POINT 19 02 **LOMA**
NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages
College of Arts and Humanities

ENG 4005-1 Professional Writing
3 Units
Spring 2026
Tuesdays and Thursdays 3-4:15
Bond Academic Center (BAC) 155
Final Portfolio Due May 6th

INFORMATION	SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE
Instructor title and name:	Professor Alex Wirth (he/him)
Email:	awirth@pointloma.edu
Office hours:	Drop-in Thursdays 12:30-1:30p or by appointment.
Office Location	Bond (BAC) 127

PLNU Mission
To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description
Strategies for success in professional writing. Students will produce a portfolio of professional writing geared toward success in starting their career path beyond graduation.

Program Learning Outcomes
Students who complete the program in English - concentrations in English Education, Literature, and Writing, will be able to:
1. Integrate literary studies and/or craft development with ongoing reflection and hospitable engagement with a diverse world. (Integrative Learning, Foundation Skills for Lifelong Learning)
2. Analyze and critique diverse forms and genres of literature situated within historical and cultural contexts. (Critical Thinking)
3. Employ strong research, close reading, and analytical skills in writing as appropriate for literary form and genre conventions. (Information Literacy, Critical Thinking)
4. Develop creative or analytical works in various forms of writing. (Written Communication)
5. Present creative and/or analytical writing to formal audiences, demonstrating strategies for audience engagement and oral communication. (Oral Communication)

Course Learning Outcomes
Students who complete WRI 3065 will be able to:
1. Identify appropriate transactional writing styles for specific professional situations.
2. Analyze professional writing to determine efficacy for target audience.
3. Craft a variety of transactional texts appropriate for audience and purpose.
4. Format texts in a genre-appropriate and professional manner for submission to workshop and publication.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources
Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class. All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

   1. *Writing that Works* by Kenneth Roman and Joel Raphaelson, HarperCollins, 2000
   2. Various Readings Posted on Canvas

Lomabooks Instructions for Students:
This course is part of our course material delivery program, **LomaBooks**. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.
You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.
For more information about **LomaBooks,** please go: HERE

Assessment and Grading
Just as professional writing varies quite a lot so will the assignments for this class and how they are graded. Smaller assignments such as in class work, drafts, and homework will be assigned a point value and be graded complete/incomplete. Medium sized assignments will be assigned a point value and be given a portion of those points as a grade. Large assignments will be assigned a point value and be given a letter grade based on that point value. Rubrics will be provided when possible for grading standards. The postings for assignments on Canvas will make point totals and grading methods abundantly clear.

Almost every assignment will include an element of self-assessment. Grades are rarely directly assigned in the professional world.

Attendance will count toward your grade. In class workshops will count toward your grade as well.

I reserve the right to a participation grading system as necessary to encourage full class participation.

Grades will be based on the following:

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Examination Policy

There is no in person final exam for this course. Your final will consist of an in class presentation during the final two weeks of class as well as turning in the second portfolio (see below.) This class will not meet during finals week.

Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In ENG 4005, all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of professional writing, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In ENG 4005, we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of professional writing, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted on Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on State Authorization to view which states allow distance education outside California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) to generate ideas, but you are **not allowed** to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. You are **not allowed** to use AI to help proofread your work for you. Additionally, you are **not allowed** to use AI to summarize class readings in lieu of reading the actual text yourself. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/Title-IX.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy
Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.
Note: The information below must be included under the "PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy" Section if you are teaching an Online or Hybrid course.

Use of Technology
Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

Loma Writing Center
The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.
Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see Loma Writing Center webpage or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.
- Appointment Calendar
- Website
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

Assignments At-A-Glance
This is an assignment heavy class. The only way to learn about your writing is to write and so we will. There will be some kind of writing assignment due at the beginning of most classes. Those assignments may just be drafts so you'll have something started to workshop in class. Other times, you will need to turn in your best, polished work that has be thoroughly revised.

Participation
This is a small, interactive class where one of the things we are trying to learn is that the writing process is collaborative and communal as it will be in the workplace. Your active, present, vocal presence is required. I would LOVE IT if, as a learning community, we all choose to take the risk of presenting our ideas to each other and asking our questions WITHOUT some sort of grade attached to participation. So I am going to begin the semester without a participation grade in place. If lack of participation becomes an issue or if I notice individuals not letting their voice be heard, I will institute a graded participation process.

In Class Work

To illustrate a concept, give you practice, or get your brain thinking about a concept, we'll have work to do in class that will be due at the end of class. Usually posted on Canvas. They will usually be worth 10 points graded complete/incomplete. These in class assignments cannot be made up if you miss class but I will drop two incompletes.

Workshops

We will workshop each other's writing a lot in our class. Sometimes we will put your work up on the screen and we review it as a whole class. Other times we will break into small groups to workshop. During small group workshops you will have worksheets to help guide your feedback that you turn in so I can see the kind of things you discussed in your group. Workshops will be worth points in porportion to the size of the assignment and graded complete/incomplete. Worskhops cannot be made up if you miss class but I will drop one incomplete workshop.

Portfolios

Most of the assignments that you will turn in for this class will eventually be collected into two writing portfolios that will hopefully be useful to you out in the professional world. Some of the assignments will be drafts to be workshopped in class that will receive a grade of complete/incomplete from me. Others will be well revised, polished pieces that I will grade and offer feedback on. In week 8 and at the end of class, you will turn in a portfolios of your work incorporating all the feedback you've received from me and from your classmates for a grade. You should save these two final portfolios so that you can reference them in your future job searches and career.

First Portfolio

This portfolio will focus on the kinds of writing and documents that you will be expected to create in order to apply for internships, jobs, fellowships, graduate schools and funding. It will include:
• Professional email
• Resume or curriculum vitae
• Cover letter
• Professional Social Media Campaign OR LinkedIn profile
• Financial support letter

Second Portfolio

This portfolio will focus on the kind of writing and documents that you will be expected to create in your chosen vocational field. Because writing in different professions varies widely, we would never have time in class to cover it all individually. For this portfolio you will used your professional writing skills to find a professional in your chosen field, request and conduct an interview with them about how they use writing in their work and synthesize what you learn in a presentation to the class. It will include:
• Interview request: your formal request for an interview and all follow up communications.
• Interview questions
• Transcript of the interview
• Example of professional writing from your field
• Thank you note to your interviewee.
• Post-project debrief

Final Presentation
The culmination of your second portfolio will be a presentation to the class. You will have twenty minutes to present about the process of requesting and conducting your interview, what kind of writing happens in your field, what you learned about professional writing more broadly that might be helpful for your fellow classmates. The 20 minutes of class time is yours to use in the way you think is best. Lecture, discussion, group work, etc.

HOW TO ACTUALLY BE PRESENT IN CLASS
This class doesn't work unless you are actually present in class. Like, PRESENT present. That means that you need to be physically and mentally in the classroom, having read the required reading, and ready to share your ideas, discuss, answer questions and engage with each other's writing. I will take attendance every class. Missing too many classes can hurt your grade or get you de-enrolled from the class (see above.)

Almost all of the learning in this class happens in the classroom together: a blend of my ideas and yours shared, discussed and analyzed. Then we will put those ideas into practice as we workshop our writing together. Obviously, there are times in class where you'll need your laptop or tablet to take quizzes, complete assignments, take notes, etc. There's basically no times that you need to have your phone out in class. I will trust you to be using your devices to facilitate your learning for our class and not doing work for other classes or engaging in other non-class related activities. You might want to consider taking notes by hand to avoid that distraction.

But there will also be times when you should consider raising your eyes from your devices, maybe turning them off, and giving your attention to the conversation and flow of ideas happening in the room. That's why you're in college right? I will try to encourage you to be present to your learning, your classmates and me. I employ the awkward silence strategy to get discussion going, but if I feel like you are getting immune to the awkwardness, I'll start randomly calling on people.

Course Schedule
Additional readings and assignments may be posted on Canvas.

Week 1: Human Centered Professional Writing
• **Tuesday 1/13:** Intro to Course and Syllabus. Introducing ourselves.
   • In Class Work: What are your questions about professional writing?
   • Lecture and discussion-What makes writing "professional?"
• **Thursday 1/15:**
   • Lecture and discussion- How to be the most human in your vocation.
   • Intro and begin- 4 Questions Assignment.
      • Who are you? Whose are you? Who is your neighbor? What do you see grieving God's heart?

<u>First Portfolio: Literally Applying Yourself</u>
Week 2: Voice
• **Tuesday 1/20:** Turn in 4 questions answers. Read *Writing that Works* Ch.1
   • In Class Work: Mining your writing. Look for an ethic. Bank some content.
• **Thursday 1/22:** Turn in your choice for what you are applying to. Read *Writing that Works* Ch.2
   • Lecture and discussion- Voice.

- Intro and Begin- Professional Email assignment.

Week 3: Audience
- **Tuesday 1/27:** Turn in draft of Professional Email. Read *Writing that Works* Ch. 4
    - Lecture and discussion- How to give and receive feedback.
    - Workshop (whole class)- Professional Email.
- **Thursday 1/29:** Turn in revised Professional Email. Read *Writing that Works* Ch.11
    - Lecture and discussion- Audience and Resumes/CVs
    - Intro and Begin- Resume/CV assignment

Week 4: Tone
- **Tuesday 2/3:** Turn in draft Resume/CV. Read *Writing that Works* Ch.6
    - Workshop (small group)- Resume/CV
- **Thursday 2/5:** Turn in revised Resume/CV. Read *Writing that Works Ch. 5*
    - Lecture and discussion- Professional Tone
    - Intro and Begin- Cover Letter assignment

Week 5: Clarity and Brevity
- **Tuesday 2/10:** Turn in draft Cover Letter. Read *Writing that Works*. Ch.12
    - Workshop (small group)- Cover Letter
- **Thursday 2/12:** Read *Writing that Works* Ch. 13
    - Lecture and discussion: Writing with clarity and brevity

Week 6: Writing Online
- **Tuesday 2/17:** Turn in revised Cover Letter
    - Lecture and discussion- Professional writing online
    - Intro and Begin- Professional Social Media Campaign OR LinkedIn profile assignment
- **Thursday 2/19:** Turn in Professional Social Media Campaign OR LinkedIn profile assignment
    - Workshop (whole class)- Craft Prof. Wirth a LinkedIn profile
    - In Class Work: Dating profile vs. LinkedIn profile game.

Week 7: Asking For Money
- **Tuesday 2/24:** Read *Writing that Works* Ch. 8
    - Lecture and Discussion- Asking for money in writing
    - Intro and Begin- Financial support letter assignment.
- **Thursday 2/26:** Turn in draft of Financial support letter assignment. Read *Writing that Works* Ch. 9
    - Workshop (whole class)- Financial support letter assignment (penny game)

Week 8: Writing for your Professional Self
- **Tuesday 3/3:** Turn in your first portfolio
    - Lecture and Discussion- Writing for your professional self
    - Intro and Begin- Post-project debrief assignment
- **Thursday 3/5:** Turn in Post-project debrief assignment
    - Discussion- Debriefing the first half of the semester
    - Intro and Begin- Second portfolio and list of potential interviewees

Week 9: SPRING BREAK NO CLASS

Second Portfolio: Professional Writing in your Field
Week 10: Professional Writing in your Field
• **Tuesday 3/17:** Welcome Back
    • Introduce Second Portfolio and review list of potential interviewees
    • Introduce and begin- Professional writing interview requests
• **Thursday 3/19:** Turn in draft professional writing interview requests.
    • Workshop (small group)- Professional writing interview requests.
    • In Class Work- Revise interview requests and turn them in on Canvas.
    • SEND interview requests AFTER you've gotten feedback from Prof. Wirth.
    • Intro and Begin- Interview questions assignment

Week 11: FRIDAY 3/27 is the last day to withdraw from classes
• **Tuesday 3/24:** Turn in draft Interview questions assignment
    • Workshop (small group)- Interview questions.
• **Thursday 3/26:** Turn in revised Interview questions assignment

Week 12: Sign up for Week 14 One on One meetings.
• **Tuesday 3/31:**
    • Lecture and discussion- What about AI?
• **Thursday 4/2:** *EASTER BREAK NO CLASS*

Week 13: Conduct your professional interviews
• **Tuesday 4/7:** Hand written notes
    • In Class Work: 10 notes
    • Intro and Begin- Professional Writing in your field Presentations
• **Thursday 4/9:** The amazing power of saying thank you.
    • In Class Work: Draft a thank you note to your interviewee

Week 14: One on One meetings with Prof. Wirth
NO SCHEDULED CLASS TIMES THIS WEEK
Transcription of your interview and at least a presentation outline due at your one on one meeting.

Week 15:
• **Tuesday 4/21:** 3 Student Presentations
• **Thursday 4/23:** 3 Student Presentations

Week 16:
• **Tuesday 4/28:** 3 Student Presentations
• **Thursday 4/30:** 3 Student Presentations

Second Portfolio and Post-Project Debrief Due May 6th 11:59pm