# Basics

Instructor | **Julia Carey Arendell**

Course | **ENGL 2002, Section 6 :: Business Writing**

Where & When | **128 Allen Hall :: Tues & Thurs 1:30 – 2:50**

Contact | [**jcarey5@lsu.edu**](mailto:jcarey5@lsu.edu), please allow 24 hours for response

Office Hours | Allen 212-T :: **Thursdays 11am – 1pm, or by appointment**

**Description & Objectives** |

:: cultivate focused, cogent writing for business purposes

:: identify, research, and develop specific resources targeted towards individual professional goals

:: prepare for professional interactions, such as interviews, presentations, and applications

:: forge reliable habits to buttress future professional life

:: identify a passion, form a correlate online presence, and begin building a career-oriented persona

:: embrace the unending process of writing as creation and revision of ourselves

**Required Materials** |

Reliable access to both printing and the internet. Both are available in Middleton Library. You will also need access to a webcam to record your midterm exam.

Canavor, Natalie and Claire Meirowitz. *The Truth About the New Rules of Business Writing*. FT Press, 2010. ISBN: 0-13-715315-5

Strauss, Jane. *The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation*. Bare Bones Training & Consulting Co. 7th edition. (2001) ISBN: 0-96-672216-7

A notebook of some kind to organize your notes and journal entries.

Additional readings and resources will be posted to Moodle. The syllabus and course schedule are subject to change depending on how our class progresses and will be updated in a timely fashion on Moodle. Check the class website before each class so you are prepared.

**Grading** |components of the course

12% :: Participation

11% :: Journal

15% :: Resume/CV and cover letter

8% :: Oral presentation

15% :: Website & Blog

12% :: Interview, which will count as the midterm exam

7% :: Career Services Event

15% :: Final Portfolio, or The Pitch

5% :: Quizzes

**Plagiarism** |or, don’t cheat, y’all

“Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student...” (Sec. 5.1, C. of the LSU Code of Student Conduct).

I expect all of the work you turn in to be your own. Cases of academic misconduct and plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students for further possible sanctions.

**Disability Services** |

According to the LSU General Catalogue, “The Office of Disability Services assists students in identifying and developing accommodations and services to help overcome barriers to the achievement of personal and academic goals. Services are provided for students with temporary or permanent disabilities. Accommodations and services are based on the individual student's disability-based need.”

Students must provide current documentation of their disabilities as soon as possible. Please contact the disabilities office early so accommodations can be arranged.

# Details

**Conduct** |

No electronic devices allowed in class, including laptops, tablets, and cell phones. These should remain powered off and stowed. Any in-class writing exercises will be handwritten. Please no eating of food during class.

**How to Succeed** |but also in this course

:: **active participation**

To participate, you must attend. And still, as it is in the workforce, just showing up is not enough. Speak your thoughts and opinions in class so they can be appreciated and debated. To be respected or understood, you must communicate. To communicate, you must speak. Your comments should reflect your sophistication and education as college students, reaching beyond, “I liked it,” “It was bad,” or “I agree.” Tell us why and how, what worked for you, what didn’t. Give your perspective. I guarantee it is valuable and unique.

:: **respect your colleagues**

Much of this class will involve workshop and group collaboration. Candid feedback is extremely valuable and can always be done in a manner that is respectful. Remember that the world is about rejection and revision and your ability to sift through your emotional responses and persevere. Keep your comments constructive and offer suggestions for improvement, not just complaints or compliments. There is always room for improvement, and if your only response is “its perfect,” you have not delved far enough. Embrace the challenge of good work to become a more critical thinker.

:: **meet your deadlines**

In the professional world, if you do not meet the demands of your supervisor, you are fired and replaced. In today’s competitive market, no employer is looking for excuses or extensions. Budget your time, plan ahead, and communicate your needs. Late work will not be accepted. No exceptions.

**The Components Explained** |

:: **participation**

Graded by your enthusiasm during class discussion and willingness to contribute. Ask for clarification or help understanding something. Bring relevant outside materials to class. Do not wait to be called upon. Successful business relationships stem from being able to connect to other people. The classroom is a safe place for you to practice this vital skill. Also, your participation grade may be affected by a lack of commitment to your group. Asking me to mediate dissension in your group would be akin to asking your boss to do so – a big no-no. Work it out amongst yourselves. Learning to work with others whose habits and ways of thinking are different from your own is the greatest lesson you can take from this class.

:: **journal**

A collection of in-class writings or responses to readings or assignments. Though any work done in class will be handwritten and free of form to encourage brainstorming and self-discovery, the final product should be typed, coherent, and organized chronologically. Each response should be at least a half page, single-spaced, with the date of its assignment at the top. The journal can be related to the blog, but should not be the same. Hopefully, the journal will spur ideas for your blog where you will more fully develop them. Your journal will be due at the end of the semester at the same time as your final portfolio. Failure to attend your conference will result in a diminished grade on this component.

:: **resume/CV and cover letter**

A quick snapshot of your accomplishments and qualifications and an accompanying letter targeting a specific audience for a selected position. Quality resumes and cover letters will represent a candidate as cogent, well-rounded, and tech-savvy, demonstrating a great fitness for the organization. They should be tailored to each application. Must include workshopped drafts and peer comments.

:: **oral presentation**

I will provide a smattering of topics from which you can choose, or you can bring something related to your topic or field. Your presentation should somehow use technology, though is not limited to powerpoint. (In fact, I encourage you to find other means.) As we will discuss in class, a powerful presentation does not rely upon flashy software. It is what you have to say as the speaker that is important. The software should only provide support. Your presentation should bring something new to the class to help all of us in our professional development.

Duration :: 5-7 minutes, no longer than 10. You are welcome to collaborate on these presentations and give them in pairs or groups if you like. If you do so, each person will receive a separate grade based on my perception of their equal and fair contribution to the presentation. Also, the presentation length must be proportional to its number of members, therefore: a pair would speak for 10-14 minutes, but no more than 20. A trio, 15-21 minutes, but no more than 30. Creativity is encouraged. Please post any outside resources for the class in the corresponding forum on Moodle.

:: **website and blog**

You will cultivate a personal website with an accompanying blog that will showcase who you are, what is important to you, and help potential employers decide if you might be a good fit for them. Your blog should have at least ten entries of significant content. This online presence should be creative and individual to you. Before the end of the semester, it should also include your interview. (Sidenote: though your interview will be included in the final live website, your grade for the “interview component” will not change should you choose to upgrade or revise it. However, its improvement may contribute to a more favorable grade on the website, so if for some reason you do score poorly on the midterm, revising it may help your “website and blog” score.)

Your website must also be evaluated by a peer at some point in the semester before it is due.

:: **interview, or, the take-home midterm**

You will choose two questions from those provided to you and record your answers with a webcam. These videos will be uploaded to Moodle.

:: **career services event**

Select an event from the LSU Career Services calendar and attend. These events can be found at

<http://careercenter.lsu.edu/events> Write a one page, single-spaced response with the date and title of the event at the top. Your response should include more than just a summary of the event, but how it impacted your goals, thoughts, and plans. Turn this in as the last page of your journal. Other events could be substituted, for example, if you are in a creative field and want to attend an opening, but must have instructor approval ahead of time.

:: **quizzes**

There will be six throughout the semester, at my discretion, related to the readings. I will drop your lowest quiz score.

:: **final portfolio, The Pitch**

Due Monday, 6 May by 1:00 pm in my office. Late work will not be accepted. I will not be returning to my office for the summer after this time, so any portfolios not placed in my hands will not be received or graded. Presentation matters. Your portfolio should include, in this order:

:: Cover letter (one single-spaced page, but no more than two)

:: Resume or CV

:: Personal statement (one single-spaced page)

:: Statement of Purpose (one single-spaced page)

:: The URL for your completed website and blog incorporated into the cover letter

:: Group Report (at least two single-spaced pages, no limit) Describe in detail how each member of your group contributed to your project. What advice did they give? How did you help each other? What failed? What challenges did you experience? How did you overcome them? What did you discover together? Your group is responsible for contributions on each of the components in the final portfolio (5) and there should be evidence of your work together throughout the semester.

:: Workshopped drafts and peer comments (resume/CV, cover letter, website & blog, personal statement, and statement of purpose)

**Revision** |

We will workshop in class most components of the course, and you will receive editing feedback from several parties. Line editing, or proofreading, does not equal revision. Revision is remodeling, re-envisioning of the piece or project, for better or worse. It is simply experimentation. I am looking for your ability to take some risks, and be flexible and creative. I want to witness your appraisal and consideration of the project, not your ability to pass a course.

**Formatting** |and other guidelines

All materials, with the exception of the website and blog for which you have total creative discretion, should be composed in Times New Roman, 12 pt font, with one inch margins.

All written assignments, unless otherwise noted, are to be turned in as hard copies at the beginning of class on the day they are due. No e-mails.

**Calendar of Important Dates** | Subject to Change

Please remember to check Moodle for our daily schedule. These are only major dates to remember.

23 Jan | Last Day to Drop

24 Jan | e-mail, thank-you note, and letter of resignation due to Moodle forum

28 Feb | Resume/CV and Cover Letter due

7 Mar|Interviews (midterm exam) Due, post to Moodle forum

12 Mar| Mid-term grades due

14 Mar | journals due

26 – 28 Mar | Conferences

6 May | Final Portfolios due in my office, 1pm