

**English 295**  
Writing in the Workplace  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
Section 015 // MWF 11:30a-12:20p // HSS-111  
Section 024 // MWF 3:00-3:50p // HSS-58

**Contact Information**

**Instructor:** Dr. Daniel Pizappi

**Email:** [dpizappi@vols.utk.edu](mailto:dpizappi@vols.utk.edu)

**Office Hours:** MWF 12:30-1:30 PM; T 10:00-12:00 PM

**Office Location:** Dunford Hall 2341 or <https://tennessee.zoom.us/my/dpizappi>

The best way to contact me is through email. Please make sure that you put the course number (ENGL 295) in the subject line and that you send from your UTK email account. Please allow a response time of one business day to all emails.

If you would like to meet with me but cannot make it to my office hours, I am happy to arrange a time that works for both of us.

**Course Description**

This writing intensive course focuses on professional communication, and on professionalism *in* communication. Students produce a variety of documents that professionals encounter in the workplace. The course examines both the formal and rhetorical elements of writing these documents, as well as the “rhetorical situations” in which they are produced and read. Students learn ways to examine writing rhetorically so that they can write texts that respond appropriately to the situations in which they are composed.

The course prioritizes an “audience-centered” approach to writing. Students also learn formatting, content, and etiquette guidelines for various communication situations. Frequent writing assignments assist students in developing the habits necessary for appropriate and effective workplace writing. Course activities include lecture and discussion, in-class writing workshops, group critique of genre examples, peer review sessions, and collaborative group work. Throughout the course, students examine methods of critically analyzing and revising prose for clarity and professionalism.

In English 295: Writing in the Workplace, students will:

- learn and practice the conventions of professional discourse
- produce common workplace documents: emails, memos, letters, and reports
- produce effective business writing within appropriate contexts and genres
- increase their effectiveness in writing and speaking for different rhetorical situations within the professional world
- learn fundamentals of rhetorical theory, both textual and visual, as adapted for the workplace

- apply knowledge of textual and visual rhetoric to analyze texts, graphs, images, and communication designs
- increase their knowledge about the job search process and produce drafts of application materials that can be repurposed for future use
- enhance their professional presentation skills by developing and delivering a formal visual and oral presentation

### **Communication through Writing (WC)**

ENGL 295 is a writing intensive course that counts toward the College of Arts and Sciences' "Communicating through Writing" General Education requirements. Writing intensive courses require a *minimum of 5000 words*.

Good writing skills enable students to create and share ideas, investigate and describe values, and record and explain discoveries – all skills that are necessary for professional success and personal fulfillment. Students must also be able to write correctly and engage in a productive writing process that includes drafting, feedback, and revision. They also must be able to locate relevant information, evaluate its usefulness and quality, and incorporate it logically and ethically to support ideas and claims for different audiences and purposes.

Courses in this area are expected to produce the following outcomes for students:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to write correctly, employing appropriate conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to focus material to convey a clear, unified point or effect.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to shape content, organization, style, and/or documentation conventions to correspond with appropriate disciplinary expectations and rhetorical contexts, including audience and purpose.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to locate and use relevant, credible evidence to support ideas.

### **Texts**

- Guffey, Mary Ellen and Dana Loewy, editors. *Essentials of Business Communication*. 12<sup>th</sup> ed., Cengage, 2022.

Supplemental readings will be uploaded to *Canvas*.

### **Grading**

You may notice as you read through this section that our course quantifies your grade differently than you have become accustomed to in previous classes. This course utilized a labor-based grading system, and as a result, your grade in this class is based on the labor you complete during the semester. All major assignments and activities for this course are graded "Complete/Incomplete." To determine how your labor translates to a transcript grade at the end of the semester, you can refer to the **grading matrix** provided below.

As long as you complete each project in the spirit that it's asked, you will receive credit for it and pass the class.

**Grading Matrix**

<b>For an A, you will</b>	<b>For a B, you will</b>	<b>For a C, you will</b>	<b>For a D, you will</b>
Pass all six major assignments (internal email correspondence, informative memo, negative message, formal report, formal presentation, application packet).	Pass five of the six major assignments (internal email correspondence, informative memo, negative message, formal report, formal presentation, application packet).	Pass four of the six major assignments (internal email correspondence, informative memo, negative message, formal report, formal presentation, application packet).	Pass three of the six major assignments (internal email correspondence, informative memo, negative message, formal report, formal presentation, application packet).
Submit a crappy first draft for three required projects (internal email correspondence, informative memo, negative message) and make notable revisions to all three prior to submitting the final paper / project.	Submit a crappy first draft for at least two projects and make noticeable revisions to both prior to submitting the final paper / project.	Submit a crappy first draft of at least one projects and make noticeable revisions prior to submitting the final.	You do not submit any crappy first drafts OR your crappy first drafts are identical or nearly identical with the final.
Provide on-time peer review feedback to an assigned classmate for ea. of the following papers: internal email correspondence, informative memo, and negative message.	Provide on-time peer review feedback to an assigned classmate for two papers.	Provide on-time peer review feedback to an assigned classmate for one paper.	You do not provide on-time feedback to your classmates.
Pass at least 90% of homework and in-class assignments	Pass at least 75% of homework and in-class assignments.	Pass at least 60% of homework and in-class assignments.	Pass 50% of homework and in-class assignments.
Complete the following: 1. Reflection Memo 1 2. Reflection Memo 2 3. Attend Formal Report group conference	Complete 2 of 3: 1. Reflection Memo 1 2. Reflection Memo 2 3. Attend Formal Report conference	Complete 1 of 3: 1. Reflection Memo 1 2. Reflection Memo 2 3. Attend Formal Report conference	Do not attend group conference for Formal Report or complete any self-assessments

Please note that due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), I cannot discuss grades over email; if you want to discuss your grade with me, visit me during office hours or make an appointment.

While you can monitor which assignments you've completed on Canvas, Canvas's gradebook is not intended to play nicely with a labor-based grading system. As such most assignments on Canvas will be graded Complete/Incomplete or Pass/Fail. You are able, welcome, and strongly encouraged to keep track of your progress by comparing the work you've completed as shown in the gradebook to the **Grading Matrix**. Please let me know if you want to talk about where you stand in the class.

## Revisions

I allow revisions of any "Incomplete" major assignment this semester with the exception of the Formal Report and Formal Presentation as these are group assignments. Revisions are due within two weeks of the date I hand back graded assignments. If you wish to revise you must:

1. Schedule an appointment with me or the writing center to discuss plans for revision, and
2. Resubmit your assignment in a portfolio with all previous drafts and a Revision Memo (see separate instructions).

If you plagiarize and do not pass the paper as the penalty, you will not be allowed to revise the paper. (For more information about plagiarism, see "Academic Integrity & Plagiarism" section).

## Written Homework & In Class Writing Grades

I grade homework using the Canvas's complete/incomplete grading scale.

- A "complete" indicates that you successfully completed the assignment in a timely, thoughtful, and thorough manner.
- An "incomplete" suggests that either your homework was too brief or superficial to demonstrate learning, indicated confusion or an incomplete understanding of the course concepts, doesn't really respond to the prompt, shows evidence of not reading, is too hasty or brief, or is missing altogether.

## Course Assignments

Assignment	Due Date
Internal Email Correspondence	2/17
Informative Memo	3/6
Negative Message	3/31

Formal Report	4/28
Formal Presentation	TBD
Application Packet	Final Exam
Writing Activities	Regularly

### **Assignment Submission and Late Work Policy**

You will submit final essays and shorter assignments on the course's Canvas site, and I will return them there with comments. Major assignments will typically include formatting requirements, which will be part of the grade; however, in the absence of other instructions, all assignments should follow basic MLA format (1" margins, TNR font, size 12, double-spaced throughout).

**For major assignments**, students are required to upload an electronic copy to Canvas before the required deadline. Assignments are **due by 11:59 p.m. EST on the day they are assigned** unless otherwise indicated.

This course requires extensive reading and writing, with overlapping assignments and daily written homework; please keep tabs on the syllabus so that there are no surprises. Due dates are to help us all work at a manageable pace. But I accept all late work, and I grant all extensions. Any paper can be turned in late with the only penalty being no timely feedback. As I expect growth from feedback as part of grading criteria, this can be a significant disadvantage. Please come talk to me if you're falling behind.

### **Attendance**

While I do not take attendance, missing class time will make it difficult to successfully complete the required work necessary to pass the class.

I still expect you to attend every class on time, having completed all assigned readings and homework, and to participate actively and respectfully in all class activities, which includes turning off all electronic devices and putting away all food before class begins.

If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed; contact me or a classmate before the next class. All work is due on time or in advance, even if you miss class.

Students who are absent due to illness or other emergencies **do not** need to submit documentation for that absence. Please email the professor as soon as you are able to let him know about your absence and reach out to a classmate to get notes. If you require any other materials from the missed class, please reach out to the professor *with a list of what you need*.

### **Communication Policy**

There is a lot of material packed into this 15-week course, and you should plan to work on course material every day of the week. Please plan to

- Log into Canvas at least three times per week

- Check your UT email at least three times a week
- Check the Announcements page on Canvas for important announcements; an email will also be sent out.
- Please adhere to the proper netiquette when communicating with me and your classmates.

There are three ways to contact me: office hours, email, and the course Q&A discussion board. My office hours are M/W 11:00-12:00 and T 10:30-12:30. During those hours, you can contact me at my office in Dunford Hall (2341) or via Zoom at <https://tennessee.zoom.us/my/dpizappi>. If you wish to meet via Zoom, please just send me an email to set up the meeting.

You should feel free to drop by my office hours as often as you'd like to chat, review an assignment, or discuss any questions or concerns. Dropping by office hours is often one of the most effective ways to resolve any confusion you might encounter.

### **University Civility Statement**

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: <http://civility.utk.edu/>.

### **Academic Integrity & Plagiarism**

You are expected to abide by UTK's Honor Statement:

*An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.*

~From Hilltopics

All work you turn in must be your own; appropriating others' work, cutting and pasting from the internet, failing to properly acknowledge sources, turning in work that was substantially written or rewritten by a friend, family member, or tutor, providing false attributions of source material, falsifying data, or other forms of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in failing the assignment and other penalties, up to and including failure of the course and possible additional university action. All plagiarism and academic dishonesty is reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards and the Dean's Office of your College. Plagiarism is serious; we'll talk about what it is and how to avoid it throughout the semester.

### ***UTK's Policy on Plagiarism as Stated in Hilltopics***

Plagiarism is using the intellectual property or product of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else's words or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the University. Some specific examples of plagiarism are:

- copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
- summarizing or paraphrasing without proper documentation (citation) ideas and phrases from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
- collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor's approval;
- submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

In addition to the types of plagiarism listed above, I consider recycling work from another class to be academic dishonesty and doing so will result in failing the assignment.

As a UTK student, you are held to all the standards and regulations stated in Hilltopics, and I recommend that you read it (<http://dos.utk.edu/hilltopics/>).

### **The University Libraries**

The University Libraries are staffed by knowledgeable and helpful professionals and should be one of your first research resources throughout your time at UTK.

Here are the two tips for letting the Library make your life easier:

- You can chat with a reference librarian to ask a quick question (about almost anything); see the "Chat" function at <http://www.lib.utk.edu/>
- And you can request a book for pickup at Hodges rather than weeding through the stacks (see <http://www.lib.utk.edu/>).

### **The Counseling Center**

The Counseling Center's mission is to promote students' psychological, educational, and social well-being. They provide a variety of services, including crisis intervention, individual counseling, workshops, and more. If you or someone you know could benefit from their assistance, contact them anytime.

Location: 1800 Volunteer Blvd (in the Student Health Building)

Phone: 865-974-2196

24-Hour Helpline: 865-974-HELP (4357)

Email: [counselingcenter@vols.utk.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@vols.utk.edu)

## **Emergency Alert System**

The University of Tennessee is committed to providing a safe environment to learn and work. When you are alerted to an emergency, please take appropriate action. You can learn more about what to do in an emergency and sign up for UT Alerts here:

<https://www.utk.edu/utalert>

Check the emergency posters near exits and elevators for building-specific information. In the event of an emergency, the course schedule and assignments may be subject to change. If changes to graded activities are required, reasonable adjustments will be made, and you will be responsible for meeting revised deadlines.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Any student who feels they may need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability should contact the Student Disability Services:

<https://sds.utk.edu/>. You can also call the office at 865-974-6087 or visit the office in 100 Dunford Hall to document eligibility / register for services, or if you have emergency information to share. Student Disability Services will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

## **Accessibility**

UT values accessibility for everyone in our community and has expressed this value in system-wide policy. All communications, learning material, and technology at UT should be accessible. For more information about accessibility including the full policy and opportunities for training, visit the UT accessibility webpage: <https://accessibility.utk.edu/>

## **Title IX**

University of Tennessee faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. Please be aware that if you choose to confide in a faculty member regarding an issue of sexual misconduct, dating violence, or stalking, we are obligated to inform the University's Title IX Coordinator, who can assist you in connecting with all possible resources both on- and off-campus. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, the Student Counseling Center (865-974-2196) and the Student Health Center (865-974-3135) are both confidential resources.

For additional resources and information, visit <https://titleix.utk.edu/>.



## Course Schedule

Schedule is subject to change at instructor's discretion. Students will be notified of any changes ASAP in writing.

CNV = Canvas

EBC = *Essentials of Business Communication*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Due</b>
Week 1 (1/23 – 1/27)	Course Introduction Syllabus Review of Rhetorical Situation	<b>Read:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapter 1
Week 2 (1/30 – 2/3)	Business Communication Basics & Audience Awareness	<b>Read:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapter 2 and 3  <b>Quiz #1 due on 2/3</b>
Week 3 (2/6 – 2/10)	Positive & Neutral Messages Email Genre Analysis	<b>Read:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapters 5 & 6 + Appendix A (A.1-A.3)  <b>Quiz #2 due on 2/10</b>
Week 4 (2/13 – 2/17)	Document Design	<b>Read:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapter 4 <b>Review:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapters 3 & Appendix A (A.1-A.3)  <b>Rough Draft of Internal Email due on 2/12</b>  <b>Internal Email due on 2/17</b>
Week 5 (2/20 – 2/24)	Persuasive Messages	<b>Read:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapter 8  <b>Reflection #1 due on 2/20</b>
Week 6 (2/27 – 3/3)	Goodwill Messages & Revision	<b>Review:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapter 6  <b>Rough Draft of Informative Memo due on 3/2</b>
Week 7 (3/6 – 3/10)	Negative Messages	<b>Read:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapter 7  <b>Informative Memo due on 3/6</b>
<b>Week 8 - Spring Break 3/13-3/17</b>		

Week 9 (3/20 – 3/24)	Writing Ethical External Messages	<b>Read:</b> CNV Readings <b>Quiz #3 due on 3/24</b>
Week 10 (3/27 – 3/31)	Ethical Considerations (Cont.)	<b>Read:</b> CNV Readings <b>Rough Draft of Negative Message due on 3/28</b> <b>Negative Message due on 3/31</b>
Week 11 (4/3 – 4/7)  <b>4/7: NO CLASS (Spring Recess)</b>	Writing a Formal Report	<b>Read:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapters 9 & 10 <b>Reflection #2 due on 4/3</b> <b>Formal Report Proposal due on 4/5</b>
Week 12 (4/10 – 4/14)	Writing a Formal Report (Cont.)	<b>Read:</b> <i>EBC</i> Chapters 11 & 12 <b>Quiz #4 due on 4/14</b>
Week 13 (4/17 – 4/21)	Group Conferences for Formal Report	
Week 14 (4/24 – 4/28)	Application Materials	<b>Read:</b> CNV Readings <b>Formal Report due 4/28</b>
Week 15 (5/1 – 5/5)	Formal Report Presentations	<b>Formal Presentation due Day of In-Class Presentation</b>
Week 16 (5/8)	Application Materials Review	
Final Session*	Final Application Packet and Reflection	<b>Application Packet &amp; Reflection #3 due on scheduled date</b>
<p><b>* Final Date and Time as Scheduled by the University:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 015: Tuesday, May 16 // 10:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m..</li> <li>• Section 024: Wednesday, May 17 // 10:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.</li> </ul>		