

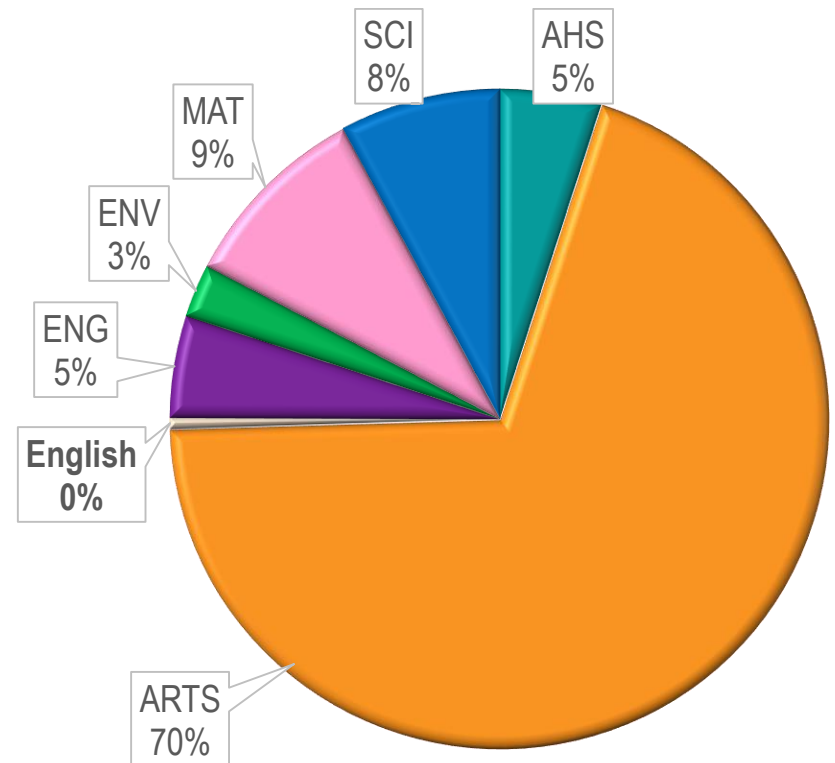
Dorothy Hadfield (dhadfiel@uwaterloo.ca)

Bruce Dadey (badadey@uwaterloo.ca)

ENGL 210F: Simulated Environment, Real Curiosity

+ Who are we and what is ENGL 210F?

- Bruce Dadey, Dorothy Hadfield, English Department lecturers, co-authors
- English 210F: Genres of Business Communication
- Offered (exclusively) online, Fall, Winter, Spring
- 125-250 students each offer
- Simulated business environment



+ Simulated Environment: L4L website



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YOUR SOURCE FOR CUTTING-EDGE ONLINE LEARNING

CEO WELCOME MESSAGE



Dr. Jayne Whitefield welcomes you to Living4Learning

[Listen Here...](#)

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Living4Learning is devoted to changing the way people learn through our innovative educational solutions. We provide online course and learning management systems to more than 400 institutions of higher education in 15 different countries.

[More Info](#)

With Living4Learning, we make ideas live – there are no limits. We are more than simply a course management system. The world's top schools and organizations trust Living4Learning to help them realize their goals, and our support system extends across the entire life cycle of your inspirations. We are committed to product development, teaching and training, as well as site hosting, analytics, and ongoing customization. We live for learning.

– Dr. Jayne Whitefield, C.E.O. and founder

+ Simulated Environment: L4L

“About Us” page

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Living4Learning About Us

COMPANY MISSION STATEMENT

Living4Learning recognizes that learning is a lifelong process. We create professional development websites, courses, and tutorials with the following key qualities: accessibility, reliability, and flexibility. More importantly, we create a living world in which students shape their own educational futures. We are a continental and global leader in cloud-based educational environments, and we provide open platforms and launchpads for nearly 5 million post-secondary students in collaboration with the healthcare, government, and corporate sectors. We change the way people learn through our innovative educational systems and solutions by enlivening online learning.

CORE VALUES

INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS

Living4Learning's state-of-the-art user interface closely monitors each and every learner while providing helpful instruction, enhancing the learning process and enabling a comprehensive, well-rounded learner experience. Our system closely analyzes learners on a case-by-case basis, mapping out their development and producing highly detailed, fully customizable learning plans that provide helpful tips and instruction during the learning process, and ultimately pave the way for learner success.

INNOVATION

Living4Learning's collaborative approach to online learning, along with our dynamic and feedback-oriented user interfaces allow for maximum creativity. We innovate online learning by making it seamless, easy-to-use, and highly quantitative in scope. Each and every learner experiences a fully customized learning plan tailored for their own specific needs and goals. Ultimately, the Living4Learning paves the way for each and every user not only to meet their learning requirements, but to realize their goals.

DEDICATION

The students of today shape the world of tomorrow. Living4Learning understands the importance of a comprehensive education. Our staff are always looking for new ways to enhance the learning experience, create new and advanced learning technologies, and improving existing technologies.

SIMULATION

Living4Learning incorporates gaming, and gamification/simulation technology into its learning systems. Our highly dynamic, state-of-the-art user interfaces create real-time online environments in which learners can interact with and manipulate complex systems, which serve as highly immersive environments that make the learning experience much more memorable and more effective.

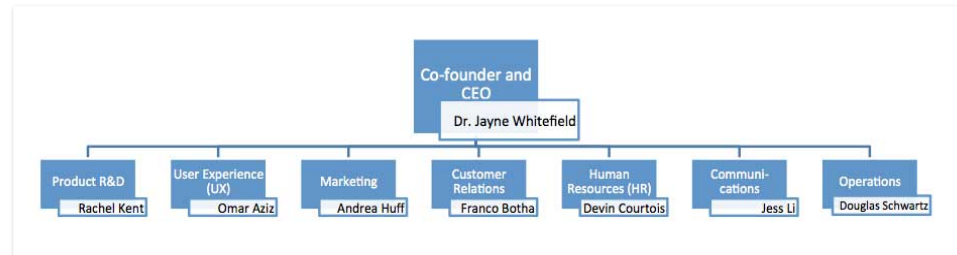
+ Simulated Environment: L4L org chart

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Living4Learning Departments

Living4Learning's corporate functions are organized into 7 departments; each department is headed by a Corporate Director who sits on the L4L Board of Directors with co-founder and CEO, Dr. Jayne Whitefield. The following orgchart outlines the department structure at Living4Learning:



Click on any of the department names below for more information on the department and the department blog:

- [Communications](#)
- [Customer Relations](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [Marketing](#)
- [Operations](#)
- [Product R&D](#)
- [User Experience](#)

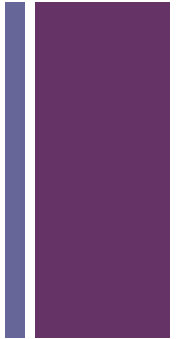
 |  |  |  **Jayne Whitefield** ▾
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Why a simulation?

- Transactional writing: Writing received by a real audience that seeks to bring about an action or effect some kind of change.
- Demonstrative writing: Writing explicitly designed to demonstrate knowledge rather than to effect change in an audience.
- Pseudotransactional writing: Writing that does not have to result in any action being taken, any attitude being changed; it only needs to appear to have that *potentiality* in the teacher's opinion.

Joseph Petraglia, "Spinning Like a Kite: A Closer Look at the Pseudotransactional Function of Writing."



+ What are the potential consequences of pseudotransactionality?

- Decontextualization
- Lack of critical application
- Disengagement





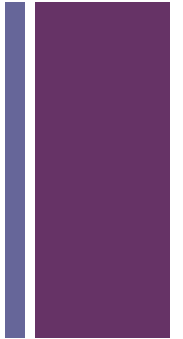
What is a rhetorical approach?

“A work of rhetoric is pragmatic; it comes into existence for the sake of something beyond itself; it functions ultimately to produce action or change in the world.”

Lloyd Bitzer, “The Rhetorical Situation”

Elements of a Rhetorical Situation

- Exigence
- Audience
- Constraints
- Rhetor



+ “Where could I work?”

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Living4Learning Careers



WORKING AT LIVING4LEARNING

Living4Learning is devoted to changing the way people learn through our innovative educational solutions. We provide online course and learning management systems to more than 400 institutions of higher education in 15 different countries.

CURRENT CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- [Communications – Job Reference #: CPR6768](#)
- [Customer Relations – Job Reference #: CRL4144](#)
- [Human Resources – Job Reference #: HRS2468](#)
- [Marketing – Job Reference #: MKT3625](#)
- [Operations – Job Reference #: OPS7201](#)
- [Product R&D – Job Reference #: PRD5682](#)
- [User Experience – Job Reference #: UXP1946](#)

5 PRINCIPLES OF POSITIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

1. At Living4Learning, we are constantly seeking innovation, from the design of our offices, to our workplace health programs, to the ways that we speak and work with one another. We believe that change is good, and we seek to improve our workplace whenever possible.
2. At Living4Learning we believe that every interaction and every connection we make with one another is an opportunity to learn. Every member of the Living4Learning community is responsible for learning at least one new thing every day, as well as for teaching her or his colleagues something new every day. Living4Learning is a research culture, and we are all responsible for asking questions and finding answers.
3. At Living4Learning we always prioritize education over profit. For every decision we make, we ensure that we are focused on educational goals and not short-term motivations like profit or efficiency.
4. At Living4Learning we set our standards high and we apply those high standards across the community. For instance, we expect our employees to take just as much care communicating with one another as they take communicating with clients. In turn, this means that everyone at Living4Learning is treated with the utmost respect and professionalism.
5. At Living4Learning we value diversity. We know that the educational landscape continues to change, and we expect to change with it by becoming more international, working across language differences, ensuring access despite economic and cultural barriers, and eradicating all forms of discrimination.

+ “Where could I work?” (Job Ad)

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Living4Learning Careers



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3. At Living4Learning we always prioritize education over profit. For us, it's about long-term goals and not short-term motivations like profit or efficiency.
4. At Living4Learning we set our standards high and we apply those standards to everyone. We take just as much care communicating with one another as we do with our customers. At Living4Learning is treated with the utmost respect and professionalism.
5. At Living4Learning we value diversity. We know that the education industry is becoming more international, working across language differences, and embracing various forms of discrimination.

USER EXPERIENCE

Job Reference #: UXP1946

Do you look at current software and think: “I could make that better”? Are you fascinated by the human side of technology, and how we interact with our digital world? Can you translate user feedback into clear reports and action plans? If so, you might be just the kind of person Living4Learning’s User Experience department is looking for!

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Become familiar with functions and documentation of L4L’s product suite
- Facilitate communications between users and product developers
- Organize and conduct events that engage users in product testing and feedback
- Request information efficiently and make persuasive recommendations
- Provide support and information to other departments as needed

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE WILL:

- Work effectively in a dynamic team environment
- Communicate clearly and concisely, particularly in writing
- Adapt to the ever-changing needs of L4L
- Contribute meaningfully to group meetings, brainstorming sessions, and projects
- Manage multiple deadlines and deliver results

Interested in joining the UX team? Fill out our [Employment Application Form](#) quoting **Job Reference # UXP1946**, and submit a PDF copy to the “Employment Application” dropbox by the deadline specified in the Course Schedule. You will find the dropbox by clicking **Assessments** and then **Dropbox** on the course navigation bar in the ENGL 210F LEARN site.

+ Employment Letter

Dear Applicant,

I'm pleased to confirm that you've been offered an internship position with Living4Learning for this semester. You'll be joining the team of learning creatives (as we call ourselves at L4L) in the User Experience department. Congratulations and welcome to UX! Please make sure you start reviewing the UX resource package to familiarize yourself with the areas that we are expected to have some expertise in.

As you already know, Living4Learning is a Waterloo-based (simulated) company specializing in software systems for learning management and educational support. Although we're relatively new, this is a fast-growing market, and we've already signed on or had serious interest from an impressive array of clients among major North American colleges and universities, as well as

In our early years, we hosted an annual User Conference. It was a fun, hands-on, collaborative environment for sharing our new product developments and getting ideas for new features from our learning partners (a.k.a. users). Since then we have radically redesigned and expanded our product platform, but the development pressures meant we let that personal connection with our users slide. We need to fix that. Your major project for this term is to work collaboratively with your departmental colleagues on drafting a **proposal for a User Conference** so that we can rebuild that enthusiasm with our learning partners.

n, hands-on, collaborative
ideas for new features from
designed and expanded our
personal connection with our
work collaboratively with
ference so that we can

partments for information
(You should also be ready to

offer information and recommendations on UX questions to learning creatives in other departments as they work on their own proposal projects.) Make sure all your communications properly cite any research material you used to help establish the credibility and authority of the ideas.

Your Regional Manager requires your department's completed proposal on the due date posted in your schedule. L4L's board will review the proposals from all regions and select the best one to use as a blueprint for the user conference.

See the next page for instructions on making requests for your proposal. Your regional manager has been briefed on this project and can answer any questions about it.

With best regards,



Omar Aziz
Corporate Director, User Experience

Request prompts

Making a Request (Assignment 1)

There's a lot to think about in planning a user conference. For example: Where should we hold it? What topics do we cover? Should we have big presentations, or small workshops? How do we make it memorable? How do we find out if it was a "success"? You should also consider how we can implement the plan when everyone is already so busy. Your group might think of other topics that your proposal should include as well.

Learning creatives in other departments and would be happy to recommend more specific you can be when making understand what you are looking for

For this assignment, you will choose request. While your requests will be

time to respond themselves. Review everything you know about the project and assignment requirements, and L4L's corporate structure and culture, and follow the guidelines presented in the course materials about how to make an effective, appropriate request. Work with your team to

make sure as many of the topics are covered sending the same request to the same person

You will decide what medium to use for your directors, use the address for the L4L Corporation provided below. Here is the list of contact

Andrea Huff, Corporate Director, Marketing her department sources targeted promotional materials, giveaways, etc. that keep it fun for our learning partners. She just needs to know what you are trying to achieve.

Franco Botha, Corporate Director, Customer Relations this department has the data on who are users are and what features they are having trouble with. They also run hands-on training sessions for new clients.

Gordon Gluck, Corporate Director, Product R&D the tech-minded learning creatives in R&D built the platform, so know better than anyone how it works now, and what new features are coming (product announcements always add a "wow" factor!), but don't necessarily like talking directly to users. Users want to meet them, but how to get them involved is the big question.

Doug Schwartz, Director of Corporate Operations his department does space planning, and knows what kind of space we have available at L4L HQ for events, and what other venues are available to rent.

Devin Curtois, Corporate Director, Human Resources this event will require some dedicated staffing, for planning and at the event. Let HR know what you need and they can recommend whether we have the staff or need to hire.

There's a lot to think about in planning a user conference. For example: Where should we hold it? What topics do we cover? Should we have big presentations, or small workshops? How do we make it memorable? How do we find out if it was a "success"? You should also consider how we can implement the plan when everyone is already so busy. Your group might think of other topics that your proposal should include as well.

- Andrea Huff**, Corporate Director, Marketing [email: andhuff@l4l.com]: her department sources targeted promotional materials, giveaways, etc. that keep it fun for our learning partners. She just needs to know what you are trying to achieve.
- Franco Botha**, Corporate Director, Customer Relations [email: fbotha@l4l.com]: this department has the data on who are users are and what features they are having trouble with. They also run hands-on training sessions for new clients.
- Gordon Gluck**, Corporate Director, Product R&D [email: ggluck@l4l.com]: the tech-minded learning creatives in R&D built the platform, so know better than anyone how it works now, and what new features are coming (product announcements always add a "wow" factor!), but don't necessarily like talking directly to users. Users want to meet them, but how to get them involved is the big question.
- Doug Schwartz**, Director of Corporate Operations [email: dschwartz@l4l.com]: his department does space planning, and knows what kind of space we have available at L4L HQ for events, and what other venues are available to rent.
- Devin Curtois**, Corporate Director, Human Resources [email: dcurtois@l4l.com]: this event will require some dedicated staffing, for planning and at the event. Let HR know what you need and they can recommend whether we have the staff or need to hire.



“What is the rhetorical context?”

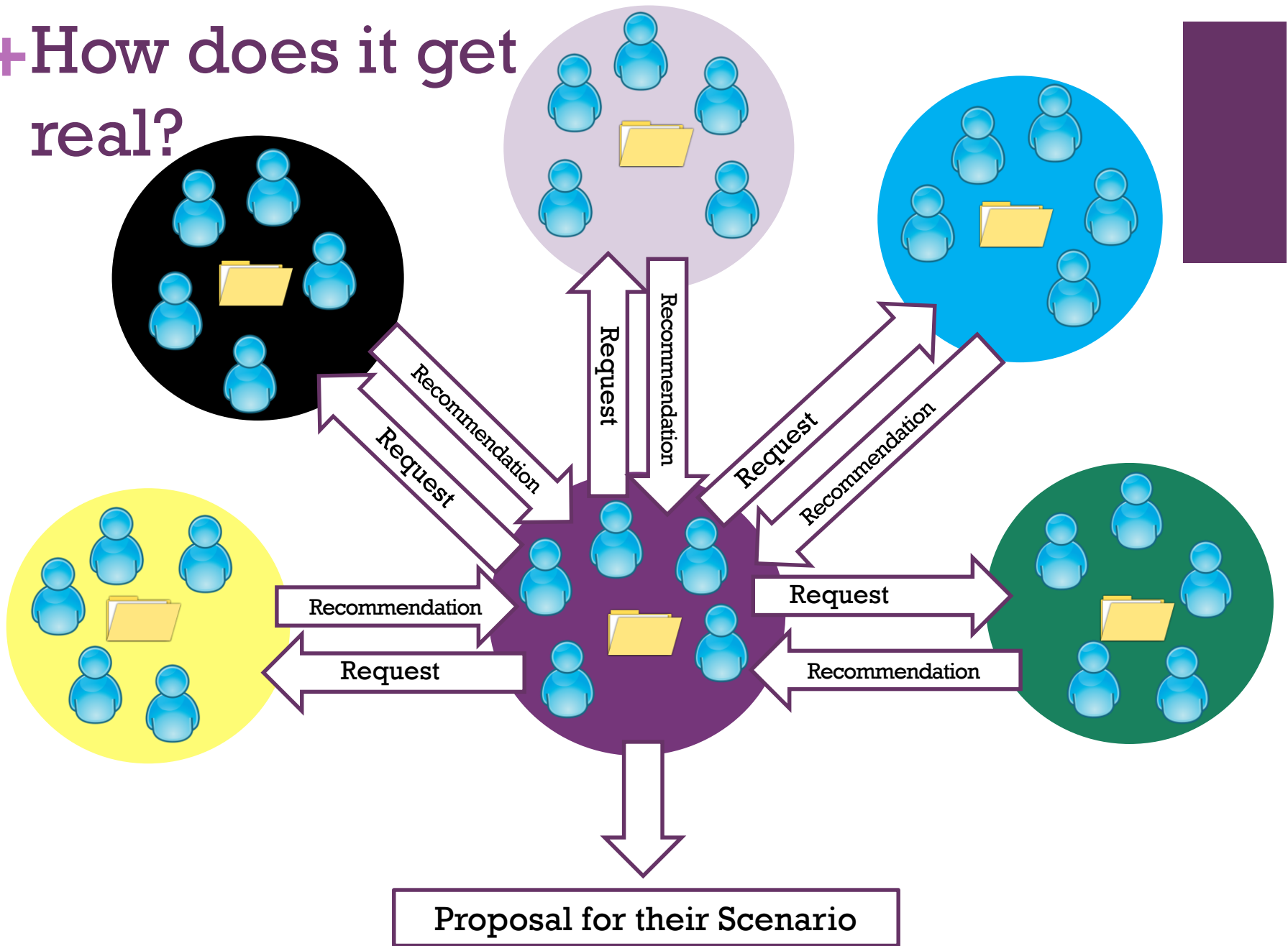
Prewriting Analysis: Rhetorical Context

Use this worksheet to help you assess the rhetorical context and plan your communication strategy. Explain your analysis and choices in the assignment submission memo.

Purpose(s) of communication	Desired outcome(s)
Identify Audience(s) <i>Who is primary audience? Secondary audience? Who am I in relation to them?</i>	implications for tone
Knowledge base of audience(s) <i>What does audience already know? Still need to know?</i>	implications for content
Likely reaction to communication <i>Will the audience be open, hostile, or indifferent to my message and desired outcome?</i>	implications for approach
Audience size and location(s)	implications for medium
Other considerations:	



+How does it get real?

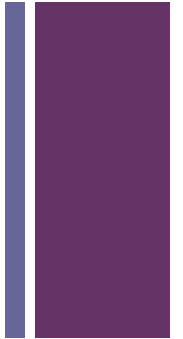


+ Does it work? Benefits

- Genres as forms of social action
- Adaptability
- Experience as a foundation for reflection

Comments on course strengths

- Structuring the course as if it were we were working in a real business setting. It really helped to understand the types of documents and collaboration that will be expected in some companies.
- Provides a realistic simulation that allows students to work as if they are actually in a business setting.
- Great way to set up a business communication course with a business setting. Gives some similar situations that one may face in the workplace.
- The professionalism and conciseness of messages written by students and instructors in the course. Simulating a work place department helped in this regard.



+ Does it work? Challenges

Group Work

- Too much group work. I understand that that is what the real world is like, but when your group doesn't contribute to most of the group work and then gets the same mark as those that do it all, it gets to be really unfair.
- Have more assignments that are individual. Business communication does NOT ALWAYS mean you have to be working as a team. There are other positions that exist in the business world and I feel like a few more potential positions could have been addressed.

Clarity

- Overall I felt the instructions left for assignments, discussions were very vague. The assignments themselves were not extremely difficult, but my group and I often spent more time trying to figure out what we were suppose to do than us actually doing the work.
- The assignments could be explained more clearly. I appreciate that a lot of direction is not always given in a business situation but some assignments seemed rather vague.

Context

- The L4L website use was silly, as the internal and external websites for such a company would normally be separate.
- Some more info about the products would have been nice, like some mockups of the apps.



How can we foster transactionality?



- Experiential learning: Co-op and service learning
- Problem-based learning, case studies
- Simulations
- Analysis of context and audience
- Peer response and editing
- Reader-based instructional feedback