



COMM 3342.002
Advanced Writing and Research
Fall 2015 (TTh 11:30am–12:45pm)
Course Syllabus

Instructor Information

Carie S. Lambert, PhD
Office: JO 3.548 (972.883.2790 office phone)
Office hours: M/W 12–2pm, T/TH 10–11am, and by appointment
Email: carie.lambert@utdallas.edu
Skype: CSLambs
Twitter: UTDComm
Gradebook and assignment submission: www.turnitin.com

Course Description

This course is designed to build on students' experiences in RHET 1302 to improve technical and professional writing skills as well as to investigate needs and elements necessary in industry documents. Students will study and practice audience analysis, corporate culture, and mechanics and style to improve their writing. In addition, they will consider research methods that allow them to identify best practices for various professional documents, including manuals; instructions; books, proposals, reports (e.g., feasibility, progress, travel, budget); and online documents.

Course Prerequisites

- RHET 1302
 - Upper-level standing (junior or senior)
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Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

To succeed in this class, you will

- Use Microsoft Word for the writing process;
 - Discuss how to improve your writing skills;
 - Analyze rhetorical situations (audience, purpose, and constraints);
 - Consider the role of critical thinking in the writing process;
 - Research corporations' cultures and various audiences;
 - Investigate industry documents;
 - Collaborate with others on writing assignments; and
 - Present your findings, independently and collaboratively.
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Required Textbooks and Materials

You need access to the textbooks as well as additional sources that are noted on the course calendar.

Required Texts

Treadwell, D. (2014). *Introducing communication research* (2nd ed). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
Williams, J. M., & Bizup, J. (2015). *Style: Lessons in clarity and grace* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Additional Resources

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: APA.

If you have a laptop computer, please bring it to class so you can use it to write. If you do not, you can bring a tablet or smartphone with Internet capabilities.

We will use APA style to format in-text and end-of-text citations in this class.

Assignment Values

| Assignment | Submission Instructions | Value |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Writing Journal (exercises, reflections, notes) | Submit on request in spiral | 150 |
| Style Exam | Submit via turnitin.com | 100 |
| Document Analysis Proposal | Submit via turnitin.com | 100 |
| Document Analysis | Submit via turnitin.com | 150 |
| Document Analysis Presentation | Present in class | 100 |
| Team Research Project and Paper | Submit via turnitin.com | 100 |
| Team Presentation | Present in class | 100 |
| Low-Impact Assignments in Class | Submit as requested | 200 |
| Total | | 1000 pts |

Grading Criteria

Grades will not be rounded up. Course assignments together are worth 1000 points, and students receive grades according to the following (standard UTD) scale:

930–1000 = A
900–929 = A–
870–899 = B+
830–869 = B
800–829 = B–
770–799 = C+
730–769 = C
700–729 = C–
670–699 = D+
630–669 = D
600–629 = D–
0–599 = F

Your grade in this class reflects if you

- Fulfill objectives for the class and particular assignments;
 - Support your ideas and arguments with analysis and evidence from credible sources, focusing on a thesis or main idea;
 - Manage your time wisely and effectively;
 - Use correct mechanics, strong style, and appropriate organization;
 - Edit and proofread **all** work before you submit assignments;
 - Ethically present information in assignment documents, address copyright, and correctly cite resources; and
 - Present yourself professionally.
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Course & Instructor Policies

In addition to all UTD policies that students must know and follow (available at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>), the following policies apply.

Preparation for Class

UT Dallas students are expected to study 2–3 hours per week for each credit hour (6–9 hours per week for a 3-hour class in a 15-week class). The writing process takes time, and **you must manage your time and integrate that time into your schedule**. If you study consistently more than 9 hours per week, please document your activities and communicate immediately with the instructor.

Make-up and Late Work

In this class, you are scholars as well as professionals in training. Professionals who miss deadlines present poor work ethics and damage their reputations as well as lose contracts, increase costs, delay results, decrease profits, and lose their jobs. ***Therefore, you may not submit late or incomplete work or makeup exams unless you are hospitalized and provide a valid physician excuse.*** Missed work results in a zero (0) on the assignment.

References, Copyright, and Plagiarism

UTD has a no-tolerance policy for plagiarism, copyright infringement, or scholastic dishonesty (including missing citations). I support and enforce that policy in my classes. ***If you do not cite your sources with in-text and end-of-text citations or if you publish copyrighted work without permission, you will receive a referral to the Office of Judicial Affairs.*** (We will use APA style for all in-text and end-of-text citations.)

Comet Creed: “As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Attendance

Treat this class as you would a job: Attend class and be punctual. If you arrive on time and sign in and then participate in class activities, you are present. If you arrive late to class or you attend class but conduct nonrelated work, you are considered absent. You may miss two classes without penalty; after two absences, you lose 20 points of your 1000-point grade for each absence.

UTD excuses absences for religious holidays; however, the student is responsible to inform the instructor *before* the holiday and to submit missed work *before* the absence.

Communication outside the Classroom

You should communicate with the instructor and your classmates outside the classroom. Communication is part of coursework and therefore you should

- Identify yourself in all communication (e.g., email, texts, phone calls) to the instructor AND your classmates;
- Use correct mechanics and style in correspondence;
- Communicate clearly, respectfully, and professionally; and
- Allow 48 hours for a response to e-mail during weekdays. (Do not expect a response on weekends.)

Please communicate about all issues with your instructor throughout the semester.

All official e-mail correspondence must go to and come from official UTD emails. The instructor will not answer emails that come through addresses from other providers (per UTD policy). Email should be professionally written with a relevant subject line, a respectful greeting, a body that informs the recipient of your purpose/need, and a professional closing and signature.

Classroom Citizenship

You will receive a grade for professionalism and attendance. You should prepare for class; attend and participate; communicate professionally; and cooperate, listen, and respect others' opinions. Please leave profanity and other threatening language and behavior outside the classroom. *Also, turn off your cell phones and other electronic equipment during class, and use your laptop for class work only.*

Accessibility Issues

If you are registered with the Office of Student Accessibility, please inform your instructor so she can effectively teach and meet each student's needs. If you are registered, please meet with me at the beginning of the semester during my office hours.

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the professor.



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Course Syllabus Contract

I have read the syllabus for COMM3342 *and the university policies* (<http://coursebook.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>).

I understand that content and communication related to this course may be used for future examples and research but that my identity will be blinded and my confidentiality will be protected if content is used.

I also understand that my contact information listed on this contract will ONLY be used for course-related activities and information.

By signing this contract, I acknowledge that I have read the policies and this syllabus and that I am expected to abide by ALL university policies, attend class, and submit quality, unique work by all deadlines to fulfill requirements for this class.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Student ID Number

Mobile Telephone Number



COMM 3342.002
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Course Calendar

| Date of Class | Topic for Discussion and Preparation |
|-----------------------|---|
| Tuesday, August 25 | Introduce COMM3342, the students, and the instructor. |
| Thursday, August 27 | <p>Improve how you use Microsoft Word. Discuss APA citation style and the importance of copyright.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain textbooks. • Purchase spiral notebook. • Register for turnitin.com. <p>Bring your laptop computer if you own one.</p> <p><i>Submit signed Course Syllabus Contract in class.</i></p> |
| Tuesday, September 1 | <p>Analyze the rhetorical situation. Consider the purpose of style. Review mechanics: Spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization. Research written communication.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Chapters 1 and 2. • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: "Why is language important, and why is it important to me?" |
| Thursday, September 3 | <p>Live in a state of inquiry.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Treadwell's (2014) Chapters 1 and 2 and complete Chapter 2 Exercise 1 (p. 36) in your writing notebook. • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: "Why is research (or inquiry) important?" |
| Tuesday, September 8 | <p>Place actors as subjects and actions as verbs.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Chapters 3 and 4. • Complete Exercises 3.1–3.7 and 4.1–4.4 in your writing notebook. • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: "What does 'critical thinking' mean?" |

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| Thursday, September 10 | <p>Consider values when you communicate and research.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Treadwell's (2014) Chapter 3 and on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Chapter 12. • Complete Williams & Bizup (2015) Exercises 12.1–12.2 in your writing notebook. • Complete the NIH Human Subject Ethics Training (https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php) and save a copy of your certificate number on your desktop or in your email. |
| Tuesday, September 15 | <p>Consider cohesion, coherence, and emphasis in your writing.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Chapters 5 and 6. • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: "Create a list of three research questions." (Revisit your notes from Treadwell's [2014] Chapters 1 and 2.) Consider what you want to research (generally) this semester. (Consider proposing your research for the Undergraduate Research Award. Information about the program is available at www.utdallas.edu/research/ord/students/undergraduate_research.) |
| Thursday September 17 | <p>Build your credibility with sources.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Treadwell's (2014) Chapters 4 and 14 and on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Appendix II. • Bring a credible source that relates to your research and its APA-formatted citation to class. |
| Tuesday, September 22 | <p>Create a foundation for your research.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Treadwell's (2014) Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8. • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: "Watch the national news and choose a news story that interests you. Investigate the story further than the news reporter shared, citing (in APA format) at least two other sources that relate to the story. What information did the news reporter include? What information did the reporter omit? How do the selections and omissions influence the audience's response to the story?" |
| Thursday, September 24 | <p>Explore research methods for quantifiable data.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <p>Read and take notes on Treadwell's (2014) Chapters 9 and 10.</p> |

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| Tuesday, September 29 | <p>Explore research methods for qualifiable data.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Treadwell's (2014) Chapters 11 and 12. • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: "How would you research the topic that interests you? Outline your research project to include sampling, methods, values, hypothesis (if applicable), etc." |
| Thursday, October 1 | <p>Explore research methods for qualifiable data.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <p>Read and take notes on Treadwell's (2014) Chapter 13.</p> |
| Tuesday, October 6 | <p>Decide on your research and write confidently about what you learn.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Chapters 5 and 6. • Complete Exercises 5.1–5.3 and 6.1–6.3 in your writing notebook. |
| Thursday, October 8 | <p>Research and write collaboratively.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Chapters 7 and 8. • Complete Exercises 7.1–7.2 and 8.1 in your writing notebook. |
| Tuesday, October 13 | <p>Plan your research projects.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Chapters 9 and 10. • Complete Exercises 9.1–9.3 and 10.1–10.3 in your writing notebook. |
| Thursday, October 15 | <p>Analyze corporate cultures.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes on Williams & Bizup's (2015) Chapter 11. • Complete Exercises 11.1–11.3 in your writing notebook. • Find three jobs for which you would consider applying. Print two copies of each job advertisement and bring those to class. |
| Tuesday, October 20 | <p>Apply style principles.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <p>Take the Style Examination today. You will have 24 hours to access the exam via eLearning, to take the exam, and to submit it before 11:59pm to turnitin.com.</p> |
| Thursday, October 22 | <p>Work collaboratively.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <p>Research the corporation or individual for which you will be writing. Bring in-depth identifying information to class to discuss with your team.</p> |

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| Tuesday, October 27 | <p>Analyze communication.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i> Bring your research document to class. Before class, read the document and take notes to prepare to work on the document in class. Write a 100-word description of the document.</p> <p><i>Submit a copy of the document to the instructor for approval.</i></p> |
| Thursday, October 29 | <p>Research as a team today.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i> Come to class prepared to write your IRB application for your team project. Have your survey questions ready to share. Bring your NIH certification numbers.</p> <p><i>Submit a draft of your team IRB application to the instructor by 11:59pm via email.</i></p> |
| Tuesday, November 3 | <p>Work on your analysis.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather data today. • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: “What values do we need to apply when we write professional documents? What values do we need to apply when we research communication?” |
| Thursday, November 5 | <p>Work on your analysis.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i> Gather data today. Begin to draft your analysis.</p> |
| Tuesday, November 10 | <p>Consider your audience when you write.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: “What experience have you had communicating with someone from another culture or country, and what have you observed in that communication?” • Work on the draft of your analysis. <p><i>Submit your team IRB application by the end of class.</i></p> |
| Thursday, November 12 | <p>Consider your audience when you write.</p> <p><i>Prepare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the writing prompt in your writing notebook: “What type of communication (written, visual, and verbal) have you delivered and received today? How were these deliverables customized to cater to you as the audience? If they were not, how could the writer/speaker/designer/creator improve the deliverables?” • Work on the draft of your analysis. |
| Tuesday, November 17 | <p>Research as a team today. Document your progress.</p> <p><i>Gather data today.</i> <i>Submit a brief team progress report by the end of class.</i></p> |

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| Thursday, November 19 | Submit a draft of your document analysis. <i>Prepare</i> Gather data today. Advance the draft your analysis. |
| Tuesday, November 23 | Thanksgiving Break |
| Thursday, November 25 | Thanksgiving Break |
| Tuesday, December 1 | Submitting Full Draft of Document Analysis <i>Prepare</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes— • Complete a writing prompt in your writing notebook <i>Submit</i> |
| Thursday, December 3 | <i>Prepare</i> <i>Submit</i> |
| Tuesday, December 8 | Submitting Final Document Analysis <i>Prepare</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and take notes— • Complete a writing prompt in your writing notebook <i>Submit</i> |
| TBD | Final Examination |
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Bibliography

- Treadwell, D. (2014). *Introducing communication research* (2nd ed). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Williams, J. M., & Colomb, G. G. (2015). *Style: Lessons in clarity and grace* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.



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Course Assignments

Assignment—Writing Notebook

Style Exercises

Also use your writing notebook for your style exercises from Williams and Bizup (2015), as assigned in the Course Calendar.

Prompts

Choose a prompt every Tuesday and write 250–500 words on your observations. Handwrite your responses (legibly) in your writing notebook.

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- Find a word in your reading of which you are unsure of the definition and define the word per your knowledge and experience. Find the word in several dictionaries and compare the definitions. How do these differ? How are these the same?
- How can an idiom confuse the audience?
- Why is this class important to you academically, professionally, and personally?
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- Go out to eat and listen in on conversations around you. What did you observe? (Consider verbal, visual, body language, etc.)

Assignment—Style Examination

Assignment—Document Analysis

You will select a document (at least 10 pages long), and you will analyze the style and content of that technical document. (You will submit the document to me so I can ensure that you have selected an appropriate document for the analysis.) The document must meet the following criteria:

- Include 3–5 pages of single-spaced type.
- Serve a clear technical purpose.
- Address a discernible primary and secondary reader(s). You must be able to identify and describe these readers and their purpose for reading the document.

Your analysis must include the following:

- A quantitative analysis of the style elements that we discussed during the course;
- A discussion of how the style elements affect the readers' purpose for reading;
- A discussion of how the style elements have an impact on the document to achieve the writers' intended purpose;
- Summary charts detailing your quantitative analysis; and
- Sufficient examples from the document (cited quotes, paraphrases, and summaries) to support your conclusion.

Your paper should include the following sections and answer these (and more) questions:

- Introduction
 - What is the document you are analyzing?
 - What is its purpose?
 - Who are the intended primary and secondary readers? (Include detailed information about the readers and include information about what they know and perceive about this document.)
 - What is the purpose of your paper?
 - What follows in your paper?
- Methods
 - How did you analyze the document?
 - What style elements did you analyze?
 - How did you gather the information that led to your conclusions?
- Results
 - What did you find?
 - What are the quantitative results of your analysis?
- Conclusion
 - What do the results mean?
 - How do the style elements affect the writer's intended purpose and the readers' purpose?

Your analysis should incorporate

- appropriate navigational cues (e.g., headings, page numbers);
- single spacing; and
- logical structure and clear organization.

Assignment Three—Team Document Writing

Assignment Four—

Assignment Five

Mechanics and Style Quizzes

Participation and Attendance

Students do not need to submit anything to finalize this grade. To earn these points, prepare for and attend classes, participate in discussions, communicate professionally, and be part of small-group activities.