

**Writing in the Business Administration Professions**

## Syllabus

**Section Details:**

13 (CRN 30644) Kariotis 302, MWR 9:15 am - 10:20 am, Jan. 10, 2011 – Apr. 20, 2011

**Instructor:** Steven S. Kapica

**Office:** 466 Holmes / **Hours:** MW 10:30 -12:00, or by appointment

**Email:** [s.kapica@neu.edu](mailto:s.kapica@neu.edu)

**Required Texts**

- Kellogg, David, and Susan Soroka, editors. *The AWD Toolkit*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.
- Electronic files in Blackboard
- On reserve (Snell Library): *The Business Writer*. Houghton Mifflin. (2006)

**Catalog Description**

Provides writing instruction for students in business-related fields. Students develop an in-depth analytic or recommendation report about a focused topic related to their majors and/or their co-op or other personal or professional experiences. In a workshop setting, students evaluate scholarly and popular sources, practice a variety of professional and academic forms of writing and communication, and develop expertise in audience analysis, critical research, peer review, and revision. Writing is guided in stages from initial topic exploration and a formal proposal through drafts and progress reports to a final polished report, presented in a bound portfolio with a cover letter, an executive summary, an abstract, and other writing samples. Prereq. (a) ENGL 1102 or ENGL 1111 and (b) 56 SH toward degree. 4.000 Credit hours 4.000 Lecture hours

**Course Description**

Writing is a complex of activities that engages a variety of cognitive processes. As exercised in academic and professional situations, it is always public *and* collaborative. In this course, we will work on addressing professional and public audiences and situations, paying constant attention to how our performances are conceived and perceived, envisioned and *revised*. As such, active student engagement will shape the course's effectiveness. Knowing what writer choices are and making appropriate choices is crucial to effective writing. The more one writes, discusses, gives and accepts feedback, asks questions, takes advantage of available resources, and revises, the more one will achieve. This course will be writing intensive and will require *significant* attention and commitment.

We will consider writing in *your* discipline and *your* position as writer and communicator within your chosen activity field(s). We will naturally move in and through a variety of types of reading, writing, presentation and performance. Additionally, you will engage in self-reflective writing throughout the semester—writing that addresses how you think about how you write, and writing that explores your analytical thinking about why you've made the writing choices you've made. The complicated path we weave through writing and rhetoric will amount to achieving the learning goals set forth by the Northeastern Writing Program.

**Advanced Writing in the Discipline (AWD) Learning Goals**

A student who successfully completes the AWD requirement at Northeastern should have demonstrated

1. A strong understanding of the uses of writing in his or her academic discipline and/or career path
2. Critical understanding of and facility in the discourse of a field

**Comment [k1]:** Northeastern University's Writing Program consists primarily of a first-year writing course paired with an advanced writing in the disciplines course (often taken by students after they have completed their first co-operative education experience and/or have started their junior year). Each of these courses has a number of iterations.

With regard to AWD, sections are offered for a number of populations: business majors, the health professions, engineering, social science and humanities, to name a few. In my time at Northeastern, I was fortunate to teach three of these iterations: ENGL 3301- Writing for Careers in the Arts and Sciences; ENGL 3304- Writing in the Business Administration Professions; ENGW 3306-Writing in the Health Professions.

The first AWD course I taught was a version for arts and sciences majors (summer 2010). I then taught the version for business majors in the fall of 2010 and the spring of 2011. In the summer of 2011, I returned to teaching arts and sciences majors. I did not teach an AWD course again until the summer of 2014; this time it was a dedicated multilingual writers section.

By the time I taught the version of the course represented by this syllabus (Spring 2011), I had developed a course that incorporated e-portfolios and team-based multimodal projects. At the time of this course, I was using TaskStream for the e-portfolio component. I later used Digication (the system Northeastern currently uses), and then moved away from these (paid) platforms to free blog hosting sites. My primary reason for this move was to highlight skill transfer and offer a much wider range of design elements/capability.

3. Successful use of appropriate citation conventions
4. An understanding of the importance of audience and context with respect to writing style and arrangement
5. Confidence and facility with the processes of revision
6. The production of 5000+ words of polished, revised writing
7. Written reflection on his or her own writing processes and texts and their role in his or her own practice of critical reasoning

### **Course Delivery and Evaluation**

This version of *Writing in the Business Administration Professions* will rely heavily on computer-based learning technologies (Blackboard and TaskStream E-Portfolio) and we will work partly in the classroom and partly online. The approach we use in this class may be different from what you are used to in your college class work: We will actively and critically explore the transition from writing for college to writing for professional and public situations. We will engage scholarly, professional, and popular sources, practice a variety writing and rhetoric, develop *meta-cognitive* awareness of audience and performance, conduct critical research, peer review, and revision, and produce publishable electronic (web-based) portfolios representative of course work and goals.

**Electronic Protocols:** The “e” component of this class is designed to enhance your experience and facilitate more effective writing and discussion. To this end, these protocols will be followed:

- This will be a primarily “paperless” course.
- All assignment details and guidelines, grades and feedback, will be handled electronically through two online platforms provided by Northeastern: TaskStream and Blackboard. TaskStream, an e-portfolio and evaluation platform, will be a site for assignment guidelines, creation, and submissions; Blackboard will be used for course communications (announcements, group discussion and file exchange, etc.), final evaluations, and final point tallies.
- *Email should only be used for genuine communication and problems that cannot be answered by you, your group, or your classmates.* During weekdays, I will get back to you within 24 hours; on the weekends, I will respond at my discretion. I want to make myself as accessible as possible; however, please use your best judgment. I will only devote my time to helping with genuine writing concerns and assignment issues.
- All papers should be submitted via Blackboard or TaskStream. I reserve the right to ask you for hard copies, but electronic versions will always be used for grading purposes. Grades will not be emailed; they will be posted periodically through TaskStream and Blackboard.
- **Technical difficulties are never an excuse for missed, late, or lost work.** Make multiple copies of all materials throughout the course. Backup your work frequently. File losses/problems are your responsibility and all technological problems should be handled *far in advance* of all deadlines.

**Conferences:** Formal conferences (both individual and group) will take place within the framework of our class time. Failure to participate in a scheduled conference will count as an absence. Additionally, I will hold office hours and be available to you by appointment. I encourage you to speak with me if you are confused, concerned, or simply want more feedback about your writing and the class. If I have a particular question I would like to discuss with you, I may ask you to set up an appointment to talk to me.

**Writing Center:** The Writing Center (412 Holmes, 617-373-4549) is available to help you with your writing. This is a free resource. While I am not requiring you to make use of The Writing Center, doing so

can only help. I also reserve the right to “require” you to visit The Writing Center if your writing exhibits consistent patterns of error that merit more attention than our class can offer.

**Classroom Atmosphere and Participation:** A classroom is a community. Because we are a classroom of individuals, we are likely to encounter a great deal of diversity. With this in mind, I would like to stress that all members of our community respect the work and human dignity of others. Expressions of disrespect degrade the community and damage us all; they will not be tolerated.

The group process and peer review are invaluable tools in this class and will require commitment to your own and your group's success. Because this class functions as an ongoing, flexible workshop, your participation is essential. Poor participation generally leads to poor work and failure to meet learning goals; it brings its own penalty. Therefore, you will not have a participation grade as such. However, if you come unprepared or are unwilling to participate, I reserve the right to dismiss you from class. Interference with other student's learning will not be tolerated.

**Late Policy:** All major assignments (indicated on the course calendar) are due on the dates indicated. All assignments need to be turned in at the appropriate time and to the appropriate place. Late assignments will result in a grade penalty, and any assignment more than one week late (seven calendar days) will not be accepted for a grade. You are required to complete all assignments, regardless of whether or not you receive credit for them.

**Academic Honesty:** Please see the *AWD Toolkit* for the Writing Program's policy on Academic Honesty.

**Grading:** Please see the *AWD Toolkit* for the Writing Program's general policy on grading.

Your base grade comes from three units. Assignments are given the following values:

Unit 1: Discourse Foundations 300 points (30%)

Unit 2: Navigating Communities 300 points (30%)

Unit 3: Developing Fields 300 points (30%)

Slush Fund 100 points (10%)

All grades are based on rubrics and assessment of process. While final writings will be primary determinants of unit grades, your grades will be a combination of all elements (in-class writing and group exercises, workshops and peer review, online research and activities, etc.). You will be able to keep track of your grades through TaskStream and Blackboard. The “Slush Fund” will supplement unit grades, cover assignments that bridge unit designations (in-class exercises, discussion, etc.), and will be used in final grade evaluation.

Because AWD focuses on writing processes and workplace professionalism, failure to turn in drafts on time will result in serious and non-negotiable grade-based consequences. Your grade in this class is based on your commitment to learning the conventions of academic and professional writing in your field and your ability to improve those skills.

**Comment [k2]:** In the assignment guidelines provided below, you will find that this multilayered unit provides extensive self-reflection on students' changing roles (from student to professional). Much of the work in this unit provides students with a pool of resources and writings that can be implicitly or explicitly used for entering the job market.

**Comment [k3]:** Where much of their first unit focuses on aligning individuals with their professional selves, this unit seeks to enter them into their discipline's discourse communities. Like their first unit, this second unit offers a sequence of interconnected assignments.

**Comment [k4]:** This unit highlights both discipline-specific research and team/collaborative writing. I reference this assignment in my teaching philosophy statement.

**ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN**

Unit	Assignment	Points
1: Discourse Foundations	Co-Op Narrative Draft 1	25
	Co-Op Narrative E-Folio Draft	25
	Presentation	100
	Linked In Site Development	25
	E-Folio Final	100
	Reviews & Reflections	25
2: Navigating Communities	Sector Snapshot	75
	Research & Development Memo	75
	Report Proposal	100
	Reviews & Reflections	50
3: Developing Fields	Research & Development	50
	Progress Report	50
	Presentation	75
	Report & E-Folio	100
	Reviews & Reflections	25

Writing is a complex of activities that engages a variety of cognitive processes. As exercised in academic and professional situations, it is always public and collaborative. The Unit sequence of our course is designed to address professional and public audiences and situations, paying constant attention to how our performances are conceived and perceived, envisioned and revisioned.

While each unit has specific goals, we will always work toward achieving the *AWD Learning Goals* and the goals highlighted in the **Catalog Description** for this course. We will first consider *your* position in your discipline (**Unit 1**). We will then move on to examine a variety of types of writing and rhetoric, moving deeper into both *our* understanding of professional rhetoric and *your* discipline and discourse communities (**Unit 2**). Finally, we will end the semester with a challenging and rewarding major report project that will sharpen your research and analytical skills, as well as address your interpersonal communication and collaborative writing skills (**Unit 3**).

Each unit will require a variety of writing and performance tasks, including peer review and personal reflection. Points will be awarded quantitatively and qualitatively. Keep in mind that each unit has an available 300 points. Successful completion of each assignment is required to adequately achieve learning goals. It is also important to note that presentations and final (publishable) drafts always bear the largest point totals. All grades are based on rubrics and assessment of process. The “Slush Fund” will supplement unit grades, cover assignments that bridge unit designations (in-class exercises, discussion, etc.), and will be used in final grade evaluation.

Because AWD focuses on writing processes and workplace professionalism, failure to turn in drafts on time will result in serious and non-negotiable grade-based consequences. Your grade in this class is based on your commitment to learning the conventions of academic and professional writing in your field and your ability to improve those skills.

## **1. DISCOURSE FOUNDATIONS:** *Co-Op Narrative*

**Length:** 1500-2000+ words

**Audience:** Peer Community

**Draft 1 Due:** 19 January

Post to Blackboard > Groups > UNIT 1 Forum > Thread

Submit to Blackboard > Assignments > Co-Op Narrative Draft 1

**E-Folio Draft & Comments Due:** 26-28 January

Request Peer Comments > TaskStream

Comment on Peer E-Folio > TaskStream

**Final Due:** 7 February

Request Instructor Comments > TaskStream

Optional > Publish URL

According to the College of Business Administration, “As a student... your co-op experiences will add depth to your classroom studies, provide exposure to career paths and opportunities, and enable you to develop the skills needed to be successful in today's global business environment.”

Since your co-ops constitute a significant portion of your academic and professional education and training, our first major writing for this course will be an explanatory and reflexive assessment of your experiences. This will be an opportunity for you to not only revisit and reflect on your experiences, but it will also allow you to produce and collect writing that you can later use for résumés and job interview preparation.

### **Co-Op Narrative Draft 1 Guidelines**

For your first draft of this assignment, **write a semi-cohesive narrative about one or more of your co-op experiences**. This essay should strive to **explain the nature of your co-op** (how you “landed” the job, where you worked, what you did, how you did it, etc.) and **reflect on your experiences and how they relate to your future academic and career goals**. Your draft should be relatively complete (1500 words), written in a professional yet conversational tone, and presented according to APA formatting guidelines.

Things to keep in mind:

- This paper serves two main goals: **explanation** and **reflection**.  
The **explanation** part should seek to put your co-op in proper context. That is, write your essay to an audience unfamiliar with the College of Business Administration's co-op program. You don't need to spend too much time going over the co-op program details, but be sure not to assume that your audience will know what you're talking about. The same goes for the company or companies you worked for: Be sure to give some background and “set up” your role(s). You may find that this explanation will not only help you frame your essay, but will spark additional thoughts and reflections.  
The **reflection** part may be the harder of the two because while you likely have vivid memories and plenty to write about, you may find it hard to actually write about what you think about what you did. This is why I would suggest you start with fleshing out the concrete details (the explanation part) first and then use this to guide you through reflection about your experiences. But what about those experiences? You can approach this from several angles, but here are two

to consider: **1.** Go personal. Write what you feel. Did you have good or bad experiences? What was your boss like? What happened that you didn't expect? And so on. **2.** Think about your career, your burgeoning professional self. What did you learn that will help you be a better employee or worker? How can you apply what you've done to future goals? How might you talk about your experiences in a future job interview? This second point is really the one that will be most helpful to future writing/thinking about your co-ops: The more you reflect on these experiences, the more you will be inclined to recall on résumés and in job interviews.

- **APA for Beginners:** We will be using APA style this semester. Since this is your first paper, and your first draft, you don't need to worry about getting your formatting perfect; however, I do want you to begin using APA as best you can. Go to Purdue University's OWL [APA Formatting and Style Guide](#) to find the most recent and accessible information about APA.
- **Tone:** As college writers with some workplace experience, you are likely not (sorry to say) masters of writing tone and delivery. That's why you're in this class. Much of your writing at this point is based in emulation and avoidance of instructor ire. This has likely served you well up to this point, but as you become professionals, your ability to control tone in your writing will be key to not only how you are perceived but how effective your writing will be. This is all to say that with this assignment, try to pay attention to not only *what you say* and how you organize it (into a coherent narrative) but to *how you say it*. Does your writing sound like it's coming from a college student or from a professional business person? What kinds of writing choices can you make to change your tone? Here again, we will talk about this in class, work on it in workshops, but I want you to start this draft thinking about how your writing tone presents itself *right now*.

## 2. NAVIGATING COMMUNITIES: *Sector Snapshot*

**Length:** 1500-2000 words

**Audience:** Instructor; Group

**Sector Snapshot Discussion / Draft Feedback:** 16-23 February

Group Page > Group Discussion > State of Sector Forum

**Sector Snapshot Final:** 24 February

Blackboard > Assignments > Sector Snapshot Final

### Navigating Communities

Put simply, Unit 2 is about navigating professional conversations. We've talked in class about the complicated position you hold as student-professionals; this unit's goal is to push you further into the role of professional by immersing you in appropriate, field-specific discourse. In addition to this, we will spend some time discussing the function of writing and communicating within these professional contexts. This unit, then, is about reading in your chosen field, writing to professionals in that field and, finally, reflecting on how your field and your communication fit into a larger, global context.

This first assignment, *Sector Snapshot*, asks you to start with one scholarly text from your field. You will choose the text by following your professional interests, and then you will ask questions generated by the dynamic interaction between your interests and the text. Your *Sector Snapshot* will serve as a starting point for additional research into your field (*Research & Development Memo*); this research will ultimately culminate in a *Major Report Proposal*.

### Sector Snapshot Guidelines

First, locate a *single scholarly text* in your field that raises issues you think are worth exploring. Working from this text, you will inquire into the contours of a scholarly debate.

This paper serves two purposes: the first is to define a *knowledge front*; the second is to locate your own relation to that front. In any field, the knowledge front is the area where questions are asked. On one side of the front are the *facts*, the kinds of things on which the members of the field agree without dispute. On the other side of the knowledge front is *the unknown*, where we do not even yet have the tools to investigate. We can define the knowledge front as the area between facts and the unknown; there, things are *open to question* and questions are *capable of being answered*.

Here are a few guiding questions: *What does this text tell you about the kinds of things people in this field are concerned with? What does it assume? What kinds of arguments does it make? What kinds of evidence does it use? In other words, from this text, what does this field or argumentative terrain look like? Second, a few questions about your relation to the front. Why did you choose this text? What drew you to it? What areas of dispute were immediately recognizable as such? What areas of dispute or disagreement seemed more obscure at first? Finally, what kinds of specific research questions would you like to answer, if you had the time and resources?*

This assignment is designed specifically to advance your understanding of your discipline and the relation between your discipline and your career path. **A strong paper will be characterized by an impression**

**of carefully conducted inquiry, a close reading of the text, an attention to the audience (me; your group), and careful reflection on your own knowledge and position with respect to the field.**

Things to keep in mind:

- **A good article.** First, you must—I repeat, **must**—choose an article from an appropriate scholarly journal. All articles must be approved by me. Second, pick a good one. This may sound obvious, but it really isn't. Think first about what intrigues you about your chosen field and think about questions you may already have that you'd like to explore. Use these two points to guide you to the right article. Use a variety of search terms and don't be hasty. Engaging titles are usually indicators of good articles; however, reading abstracts (when provided) is a great way to find what you're looking for. And finally: Don't shy away from long and difficult articles. In fact, the longer, the better—not because you need to spend an inordinate amount of time reading but because the goal of this assignment is to dig (and dig deep) in to your field's discourse. You can't do that if you pick the shortest, least complicated article you find!
- **No reviews or editorials.** All scholarly journals have a variety of articles—from critical pieces that ask intriguing questions, to book reviews, to researched editorials. Stay away from the last two. While scholarly book reviews and editorials are much more involved than those you would find in magazines and newspapers, they are not “original” research-based writing. They are reactions to others' works. For this assignment, we're looking for original conversations.
- **A two-pronged approach.** Above, I noted that this paper serves two purposes. Don't forget this! It's really easy to fall into old patterns of research/writing behavior, where the goal is to simply comprehend and summarize. In many ways, this assignment isn't about either of those. It's about defining a *knowledge front* and locating your own relation to that front. What does that mean? Use the questions above to guide you through your reading and writing, but also try hard to position yourself in the conversation. That is, you're not reading this article to tell me what it's about; rather, you're reading it because you want to be part of the conversation. Understanding what's been said is a given.
- **Read and read again.** One of the primary goals of NU's First Year Writing Course is to teach you how to read with and against the grain. This is code for critical reading—for understanding reading not as a passive intake of information but as a dialogue between text and reader. Reading critically is crucial to this assignment for two reasons: 1. If you're hoping to join the conversation, you need to really engage what's being talked about. 2. If you're hoping to join the conversation, you need to know how to talk to those already in the conversation. The first point is pretty simple. Read with all your might, engage, understand, talk back, think around and through, ask questions, poke, prod, and think some more. The second one is really, really important to the goal of this assignment: Read critically to pick up on the language of your discourse community. Here again, you're used to talking about your field from the position of student (as in teacher/student, employer/employee). For this assignment, analyze how the writer “talks” so that you can join the conversation (the move from teacher/student to professional/professional).



## 2. Navigating Communities: Research & Development Memo

**Length:** 1000+ words

**Audience:** Instructor

**R & D Progress Report Due:** 24 Feb-7 March

Post R & D Progress Report > Blackboard > Group Page Discussion

**R & D Progress Report Feedback:** No Later than 9 March

Post Comments on R & D Progress Report > Blackboard > Group Page Discussion

**R & D Memo Due:** 10 March

Submit R & D Memo > Blackboard > Assignments

The first assignment of Unit 2, *Sector Snapshot*, asked you to start with one scholarly text from your field, asking questions generated by the dynamic interaction between your interests and the text. This initial writing will serve as a starting point for additional research into your field in your *Research & Development Memo*.

The final goal of Unit 2 requires you to stake out research territory from which you will be able to write a proposal for a major report. Your *R & D Memo* will be a place where you pose research questions and building on the working knowledge front you discussed in your *Sector Snapshot*. This involves generating research questions, a working thesis, and a zeroing in on a handful of relevant sources.

**Write a memo to me, including a working annotated bibliography that begins to formulate what you hope to solidify in your *Major Report Proposal*.**

Write a memo to me with the following labeled sections:

- **Working Thesis.** This is the general hypothesis that you are going to use as your Proposal's focal point.
- **Research Questions.** These are the questions you are going to need to answer in order to make a fair test of your working hypothesis.
- **Challenges.** Which questions will be hardest to answer? How will you answer them? Are there experts you need to consult? How will you find them? What will you do if your thesis proves entirely wrong? Do you have a Plan B? Is your paper achievable?
- **Working annotated bibliography.** While your choice of a sector will surely be motivated by your current understanding of the field, you will need to test what you already know against the knowledge of professionals in your field, against what they've already written (or neglected to write). As such, your preliminary research (which will lead to additional research) is a narrowing down, a focusing in on your sector.

Compile a short, working list of sources (these will be a starting point for your *Major Report Proposal*; however, they will not necessarily be the ones you use in your final paper). Include at least 5 (and no more than 10) citations in your memo.

Citations should follow APA format, and include the following:

- APA bibliographical information
- A brief summary (one or two sentences) of the article
- A critical analysis of the article. *What are its strengths? Weaknesses? Are there things the article overlooks or glosses?*
- A short description of how the article is relevant to your project.

Although the length of an annotation may vary with the length of the source (a very short article will take less space to annotate than an entire book), each entry should be approximately 150 words.

Guidelines for how to write and design memos can be found everywhere. However, I would like you to review the materials posted on Purdue University's OWL site regarding memos (click on these links):

- [Memos](#) (general overview)
- [Format](#)
- [Sample Memo](#) (use this format when presenting your work)

## 2. Navigating Communities: Proposal

**Length:** 1500-2500 words

**Audience:** Peer Group

**Proposal Draft Due:** 21 March

Blackboard > Group Discussion Board > Thread

**Proposal Review:** 25 March

Blackboard > Group Discussion Board > Reply to Thread

**Proposal Final Due:** 30 March

Submit > Blackboard

Post Proposal Final to Group Discussion Board

The final goal of Unit 2 requires you to stake out research territory from which you will be able to write a Proposal for a major report. Your *R & D Memo* should serve as pre-writing and planning for your Proposal.

Your proposal must have a specific, identifiable, and namable audience who can (at least in theory) act on your ideas. You will need to consider what your audience already knows, what they need to know, what information you should give them (and why). Keep tying the proposal back to the audience: What's in it for them to read this? What should they do after they've read it? There should be evidence of research to prove credibility.

Your proposal should be 2000-2500 words long (app. 4-7 pages), **in memo format**, and should use the major headings listed below (*it should also include descriptive subheadings that are tailored to your particular audience and topic*).

### **Begin your proposal with the following:**

Your subject stated in a few concise sentences indicating exactly what your report will cover and the angle that you are taking. (This section does not need a heading, although it will serve as an introduction and will frontload an overview of the entire report.) This section should include background/context: the need to be met, the problem to be solved, or the benefits to be gained. Then include the following sections:

### **Section with heading labeled “Problem Statement” or “Needs Analysis”**

A problem statement or needs analysis tells:

- What the problem is / What is needed
- When and where the problem takes place / When and where it is needed
- Why the problem happens / Why it is needed
- Who is affected by the problem / Who needs it

- Why the problem is significant—for example, the short-term and long-term costs or ramifications of not solving it or the benefits of pursuing a solution.

**Section with heading labeled “Recommendation for Major Report”**

- List criteria for a solution. What will a Major Report accomplish?
- Compare and contrast alternative solutions (if appropriate).
- Promote the best solution—your essential proposal—by stressing how it best meets the needs or solves the problem. Refer to the solution criteria and explicit benefits.
- Prove the solution’s practical workability by highlighting the following:
  - Outcomes of the solution, plan, or project
  - Requirements (what is needed to implement your proposal)
  - Schedules (if applicable)
  - Budget or cost breakdowns (if applicable)
  - Methods of monitoring costs and quality (if applicable).

**Section with heading labeled “Conclusion”**

- Summarize the problem or need.
- Provide conclusion about the best solutions—results and benefits.
- Review recommendations (briefly!) for implementing the solution.
- Request approval, solicit feedback, give contact information, and anticipate a response.

### 3. Developing Fields

**Group Email (R&D):** 2 April

Email sent to Instructor

**Group Discussion (R&D):** On-going from 28 March to 11 April

Blackboard > Group Discussion Board > Major Report Development

**Group Meeting (R&D):** 4, 6, or 7 April

Meet with instructor for 30 minutes

**Progress Report:** 8 April

Email *Progress Report Memo* > Instructor

**Group Review & Assessment:** 13 April

Submit Group Review > Blackboard Group Review & Assessment

**Presentation:** 14 or 20 April

**Report & E-Folio:** 14 April

Submit Final Report > Blackboard

Email E-Folio from TaskStream

**Presentation Reviews & Self Assessment:** 20-25 April

Submit Presentation Reviews > Blackboard > Surveys

Submit Self Evaluation > Blackboard > Self Assessment

Unit 3 is about navigating research conversations and developing fields of knowledge into presentable, workable reports. We've talked in class about where you're from and where you're going (academically and professionally). Now it's time to work as professionals and develop research into substantial, group mediated reports.

The goals of this unit, then, are wide-ranging: research and reporting within professional environments, development of interpersonal and discourse field communication, and execution of team-based writing. Your group will be tasked with choosing an effective proposal for a major report, developing a research plan, conducting additional team research, and reporting findings in a polished group-written major report. Your major report will also be presented to the class and disseminated as an E-Folio through TaskStream.

Below you will find descriptions and guidelines for the various parts and stages of this project.

#### Research & Development

The research and development stage of your Developing Fields project is just that: Your group will need to conduct group meetings, choose the right proposal, develop a workable action plan for additional research, and plan for the writing and presenting of your report.

The part of the project will be evaluated by completing a checklist of the following items:

1. Group written email notifying me of your group's proposal decision.

2. Group discussion (both in class and on Blackboard) about action plan(s).
3. Group meeting with me to discuss specifics about your project.

### **Progress Report**

After your group has spent time conducting additional research, developed plans for the report, and met with me, you will need to write (as a group) a **Progress Report Memo** explaining to me the status of your work. This memo will be a formal marker of your group's progress and will allow you to begin group reflection on your work.

Your **Progress Report Memo** should include the following:

- Explanation of the current state of research (what have you done, what still needs to be done).
- Outlining of individual responsibilities of all group members (who is doing what and why).
- Follow-up on report's "working thesis" (state it and explain how it's changed/developed since the proposal stage).

Your memo should be professionally written, addressed to me, and organized by subject headings. We will discuss how to write and develop Progress Reports in our group meetings.

### **Presentation**

This part is simple. After you've conducted your research and written your report, your group will present your findings in a 15 minute PowerPoint Presentation. Your presentations will effectively be multi-media versions of your reports, presented to your classmates and me (audience). The only major requirements are that each group member must actively participate in the presentation, all findings must be presented succinctly and effectively, and you must present for no less than 10 and no more than 15 minutes. Each group will also have 5 minutes for questions. Because we have limited time, we must make sure to stay on schedule!

### **Report & E-Folio**

Your group will prepare two versions of your report. One will be the report itself (as professionally designed PDF) and one will be an E-Folio developed through TaskStream.

### ***Report Guidelines:***

The center piece of this project is your group's major report. Once you've picked your working thesis and conducted research, **write a major report in which you describe your field (team focus), present your research thesis, and provide conclusions.**

*Your research report will need to include the following elements:*

- It must be in report format, addressed to business professionals (consistent to field).
- It must use at least 5 appropriate sources.
- It must be at least 2500 words long (it can be longer).
- It should be written in a tone that is professional and (seemingly) objective, as well as positive.
- It must use correct grammar, punctuation, usage, spelling and mechanics.

*The report should be organized as follows:*

#### Title Page

- See p.512 in the text.

#### Introduction

- State the issue or problem that the report addresses.
- Provide background information and the big picture.
- Preview the report's content, and relate the report's scope.

#### Findings

- Analyze the findings completely, accurately, and appropriately, including all relevant data and excluding all irrelevant data.
- Document the findings using APA documentation formatting.
- Interpret the findings (discuss their importance and implications) rather than just present them.
- Organize the findings into manageable chunks using compare/contrast, time, space order-of-importance, categories, cause/effect, or problem/solution patterns.
- Present the findings using informative, parallel headings to signal the contents of sections.

#### Summary and Conclusions

- Summarize the main points of the findings and key facts about the problem, issue, or need.
- Draw conclusions that are supported by the evidence in your findings.
- End the report with a sense of completion that conveys an impression that the project is important.

#### Back Matter

- At the end of your report include a properly formatted (APA) reference page.

#### ***E-Folio Guidelines:***

There really are no (major) guidelines for the E-Folio version of your report. Your group must determine what kind of folio you will create and how you will present your findings in e-folio format. However, beyond using TaskStream, your group has creative freedom to design your findings into an effective electronic format.

Once your group has completed your E-Folio, you will need to send me a stable URL for it in an email that explains your group's choices and design.

#### **Reviews & Reflection**

This portion of the project will be on-going. That is, I want you to constantly review and reflect on your group's progress—on its successes and failures, and on your contributions. At two points in the process, I will ask you to give me written proof of your reflection (in Blackboard Quiz format):

- **Group Reflection & Assessment:** You will assess your group's progress and process. This reflection will be focused on your assessment of your group as a whole and your group mates individually.
- **Self Assessment:** This portion of the reflection will be a follow up to the initial reflection and will focus on ***your*** role in the group.