



Dept. of Literature, Journalism, Writing, and Languages
WRI 365 (3 units)
Spring 2019, Section 1

Meeting days: T/R	Instructor: Breeann Kirby
Meeting times: 1:30pm – 2:45pm	E-mail: bkirby@pointloma.edu
Meeting location: BAC 151	Office location: BAC 122
Final Exam: R 2 May 1:30pm	Office hours: By Appointment

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 becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

What am I going to learn in this class?

WRI365 is an undergraduate course designed to grow your ability to communicate well in a professional capacity. We will study and practice a craft that blends critical thinking, creative writing, uses of appropriate rhetoric, and common sense. The learning process also includes unlearning many assumptions about professional writing. Further, you will spend time workshopping each other's drafts which is teach you to not only respond and give outside critique but also to look at yours and others' works with an eye not only for grammar and effective communication but also for rigor in support, rhetoric, and aesthetic. Finally, good writers are good readers; though we have a set handbook that will cover the mechanics effective business writing, we will also read various essays about aspects of professional writing.

The **Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)** for this class are as follows:

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.

Why do I have to take this class?

The short answer is that unless you are a writing major, you don't have to take this class. The better answer is that this class will make you a better critical thinker and writer—skills you can

take from the classroom into many areas of your life. Being able to read, analyze, synthesize, and write effectively gives you agency¹ in whatever field you may enter.

Are there any resources I can use online and/or on campus to help me?

Yes. The following are a few of my favorites.

The Writers' Studio is located in Bond Academic, room 159

<http://www.pointloma.edu/experience/academics/schools-departments/department-literature-journalism-modern-languages/writers-studio>.

The Library has not only many books but also databases that allow you to do specific searches for any topic you want. Further, it also contains very helpful librarians who can assist you.

Canvas will contain this syllabus, the assignments, some readings, and other fun sundries throughout the semester. Sometimes you might have to print them for class. Please check Canvas regularly.

OneLook is an online database of dictionaries www.onelook.com.

Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia www.wikipedia.org. Though this site can have errors from time to time, it is a wonderful place to look up any person, place, or event you encounter in your reading that you do not know. While I love Wikipedia for its ability to quickly provide information, DO NOT use this as a source for your papers.

Me I am available to answer any questions you may have. You can schedule appointments to see me in class or email me—**please include “WRI 116” in the subject line** of your emails to me.

What if I turn in a late assignment?

If you turn in a late assignment, you risk negating your contract. We will talk about this further as a class. Here is a space for you to make notes on what we decide:

What if you don't accept an assignment?

If your assignment does not meet the standard of our contract, I will hand it back to you. You will then have until the next class period to revise it to meet contract.

What if I don't turn in an assignment at all?

I will still like you. However, failing to do assignments (or adequately revising any ones I request) will result in a voided contract and a letter grade of D or F for the course.

¹ The ability to act with power and authority.

What if I have to miss a class?

You must attend class to pass the class. However, I do understand that emergencies do come up. If you do choose to miss class, you are responsible for the material covered and assignments given/due. You must get this information from another *student* (not your instructor). Class work is a privilege for those students who choose to come to class. They may decide to share what we did with you if you ask nicely. Also, you must be prepared for the next class you attend. “I didn’t know what to do because I missed last class” is not an acceptable excuse.

As PLNU notes,

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation.

See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

You may be absent **three class sessions without question**. Wise students will not use up allowable absences early-on for fickle purposes, however. A total of four **absences** may result in a letter's reduction in the course grade. A total of eight absences may result in failure of the course. Three times of arriving late or exiting class early will equal one absence. You should not depend on doctors' or deans' excuses to bail you out. The built-in allowances are there to cover such needs, so plan carefully and do not use up your allowed absences early in the semester.

Please talk to me and e-mail me about extended illness, emergencies and absence for official university business. Students in traveling groups that **represent the university** should meet with me during the first week of classes to review the group’s travel schedule and its impact in WRI365. Students who are absent from six class sessions within the first five weeks (without legitimate reasons communicated promptly to the professor via e-mail) should expect to be **automatically and officially de-enrolled** from the course. I warn students via e-mail of impending de-enrollment after five absences.

Distracting and disruptive behavior will be considered an absence.

What if I want to use other people’s writing in my writing?

As Solomon wisely noted, “There is nothing new under the sun.” Thus, it is perfectly okay to reference other texts (written or visual) in your own writing. However, you must give credit to any ideas or sentences that are not originally yours or aren’t common knowledge. To omit doing this action is an act of plagiarism. Writing is often collaborative, and writers share and borrow from each other all the time (just as I did from other PLNU faculty when I wrote this syllabus). There are ways to do this that are acceptable (such as taking suggestions from a professor or a peer), but there are also ways to use other people’s ideas or words in a way that is considered plagiarism (such as passing off somebody else’s work—even just a sentence—as your own). We will discuss this further in class.

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Any word or idea that is not your own must be cited correctly. As explained in the University Catalog,

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. Violations of academic honesty include cheating, plagiarism, falsification, aiding academic dishonesty, and malicious interference. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for a) that particular assignment or examination, and/or b) the course following the procedure in the university catalog. A student remains responsible for the academic honesty of work submitted in PLNU courses and the consequences of academic dishonesty beyond receipt of the final grade in the class and beyond the awarding of the diploma. Ignorance of these catalog policies will not be considered a valid excuse or defense. Students may not withdraw from a course as a response to a consequence. Students may appeal using the procedure in the university catalog.

See [Academic Policies](#) for further information.

If you aren't sure if you are plagiarizing (you sweet, naïve thing), check out the information on the university cheating and plagiarism policy at

<http://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=864>

Or you can visit PLNU's library which also has an excellent tutorial on how to avoid plagiarism.

Finally, you can always talk to me. If you're wondering if you may have paraphrased too closely, be sure to ask before you turn in the assignment. You will not be penalized if you ask first.

Will you assign extra credit?

During a given semester, opportunities for extra credit may arise. These assignments are often difficult. These tasks give you a chance to make up elements of our contract; therefore, they require *extra* effort.

How do I contact you?

At the top of the syllabus, all of my contact information is listed. In the subject line of your email, please indicate WRI365.

What if I need some extra help in your class?

While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students must request that academic accommodations by filing documentation within the first two weeks of class with the [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](http://www.pointloma.edu/experience/offices/administrative-offices/academic-advising-office/disability-resource-center) (<http://www.pointloma.edu/experience/offices/administrative-offices/academic-advising-office/disability-resource-center>), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual needs of the student. This policy assists the university in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of

which prohibit discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to the benefits of PLNU programs and activities.

Students have the right to appeal decisions regarding academic accommodations. In order to provide prompt and equitable resolution, the student must submit a written or verbal statement to the Director of Academic Advising who will conduct the appeal process in consultation with the Vice President for Student Development.

You can contact the DRC by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu.

What do I have to buy for this class?

1. Roman, Kenneth and Joel Raphaelson. *Writing that Works*. Harper Collins, 2000.
ISBN: 9780060956431
2. Printouts from Canvas as well as your essays— plan accordingly
 - a. You will make copies of various pieces in your portfolios for the class to workshop
 - b. Part of your grade will be printing out some essays on Canvas, annotating them, and turning them in to me.
3. Pocket folder (not a three-ring binder) to turn in your work.
4. Various office supplies (highlighters, pens, stapler, Scotch tape, paper for notes)

***In the interest of lightening the financial burden of college education, I have placed our additional readings on Canvas rather than constructing a course reader. It is your responsibility to PRINT these texts out for annotation purposes and bring them to class. 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. However, any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law. ***

How do I pass this class?

1. Come to class
2. Do all the assignments
3. Turn them in on time

What specifically does that look like?

We're going to learn about what transactional writing looks like in the professional world and then create pieces of your own that you can then take with you when you graduate.

That's a lot to pack into a semester course that meets for about an hour a few days a week. But we're going to give it the clichéd good college try by writing often. Writing skill is like a human muscle, if you exercise it regularly, it gets strong and doing the work gets easier.

Some of the writing will be your creating a portfolio of work that presents your “brand” and professional presence in the world with the idea that you will be able to use this portfolio or pieces from it to apply for a job, an internship, or a graduate degree. Some of your writing will be a portfolio of transactional writing that is specific to your current career aspirations. With this portfolio, I aim for you to gain proficiency in types of writing that you might actually produce once you've moved into your post-bachelor career. Some things will be universal—everyone

needs to know how to write a professional email. But some things will be specific to your career goals, and you will find out what those things are. Not everyone will write a fundraising letter—I never have; not everyone will write grants—I’ve written many.

However, with all the writing we will do, the main thing is that you get your ideas clearly down on paper. So even if you end up in 20 years writing a memo that you didn’t write in this class, you’ll know how to find examples of memos and how to express your ideas well. That last one is the hard part: expressing ideas on paper. I emphasize revision and process because most of us need to produce what Anne Lamott calls “shitty first drafts” before we can see where our ideas need work. You will write a lot of “shitty first drafts” in this class. And you will help each other find the good ideas, the clever sentences, and solid descriptions within those drafts, turning those first drafts into coherent and engaging final products. In those initial versions of a paper, you may not have perfect grammar, that’s okay—no writer ever does. In the process of revision, the grammar gets cleaned up.

Writing is less like chipping away at a marble sculpture to reveal a finished piece and more like a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly: the end product may look nothing like your first draft. But the first draft carried all the source ideas (the DNA if you will) that lets you break your essay down to primordial goo and rebuild it as a butterfly.

There will be some sort of writing due every week. This isn’t to scare you but to let you know the pacing of the writing. Some assignments may have more than one due date. The first date is for you to turn in something that you think is the best you could do while the second date is for a final submission after you’ve worked with your peers on it.

So does this mean that my first drafts can be some stream of consciousness string of text I wrote during chapel right before class?

Nope. That is not a first draft. That is what my writer friend calls “draft 0” and I call “spew.” That in-chapel, quick putting down of your ideas is a NECESSARY part of writing, but not the “shitty first draft” that others can work with. Going back to our caterpillar/butterfly analogy: a caterpillar may look nothing like a butterfly, but it’s still a viable organism—it can live and breathe on its own. Your first draft needs to look like a caterpillar.

Okay that’s all fancy words and images but what does that practically look like in my busy life as a college student? What’s the bare minimum I can get away with in a draft?

Unless done in class, your first draft needs to be

- a. Typed and double spaced in the appropriate format (we’ll discuss formatting in class; the default is MLA);
- b. Demonstrate you have been thinking about the problem/topic you are writing about;
- c. Be free of typos.

Ha! So I do have to have perfect grammar in my first draft!

No. Typos are not grammar mistakes. Typos are ignoring the things that you already do proficiently in your writing on social media, email, and texting. Things like not putting a period at the end of a sentence Or not capitalizing my name, which is Breeann Kirby. Or when you are

writing.² You need to have complete thoughts. Typos are one of my HUGE pet peeves. They are not just mistakes but a sign of disrespect to me and your peers who will be working with your writing. Most typos can be easily caught if you read through your paper at least once before you turn it in (pro tip: read your paper out loud. You'll catch a lot of stuff that way.) Because no one is a perfect proofreader, I will allow one typo every page (meaning if you have a five-page paper, you may have up to five typos total on any of the pages in that work).

What are the specific assignments?³

Contract (5%) You will write a contract for your grade in WRI365.

Email (5%) You will write various emails with attachments over the course of the semester.

***Handwritten Letter (5%)** You will write a handwritten letter to a classmate citing the things they did well in constructing their Personal Portfolios.

***Reflection Papers (5%)** You will submit a written reflection on your fulfilling your contract at the midterm and at the final.

Personal Portfolio (25%) You will save EVERY bit of writing and revision you've done in this class, organize it by date and submit it at the midterm as a portfolio of your work and progress as a writer. If you want to know what you need to put in the portfolio, look at the assignments listed below.

Memo: Application Proposal You will write a memo explaining what specific job/internship/graduate program you are shaping your pieces in your personal portfolio around.

Seven Stories You will write seven (short) stories about your personal skills.

Petal Exercises In addition to your seven skill stories, you will complete the petal exercise about your personality and career desires.

LinkedIn Account You will set up a LinkedIn account.

Summary You will write a summary of yourself.

Master Resume/CV You will construct a master resume or curriculum vitae, depending on the organization you wish to apply to.

Biography You will write your biography.

***Statement of Purpose** If applicable, you will write a statement of purpose (SOP).

Professional Portfolio (25%) You will save EVERY bit of writing and revision you've done in this class, organize it by date and submit it at the final as a portfolio of your work and progress as a writer. If you want to know what you need to put in the portfolio, look at the assignments listed on this page.

Memo: Types of Professional Writing for Your Chosen Career

Action Plan/Proposal You will write an action plan for how you intend to choose material for and create your professional portfolio

Three to Five Individualized Pieces Your professional portfolio will be unique to you. For example if you are a scientist, your professional portfolio might include a **grant**, a **research paper**, and **scientific protocol**. The number of pieces you will include in this proposal will depend on the types of projects you would do for your career.

Midterm Presentation Personal Portfolio (10%): You will present your personal portfolio, taking us through your LinkedIn account and explaining where you are interested in applying and how your portfolio meets their requirements.

² Note the three typos here.

³ * denotes an A-grade assignment.

Final Presentation Exam Professional Portfolio (10%): You will present your professional portfolio of writing to the class, explaining your chosen vocation and the types of writing needed for that vocation.

Class Participation (10%): Because writing is a process, you must engage in that process to get anything out of it; meaning, you must interact with the instructor and the other students every class session. You must talk and offer considered feedback in workshops to participate. If you wish to earn your participation grade, you must have a good attitude; you must read all of the readings; and you must speak out. Make it your goal to come up with one good thought for every class and to share it. By doing so, you will be prepared for any reading quizzes I will give. **Also, you must turn off your electronics when you enter the classroom; use of electronics will not be permitted unless you have an academic accommodation.**

Further, sometimes I may SPEAK information in class that is important. It is your responsibility as an active class participant to take notes. I often will use class discussion as a place to clarify how to do a certain writing assignment. This discussion may not appear on Canvas or a PowerPoint presentation. Thus, your taking good notes is important for your success in the class.

Much of the work we will do in this class is cooperative. You should think of all your writing and speaking for and in class as public, not private, discourse. **By continuing in this class, you acknowledge that your work will be viewed by others in the class.**

Respect in class is a must. This classroom is a safe space. As we discuss and analyze works that may address potentially emotional topics, we will encounter many different viewpoints within the class. In order to be a good participant in this class, you must be sensitive to your fellow learners. As we share ideas, personal insults and comments will not be tolerated. I will ask you to leave if you cannot be kind. If you aren't sure how to phrase your opinion, please ask me. The best rule to follow: **be kind.**

For all of these assignments, further instructions will be given on Canvas and/or in class

How will I know my grade in the class?

Because writing is a process, I want you to be able to engage in your work, taking the tools you learn from each piece you produce into the next without worrying about how many points you might lose on an individual piece of prose. To eliminate grade anxiety, I've set this course up on a contract grading model. This model means that you can choose which grade you would like to earn right now at the beginning of the semester and then allocate your time wisely to earning that grade. Though you will not get an individual score on your papers, I will give you one opportunity to redo the work if it does not meet contract standards. This redo is due back to me the next day the class meets.

Everyone defaults to a B-contract which is earned entirely on the basis of what you do—on your conscientious effort and participation. **This grade does not come from my judgment about the quality of your writing; but rather, your engagement with the process and whether or not you demonstrate that you are attempting to use the tools focused on in the specific essay (I**

will have detailed instructions for each essay on CANVAS). However, grades higher than B are predicated on my judgment of your writing and a few extra assignments. A-work is determined on your extra effort and engagement as well as the stellar quality of your writing.

If you are interested in a grade lower than a B, please meet with me to discuss your options.

To earn a B grade in this class, you will

1. attend class regularly, missing no more than 3 classes this semester;
2. come to class on time (being late to class 3 times counts as one absence);
3. contribute to class discussion and participate in all in-class activities;
4. read every essay/book chapter assigned;
5. give thoughtful peer feedback during class workshops and work faithfully with your groups on other collaborative tasks (e.g., sharing papers, commenting on drafts, peer editing, in-class activities, answering peer questions);
6. make substantive revisions when the assignment is to revise—extending or changing the thinking or organization—not just editing or touching up;
7. meet due dates and writing criteria for all the writing assignments (except those with * by them);
8. submit your portfolios with all writing assignments in it;
9. attend an individual conference with me;
10. present your personal portfolio at the midterm;
11. present your professional portfolio at the final.

**For a grade of B+, you will be an active and positive contributor to our classes, offering a respectful spirit and coming up with insightful ideas and worthwhile feedback.*

I will not accept work that does not meet with the quality expected of a B. If you do not do B-quality work, then I will not accept it. The fluctuation in the points scale allows that there can be variable effort and quality put in at the B level. Thus you can earn a B- or a B+.

To earn an A grade, you will do all the B work to a high level of excellence as well as

1. turn in printed out annotations for all the essays found on Canvas;
2. complete the assignments with an * by them.

**For a grade of A, you will be an active and positive contributor to our classes, offering a respectful spirit and coming up with insightful ideas and worthwhile feedback.*

I will not accept work that does not meet with the quality expected of an A. If you do not do A-quality work, then I will not accept it. The fluctuation in the points scale allows that there can be variable effort and quality put in at the A level. Thus you can earn an A- or an A (sorry there are no A+s).

A	93-100 Percent
A-	90-92
B+	89-88
B	87-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-78
C	77-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-68
D	67-63
D-	62-60
F	Below 60

This syllabus is a contract. If you continue in this course, then you agree to comply with the class policies as stated here.

Schedule⁴

Subject to Change as needed to facilitate course goals.

Readings and assignments are due on the date listed.

WW denotes readings from *Writing That Works*.

****(Canvas) denotes readings can be found on Canvas in PAGES section.****

Week 1

10 January Syllabus/Getting to Know You

Week 2

15 January Contract Writing (Canvas)

DUE: Rough Draft Contract

17 January *WW* Chapter 1 “Writing that Works”

Week 3

22 January *WW* Chapter 2 “Don’t Mumble—and Other Principles of Effective Writing”

Bolles *What Color Is Your Parachute* Chapter 5 “Self-Inventory Part 2: The Flower Exercise” (pp. 47 – 62) (Canvas)

DUE: PBJ (revised)

DUE: Petals 1 & 2 exercises

24 January Bolles *What Color Is Your Parachute* Chapter 5 “Self-Inventory Part 2: The Flower Exercise” (pp. 85 – 99) (Canvas)

DUE: Petals 4 & 5 exercises

DUE: Contract (revised)

Week 4

29 January Bolles *What Color Is Your Parachute* Chapter 5 “Self-Inventory Part 2: The Flower Exercise” (pp. 63 – 83) (Canvas)

DUE: Seven Stories (Petal 3 exercises)

31 January Bolles *What Color Is Your Parachute* Chapter 5 “Self-Inventory Part 2: The Flower Exercise” (pp. 100 – 119) (Canvas)

DUE: Petals 6 & 7 exercises

⁴ Note: I reserve the right to change the syllabus as needed to facilitate our course goals. You will receive notification of these changes; after which time, you are responsible for required material.

Disclaimer: This class is taught at the college level; therefore, reading materials may be adult and/or controversial in connotation and/or denotation. The purpose of presenting such material is to expose you to various viewpoints—viewpoints that will act as sources for discussions. For this reason, no alternate materials will be provided.

Final Disclaimer: You will write A LOT. Writing is a muscle that must be exercised. Every week, there will be a writing assignment of at least 1 to 3 pages.

Week 5

- 5 February** *WW* Chapter 5 “Memos and Letters That Get Things Done”
 Bolles *What Color Is Your Parachute* Chapter 7 “Google is Your New Resume” (pp. 141 – 163) (Canvas)
DUE: Memo – Proposal for Personal Portfolio
- 7 February** *WW* Chapter 3 “I Love My Computer”
WW Chapter 4 “E-mail—the Great Mailbox in the Sky”
DUE: Draft Resume/CV
DUE: Email w/ Attachment—What Types of Documents You Need for Applying

Week 6

- 12 February** *WW* Chapter 11 “Writing a Resume”
DUE: Draft Summary
DUE: Draft Biography
- 14 February** *WW* Chapter 12 “Editing Yourself”
***DUE:** Draft Statement of Purpose

Week 7

- 19 February** *WW* Chapter 13 “Making It Easy to Read”
DUE: Resume/CV (revised)
DUE: Summary (revised)
DUE: Biography (revised)
- 21 February** *WW* Chapter 6 “Writing for an Audience”
DUE: LinkedIn Profile
***DUE:** Statement of Purpose (revised)

Week 8

- 26 February** MIDTERM Personal Portfolio Presentation
DUE: Personal Portfolio
- 28 February** MIDTERM Personal Portfolio Presentation
DUE: Personal Portfolio

Week 9

4 March – 8 March **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**

Week 10

- 12 March** *WW* Chapter 7 “Plans and Reports That Make Things Happen”
***DUE:** Reflection on Contract
***DUE:** Handwritten Note to Classmate (take a picture and email attachment to me)
- 14 March** *WW* Chapter 8 “Recommendations and Proposals That Sell Ideas”
DUE: Memo Professional Portfolio

Week 11

19 March	INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES DUE: Draft Plan/Proposal for Professional Portfolio
21 March	INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES DUE: Draft Plan/Proposal for Professional Portfolio

Week 12

26 March	<i>WW</i> Chapter 9 “Asking for Money”
28 March	NO FORMAL CLASS (Independent Work on Professional Portfolio) DUE: Email to me asking a question

Week 13

2 April	<i>WW</i> Chapter 10 “Coping with Political Correctness” DUE: Plan/Proposal for Professional Portfolio (revised)
4 April	TBD DUE: Draft TBD

Week 14

9 April	TBD DUE: Draft TBD
11 April	TBD DUE: TBD

Week 15

16 April	TBD DUE: TBD
18 April	NO CLASS

Week 16

23 April	TBD DUE: TBD
25 April	TBD DUE: TBD

FINALS WEEK

2 May	FINAL 1:30pm - 4pm *DUE: Final Reflection on Contract DUE: Professional Portfolio of Work
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