John Gallagher
johng@illinois.edu

Collaborative Multiclass Sessions: MWF 11:00-12:00 (EB 261)
BTW 250 MWF Sections C1 (10am), E1 (1 pm)—Room: EB 304

BTW 250: Principles of Business Communication

Business and technical writing will instruct students in the genres/conventions of business and technical writing. This course fulfills the Advanced Composition requirements, including 20-30 pages of written work.

This course covers the theory and practice of writing appropriate to the workplace, business, and government. While the course is designed for students interested in technical applications, it is useful for anyone who intends to enter an occupation that requires writing assignments such as resumes, reports, or proposals, instructions, abstracts, technical descriptions, letters, and memos in either traditional or electronic format. Other technically-oriented assignments, including research-based activity and design/layout of documents, are included as well. Students explore concepts such as critical thinking, empathy, style, tone, persuasion, precision, simplicity, readability, ethics, etiquette, graphics, electronic and hard copy elements of design, and **especially** collaborative writing. Students will develop a portfolio to show prospective employers.

In this course you will learn to do the following:

- Work together and collaboratively, including multiple group assignments
- Produce finished reports with the goal of moving one's career forward while also learning to produce numerous drafts of those reports
- Understanding the uses of editing and writing in a community
- Write for multiple audiences, often simultaneously
- Understand one's place in the context of a work institution
- Learn persuasive techniques while maintaining professionalism
- Understand the requirements and ethics of technical and business writing in the 21st century workplace.
- Work professionally individually and in a team to produce effective business and technical documents incorporating verbal, visual, and multimedia materials as necessary
- Communicate effectively by analyzing audiences of various documents
- Writing clearly and precisely with no grammar errors and presenting the document with rhetorically savvy design/layout features
- Locate, evaluate, and incorporate pertinent information
- Write clear, intelligent technical reports

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Teaching Procedures:

This class is structured in three ways. First, I generally pose a question or activity at the beginning of class (typically a free-write that is done individually or collaboratively). Second, I lead class discussion about that day's topic, often about 15-20 minutes that involves a particular reading, vocabulary, or assignment. Lastly, we practice the writing skills involved from that day's lesson. Many times, I will walk around, chat, and help you in any way I can. This way, you receive as much individualized/group attention as you need. You can also talk with your peers.

Personal Computing:

This class takes place in a computer classroom. While the computers are a crucial aspect to workplace writing, the emphasis in this class is on the WRITING. As such, I expect you to stay on task with your time on the computer. If you are not on-task, I will note this in your class participation.

Required Texts:

There are no required texts for this class; all texts are on the BTW wiki or will be handed out as PDFs by the instructor

Attendance and Classroom Community Policies:

A crucial component to higher education is regular attendance and active participation. Accordingly, this class has strict attendance and participation policies. They are as follows:

Attendance Policy

1) Attendance is mandatory. You are granted two free (re: excused) absences, which are considered sick days. Unless you are hospitalized with an emergency, sick days in excess of two will not be excused. Higher education does not meet every day; attendance is expected.
2) If you need to be absent for a required athletic event, field trip, military obligation, or court appearance; if there is a death or serious illness in your family; if you experience an accident or serious illness; if you are absent because of religious observance; or if there is some other legitimate extenuating circumstance preventing you from attending, you will most likely be excused from class. But note that, in such cases, *you are responsible for prior notification and/or subsequent documentation and for making up all missed work*. Be aware that too many absences regardless of reason will make it impossible for you to meet course requirements.
3) Your grade will be lowered by a third of a letter grade for EACH unexcused instance. For example, an A becomes an A- or a B+ becomes a B so forth until the grade is a failing grade.
4) If you are late by more than a few minutes—this is my discretion—you will be marked absent. Because I use the opening part of class for the writing, it is imperative you are on time. Aim to arrive a few a minutes early. If you do arrive late, do not be intrusive and ask a fellow classmate about the assignment/activity. If you leave class before class has finished, you will be marked absent.
5) I do not announce attendance but simply record whether you are present or absent. Attendance is expected and not part of your grade.

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Classroom Community Policy:

1) You are expected to submit all assignments, readings, and writings by the announced due date. Late assignments and lack of preparation will be marked down. This includes bringing any texts to class if we are using them. You are responsible for printing them out, which I believe is a fair trade for not making you buy any books.
2) Cell-phone *use* is not allowed in class. If your phone rings, you will be asked to leave class and marked absent. If you are using a computer off-task, I will simply mark it in my notebook and that will be taken off your participation. I am an *excellent* observer.
3) If you are called on, I expect you to answer to the best of your ability. It is perfectly acceptable to be unsure of your answer—that is the goal of higher education: to take risks. I reward risk-taking. It is encouraged to think and venture an answer.
4) Everyone in class has different levels of comfort. I expect all members of our community to respect one another. **For those individuals who are more comfortable talking, I expect you to ask your fellow classmates questions to encourage them to add to our discussion.** For those less comfortable, I expect you to make an attempt to add your thoughts to the discussion, even if it is a brief statement. Further, for those less comfortable talking in class, there will be other types of participation, which includes emailing me ideas to bring up in class, peer review, group work, and so forth. I expect everyone to listen actively to another. In this way, participation includes more than talking; it also includes listening, posing questions, and completing all in-class assignments to the best of your ability. Respect means listening, taking notes, and joining/enhancing conversations that challenge each other and your instructor using civil language and tone.
5) We all come from different lives and have different journeys, so we should expect and embrace vibrant disagreement and productive dissent. A democratic society cannot thrive otherwise. Therefore, I expect us to continually strive for a spirit of grace, compassion, and respect in our learning journeys (both in agreements and disagreements) for the short time we are together in this course. If at any time you feel that these expectations are not being met, please let me know as soon as possible.

Plagiarism/Academic Integrity (http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part4_1-401.html):

The University of Illinois has high standards of academic integrity set out in Article 1, Part 4 of the University Student Code (copied below), which I uphold.

(1) Policy Statement. The University has the responsibility for maintaining academic integrity so as to protect the quality of education and research on our campus and to protect those who depend upon our integrity.

(2) Expectations of Students. It is the responsibility of each student to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions. Students have been given notice of this Part by virtue of its publication. Regardless of whether a student has actually read this Part, a student is charged with knowledge of it. Ignorance is not a defense.

(3) Expectations of Instructors. It is the responsibility of each Instructor to establish and maintain an environment that supports academic integrity. An essential part of each Instructor's responsibility is the enforcement of existing standards of academic integrity. If Instructors do not discourage and act upon violations of which they become aware, respect for those standards is undermined. Instructors should provide their students with a clear statement of their expectations concerning academic integrity.

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Students Requiring Accommodations:

If you have a disability that requires accommodation in order for you to be successful in this class, please let me know immediately. If you haven't already, you should contact the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) for accommodation support. Their website is http://www.disability.illinois.edu/

Emergency Response Recommendations:

In an emergency in this building, we'll have three choices: **RUN** (get out), **HIDE** (find a safe place to stay inside), or **FIGHT** (with anything available to increase our odds for survival). Take time to familiarize yourself with the University's emergency response recommendations at http://police.illinois.edu/emergencyplanning/general/

Class Grade Breakdown of Deliverables (out of 100%):

Participation (including quizzes)	10%
Letter Correspondence Portfolio	10%
Job Application Portfolio	10%
White Paper Collaborative Project	10%
Five year business plan Portfolio	15%
Semester end "annual" Report	5%
Collaborative Entrepreneurial Project	40%

Collaborative Entrepreneurial Project Breakdown (comprised of three students)

Cover letters, bios, company description, logo	5%
Academic/qualitative research (analysis of market)	10%
Prospective White paper/designed documents	5%
Budget, with real estimates and effective design	5%
Company position description and company structure	5%
Extensive self-evaluation (individual)	5%
Presentation (group)	5%

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Brief Description Deliverables (extended descriptions to follow as the semester progresses):

Participation (including quizzes): Students are expected to come to class prepared having read assigned materials and ready to discuss the material with *notes* and *questions*. Students are expected to listen to the entire class (not only the instructor but classmates as well). Students are expected to ask their classmates questions and push them on their statements/positions. Students are expected to perform all in-class assignments/activities without lassitude. Quizzes are not graded; students are simply expected to take them and struggle with them until they get a 100%.

Letter Correspondence Portfolio: this portfolio of documents asks students to work in groups (two or three) and write an exchange of letters between a customer and a company (you will role-play each part with your classmates). The letter exchange relates to a complaint letter and a company's response to that letter. There will be several drafts and finalized documents.

Job Application Portfolio: you will find a job call and design a series of documents that would allow you to apply for this job. You will be asked to produce a job application letter (not a "cover" letter), a portfolio of resumes with various layouts, and an audience analysis of the job call. You will produce several drafts of the job application letter, resumes, and audience analysis. You will also help your fellow classmates with a mock interview. There will be several drafts and finalized documents.

White Paper Collaboration: this visually-pleasing document asks students to take on the persona of a particular real-life company of their choosing. In groups of four, students will then attempt to garner investments from the readers (the public; other businesses; investors) of the document while also explaining/advocating an issue to that audience. You will be given sample white papers upon which to model your projects. Students will be introduced to campus resources for graphic design and research databases. There will be several drafts and finalized documents.

Five year business plan Portfolio: most employees in higher in an organization's or company's structure need to have a vision for that organization's or company's direction—think CEO, CFO, or Risk Officer. Drawing on your white paper collaboration, e.g. the same company from that project, you will brainstorm in same group five year end-goals for the company, including an end budget, employee number and compensation, and new product lines and products. You will also write out the status of the company presently and where the company will be at the end of those five years. This project can also be categorized under the larger theme of *strategic planning*. This should include a *budget* as well.

Semester end "annual" Report: during the semester, you should keep a journal of all the work you do, including hours worked, drafts written, and other quantitative metrics. You are also expected to maintain a reflective journal about the processes you've learned (research processes, writing processes, and personal processes for doing work). This report should find three to five sources that will help you develop personal habits for writing in the workplace effectively. It should look like annual report, depending on your preference. Students will be given sample annual reports upon which to model their projects. There will be several drafts and finalized documents.

Collaborative Entrepreneurial Project: this collaborative project will be explored for the last five weeks of the semester. The general assignment is to apply for funding for the creation of a business of your choice. The class will be broken into groups of three students. The overall goal of this project is to familiarize yourself with the documents of starting and funding a company, the concepts and procedures associated with running a startup company, and developing an ongoing vision for a company. The project will also end with a presentation to the class that is conceptualized as a "pitch" in which you're ultimately trying to sell the class on funding your prospective company. The company that is created will be located in the local Champaign-Urbana area or serve the local area.

Cover letters, bios, company description, logo—
-You are to design a cover letter detailing the company's overall description, purpose, and vision. The group will also write "bios" for each individual and for the group as a whole. You are to develop an innovative, original logo. (3+ pages)
Academic/qualitative research (analysis of market)—
-The group will conduct academic and professional research to identify ideal markets for a potential business; this will research will include academic articles, interviews with local business owners and other relevant knowledgeable individuals, as well as identifying government policy at the local, state, and federal levels, including potential funding from government agencies. (10+ pages)
Prospective White paper/designed documents—
-You will write out a professionally designed white paper that attempts to find and convince investors to fund your company. This white paper will include diagrams, memo-like documents, and other pertinent information designed for quick consumption of the potential company. (5+ pages)
Budget, with real estimates and effective design—
You will develop a line-by-line budget for startup capital with real estimates (sources are required) of all relevant expenditures, including employees, human resources expenditures, possible equipment, insurance, and taxes (please note that this is not an exhaustive list). Each item must be accompanied by a justification of 50+ words. Statistics are welcome. (any number of pages)
Company position description and company structure—
-You must develop and produce at least five job descriptions along with the job calls associated with those positions. These positions will detail, in memo form, the responsibilities for the potential employee. You must also develop a list of products and services, along with justifications for these products/services. You must also develop a company structure for all positions created and a code for employee conduct. (6-10 pages)
Extensive self-evaluation (individual)—
-You are to write a two page memo to Gallagher detailing your role in the creation of the rest of this project. This can include your input, ideas, actual writing, or any other pertinent information. No more than two pages.
Presentation (group)—
-This ten minute formal presentation attempts to sell the company to potential investors (the class) using a variety of rhetorical speaking techniques. You are strongly discourage from using slides, other than as a guide (typically, slides do not contain more than ten words or one image). The time does not have to be divided equally, but each student is expected to make a significant speaking contribution.

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Semester Schedule

I am always available for help by appointment

I reserve the right to alter the course of schedule; it is flexible

Date	**Topic and/or classroom activity**	**Reading and/or Concepts**	**Deliverables Due**
M 8/25	-Welcome to course -Course introduction	-Email policy and write up in memo	N/A
UNIT ONE: Memo writing and introduction to business writing concepts Please note: this is a practice unit			
W 8/27	-Syllabus Review -Introduce memo	-Memo Writing -Letter Writing (to Gallagher introducing the memo about yourself) -IF TIME: Smith's "Student Goals…"	DUE: Memo to Gallagher about Yourself DUE: see reading
F 8/29	-Review wiki concepts -Review memo	-Discourse communities/discursive norms -Vocabulary on the wiki -IF TIME: Smith's "Student Goals…"	DUE: see reading DUE: Familiarize yourself with the wiki DUE: Memo to Your Department Head
W 9/3	-Introduce meta-writing: Writing about writing -Learning to analyze audience	-Ede and Lunsford's "Audience Address and Audience Invoked" (especially terms "address" and "invoke") -IF TIME: Selfe and Selfe's "The Politics of Interface" (really interesting stuff!)	DUE: see reading (with executive summaries)
F 9/5	-Revising memo to department head -More meta-writing about your memo	-Williams' "Lesson 5 and 6"	DUE: see reading (with executive summaries) DUE: Audience analysis of your memo(s) using readings from Ede/Lunsford and Williams
M 9/8	-Organize all memos and drafts into one portfolio as a PDF and hard copy -Reflective writing -ASSIGN: Letter Correspondence Portfolio	-Finish ungraded finalized portfolio	DUE: Revised memo using (1) Ede and Lunsford, (2) Selfe and Selfe, and (3) Williams DUE: all drafts
UNIT TWO: Letter Writing Correspondence Portfolio			
W 9/10	-Collaborative reading of complaint letters (groups and as a class)	-Collaborative writing -Letter writing	DUE: Initial complaint letter

F 9/12	-Peer Response in groups of 3 -Begin drafting responses to the complaint letters		DUE: Second draft of complaint letter using comments/responses
M 9/15	-Discussion of letter writing, involving audience towards the creation of written documents, and genres -Reading the company's responses and group critique of the "company" letters	-Hofrichter's "The Business Letter: Then and Now" -Johnson's "Audience Involved…."	DUE: see reading DUE: Response to partners' complaint letter (2) as the company
W 9/17	-Organize portfolio -Continue discussion of readings -Wiki terms (top ten) in pairs	-Continued from 9/15 -Williams' Lesson seven	DUE: Response to company (new letter; third "draft") DUE: Meta-writing: Writing about writing DUE: see readings
F 9/19	-ASSIGN: Job Application Material -Find and analyze job calls	-Ethical job seeking -Reading job calls	**DUE: Letter Correspondence Portfolio**
UNIT THREE: Job Application Material			
M 9/22	-Share analysis of job calls -Audience analysis -Close reading of classmate's analysis		DUE: Analysis of Job call (memo); make sure to bring the job call to class, either electronically or in paper form
W 9/24	-Writing a job application letter (lecture and discussion)	-Letter writing -Audience analysis -Design/layout -Generic conventions	DUE: job application letter DUE: Chapter 12 of Oxford Essentials of Technical Communication (handout—not online)
F 9/26	-Writing a resume (lecture and discussion)	-Visual design -Generic conventions -Violation of generic conventions	DUE: resumes (3 in different formats) DUE: Chapter 12 of Oxford Essentials of Technical Communication (handout—not online)
M 9/29	-Collaborative analysis of your job application material	-Gladwell's "New Boy Network" -Audience analysis -Collaborative writing skills	DUE: Revised job application letter DUE: see reading
W 10/1	-Organize portfolio -Share meta-writing documents	-Meta-writing -Audience analysis -Williams Lesson ten and epilogue	DUE: Meta-writing on your job application letter, resumes, and job call DUE: see readings

UNIT FOUR: White Paper Collaboration			
F 10/3	-ASSIGN: White Paper Collaboration -Explore white paper examples and class discussion	-Familiarization with the generic conventions and purpose of white papers ("Grey Literature" lecture)	**DUE: Job Application Material**
M 10/6	-Exchange memos -Break up into groups and identify a company and issue	-Collaborative writing skill development	DUE: Memo on a white papers of your choice (visual analysis and rhetorical analysis)
W 10/8	-Technology introduction -Bring personal technology devices to class	-Introduction to campus resources (Adobe, etc.) -Collaborative writing skill development	DUE: Memo on responsibilities of each group member for "White Paper Collaboration" (one per group)
F 10/10	NO CLASS; groups meet with GALLAGHER instead to discuss white paper project ***Plan on meeting over weekend in your groups***		DUE: Memo on technology available to you; executive summary and actionable plan to use the technology in white paper collaboration (one per group)
M 10/13	-Compare and contrast white papers with another group -Memo due at end of class on changes you recommend to the other group -Memo due at end of class on changes you recommend to your own group	-Collaborative writing skill development -Pressurized writing situation -Group vs. group writing skill development	DUE: Draft of initial white paper (3 copies of the white paper)
W 10/15	-Discussion of form/content split in academic writing and importance of visuals -Ethical discussion of visuals (using handout from Oxford) -IF TIME: work in groups to troubleshoot white papers	-Visual design and layout -Universal design principles (see PDF online, but not required reading)	DUE: Memo on meta-writing exploring your experience working collaboratively (individual) DUE: Revised white paper (second draft)
UNIT FIVE: Five-year business plan Portfolio			
F 10/17	-Meta-writing activity on white papers and the progression of documents -ASSIGN: Five-year business plan Portfolio	-Developing ongoing ways of seeing the production of documents	**DUE: White Paper Collaboration Portfolio**

M 10/20	-Review assignment -Examine strategic plan of UIUC -Identify strategic plan of Apple	-Audience analysis -Implication analysis	DUE: Memo—background of company, develop a vision for the company, and year 1 of business plan
W 10/22	-Review memo -Revise memo using Williams (4+5)	OPTIONAL READING: Strategic Planning in the Canadian automatic industry	DUE: Memo—year 2 of business plan
F 10/24	-Review memo -Revise memo using Williams (6+7)	OPTIONAL READING: Strategic planning, What are they thinking (2) and (10) Making Strategy Happen	DUE: Memo—year 3 of business plan
M 10/27	-Review memo -Revise memo using Williams (8+9)	OPTIONAL READING: Strategic planning for nonprofits	DUE: Memo—year 4 of business plan
W 10/29	-Review memo -Revise memo using Williams (10)	OPTIONAL READING: Strategic planning for nonprofits	DUE: Memo—year 5 of business plan
F 10/31	-Meta-writing on Five-year business plan -Fake press release about monsters (Happy Halloween!)	-Press releases for the media (for the "monster" attack). Please note there will not be a real monster attack.	**DUE: Five-year business plan Portfolio**
UNIT SIX: Collaborative Entrepreneurial Project			
M 11/3	-ASSIGN: Collaborative Entrepreneurial Project (this is ALL we do) -Form groups -IF TIME: begin planning/dividing up responsibilities	-REVIEW ASSIGNMENT	NONE
W 11/5	-In class "planning" memos in your groups: +Memo—group responsibilities +Memo—group "plan" for accomplishing this project +Schedule weekly group meeting outside of class (I suggest one hour)	-Create planning or "working" documents collaboratively	DUE: Memo—company description DUE: Memo—job descriptions (3) DUE: Memo—company structure
F 11/7	-Preliminary oral reports on the company/business/non-profit (no more than five minutes) -Taking notes on each group and give each group those notes	-Practice public-speaking skills -Practice taking notes during an oral presentation	DUE: Memo—revised company description DUE: Memo—revised job descriptions (4) DUE: Memo—revised company structure

M 11/10	-Discuss budget considerations (de-emphasizing the numbers and instead emphasizing the rationale) -Discuss "work" and its organizing concept, including the way our project constructs "work" -Time to work in groups and begin researching budget items and their rationale(s) based on your company's description, job descriptions, and structure	-Rifkin's chapter 1	DUE: Finalized company description DUE: Finalized job descriptions (5) DUE: Finalized company structure DUE: see reading
W 11/12	-Pairs of groups (3 on 3) compare budgets and the rationales for each -Identify common values and characteristics; write a memo comparing and contrasting each budget rationale	-Develop collaborative communication skills	DUE: Memo—preliminary budget rationale DUE: Memo—preliminary line-by-line budget DUE: Memo—preliminary logo
F 11/14	-No Class; groups meet with GALLAGHER to discuss market analysis strategies -Memo due after the meeting with an executive summary of the meeting (think minutes) along with a research plan		DUE: Finalized budget rationale DUE: Finalized line-by-line budget DUE: Finalized logo
M 11/17	-Library use (familiarization with UIUC's technological interfaces)	-Library database introduction and navigation	DUE: Preliminary research and market analysis
W 11/19	-Continue research and market analysis	-Second library database day (practice from Monday 11/17)	DUE: Revised research and market analysis
F 11/21	-Discuss reading -Collaboration for assigning tasks over the Thanksgiving break -Review assignment and further questions	-Johnson Eilola's "Relocating the Value of Work" -Envisioning technical as communication	DUE: See reading DUE: finalized research and market analysis
THANKGIVING BREAK (11/24, 11/26, 11/28)			
M 12/1	-Final questions -Confirm presentation schedule -Speaking advice from Gallagher -Group time for planning	-Public speaking skills developed -Collaborative decision making (scheduling, planning, etc)	DUE: Draft of entire Collaborative Entrepreneurial Project (with formatting!)

W 12/3	-Review annual reports (samples provided in class) -Choose one to write a memo on (executive report and audience analysis) -Time in class for questions about the semester end "annual" report	-Audience analysis -Executive report practice	DUE: Draft of semester end "annual" report
F 12/5	Group Presentation	N/A	**DUE: Presentations (group)**
M 12/8	Group Presentation	N/A	**DUE: Presentations (group)**
W 12/10	Group Presentation	N/A	**DUE: Presentations (group)** **DUE: Collaborative Entrepreneurial Project** **DUE: Semester end "annual" report (individual)**

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Flexible Guideline to Grading and Assignment Descriptions —or "What does my grade mean?"

General description	Not complete/Off topic/Does not make sense	Lacking core characteristics	Fundamental principles not refined and core is lacking	Demonstration of fundamental principles	Understands and can EXPAND on fundamental principles	Superb (Mastery of fundamental principles)	Top 1% You're in the hall of fame
Grade	F	D	C-	C	B	A	HoF
Extended Description	You need to seek out help or perform the tasks assigned to you. *Not acceptable in any way.*	You completed the assignment, mostly, but have not demonstrated the basic principles.	You have barely passed the assignment but show effort towards understanding fundamental principles and communicate that understanding.	You grasp the material and principles enough to warrant passing the assignment.	You not only understand the material but can critique it in a way that questions or augments the fundamental principles.	You explain the material in such a way that you can *influence* the material and push people's thinking on the fundamental principles, while augmenting them.	Earn a recommendation from John for an internship, job, transfer, etc. You not only have mastered the material but do so gracefully and elegantly. The essay also recognizes its limitations and does not overstate its case.

*****Please note that I do not assign numbers to any grade.*****

*****"Pluses" and "Minuses" are available. They are combinations of the above expectations*****