

# ENG 492, Theory and Practice of Professional Writing (capstone), Fall 2014

**Instructor:** Dr. Teresa B. Henning  
**Office:** BA 206  
**Office Hours:** 1:30-3:20 M&W;  
1:30-3:00 T&TH; 11:30-12:20 F

**Course Times:** 3:30-4:45, M&W  
**Office Phone:** 507-537-7185  
**Email:** teresa.henning@smsu.edu

---

## Welcome to English 492!

English 492: Theory and Practice of Professional Writing is the capstone course for the Professional Writing and Communication major. As such, this course has two primary aims. First, this course will introduce you to the theory and history surrounding the field loosely defined as professional writing. You will learn more about this field's dynamic nature as well as its social and ethical dimensions. Second, this course will help you synthesize your learning from your other courses in the major. Class discussions as well as your work on a professional, career portfolio (i.e., the Efolio) will help you make these connections. By the end of this course, it is expected that both your Efolio and Efolio Presentation will demonstrate that you can:

1. Demonstrate a mastery of rhetorical principles (e.g., consideration of purpose, audience, and context) when communicating;
2. Apply appropriate document design principles to a variety of communication situations, including written, oral, and visual ones;
3. Demonstrate critical thinking, reading, and writing skills in responding to specific communication tasks or problems;
4. Create documents that are 'user-friendly' in content, structure, and design;
5. Make use of credible, reliable, and relevant source material (both primary and secondary) in a manner that is appropriate for specific communication situations;
6. Utilize a variety of electronic environments proficiently to produce effective documents;
7. Manage large projects effectively by allowing adequate time to research, write revise, and receive feedback;
8. Demonstrate proficient use of situationally appropriate and ethically sensitive language; and
9. Produce a variety of documents that demonstrate grammatical and technical proficiency.

## Required Books

- Peeples, Tim. Professional Writing and Rhetoric. NY: Longman, 2003.
- Smith, Herb, and Kim Haines-Korn. Portfolios for Technical and Professional Communicators. NY: Pearson-Prentice Hall, 2007.

## Technology Use

- This instructor uses D2L to post the agenda for each class period and related handouts. It is expected that when students are absent or lose copies of handouts that they will use D2L.
- This instructor occasionally uses students' SMSU email addresses to keep students updated about the course. It is expected that students check their SMSU email accounts regularly.
- When submitting materials electronically, students should save their work as Word documents. If you are unsure about how to do this, please ask me for more details.
- Students should have multiple ways to save their work when in the computer classroom (e.g., D2L locker, jump drive, SMSU email, etc.).

### Assignments and Grading Scale

**Story Problems From Required Readings**

**Worth 50 Points**

For each reading you will need to complete one or more story problems. You may handwrite or type your responses to these problems. Story problems will receive credit or non-credit grades. To receive credit, you need to answer all the questions completely. Your final score will be determined by averaging your story problem scores. For instance, if you earned credit for 90% of the story problems, you will earn 45 points.

**Meeting Draft Deadlines and Peer Review Day Requirements**

**Worth 50 Points**

Having a draft on peer review day and completing a peer review earns you credit or non-credit grades. To receive full credit, you must both have a draft AND do the peer review work. Your final score will be determined by averaging your draft and peer review scores. For instance, if you earned credit for 90% of the work, you will earn 45 points.

**Portfolio Proposal Presentation\***

**Worth 25 Points**

**Cover Letter & Resume\***

**Worth 100 Points**

**Team Oral Presentation on a Rhetorical Topic\***

**Worth 50 Points**

**Interview a Writer Project\***

**Worth 50 Points**

**Efolio (a minimum of 10 pages of writing)\***

**Worth 300 Points**

**Jin, Oral Presentation of Efolio\***

**Worth 100 Points**

\*Detailed assignment sheets for each item will be distributed over the course of the semester.

**Final grades will be determined using these percentages:**

90 – 92.9% = A-	93 – 96.9% = A	97 - 100 % = A+
80 – 82.9% = B-	83 – 86.9% = B	87 – 89.9 % = B+
70 – 72.9% = C-	73 – 76.9% = C	77 – 79.9 % = C+
60 – 62.9% = D-	63 – 66.9% = D	67 – 69.9 % = D+
Below 60% = F		

**What Grades On Assignments Other Than Credit/Non-Credit Mean In This Course\*\***

(\*\*These rubrics have been adapted from *Technical Communication Today 2e's Instructor Manual*.)

All assignments in this class receive points. Below is a general breakdown of what these points mean about the quality of your work (you can use these comments as clues about how to work toward a higher grade):

**90-100% of the total points**      You did what the assignment asked for at a high quality level, and your work engages a specific audience in an original and creative manner. Work in this range demonstrates ALL the qualities for the 80-89% point range, but it also demonstrates that you took extra steps to be original or creative in appealing to an audience, developing content, solving a problem, or in developing style or visual design.

**80-89% of the total points**      You did what the assignment asked of you at a high quality level. Work in this range needs little revision, is complete in content, organized well, and shows special attention to style and visual design.

<b>70-79% of the total points</b>	You did what the assignment asked of you. Work in this range tends to need some revision, but its content is complete and organization logical. Style and visual design are straightforward but unremarkable.
<b>60-69% of the total points</b>	You did what the assignment asked for at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. Content is often incomplete and organization is hard to discern. Verbal style and visual design are either not apparent or are chaotic.
<b>Less than 60% of the total points</b>	This work is failing. Failure means that you did not do what was asked of you. If you gave the assignment an honest try and still received an 'F' consider dropping the class and retaking first-year composition to improve your skills.

### **Other Important Course Policies**

<b>Accommodating Disabilities</b>	If you have a disability that will require accommodation over the course of the semester, please notify me as soon as possible so that we can discuss what you will need.
<b>Attendance</b>	This class is one that helps you develop as a professional, so consistent, on-time, attendance is important. <b>You may miss two classes without penalty.</b> After that, your grade will be lowered by 10 points for each class that you miss. <b>If you miss more than four classes, you will fail the course. NOTE:</b> I ONLY excuse absences related to SMSU extracurricular events (e.g., club activities, sporting activities, attending conferences, etc.) and military training. For your absence to be excused, you need to provide written documentation in advance.
<b>Class Behavior</b>	It is expected that students treat the instructor <b>and each other</b> with respect. This means that students should not arrive to class late, leave early nor speak when others are speaking. It is also expected that students set phones to silent or vibrate during class time.
<b>Late Work</b>	This course models the professional world as much as possible. As such, late <b>work will not be accepted.</b> If you think you will need more time to complete an assignment, you must send me a formal email requesting an extension at least 48 hours prior to the deadline. <b>All work must be completed to pass the course.</b>
<b>FQ/NA Grades</b>	Federal Financial Aid Mandate requires me to report a student who never attends a course that they registered for AND students who quit attending courses. If you do not attend my course for 5 consecutive class periods and do not contact me, I will enter either a NA (Never Attended) or FQ (Failure of course by quitting attending) grade as is required by this mandate.

### Daily Course Calendar

The following class period-to-class period schedule will be applied flexibly. While we will follow this schedule for the most part, when impromptu changes are needed they will be made. When changes are made regarding assignments, ample time will be given to make sure such changes do not affect your ability to complete assignments. **When reading the calendar, please note that all reading, discussion and application assignments, and homework assignments are due the FOLLOWING class period.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Activities</b>	<b>Reading Assignments (due the next class period)</b>	<b>Story Problems (due the next class period)</b>	<b>Other Homework Assignments (due the next class period)</b>
WK 1 M 8/25	Intro. to course, classmates, and careers	Read Smith Chapter 1 and pages 138-149	Write out answer to assignment 4 on page 16	Buy your books
W 8/27	Job search activities related to Smith Chapter 1 and 138-149	Read Smith Chapters 2&3	Write out exercise 2.3 on page 25; Complete exercises 3.1 and 3.2 on pages 34-35	
WK 2 M 9/1	NO CLASSES; LABOR DAY			
W 9/3	Portfolio activities related to Smith chapters 2&3; Introduction to the portfolio proposal presentation			Begin drafting portfolio proposal presentations
WK 3 M 9/8	Portfolio proposal conferences with Dr. Henning	Read Smith Chapter 5	Write out assignment 1 on pages 103-102 AND Assignment 2 on page 105	Draft portfolio proposal presentations
W 9/10	The ins and outs of electronic portfolios			Draft portfolio proposal presentations
WK 4 M 9/15	<b>Portfolio proposal presentations due</b>	Read Smith Chapter 8	Write out assignment 1 on page 162	
W 9/17	All about resumes and cover letters; Introduction to job folder assignment			Find a job you want and bring the ad to class
WK 5 M 9/22	Analysis of job ads and drafting tips for job folder			Draft your resume and cover letter
W 9/24	NO CLASS, Dr.			

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Activities</b>	<b>Reading Assignments (due the next class period)</b>	<b>Story Problems (due the next class period)</b>	<b>Other Homework Assignments (due the next class period)</b>
	Henning out of town for a conference			
WK 6 M 9/29	<b>Cover letters and resumes due</b> for peer review	Read Smith chapter 4	Write out assignment 1 on page 79 (both parts!)	Revise resume & cover letter; bring to class all documents you want in your portfolio
W 10/1	Resume & cover letter revision work and portfolio work			Continue work on portfolio for rest of semester
WK 7 M 10/6	<b>Resumes and Cover Letters due</b> ; Chapter 1 activities and plan for rhetoric group presentation	Read Peeples chapter 1	Write a 1 page response to your choice of 1 bullet on Peeples p.9	
W 10/8	Chapter 1 activities; Group work on rhetoric pres.	Read Peeples chapter 2	Write a 1 page response to #1 on Peeples p. 98	
WK 8 M 10/13	Chapter 2 activities and work with team on presentation			Work on rhetoric presentations
W 10/15	Groups work on rhetoric presentations			Work on rhetoric presentations
WK 9 M 10/20	<b>Rhetoric Presentations Due</b>	Read Peeples chapter 8	Write a response #4 on Peeples p. 410	
W 10/22	Chapter 8 activities and interview a writer project	Read Peeples chapter 3	Write 2-3 sentence definitions to each of the terms on Peeples p. 104	Interview a writer project
WK 10 M 10/27	Chapter 3 activities and interview a writer project			Interview a writer project
W 10/29	ADVISING DAY; NO CLASSES BEFORE 5:30 P.M.			
WK 11 M 11/3	<b>Draft due of interview a writer project due</b> for peer review			Revise interview a writer project
W 11/5	<b>Interview a writer</b>			

Date	Class Activities	Reading Assignments (due the next class period)	Story Problems (due the next class period)	Other Homework Assignments (due the next class period)
	<b>project due;</b> Introduction to portfolio presentation and work on portfolios			
WK 12 M 11/10	Work on portfolios and presentation scripts			
W 11/12	Work on portfolios and presentation scripts			
WK 13 M 11/17	Portfolio conferences with Dr. Henning			
W 11/19	Portfolio conferences with Dr. Henning			
WK 14 M 11/24	<b>Draft of portfolio presentation scripts due for peer review</b>			
W 11/26	NO CLASSES; THANKSGIVING			
WK 15 M 12/1	Revision of portfolios and portfolio presentations			
W 12/3	We meet at Undergraduate Research Conference; location TBA			
WK 16 M 12/8	<b>Portfolios presentations due to class for fine tuning</b>			
W 12/10	<b>Portfolios and portfolio personations are due</b> & course evaluation			<b>NOTE: We WILL meet during the final exam IF either M 12/8 or W 12/10 is cancelled due to</b>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Activities</b>	<b>Reading Assignments (due the next class period)</b>	<b>Story Problems (due the next class period)</b>	<b>Other Homework Assignments (due the next class period)</b>
				<b>weather.</b>