

# Editing Yourself and Others

## Course Syllabus

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### Course Information

### Assessment

### Policies

### Course Expectations

## Course Information

### Course Description

In a professional or business setting, writing is not only a main means of communicating but also a tool for getting things done. It is through writing that an organization demonstrates its worth and achieves its goals. Anyone with good writing skills is at an advantage in the workplace. Unfortunately, when people lack good writing skills, their overall abilities and performance may be questioned.

It is not surprising that many professionals, no matter how accomplished they are in their area of expertise, are anxious when they have to write. And, writing often becomes a point of contention when people on the job don't agree on whether a piece of writing is effective or how to go about improving it. Those who delegate responsibility for writing to others often feel frustrated that they end up having to do the work themselves—a situation that invariably leads to their employees feeling criticized and insecure in their job. Needless to say, the duplication of work effort, the loss of productivity, and the inevitable bad feelings undermine the work environment, often leading to individuals resigning or being dismissed. In fact, according to a recent survey of Fortune 500 executives, poor reading and writing skills is the most frequent reason for dismissal of first-year employees.

Writing does not have to be a source of stress and conflict. It can be a more collaborative process where there is the expectation of success.

### Course Learning Goals

After completing this course, you will be able to:

Apply a "problem-solving" approach to writing in the workplace that improves writing and empowers all involved.

Interact effectively with others to obtain and provide useful feedback at different stages of the writing process.

Apply principles of good writing to evaluating your own writing and that of others.

Apply different approaches to team writing and the roles and responsibilities of individuals in a team writing project

Employ a particular model for team writing and collaborate effectively at various stages of a project.

### Course Competencies

In this course, you will develop the following competencies:

Competence	Competence Statement and Criteria
L7	Can learn collaboratively and examine the skills, knowledge and values that contribute to such learning.
H3D	Can employ the skills of negotiation, mediation, or interpersonal communication in the resolution of a problem.
FX	Can apply the principles of peer and collaborative editing to workplace writing Or Written in consultation with the instructor.

### How the Competences will be Demonstrated in this Course

#### L7

You will develop skill in using a collaborative model to achieve good outcomes in workplace writing.

You will demonstrate this competence by working in teams of three or four to write a report or proposal.

**H3D** In class discussion and in writing assignments, you will show you understand the problems that may develop between writers and those who review their work, and that you can use principles of interpersonal communication to solve them.

You will develop skill in reviewing others' work at various stages of the writing process in ways that not only improve the writing but also show respect for others.

**FX** You will examine models for team writing, including the roles and responsibilities of each individual, and applies a collaborative writing model to a particular writing project.

### Course Resources

To buy your books, go to <http://www.mbsdirect.net>.

Hint: type DePaul for name of the school.

[Click here for help buying your books](#)

### Required Reading:

Kolin, P. (2011) Successful writing at work, Concise (3rd Edition). Cengage Learning. Co. ISBN-13: 978049590194; ISBN: 0495901946

### Course Grading Scale

A = 95 to 100	A- = 91 to 94	B+ = 88 to 90
B = 85 to 87	B- = 81 to 84	C+ = 77 to 80

C = 73 to 76	C- = 69 to 72	D+ = 65 to 68
D = 61 to 64	F = 60 or below	INC

Please note: Grades lower than a C- do not earn credit or competence in the School for New Learning.

## Course Structure

This course consists of 10 modules. The estimated time to complete each module is one week.

To see course due dates, click on the Checklist link on the top navigation bar. This page contains module-specific checklists and due dates for the work due in the course.

[Back to Top](#)

## Assessment

### Percentage distribution of Assessments

In assessing your final grade, consideration will be given to four components. The first two components assessed are your participation in the discussion forums. This is especially important in a course that stresses collaborative learning, peer review, and interpersonal communication.

As mentioned, for a good part of this class, you will be working in teams, and thus more frequent participation is required than in other online classes. If you're unable to participate at least FOUR times a week (more frequently in some weeks), it will be difficult to pass the class.

The third component relates to two written assignments: your mid-term Progress Report and your end-of-term Self-assessment.

The fourth component relates to your contribution and participation in the Team-writing project.

Quality of contributions to weekly discussion forums:

- Relevance to the topic addressed.
- Accuracy of information and use of theory.
- Conciseness of explanations and focus on main points.
- Timeliness of submitting messages.

Quality of responses to other students in discussion forums.

- Respect for other participants' ideas and input.
- Appropriate use of comments related to discussion topics.
- Focus on staying on track with discussion.
- Contributions of helpful and insightful ideas.
- Questions that challenge and engage others.

Quality of Progress Report and Self-Assessment

- Addresses the assignment according to directions.
- Assignments submitted on time.
- Summarizes and prioritizes information appropriately.
- Demonstrates understanding of learning objectives.
- Describes content with appropriate level of reflection and detail.

#### Contribution and Participation in Final Project

- Addresses the assignment according to directions.
- Assignment submitted on time.
- Demonstrates skill in using a collaborative model involving all team members.
- Is the result of effective interaction and peer review.
- Accuracy of information used as evidence and proper referencing.
- Presented with attention to principles of effective writing.

#### Point Breakdown

Assignment 2.1	5 points
Assignment 3.1	5 points
Assignment 4.1	10 points
Assignment 5.1	20 points
Assignment 6.1	10 points
Assignment 7.1	10 points
Assignment 8.1	10 points
Assignment 10.1	20 points
Performed Role on Report	10 points

### Grading Policies and Practices

To complete the course, you must complete each of the assignments as described in the course and submit them to your instructor by the assigned deadline. In addition, you must participate in the course discussion forum by responding to all instructor requests and by interacting with fellow classmates as necessary.

Points are deducted for late work.

### How To Do Well In This Class

This section provides a few hints on how to do well in this class:

1. Participate in class discussions. The class discussions and homework exercises are worth a large percentage of your grade. Most modules ask you to post an opinion and include a follow-up. Don't miss the follow-up posting.
2. Don't fall behind — In general, once a discussion is graded it's over. Don't think you can post discussion items several weeks after they are graded and expect credit. The class has moved on and it is difficult for course administrators to find your postings after it has been graded.
3. Read the assignments carefully. If the assignment says answer three questions, then answer three.

4. Email questions to the instructor.
5. Post all assignments by the specified Due Date.

### **General Assessment Criteria for All Writing Assignments**

Grading of assignments will be based on the following:

**Content** refers to the treatment of the topic logically and analytically. This is the substance, the "what" of the paper; what you had to say about the topic, what you presented in defense of your position, and what your analysis revealed about thought processes and grasp of the material you grappled with.

**Organization** is the way your paper is arranged and presented, including both the overall organization and the arrangement of sub-parts. These include: relevant title and subheadings; introductory material, where needed; summaries, where appropriate; connective and transitional links; and what used to be called "rhetoric": the skillful arrangement of the pieces for maximum persuasive impact on the reader.

**Mechanics** refers to the use of Spelling and Grammar check, the use of Standard English, the basics of sentence structure and punctuation, and effective and sensitive word choice usage. Mastery of basic communication and writing skills is a must for undergraduate (and graduate) students. The paper you prepare should also use proper APA citation form for in-text references as well as for the bibliography.

All writing assignments are expected to conform to basic college-level standards of mechanics and presentation.

Consider visiting the Writing Center to discuss your assignments for this course or any others. You may schedule appointments (30 or 50 minutes) on an as-needed or weekly basis, scheduling up to 3 hours worth of appointments per week. Online services include Feedback-by-Email and IM conferencing (with or without a webcam). All writing center services are free.

Writing Center tutors are specially selected and trained graduate and undergraduate students who can help you at almost any stage of your writing. They will not do your work for you, but they can help you focus and develop your ideas, review your drafts, and polish your writing. They can answer questions about grammar, mechanics, different kinds of writing styles, and documentation formats. They also can answer questions and provide feedback online, through IM/webcam chats and email.

Obviously, the tutors won't necessarily be familiar with every class or subject, but they are able to provide valuable help from the perspective of an interested and careful reader as well as a serious and experienced student-writer.

Schedule your appointments with enough time to think about and use the feedback you'll receive. To schedule a Face-to-Face, Written Feedback by Email, or Online Appointment, visit [www.depaul.edu/writing](http://www.depaul.edu/writing).

### **Assessment Criteria for your Final Paper or Project by competence**

It is important that your final paper:

- Is the result of an effective team process, in which each team member has participated and which is consistent with concepts of collaborative writing and editing stressed in class.
- Organizes your supportive evidence into relevant paragraphs that address your subject.

- Takes into account a variety of points of view.
- Demonstrates that you are able to integrate evidence into your argument according to principles of standard English, using proper grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure.
- Uses proper quotation form, including introduction of your quotation as well as your commentary following the quotation.
- Has an introduction and concluding paragraph.
- Contains proper APA citation form for in-text references as well as for bibliography.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Discussion Forums**

Discussion Forums are an important component of your online experience. This course contains discussion forums related to the topics you are studying each week. For requirements on your participation in the Discussion Forums, please see "Course Expectations" in the syllabus.

A Course Q & A discussion forum has also been established to manage necessary, ongoing social and administrative activities. This is where the management and administrative tasks of the course are conducted, and where you can ask 'process' questions and receive answers throughout the course. Please feel free to answer any question if you feel you know the answer; this sharing of information is valuable to other students.

## **Assessment Criteria for Online Discussion Participation**

In the online discussions your responses will be graded on whether you are:

1. Offering up ideas or resources and inviting a critique of them
2. Asking challenging questions
3. Articulating, explaining and supporting positions on ideas
4. Exploring and supporting issues by adding explanations and examples
5. Reflecting on and re-evaluating personal opinions
6. Offering a critique, challenging, discussing and expanding ideas of others
7. Negotiating interpretations, definitions and meanings
8. Summarizing previous contributions and asking the next question
9. Proposing actions based on ideas that have been developed

The above list was adapted from Gilly Simpson's book *E-Moderating: The key to teaching and learning online*. London: Kogan Page: p.143 (2000).

## **Online Participation Guidelines**

A significant part of your online learning experience involves learning with and from your classmates and the instructor in the online discussions and group assignments.

Active participation means sharing information and resources and posting your ideas and critiquing, and expanding on the ideas of others in a collegial fashion. This discussion is informal in the sense that it is meant to encourage interested discussion. You are expected to follow accepted standards of English spelling, grammar, and usage,

although you will not be assessed for these particular characteristics when you are participating in the Discussion Board discussions.

These discussions are for you to exchange your reflections with your classmates and instructor about what you are learning. The discussions will be organized into forums around the particular topic you are studying each week.

You may be asked by the instructor to take leadership in a certain group for a certain time of the course. You will receive further instructions from your instructor if this occurs.

You should contribute your responses to the particular assignment for that particular discussion heading which will be posted.

For each Discussion, you are required to make at least one original contribution to each topic and respond to at least one classmate's contribution.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Policies**

### **Academic Integrity**

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas.

Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit

<http://sr.depaul.edu/catalog/catalogfiles/Current/Undergraduate%20Student%20Handbook/index.html> for further details.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- Resubmitting one's own previous work from a different course or college, without permission from the current instructor.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If a

instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

[Back to Top](#)

### **For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussion will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact your instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week or two of the course). Please be sure to contact the following office for support and additional services:

Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD)  
#370, Student Center, LPC, 773.325.1677

### **Description of Pass/Fail Grading Options**

Students have the option of taking all SNL undergraduate courses as Pass/Fail even if a class is initially structured for a letter grade assessment. In these cases a Pass is awarded when competence is demonstrated at a level that would otherwise earn a grade of C- or higher.

In deciding to select Pass/Fail grading students should be aware that competencies assessed in a course as Pass will earn credit hours toward degree completion but *will not* be included in computing grade point averages. Attempted competence demonstration assessed within a class as Fail will not only be recorded as credit hours attempted but *will* also be included in computing a student's grade point average.

For SNL students, competencies awarded for Independent Learning Pursuits and in the Lifelong Learning Domain do not count toward the university's specification that only twenty credit hours may be earned through the Pass/Fail assessment option.

**Please note:** *There are four SNL courses within the BA curriculum that are always assessed on a Pass/Fail basis: Learning Assessment Seminar (course number LL 102; competence L-1), Foundations of Adult Learning (course number LL 250; competences L-2 and L-3), Advanced Project (course number FA 303; competences F-11 and F-12) and Summit Seminar (course number LL 390; competence L-12). These classes may not be taken for a letter grade assessment. Therefore, work that might otherwise be assessed at grades A through C- will earn a Pass in these classes.*

*There are an additional four SNL courses within the Lifelong Learning Area of the BA curriculum for which instructors regularly use a Pass/Fail grading system which may, instead, be taken for a letter grade assessment if this is a student's preference. These classes are: Academic Writing for Adults (course number LL 150; competence L-4), Critical Thinking (course number LL 155; competence L-5), Research Seminar (course number LL 300; competences L-8 and L-9) and Externship (course number LL 302; competences L-10 and L-11). In addition, SNL's undergraduate Writing Workshop (course number LL 140; competence H-3-J) regularly uses Pass/Fail although students may request a letter grade assessment. In these instances SNL offers undergraduate students the opportunity to request a letter grade assessment from their instructor. Students who need a letter grade for tuition reimbursement may wish to consider this option, as well as those who wish to raise their GPA. Students planning to attend graduate school may also prefer letter grades to Pass/Fail assessments.*

If a student wishes to switch the method of assessment, either to or from the Pass/Fail

option, this must be requested from the instructor in writing during the first two weeks of the quarter. The assessment style may not be changed after this period, with no exceptions.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Protection of Human Subjects**

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>

Demonstrating the acquisition of competencies in this course can involve "interactions"—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as "research" with "human subjects" and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning's Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

- The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
- You assess and ensure that no "harm"—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
- The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
- If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an "informed consent" document. For information on creating an "informed consent document" see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>

[Back to Top](#)

## **Course Expectations**

### **Time Management and Attendance**

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

### **Your Instructor's Role**

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

### **Your Role as a Student**

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

You will learn with and from your classmates in the online discussions and group assignments, sharing information and resources and posting your ideas and critiquing and expanding on the ideas of others in a collegial fashion. You are encouraged to bring your questions to the online discussions and respond to each other—do not always wait for the instructor to answer questions.

### **Credits**

This course was designed and produced by Michelle Greenberg and staff at SNL Online of the School for New Learning of DePaul University.

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Printed in the USA.

[Back to Top](#)