaccurate. Expression is weakened by vague or inappropriate verbal or visual choices. Errors in conventions, tone, or documentation are distracting. The main point is vague, trite, or poorly developed. <i>Beginning communication</i> performs incompletely, requiring extensive revision.	65-74
<b>Basic</b>	<i>Basic communication</i> is marked by misunderstanding the demands and expectations of the communication situation, by focusing on self rather than audience, by blatant violations of conventions and audience expectations, and by inconsistencies and contradictions. <i>Basic communication</i> performs naively, requiring thorough revision.	55-64
<b>Unacceptable</b>	<i>Unacceptable communication</i> is incomplete or completed with disregard for the basic assignment instructions for preparing the document. A "U" is given to work that was clearly prepared without care, either because it is far too brief, too shallow, or missing basic components.	0-54

## Grading Scale

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- A 90%\* and above  
 \* If you have an 89% at the end of the term, and you have completed every assignment, I will round your 89% up.
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- D 60-69%
- F below 60%

## Course Schedule

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See the live schedule at <https://goo.gl/CgWYPM> for up-do-date changes.

### **ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BEFORE CLASS TIME UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED.**

Week	Dates	Topic	Due (before class time unless otherwise directed)
1	8/15-8/21	Introductions and setup; Reader-centered communication	C: Ch. 1 Reading; Syllabus Agreement and Work-Use Form; 08-15 Freewrite: Career goals and this class
2	8/22-8/28	[8/25: NO-SHOW DEADLINE] Applying for jobs	C: Ch. 2 Reading; PACE Pre-Test survey
3	8/29-9/4	Writing proposals; interviewing clients	C: Ch. 24 Reading A: Client interview notes, Baseline Reflection
4	9/5-9/11	[9/5: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY] Planning your persuasive strategies	C: Ch. 5 Reading B: Ch. 24 Synthesis A: Proposal 0.1
5	9/12-9/18	Revising your drafts	C: Ch 17 Reading B: Proposal 0.1 peer review A: Instructor conference re Proposal (optional)
6	9/19-9/25	Conducting reader-centered research; Using five reader-centered research methods	C: Ch. 6&7 Reading A: Proposal 1.0
7	9/26-10/2	Developing an effective, professional style	C: Ch. 10 Reading; B: Ch. 10 Response; A: Memorandum of Understanding; Travel Form
8	10/3-10/9	[10/7: MIDPOINT- LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH A W] Writing progress reports	C: Ch. 27 Reading A: Volgistics

9	10/10-10/16	[10/8-11: FALL BREAK] [10/11: LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE] Drafting paragraphs, sections, and chapters	C: Ch. 8 Reading B: Progress Report 0.1 peer review A: Project Deliverables 0.01 and Progress Report 0.1; Instructor conference (optional)
10	10/17-10/23	Designing reader-centered pages and documents	C: Ch. 16 Reading; A: Project Deliverables 0.1 and Progress Report 1.0; Instructor conference (optional)
11	10/24-10/30	Using nine reader-centered patterns for organizing paragraphs, sections, and chapters	C: Ch. 9 Reading A: Client meeting report memo
12	10/31-11/6	Creating reader-centered graphics	C: Ch. 14&15 Reading B: Ethics in client projects A: Instructor Conference 1 re Project Deliverables (optional)
13	11/7-11/13	[11/8: ELECTION DAY] Writing letters, memos, emails, and digital exchanges	C: Ch. 23 Reading A: Project Rubric 0.1; Project Deliverables 0.2
14	11/14-11/20	Testing drafts for usefulness and persuasiveness	C: Ch. 18 Reading B: Project Deliverables 0.2 peer review A: Final Project Presentation scheduling; Instructor Conference 2 re Project Deliverables (optional)
15	11/21-11/27	[11/23-26: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY]	
16	11/28-12/4	Creating and delivering listener-centered oral presentations	Everyone: Course Evaluations C: Ch. 20 Reading B: A: Project Rubric 1.0
17	12/5-12/11	FINALS WEEK [12/5: LAST DAY OF CLASS; LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH A WF]	C: PACE Post-Test survey A: Project Deliverables 1.0; Final Project Presentation, Postmortem Report; PACE Course Completion Form,

## Mid-term Progress Report

The mid-term grade in this course, which will be issued on October 6<sup>th</sup>, reflects approximately 50% of the entire course grade. Based on this grade, students may choose to withdraw from the course and receive a grade of "W." Students pursuing this option must fill out an official withdrawal form, available in the Office of the Registrar, or withdraw on-line using the Swan by mid-term, which occurs on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Instructions for withdrawing are provided at <http://www.clayton.edu/registrar/withdrawal>.

The last day to withdraw without academic accountability is Friday, October 9, 2015.

## Things to Expect from a Client-Based Class

The presence of community partners as “clients” distinguishes this course from others you may have taken at Clayton State. Community partners are non-profit agencies, startups, and small companies that have partnered with my class in a mutually beneficial way. These partnerships are designed to produce usable communication

deliverables for the client *and* to provide my students with opportunities to gain hands-on experience with real communication challenges. These partnerships also create a kind of course that may be unfamiliar to you. Most college courses rely on a two-party dynamic between instructor and students; students produce work mainly so that the instructor can assess what they have learned in the course. In this course, students produce work for a third party—the client—which is then assessed by the client to evaluate what they have produced, and the instructor to determine what they have learned. Before you proceed with this course, you should understand how this three-party classroom model differs from the two-party model:

## Multi-vector communication

In most college classes, communication flows on a two-way highway between two parties—the instructor and the students. Communication is more complex and interesting in this course, because students will also communicate with clients and their various stakeholders, all of whom work outside the confines of Clayton State.

## The client is king

In most courses, students work hard to satisfy the teacher’s expectations; in this course, you will also be working hard to satisfy a client. Grades on final client projects in this class are largely based on client satisfaction. The client participates directly in grading the work. If the client is happy with the work, the instructor is also happy.

## The class/workplace hybrid

This course creates a hybrid between a classroom environment and a workplace environment. This hybrid environment requires you to think “outside the box” of most college classrooms. For example, deadlines will not be set entirely by the professor in this class, as clients will also set deadlines.

## No more “one-size-fits-all”

In most college classes, instructors rigidly maintain fairness and equity in workload and expectations, following a “one-size-fits-all” approach. In this course, the client projects drive the workload and expectations for students. Each client project will have different expectations and requirements. Some students will have more demands put upon them than others; some students will work more hours than others.

# Standards for Professor Performance

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## Teaching Philosophies

Here are the primary philosophies that inform my teaching, so you have an idea of what to expect from me and how our class will run on a daily basis:

- I am a teacher of rhetoric. I define *rhetoric* as “the systematic study and practice of all conscious communication, in all modes and media.”

- I am a teacher of literacies. I define *literacy* as “the ability to use communication tools to convey meaningful messages to specific people.”
  - There are three types of literacies my courses address:
    - Functional: the ability to use communication tools.
    - Rhetorical: the ability to say meaningful messages to specific people.
    - Critical: the ability to understand how and why specific people find their tools useful and their messages meaningful.
- Good learning is situated in real-life (or simulated) practice, not in abstract discussion.
- A good teacher is a “guide on the side” rather than a “sage on the stage.”
- People learn new things by connecting new information or skills with information/skills they already have (also known as “scaffolding”).
- Good learning is a back-and-forth process of hypothesizing about a new idea, trying it out, and reflecting on how that trial went. (This dialectical process is also known as “active and critical thinking.”)
- Students learn best when they’re engaged with the material. The ways that I try to engage my students are:
  - by giving you as much choice as possible about what you’ll study/create, and encouraging you to choose subjects that you’re excited about
  - by encouraging you to actively seek information rather than passively absorb it

## Conduct

You can expect me to

- Be professional inside and outside the classroom
- Be prepared for every meeting
- Treat you like an adult
- Update D2L regularly
- Respond to emails within 24 hours (unless you email me on the weekend)
- Treat you in a professional, respectful manner at all times
- Be available during scheduled office hours
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Be a problem solver
- Offer thoughtful, constructive criticism on your work
- Be a mentor for professional development activities

You shouldn’t expect me to

- Respond favorably to excuses of any kind
- Answer emails or phone calls from parents, guardians, or other third parties
- Be available outside my office hours without an appointment
- Respond favorably to any argument for missing my assignments because of activities in another class
- Make exceptions to my own policies and standards
- Grant make-ups
- Accept late work without a pre-arranged extension
- Answer emails on the weekends

## Uses for Your Work

All of the assignments produced in this class will be posted on the course website. In this way, our class will have a body of communication documents to study throughout the semester. I reserve the right to use your work, in whole or in part, as a teaching tool in this particular section, though I will do so by removing your name first. You will grant or deny me permission to use your work in future classes and/or my research in the first week of class.

## Standards for Student Performance

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### Assignment Availability and Due Dates

With a couple of exceptions, all of the assignments are available at the beginning of the course. Therefore, you may go ahead of the schedule and do assignments early.

However, **I reserve the right to alter any assignment** on the week it is due, if I deem that the class would benefit from doing something different. **You are responsible for revising any work you have done early** so it meets the updated requirements.

Assignments are always **due at midnight on Sunday night** of the week they are assigned.

### Attendance

Any student who fails to complete the scheduled assignments during the first week of class will be reported as a “No Show.”

### Attitude

Maintain a positive attitude – Excessive negativity is a liability in any collaborative effort. Because we will all be working together to satisfy the client, I expect students to approach the client project with positive energy and enthusiasm. This attitude will go a long way in my class.

Be a problem solver – working with real clients is not always easy. Problems and misunderstandings sometimes arise. The most productive posture towards these inevitable challenges is to be a problem solver rather than a complainer.

### Code of Conduct

Students must abide by policies in the [Undergraduate and Graduate Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities](#).

### Discrimination

I am committed to providing a safe class environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with the professional nature of this course, only professional behavior is acceptable between the instructor and the students and between students. No harassment of any kind is allowed in class including but not limited to gender, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. That being said, ignoring our differences in an

attempt to avoid conflict or discomfort can sometimes wind up reinforcing the same prejudices and conflicts we're trying to avoid, so I will encourage the input each of you brings to the class based on the identities you're comfortable speaking from.

## Email

I will **only** respond to emails sent to [ChristopherRitter@clayton.edu](mailto:ChristopherRitter@clayton.edu) via Office365 Outlook. I will **never** respond to emails sent through D2L.

I will respond to emails within 24 hours, unless you email on or just before the weekend, in which case I will respond by the end of the next business day.

## Flexibility

Because the client relationship is so fluid and organic, students in this class should expect surprises and unanticipated events. Students will be evaluated in part based on their willingness to “roll with the punches.” I expect a high level of flexibility and a willingness to take on extra work if the client project demands it.

## Late Work

**I do not accept late work unless we have a prior arrangement** – i.e., you email me **at least 48 hours** before the assignment's due date, and I grant you an extension. Again, you can turn in an assignment **only if you have requested an extension by Friday of the week the assignment is due.**

## Off-Campus Travel

Because the personal touch is critical to maintaining any client relationship, some travel to off-campus destinations will almost certainly be required in this course. The details of this travel will emerge as the client relationship evolves. If your client is located in Atlanta, you should expect to visit their site once or twice during the semester.

## Office Hours/Contact Information

One of the most valuable ways to improve your writing is through sustained, personal attention to your work. I offer this attention during office hours (listed at the beginning of the syllabus) or by appointment. In addition, you may email me to discuss specific questions you have about your writing, and I am happy to meet with you online for a face-to-face web chat.

## Online Etiquette (Netiquette)

Discussion, chat, and e-mail spaces within this course are for class purposes only, unless otherwise stated. Please remember to conduct yourself collegially and professionally. Unlike in the classroom setting, what you say in the online environment is documented and not easily erased or forgotten.

The following guidelines apply:

- Avoid using ALL CAPS, sarcasm, and language that could come across as strong or offensive.
- Use proper punctuation, grammar and be sure to edit your contribution before posting.
- Read all postings before posting your responses to discussion topics so as to not unnecessarily repeat information.
- Keep chat comments brief and to the point.
- Focus on one topic at a time when chatting or posting to discussions.
- Remember that unlike in face-to-face learning environments what you say in discussions and chats is documented and available to be revisited. Choose your words and discussion topics carefully.
- E-mail should only be used for messages pertaining to the course. Please refrain from sending forwards, jokes, etc. within e-mail.

## Plagiarism

If you consult outside sources in order to supplement or advance or generate your own ideas, you need to give credit to the author(s), whether you directly quote them or not. You're all aware that intentional plagiarism is wrong, and that it has dire consequences. Most students who intentionally plagiarize do it because they're pressed for time and feel too stressed to write their own paper. My advice: come talk to me if you have any problems getting the work done, or if you're confused about documentation. I'm here to help you, not catch you.

### Guidelines for Writing from Sources and Consequences of Plagiarism

The following descriptions are designed to help explain plagiarism and its consequences to help you avoid it in your writing for this course. We will devote class time to learning and understanding how to use sources in your writing, how to research and take notes effectively, how to use and cite electronic resources, and how to get help from various writing aids and resources.

#### *Problems in Writing-from-Sources:*

**Inaccurate Citation: Mechanics and Format:** Students are expected to cite both written (print and electronic), oral, and visual sources consulted in papers and presentations. All borrowed ideas—both direct quotations and paraphrasing from another's work—require accurate citation, and direct quotations require quotation marks. Students should learn and use correct format for block quotes, quotations, and in-text parenthetical documentation. Source material should be introduced fully, and all borrowed ideas should be cited; Works Cited pages should be formatted correctly. Drafts of papers with inaccurate citation, mechanical citation problems, and/or minor Works Cited inaccuracies will require mandatory revisions; final papers with these problems will receive a letter grade deduction.

#### *Plagiarism:*

**Insufficient Citation: Patchwriting and Derivative Papers:** Students should fully introduce and cite borrowed material. Cutting and pasting passages from your source into your own paper without citation and turning in the paper as your own is plagiarism, as is directly quoting without using quotation marks. Undocumented paraphrasing is plagiarism: fully cite the source of your ideas. In addition, students are expected to paraphrase and summarize using their own stylistic features, not the source's, to avoid patchwriting (also called stylistic plagiarism). If your summary is too close to the original in a draft, keep working to synthesize it fully. In addition, students are expected to develop their own framework for their papers rather than borrowing their source's argument wholesale (even if acknowledged). Drafts with several examples of insufficient citation, papers that fail to develop original arguments, papers lacking a Works Cited page, or papers that exhibit patchwriting will earn a lowered grade and will require mandatory revision; final papers will receive a 0 for the



assignment for failure to meet the minimum requirements of papers in 1101/1102, and students will face disciplinary action as per the CSU Office of Student Affairs and [Community Standards](#).

**False Submissions, Ghostwriting, or Fraud:** Students are expected to write their own original papers for each assignment, from development of ideas and research to revision. Plagiarized papers include papers written by someone else (i.e. acquired or bought through the Internet, an organization, friends, family members, or another student); papers in which much of the material is cut-and-pasted from sources without correct documentation; and papers submitted by the student for another course/assignment. If such a paper is submitted for a rough draft, the student will receive a 0 for the draft and be required to do a mandatory revision and/or new rough draft before submitting a final paper. If students turn in such papers as final papers, the student will receive an F for the course and face disciplinary action as per the CSU Office of Student Affairs and [Community Standards](#).

If you have any doubt about whether or not you're plagiarizing, talk with your professor before submitting your paper.

## Plagiarism Detection Software

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. You should submit your papers in such a way that no identifying information about you is included.

## Revision

Revision is an integral part of the writing process and an essential part of improving one's writing. To that end, multiple drafts of Bonus and Advanced assignments that show substantial revision are required. However, once a paper has been graded, it may not be revised for an improved grade. As such, each grade reflects your final written product rather than your effort.

## Schedule Changes

By necessity, our schedule may change according to the needs of the projects. I will announce changes on D2L, but you are responsible for knowing and following them. See the live schedule at <http://goo.gl/UXRRCI> for up-to-date changes.

# Resources for Students

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## Writers' Studio

You can get free assistance on any aspect of your writing from a trained tutor at the Writers' Studio. You can meet tutors in the Studio itself or online.

The goal of the Writers' Studio is to give rise to better writers, not just to better writing. People who love to write, people who struggle mightily with it, and people who fall anywhere else on the spectrum can find a place at The Writers' Studio—a place for students to come for writing guidance and feedback.

Each student may receive up to 90 minutes of assistance per day and 3 hours per week. Furthermore, both appointments and walk-ins are welcome. Here's The Writers' Studio's contact information:

Location: Arts & Sciences Building, Room G-224  
Phone: 678.466.4728  
Email: [ws224@clayton.edu](mailto:ws224@clayton.edu)  
Website: <http://clayton.edu/writersstudio>

Visit The Writers' Studio at <http://clayton.edu/writersstudio> or schedule your appointment online at <http://clayton.mywconline.com> (Note: first-time users need to complete a one-time registration prior to using the online appointment website).

## Operation Study

At Clayton State University, we expect and support high motivation and academic achievement. Look for Operation Study activities and programs this semester that are designed to enhance your academic success such as study sessions, study breaks, workshops, and opportunities to earn Study Bucks (for use in the University Bookstore) and other items.

## Accommodations for Students with Special Needs

Individuals with disabilities who need to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Coordinator, Student Center Room 255, phone 678-466-5445, or email: [disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu).