Professional & Business Writing (DL) Summer 2021

  English Department/College of Arts & Letters

ENGL 2960-911   ●  CRN 31899   ●   3 Credit Hours

 

**Instructor**: Sheri Benton

**Office Hours:** Online only via email, chat, or video. Email to schedule.

**E-mail**: sheri.benton@utoledo.edu

# Course Information



## **SPECIAL COURSE EXPECTATIONS DURING COVID-19**

It’s important to note that based on the unpredictability of the COVID-19 virus things can change at any time, so please be patient and understanding as we move through the semester. I also ask that you keep me informed of concerns you may have about class, completing course work/assignments timely, and/or health concerns related to COVID-19. If you report COVID-19 related symptoms or positive test results to me, I am expected to inform the relevant personnel at the University to ensure your wellbeing, the safety and wellbeing of others on campus, and for contact tracing protocols.

For additional information, please read the resources on the [COVID-19: Keeping Campus Safe](https://www.utoledo.edu/coronavirus/) page. Current information is also available via MyUT > COVID-19 Updates.

## **Attendance**

The University of Toledo has a [missed class policy](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/academic/undergraduate/pdfs/3364-71-14%20Missed%20class%20policy.pdf). You must perform a daily health assessment, based on [**CDC Guidelines**](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html)**,** if you plan to go to campus, which includes taking your temperature. If you are symptomatic or sick, you should ***not*** attend any on-campus class or activity and should contact the Main Campus Health Center at 419-530-3451. While absences due to COVID-19 quarantine or isolation requirements are considered excused absences for on-campus classes, this is not necessarily the case for a DL class such as ours (for example, if you’re in quarantine but not ill). Let me know ASAP of any issues that may contribute to your inability to complete your work. **Absences, excused or not, do not negate the requirement to meet the course objectives.**

**IMPORTANT:** If you are a CCP student, your school’s days off/breaks/holidays do not apply to this class.


## General Education Statement

This course fulfills a General Education and Core Curriculum requirement at the University of Toledo.

## Prerequisite

Students are eligible for ENGL 2960 after successfully completing ENGL 1010/1110: College Composition I with a grade of C or better, or through obtaining Composition I credit via test score, portfolio, or transfer. Students who do not have credit for Composition I should see the course instructor immediately for next steps.

## Course/Catalog Description

Instruction and practice in multiple forms of professional and business writing within an organizational context. Emphasis on the analytical report based on research.

## Course Requirements

Students will produce a minimum of 7,000 words in final draft form over the course of the semester. This will mean roughly 20-24 finished pages. At least one paper will be a documented essay using APA format and incorporating a number of sources with a sustained discussion that results in a paper of at least 8 pages.

## Course Overview

We will focus on documents typical for business and professional fields, and consider the importance of audience, purpose, format, style, and usability of these documents. Our goal is to simulate workplace experiences with much of our coursework. Assignments will vary in purpose, format, and length, and will include correspondence documents such as letters and memos; a substantial formal report with extensive primary and secondary research; and multiple short assignments that will build skills and reinforce Student Learning Outcomes (listed on page 2).

## Teaching Strategies

This section of ENGL 2960 is a fully online course and uses Blackboard, Rockets email, and OneNote for the web-based delivery of assignments and course communication, as well as collaborative activities involving asynchronous discussion. No on-campus meetings will be required.

## Workweek

In this fully online course, our weeks will run from Sundays through Saturdays, beginning at 12:00 a.m. Sunday mornings and ending at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday nights. Content and assignments will be posted on Sunday of each week, if not earlier, under Weekly Content. A preview of the following week’s Monday assignments will be included.

## Student Learning Outcomes

|  |
| --- |
| Students in ENGL 2960 will be expected to continually build upon and strengthen the learning outcomes from Composition I (ENGL 1010/1110); please see the [common syllabus for ENGL 1010/1110](https://www.utoledo.edu/al/english/programs/composition/pdfs/ENGL%201110%20Common%20Syllabi%20Fall%202019.pdf) for a description of those learning outcomes. In addition, students who successfully complete ENGL 2960 will also be able to:  |
| 1. Develop and design workplace documents that demonstrate understanding of professional communication contexts, genres, and contemporary business topics. *(TAG: Rhetorical Knowledge)*
2. Recognize, explain, and use the formal elements of specific genres of professional and business communication, including white papers, recommendation and analytical reports, and promotional documents. *(TAG: Rhetorical Knowledge and Composing in Electronic Environments)*
3. Explain the ethical, cultural, social, and professional constraints of audience, style, and content for writing situations. *(TAG: Rhetorical Knowledge; Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing; and Knowledge of Conventions)*
4. Demonstrate effective use and analysis of secondary research sources as well as primary data gathering strategies. *(TAG: Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing and Composing in Electronic Environments)*
5. Identify different citation styles and use them in the disciplines for which they are appropriate. *(TAG: Knowledge of Conventions)*
6. Compose professional documents that are concise, clear, accurate, and ethical. *(TAG: Rhetorical Knowledge; Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing; and Knowledge of Conventions)*
7. Identify and apply different format features in print, multimedia, and web texts. *(TAG: Knowledge of Conventions and Composing in Electronic Environments)*
8. Revise and edit effectively all assignments, including formal and informal texts and communications. *(TAG: Knowledge of the Composing Process and Knowledge of Conventions)*
9. Demonstrate professional work habits, including but not limited to those necessary for effective collaboration, cooperation, and presentation with other students, instructors, and, if applicable, outside stakeholders. *(TAG: Collaboration)*
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Note: TAG = Transfer Assurance Guideline, as defined by the Ohio Dept. of Higher Education.

## Course Text



Alred, G. J., Brusaw, C. T., & Oliu, W. E. (2020). *Business writer’s handbook with APA update* (12th ed.). Bedford/St. Martin’s.

**ISBN 9781319361761**

**Required.** Available from the [student bookstore](https://utoledo.bncollege.com/shop/utoledo/home), [publisher’s website](https://www.macmillanlearning.com/college/us/product/The-Business-Writers-Handbook-with-2020-APA-Update/p/1319361765), and [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/Business-Writers-Handbook-2020-Update/dp/1319361765/ref%3Dsr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=business+writer%27s+handbook+apa+update&qid=1610382121&s=books&sr=1-2) in print and digital format.

**Additional course readings** will be provided via links in Blackboard. If you prefer paper copies and can visit campus, your UT print quota can be used to print the readings in the Information Commons of Carlson Library or in a UT computer lab.

# Technology Requirements



**Use of and access to multiple technologies, software, and the internet, including Blackboard, UT Rockets email, and OneNote, is required.**

All final copies of work for this class must be submitted in MS Office-compatible or PDF form to the Blackboard Drop Box created for that assignment unless otherwise noted (some assignments will be completed via our MS OneNote Class Notebook). Course documents, including the course syllabus, assignments, handouts, and other important course information, will be posted in Blackboard. Course announcements will be made on the Blackboard course home page and via Rockets email. You are responsible for consulting Blackboard and your UT email **frequently** (I suggest several times a week) to keep current on course announcements and information.

For additional technology information, please read the [Course Technology Information](https://www.utoledo.edu/dl/students/required-info-online-learners.html#CT) provided by UToledo Online and the University’s [Responsible Technology Use Policy](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/administration/info_tech/pdfs/3364-65-01-responsible-technology-use-policy.pdf).

## Technical Skills

Students in this course are expected to know how to:

* Rename, delete, organize, and save files.
* Create, edit, and format word processing and presentation documents.
* Copy, paste, and use a URL or web address.
* Download and install programs and plug-ins.
* Send and receive email with attachments.
* Locate and access information using a web search engine.
* Use chat or IM software for real-time communication.
* Use the Blackboard learning management system.

## Browser Check Page

You will need to have access to a properly functioning, reliable computer throughout the semester. The [Browser Check Page](http://www.utoledo.edu/dl/helpdesk/browser-check.html) will enable you to perform a system check on your browser and to ensure that your browser settings are compatible with Blackboard, the learning management system that hosts this course.

## Internet Service

Reliable high-speed Internet access is recommended. This course may include streaming audio and video content.

## Use of Public Computers

If using a public library or other public access computer, please check to ensure that you will have access for the length of time required to complete tasks. A list and schedule for on-campus computer labs is available on the[Open Lab for Students](https://www.utoledo.edu/it/CS/open-labs-for-students.html) webpage.

## Software

Your computer needs to be capable of running the latest versions of plug-ins and recent software, and have the necessary tools to be kept free of viruses and spyware. The following software is available in the[UT Online Download Center](http://www.utoledo.edu/dl/main/downloads.html):

* Google Chrome Browser – Recommended
* Word Processing Software
* Adobe Acrobat Reader
* Adobe Flash Player
* Adobe Shockwave Player
* Java Plugin Console

## UT Virtual Lab

Traditionally, on-campus labs have offered students the use of computer hardware and software they might not otherwise have access to. With [UT's Virtual Lab](http://www.utoledo.edu/it/VLab/), students can now access virtual machines loaded with all of the software they need to be successful using nothing more than a broadband Internet connection and a web browser. The [Virtual Lab](http://www.utoledo.edu/it/VLab/) is open 24/7 and 365 days a year.

## Technology Privacy Policies

This course will use tools that will require learners to create an account with a username and password. To safeguard your account on each platform, please make note of the University of Toledo’s [Responsible Technology Use Policy](http://www.utoledo.edu/policies/administration/info_tech/pdfs/3364-65-01-responsible-technology-use-policy.pdf).

# Course Policies



## Code of Conduct and Academic Policies

As a student of the University, you are required to be familiar with and abide by the [Student Code of Conduct](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/main_campus/student_life/pdfs/3364_30_04_Student_code_of_conduct.pdf); in addition, all students at the University of Toledo are expected to read, understand, and follow the academic policies that govern their attendance at the University. These policies include, but are not limited to, academic dishonesty, academic forgiveness, adding and dropping a course, grades and grading, and the missed class policy. Please read the [Undergraduate Academic Policies](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/academic/undergraduate/) that pertain to you in this class and throughout your academic journey. If you have any questions after reading through the policies, please let me know.

## Participation

Participation is essential to your success in this class. This course is not self-paced; there will be specific due dates and times for your work. Failure to heed these deadlines will affect your grade. Important: Because we meet online only, weather-related events that cause class cancellations DO NOT APPLY.

Although we do not meet synchronously or in a classroom, your online “attendance” is required. If you do not access the course and meaningfully participate for 7 consecutive days at any point during the semester you may fail the course; simply “logging in” is not sufficient. Note: Blackboard records student access and activity in every course.

## Netiquette

Because all aspects of this class will be conducted online, [netiquette](https://www.utoledo.edu/dl/students/netiquette.html) is important. All of our course communication should be polite, respectful, constructive, academic, and proofread. Any communication in or outside of the course that fails to meet these standards or that violates the [University Student Code of Conduct](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/main_campus/student_life/pdfs/3364_30_04_Student_code_of_conduct.pdf) may affect your grade and possibly your ability to pass the course.

## Announcements

Announcements will be posted on Blackboard on a regular basis. They will appear on your Blackboard dashboard when you log in, will appear in the Course News module when you enter the course site, and most will be sent to your Rockets email. **Please be sure to check them regularly,** as they will contain important information about upcoming assignments or class concerns.

## Email

You are responsible for checking your Rockets email account daily for communication from me, the University, and your classmates. Your Rockets email **is the only email account I will send and respond to.** In addition, please remember the following:

* Before emailing with a question, review Start Here, the Syllabus, and relevant assignment instructions and handouts for the answers you need.
* Include a meaningful Subject in your email—messages without a Subject may end up in the Spam folder.
* Address the recipient of your email (Hello Professor Benton, or similar), introduce yourself, and identify the course you are in: “this is Jamie Doe from ENGL 2960-123” or similar (I have several sections of Composition II; simply saying you are in my Comp or English class is not sufficient).
* **Send emails only from your Rockets account or Blackboard**; I do not open emails from a personal account.
* I do notaccept assignments via email without prior approval. All assignments will have a Blackboard Drop Box or similar for submission.
* I check my email daily M-F and sporadically on weekends. On the rare occasion that I miss an email or that your email ends up in the Spam folder, please send a polite follow-up if you have not received a response within 24 hours. Send assignment questions at least 24 hours before an applicable due date and time.
* Write your emails in a professional manner—a text message is a different genre—and close with your name.

## Academic Honesty

Representing the work of another as your own is plagiarism. Intentional plagiarism is dishonest and a violation of the [University Student Code of Conduct](http://www.utoledo.edu/policies/main_campus/student_life/pdfs/3364_30_04_Student_code_of_conduct.pdf). Examples of plagiarism include:

∙ Having someone write your entire paper or a portion of it.

∙ Having someone give you substantial help with the substance of your paper.

∙ Using words, thoughts, and ideas of another person in your writing without giving proper credit through in-text citations and a reference page. Note that you must give credit for thoughts and ideas, not only direct quotes.

∙ Cutting and pasting materials from various sources without giving proper credit.

∙ Submitting as your own a paper written by someone else, even if you paid for it.

∙ Submitting the same paper for more than one course without instructor approval.

I understand that citing sources can be challenging. I do not consider it plagiarism if you have made a good faith effort to properly credit the sources you have used in your work; in other words, poor citation format is not necessarily plagiarism. Lack of citations may be considered plagiarism, and it is important to understand that some instructors or institutions will not differentiate between unintentional format errors and the intentional omission of accurate citations.

**Please contact me with any questions regarding proper citation in your papers.** For information on plagiarism and citation, see resources available on the [Purdue OWL](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html) website and in the course text*.* A paper that is plagiarized in whole or part may receive an F, you may receive an F for the course, and the paper may be turned over to administrative supervisors to determine further action. You should also review the University’s policy on [Academic Dishonesty](http://www.utoledo.edu/policies/academic/undergraduate/pdfs/3364-71-04%20%20Academic%20dishonesty.pdf).

# Assignments



## Discussion Board Posts and Replies

During the semester, you will be expected to participate in a couple of Discussion Board forums. You will also be expected to engage and respond to a selected number of your peers. Failure to submit Posts and Replies in a timely manner or of sufficient length and quality will affect your grade. *(SLOs 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9)*

**Note:** I do not comment on every individual Post or Reply, but I read them all and some will receive comments.

## Letters & Memos

Throughout the semester, you will be assigned writing tasks that will use and reinforce correspondence protocols for letters, memos, and email messages. These short assignments will also introduce and reinforce skills necessary for various projects and the course Learning Outcomes. Additional assignments will lead into and be preliminary parts of the formal report. *(SLOs 1-9)*

## Formal Report (required)

The major project for this class is an in-depth, researched formal report with front and end matter with APA formatted citations. Details will be available in Blackboard. **Important: a completed Formal Report that meets assignment expectations is required to pass the course** and will only be accepted if there is evidence of productive work on the project during the semester. However, note that a passing Formal Report is not a guarantee of an overall passing grade in the course. *(SLOs 1-9)*

## Assignment Format

Because of the nature of the work in this course, assignment format will vary. Most short assignments will be in memo format unless otherwise specified.

* Submitted work should be in 11 or 12 point standard font (Times New Roman or Calibri) with 1-inch margins, unless otherwise specified.
* **Use filenames that begin with your last name**, i.e. “Benton Research.docx” or similar. I see far too many assignments called “memo1.docx” or similar.
	+ **IMPORTANT:Unless otherwise specified, ALL writing assignments must be submitted in Microsoft Office-compatible or PDF format** - I cannot open most other file types.
* Inattention to correct format means you must revise and resubmit the assignment to earn points.
	+ Be aware of blank pages in your submissions – I notice this and may deduct points.

## Late Work

All assignments will have posted due dates. A 24-hour, no questions asked, grace period will be in place (note that the submission may be labeled “late” by Blackboard). Work submitted later than 24 hours will receive half-credit. Some Drop Boxes may close after the 24-hour grace period (this will be noted in the Drop Box). If you need an extension beyond the 24-hour grace period, you must contact me beforehand, unless you have an unavoidable extenuating circumstance.

# Grades



Your writing this semester will be evaluated for its rhetorical effectiveness and whether or not it meets the specific assignment criteria and the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for ENGL 2960.

## Final Grade

Final grades of A-F are issued for this course. Regardless of your participation and attention to short assignments, **you will NOT be able to earn a passing grade unless you submit a Formal Report completed according to assignment expectations and that earns a passing grade**. This is non-negotiable.

25% -- Formal Report (required)

75% -- Letters, Memos, Discussion Board, Drafts

## Final Course Grade

Final grades of A – F are issued for this course. The course grading scale is as follows:

 A = 93-100% = 4.0 B- = 80-82% = 2.67 D+ = 67-69% = 1.33

 A- = 90-92% = 3.67 C+ = 77-79% = 2.33 D = 63-66% = 1.0

 B+ = 87-89% = 3.33 C = 73-76% = 2.0 D- = 60-62% = 0.67

 B = 83-86% = 3.0 C- = 70-72% = 1.67 F = 0-59% = 0.0

# Student Services



## Inclusive Classroom Statement

In this class, we will work together to develop a learning community that is inclusive and respectful. Our diversity may be reflected by differences in race, culture, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic background, and a myriad of other social identities and life experiences. We will encourage and appreciate expressions of different ideas, opinions, and beliefs so that conversations and interactions that could potentially be divisive turn, instead, into opportunities for intellectual and personal development.

## Academic Accommodations

The University of Toledo embraces the inclusion of students with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring equal opportunity and seamless access for full participation in all courses. For students who have an accommodations memo from Student Disability Services, I invite you to correspond with me as soon as possible so that we can communicate confidentially about implementing accommodations in this course. For students who have not established affiliation with Student Disability Services and are experiencing disability access barriers or are interested in a referral to healthcare resources for a potential disability or would like information regarding eligibility for academic accommodations, please contact the [Student Disability Services Office](https://www.utoledo.edu/offices/student-disability-services/) by calling 419.530.4981 or sending an email to StudentDisability@utoledo.edu.

## Safety and Health Services for UT Students

Please use the following link to view a comprehensive list [Campus Health and Safety Services](http://www.utoledo.edu/offices/provost/utc/docs/CampusHealthSafetyContacts.pdf) available to you as a student.

## Student Support Services

The following are campus student services that you may find helpful:

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| --- | --- |
| * [The Writing Center](http://www.utoledo.edu/success/writingcenter/)
 | * [University Libraries](https://www.utoledo.edu/library/)
 |
| * [Counseling Center](https://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/counseling/)
 | * [Information Technology](https://www.utoledo.edu/it/)
 |
| * [Center for Success Coaching](https://www.utoledo.edu/successcoach/)
 | * [Campus Safety](https://www.utoledo.edu/publicsafety/)
 |
| * [Office of Multicultural Student Success](https://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/omss/)
 | * [Career Services](https://www.utoledo.edu/career/)
 |
| * [TRIO Student Support Services](http://www.utoledo.edu/success/trio/)
 | * [Student Affairs](https://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/)
 |
| * [Learning Enhancement Center](http://www.utoledo.edu/success/lec/) (includes online-tutoring)
 |

## University Policies

Your safety and well-being as a University of Toledo student is important to the faculty, staff, and administration. Please take time to review the following university policies that apply to you as a student of the University:

* [The University of Toledo Title IX (Sexual Misconduct) Policy – 3364-50-01](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/administration/diversity/pdfs/3364_50_01.pdf)
* [Nondiscrimination Policy – 3364-50-02](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/administration/diversity/pdfs/3364-50-02.pdf)
* [Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability – Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance – 3364-50-03](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/administration/diversity/pdfs/3364_50_03_Nondiscrimination_o.pdf)
* [Consensual Romantic and/or Sexual Relationships – 3364-25-65](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/administration/humanresources/pdfs/3364-25-65.pdf)
* [The University Student Code of Conduct](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/main_campus/student_life/pdfs/3364_30_04_Student_code_of_conduct.pdf)
* [Undergraduate Academic Policies](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/academic/undergraduate/)
* [Additional Student Policies](https://www.utoledo.edu/policies/audience.html/#students)

## Resources Related to Sexual or Gender-based Violence and Harassment

The University of Toledo cares greatly about the health and well-being of our students, staff, and faculty, and takes all sexual or gender-based violence and harassment very seriously.  If you have experienced sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, and/or stalking and want a confidential place to obtain support and information, please contact the Center for Student Advocacy and Wellness on the main campus in Health and Human Services Room 3017.  You can call 419.530.2497 during regular business hours and 419.530.3431 for 24 hour assistance from a trained advocate. In-person, walk-in appointments are also available Monday-Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Center for Student Advocacy and Wellness provides free and confidential advocacy and counseling services to students, faculty, and staff.  The YWCA H.O.P.E. Center can also be accessed as an off-campus confidential resource at 419.241.7273. Faculty, teaching assistants, and other university employees are mandated reporters of any incidents of sexual or gender-based violence or harassment. Thus, any disclosures of sexual or gender-based violence or harassment on or off campus made to faculty or teaching assistants, or other university employees, must be forwarded to the Title IX Coordinator.  The Title IX Office will then contact you regarding your rights, your option to participate in the investigation, interim safety measures and/or academic accommodations, and the need to proceed with an investigation (even if none is requested). Your participation in the process is voluntary. You may call 419.530.3152 to file a complaint or visit the University’s [Title IX website](http://www.utoledo.edu/title-ix/) for more information and resources, including [policies relating to Title IX](http://www.utoledo.edu/title-ix/policies.html).

**Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to working with you this semester!**