

English 515: Advanced Professional Writing

Fall 2012: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30-2:45pm, HEAV 227

Instructor: Jennifer Bay

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Course website: <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~jbay/515/>

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9:00-11:00am and by appointment

Course Description

This course is designed for upper-level undergraduates and graduate students interested in advanced and emerging concepts in professional and technical writing. The course content changes based on the instructor and programmatic needs. This semester, our course will focus on the rhetoric of risk and crisis communication in non-profit settings. We'll analyze case studies of recent and historical crises, rhetorical theories of risk communication and crisis management, the role of social media and web 2.0, as well as practical concerns such as principles of document design and theories of collaborative work.

Much of our work this semester will center on two projects we will complete for Food Finders Food Bank, a local not-for-profit agency that distributes food supplies to emergency food outlets in sixteen Indiana counties. We will create a sorting handbook for Food Finders workers and volunteers on how to best sort foods available for distribution. We will also create a crisis communications guide for Food Finders staff on what to do in case of a crisis. Along the way, we'll analyze some of Food Finders' prior crisis communications and provide suggestions for the future. While we do have clear titles and descriptions for these projects, we will also need to be flexible about what Food Finders needs. This means that the parameters for these projects are not clearly set and may shift based on our interactions with Food Finders staff. It also means that we will not necessarily be given all of the answers or all of the information we need to complete these tasks. Part of what it means to be a professional is learning how to access information on your own and utilize it effectively to achieve goals. This kind of work will give you a hands-on understanding of how theories of rhetoric, language, and digital media work in a real world setting.

Note: In order to complete this work, some of you will need to be able to visit Food Finders in Lafayette a few times during the semester. We will also have a class visit the second week of class.

Required Texts

You are not required to buy any books for this course. All of the readings are available in available in digital format from the library or from me. In addition to some scanned articles and book chapters, we will use the following library e-books:

Risk and Crisis Communications: Methods and Messages. Pamela Walaski, 2011.

Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach. Kathleen Fearn-Banks, 2010.

Effective Apology: Mending Fences, Building Bridges, and Restoring Trust. John Kador, 2009.

Beautiful Teams. Stellman and Greene, 2009.

Evaluation

I will evaluate your work using a 4.0 scale (+/-) as outlined by the university. Components will be worth the following percentages listed below. There is no final exam in this course.

Food Sorting Visual Handbook and Quiz—20%

Case Study of Food Finders Crisis Communications—20%

Crisis Communications Guide—20%

Presentation to Food Finders—10%

Written Responses—20%

Participation—10%

Written Responses

You are required to complete several responses to the course readings and to other events (such as the site visit), as will be indicated on the calendar. This eliminates the hassle of having reading quizzes and provides you with the opportunity to think about the readings before coming to class. It also allows you to reflect on and begin to analyze interactions with stakeholders involved in our major project. These responses should be single-spaced and a minimum of two typed pages, and we will

negotiate as a class how we would like to submit and share them with one another. They should refer to the course texts and/or to other resources and assigned readings.

Late Work

I do not accept late work. I expect all work to be completed by the beginning of the class period on which it is due.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is a serious crime. If you are suspected of academic dishonesty, you may be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students to receive disciplinary action. Forms of academic dishonesty include: Collusion - lending your work to another person to submit as his or her own; Fabrication - deliberately creating false information on a works cited page; and Plagiarism - the presentation of another person's work as your own, whether intentional or not. Purdue students and their instructors are expected to adhere to guidelines set forth by the Dean of Students in "Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students," which students are encouraged to read here: <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academicintegritybrochure.php>

Attendance

For the course to be successful, everyone's participation is necessary. Therefore, attendance is required. You are allowed three absences, no questions asked. For each class absence over three, your final grade will be lowered by one letter grade. More than six absences will result in a failing grade for the course. You are responsible for obtaining all information about missed class meetings from a classmate and for submitting work on time. Excessive tardiness will not be tolerated. Three tardies equals one absence. If you enter the class more than 30 minutes late, you will be counted absent. Obviously, if you are extremely ill and need to miss more than 3 classes, I will take that into consideration. Please do not come to class if you are contagious or have flu symptoms.

Participation

Participation includes active and constructive involvement in class discussions, online collaboration, as well as being prepared for class by doing the assigned reading and writing assignments. Participation also includes active and constructive involvement in peer groups, peer review sessions, turning in projects to group members for feedback, giving effective feedback on projects, and learning to work diplomatically with others to achieve common goals. Note: there is a lot of online reading for this course. If you have trouble reading online, make sure to print out these articles to read. Occasionally, some of the very "how-to" material will not be completely covered in discussion. Nevertheless, you are still responsible for that content.

General Course Policies

Come to class prepared to engage with the assigned readings, course concepts, class peers, and instructor. This can best be accomplished by completing your assignments before the beginning of class.

Please respect your peers and your instructor by actively listening and paying attention. This means that unless we are using the computers during a class activity, students should be facing the instructor, other students, or whoever has the floor and is speaking.

Remember to bring your texts to class with you and remember to print copies of all documents (drafts, electronic and online readings, etc.) **before** class begins.

You must complete all of the projects in a timely manner in order to pass this course.

Remember that we now complete course and instructor evaluations online during the last week of classes. Your feedback is vital to improving education at Purdue University, and I strongly urge you to participate in the evaluation system.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Information about changes in this course can be obtained through email: jbay@purdue.edu.

If you have a university-recognized disability that requires an accommodation, please make an appointment with me to discuss your needs.

Calendar (Note: This is a preliminary draft of the calendar and will be adjusted to meet the needs of the class).

Week	Dates	Topic	Homework
1	August 21	Introduction to the course	Examine http://food-finders.org & http://feedingamerica.org ; Read Grabill and Simmons
	August 23	Background on Food Finders	Write up at least 3 questions for Food Finders visit
2	August 28	Visit Food Finders Food Bank	Read Fearn-Banks, Ch 1 & 2
	August 30	Site visit report due	Read <i>Beautiful Teams</i> , Ch 2, 6, 11, 16, 20, 26
3	Sept 4	Discuss team planning and work	Read Walaski, Ch 2 & 3
	Sept 6	Proposal and planning memos due	Read Heath & Millar; Scott; Tyler
4	Sept 11	Rhetorical theories; Response due	Read Heath and Willihnganz et al
	Sept 13	Narratives of crisis	Read Fearn-Banks, Ch 3; Walaski, Ch 4
5	Sept 18	Progress reports due	Read Fearn-Banks, Ch 4 and Walaski, Ch 5 & 6
	Sept 20	Crafting the words; Response due	Read Kador, Ch 1-7
6	Sept 25	Apologizing	Complete draft of food sorting guide
	Sept 27	Draft of Food Sorting Guide due	Read Kador, Ch 8-14
7	Oct 2	More on apology; Response due	Complete food sorting guide
	Oct 4	Food Sorting Guide Due	Prepare for Fall Break
8	Oct 9	No class-Fall Break	Read Fearn-Banks, Ch 5, 6 and 7
	Oct 11	Types of crisis	Read Walaski, Ch 7 and Elmasry et al
9	Oct 16	Media Relations; Response due	Read Taylor, Veil et al, and Gonzalez-Herrero
	Oct 18	Social media	Work on draft of case study
10	Oct 23	Draft of case study report due	Read Schultz et al and Rife
	Oct 25	More on digital crisis communications	Finalize case study report
11	Oct 30	Case study reports due	Read Beloit, Beloit, and Moody
	Nov 1	Image Restoration; Response due	Read Fearn-Banks, Ch 15 and Walaski, Ch 8-9
12	Nov 6	Proposal and planning memos due	Read Nikolaev and Fearn-Banks, Appendix A-C
	Nov 8	Sample plans	Read Walaski, Ch 10 and Fearn-Banks, Ch 12
13	Nov 13	Case Studies	Read <i>Managing Crisis</i> ; one unassigned chapter from Fearn-Banks
	Nov 15	More case studies and resources	Complete draft of report
14	Nov 20	Draft of report due	Prepare for Thanksgiving Break
	Nov 22	No class-Thanksgiving Break	Readings on oral presentations TBD
15	Nov 27	Discuss oral presentations	Continue to work on report
	Nov 29	Work in class on report	Continue to work on report and presentation
16	Dec 4	Prepare for presentation on report	Crisis Communications Guide and Presentation due to Katy Bunder
	Dec 6	Crisis Communications Guide Due!	at the end of class on December 6