English 210F • Genres of Business Communication

Instructor: Jamie Roberts. Office hours 12:30 to 1:20 P.M. Mondays in HH
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Course Objectives
To communicate effectively in the professional world, writers must become attuned to their writing as a specific process in a broader communicative environment. From generating ideas to designing the graphic impact of a document, writing today means being able to express an appropriate message, often for many people and in many different ways. This complex situation poses several significant problems for professional writers—problems they must face each time they begin to write.

This course examines ways to solve these problems. First, we will examine some techniques for analysing the requirements for professional writing. Secondly, we will look at some ways that the mechanics of writing can influence the effectiveness of a corporate or professional style. Thirdly, we will examine the rhetorical nature of professional writing, and how different writing structures and document genres communicate in different ways.

Throughout the course, we will emphasize the broader context of business communication, so that professional writing can become an effective solution, instead of a problem in and of itself.

Course Outline
The following topics will be covered in the course:
• Generating ideas that communicate
• Writing with an audience in mind: your business, another business and the public
• When to write
• Writing conventions and styles
• Good news and bad
• Arguing on paper
• Language and register
• The discourse of writing: emphasis and impact
• Graphic communication

Grading
5% • participation
25 % • in-class tutorial exercises
15 % • mid-term test
40 % • 4 written assignments
15 % • Final report

Texts
Gordon, Karen E.
• The Deluxe Transitive Vampire: A Handbook of Grammar for the Innocent, the Eager and the Doomed (recommended).
• The New Well-Tempered Sentence: A Punctuation Handbook for the Innocent, the Eager, and the Doomed (recommended).