

Technical and Professional Writing

EN 327-1 and EN 327-Z

Spring 2009

Instructor Information and Office Hours:

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Office Hours:

MWF: 9:00 – 9:50 a.m. TTh: 11:00 – 11:50 a.m.
MW: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Other Times by Appointment

Catalog Description

3 hours. Intensive instruction and practice in effective writing strategies for career searches, government agencies, business, and industry. Emphasis will be placed upon information gathering and the writing of correct, clear, and properly formatted documents including, but not limited to, the following: persuasive letters and memoranda, summaries, oral and written reports, visuals and descriptions, instruction, proposals and feasibility studies. Spring even.

Rationale

To succeed professionally and to advance in your career, you must be able to write and to speak effectively. EN 327 will provide instruction and practice in technical and business writing, as well as practice in oral presentations using PowerPoint.

EN 327 fulfills one requirement for English: Secondary Education Certification, Business Administration: Management and Small Business concentrations, and Public Relations.

Goals

The primary objective of EN 327 is to make you a more effective writer who is also an effective speaker. In achieving this objective, you will:

1. learn to use a variety of written formats;
2. learn to use a variety of written and oral communication styles for different purposes and audiences;
3. sharpen your research skills; and
4. sharpen your critical thinking skills.

MVC ADA Statement

Special Needs: If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact your instructor immediately. After proper documentation, reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs.

MVC Student Code of Conduct

It shall be the responsibility of every student enrolled at Missouri Valley College to support the academic integrity of the institution. This applies to personal honesty in all aspects of collegiate work, all student records and all contacts with faculty and staff. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

It shall also be the responsibility of every student enrolled at Missouri Valley College to be respectful of the right of other students, staff and instructors to ensure a safe, peaceful atmosphere conducive to the educational goals of an institution of higher learning. Rude or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

Student actions that do not adhere to the MVC Student Code of Conduct will be addressed according to College policies regarding academic dishonesty and disruptive behavior. Students who exhibit dishonest, disruptive, or disrespectful behavior risk suspension or expulsion from the institution.

Course Requirements

You are required to read the assigned material in the textbooks **prior** to class in order to understand the lectures, to ask questions, to discuss the readings, and to write competent reports. Please keep your reading and writing current.

General Requirements

Please:

1. Consult with me via email and meet with me in my office at least once a week if you are on campus. Should you be taking **EN 327-Z** and live well-beyond driving distance to the MVC campus, telephone me once a week—but schedule a phone conference via email in advance.
2. Bring your textbook and hardcopies of your work when you meet with me in my office to discuss the readings and to take notes.
3. Purchase a stiff-paper pocket folder to retain your work as a DESE portfolio.
4. Submit your abstracts, proposals, executive summaries, and reports to www.turnitin.com by their posted due dates.
5. Disable your cell phone and other electronic gear, except for your laptop, and avoid texting and Web-surfing.
6. Avoid wearing headgear in this classroom.
7. Avoid eating and drinking in this classroom.

Major Reports

You will write (1) memos, business letters, an article summary, a technical description, a Web site evaluation; (2) an applied technical publication; (3) a proposal, a questionnaire and progress report; (4) a feasibility report, a cover letter and résumé; and (5) two trade book reports, one of which will be on Cooper. These reports (**items 4-5**) will range 250 to 2500 words. The proposal, questionnaire, progress report, and feasibility report will focus on your career search. The feasibility report will include a cover letter and resume that will follow the format explained in my handout. The trade book report will include a five-minute PowerPoint presentation.

Please be prepared to submit them on time for in-office editing. All drafts of your reports must be word-processed in Times New Roman 12-point font using MLA Style (see Alred, Section 2). **Final drafts are due class time. Late papers earn a “0.”**

Peer and In-Office Editing

A sample rubric is appended so you and your classmates can determine standards for the assignments. Standard proofreader's marks are in Alred, page 434. See also Alred, Sections 9, Style and Clarity; 10, Usage; 11, Grammar; and 12, Punctuation and Mechanics.

Refer to specific entries listed by topic and page number in the endpapers of Alred's handbook.

Portfolio

Retain your drafts in a stiff-paper folder with pockets for two reasons. First, you will be rewriting your reports. Second, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires that college and university students keep their portfolio while they are in school.

Examinations

There will be no examinations per se because careers rise and fall on daily performance that includes technical and professional writing.

Attendance and Class Participation

Weekly submission of your drafts is required. According to College policy, a student is dropped from the course after being absent from two consecutive weeks of class, or for missing, at any time during the semester, more than half of the scheduled class meetings, not counting the first week.

Grading

A good document must meet the requirements of the assignment; it must follow standard business format and conventional English standards. A sample holistic rubric is appended so you and your classmates can determine standards for the assignments.

Objective Percentages and Letter Grade Equivalencies:

19-20 = 95 - 100% (A)	12-13 = 60 - 69% (D)
17-18 = 85 - 94% (B)	01-11 = 01 - 59% (F)
14-16 = 70 - 84% (C)	0 = Late; non-completed work

Letter Grade Point Equivalencies:

A+ = 5.5	B+ = 4.5	C+ = 3.5	D+ = 2.5	F+ = 1.5
A = 5	B = 4	C = 3	D = 2	F = 1
A- = 4.6	B- = 3.6	C- = 2.6	D- = 1.6	F- = 0.6
0 = Late; Non-completed Work				

Five Reports at 20% Each	$\frac{100\%}{5}$
Final Grade	100%

Plagiarism

Plagiarized work is unacceptable for a passing grade and earns 0 points. Instances of plagiarism are reported to the Chief Academic Officer. The first instance results in a failing grade on the writing assignment. A second instance results in a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action by the College, up to expulsion.

DESE Subject-Specific Competencies

Students will learn:

To write through a process of prewriting, drafting, and revising

P.I. (Performance Indicators): reports, peer activities (E-SSC 1.1,1.2, 2.2, 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4) (M-SSC 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4, 4.3, 4.4) (S-SSC 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4, 3.3, 3.5, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

To gain mastery over the report form

P.I.: assigned readings, essays (E-SSC 1.1, 2.2, 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4) (M-SSC 1.2, 2.1, 2.4, 3.2, 3.7, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4) (S-SSC 1.2, 2.1, 2.4, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2)

Subject-Specific Competencies (Continued):

To write critical analyses according to rhetorical principles of argument

P.I.: essays, research paper (E-SSC 1.1, 1.2, 3.4, 3.7, 4.2) (M-SSC 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.7, 4.4) (S-SSC 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 4.8, 4.9)

To increase skill in reading critically

P.I.: class discussion, occasional quizzes (E-SSC 1.1, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.5) (M-SSC 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9) (S-SSC 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 4.8, 4.9)

To increase familiarity with the library and its resources

P.I.: library exercise, essays, research paper (E-SSC 3.4, 3.5, 3.7) (M-SSC 3.2, 3.7) (S-SSC 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.7, 4.8)

To incorporate source material in their writing and report on their findings

P.I.: research paper (E-SSC 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4) (M-SSC 3.2, 3.5, 3.7, 3.9, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7) (S-SSC 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.7, 3.9, 4.1, 4.3, 4.7, 4.8)

To write an argumentative research paper with documentation following standard business format

P.I.: research paper (E-SSC 3.4, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2) (M-SSC 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7) (S-SSC 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9)

Required and Recommended Texts

Alred, Gerald J., Charles T. Brusaw, and Walter E. Oliu. *The Business Writer's Companion*, 5th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2008.

Bureau of Labor Statistics Staff. *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. US Dept. of Labor. Washington: GPO, Updated Annually. Available: <http://www.bls.gov/ocohome.htm>.

Cooper, Violet M. *How to Find Those Hidden Jobs*. Salem, OR: Dimi, 1995.

A collegiate dictionary such as *The American Heritage Dictionary* is highly recommended.

Tentative Schedule

All assignments will be from Alred, *OOH* (online and at Murrell Library), Cooper on reserve at Murrell Library), and my résumé/cover letter handouts. This schedule may be altered to meet the students' or professor's needs.

Please note that college policy prohibits your taking the final examination early. Make your travel plans accordingly.

NOTE: Students who take EN 327-Z must submit their assignments to the Registrar on the SAME due dates as for EN 327-1 students.

NOTE ALSO: Choose one of the trade books listed in the bibliography at the end of this syllabus—OTHER THAN COOPER—to read. Write an abstract on it. The Cooper abstract is due during Week 4. The trade book abstract and PowerPoint are due Week 6.

Week 1 Jan 9

F: Introduction. You will find models, explanations, and instructions for your assignments in Alred. For example, pages numbers for the following assignment—to write a memo—can be found in the **index**, under **memos** (Alred 420). Unless otherwise noted, you can locate the pages for your assignment models and instructions in Alred's index. In some instances, we will discuss the best model for your assignment. The key words to your assignments are **boldfaced**. Using the index is faster than using the table of contents.

Remember to refer to General Requirements, point 4, page 2 above, regarding submission of your material to www.turnit.com.

Alred, "Five Steps to Successful Writing," xv-xxii. Note and use checklist, pages xxiii-xxx, throughout this course.

Write a **memo** addressed to me that indicates what your proposed career will be and how you plan to investigate it.

Begin your career search in *OOH* and **begin reading Cooper**.

List fifty people you know, their addresses, e-mail, phone numbers, and employment. Do not include more than three Missouri Valley College students or alumni.

Week 2 Jan 12-16

M: Memos due class time.

W-F: Write a two-page **investigative report** that compares, evaluates, and makes recommendations for Bass Pro Shops Outdoors Online and Reeds Sporting Goods: Family Outdoor Outfitters.

Tentative Schedule (Continued):**Week 3****Jan 19 (Martin Luther King Day)-23**

M:

List of fifty network contacts and Website evaluation due class time.

Research your proposed career in *OOH*.

W:

Read one of Diane Stafford's columns in the *Kansas City Star*, write a one-page **abstract (see also, research and MLA documentation)** of her points. Its last paragraph will evaluate how her points affect you and your proposed career.

F:

Compile survey questions for your proposed career **questionnaire**. Write **instructions** and a **cover letter (see also, letters)** that targets some of your network contacts as respondents to your questionnaire.Susan Dittmer will teach us how to create a PowerPoint. Your PowerPoint **presentation** will discuss your proposed career and your likelihood of entering it.**Week 4****Jan 26-30**

M:

Article abstract, instructions, cover letter, and questionnaire due class time.

Create a **drawing** of a cup and write a technical **description** of it.

W:

Write a **proposal** regarding your career path, based on your findings in *OOH* and **Cooper**.Write a two-page **abstract (see also, research and MLA documentation)** of Cooper's book, which includes a one-paragraph conclusion that evaluates how her book affects you and your proposed career.Attach a third page that is a graph (line, bar, pie, or picture) **of your choosing that illustrates employment trends and salaries**.

F:

Write a **good-news letter** and a **bad-news letter (see correspondence)** that indicates why your career proposal is or is not feasible.

Mail your questionnaire with an SASE to your targeted respondents.

Tentative Schedule (Continued):

- Week 5 Feb 2-6**
M: Article evaluation due class time, good news and bad news letters, and proposal due class time.
- W-F: Write a **complaint letter** to a company of your choosing and write an **adjustment letter** to that complaint, as if you were working for the company you chose.
- Select one of the trade books other than Cooper, read it, write a two-page **abstract (see also, research and MLA documentation)** of it. Then, prepare a three-minute PowerPoint presentation on your trade book that includes a graph. **Sixteen word-processed lines in Courier New font is approximately one minute in length, so calculate accordingly.**
- Week 6 Feb 9-13**
M: Two-page book abstract, PowerPoint, and progress report of your career search due class time.
- W-F: **Design** a one-page **web posting with hyperlinks** that highlights your major department. Apply your **investigative report** findings regarding Bass Pro Shops Outdoors Online and Reeds Sporting Goods: Family Outdoor Outfitters.
- Week 7 Feb 16-20**
M: PowerPoint due class time.
- W-F: **Gruber, résumé and cover letter handout.**
- Write a list of skills you think you can take from career to career from **my worksheet and handouts.**
- Week 8 Feb 23-27**
M: List of transferable skills due class time.
- W-F: Develop your résumé and cover letter from **my worksheet and handouts.**
- Week 9 Mar 2-6 MIDTERMS**
M: Web posting with hyperlinks due class time
- W: Résumé and cover letter workshop.
- F: Résumé and cover letter draft due class time.

Tentative Schedule (Continued):

Week 10	Mar 9-13
M:	Résumé and cover letter draft due class time.
	Look for a classified advertisement that lists an employment opportunity for your proposed career.
SPRING BREAK	Mar 16-20 Be safe!
Week 11	Mar 23-27
M:	Completed résumé and cover letter due class time.
W:	Write your classified ad response with tailored résumé and cover letter and a scannable résumé and cover letter.
F:	Begin assembling material for your five- to ten-page career feasibility report and executive summary .
Week 12	Mar 30-Apr 3
M:	Tailored and scannable résumés and cover letters due class time.
W-F:	Begin writing your five- to ten-page feasibility career report and executive summary.
Week 13	Apr 6-10 (Good Friday)
M-W:	Complete writing your five- to ten-page feasibility career report and executive summary.
Week 14	Apr 13-17
M:	Five- to ten-page feasibility career report and executive summary due class time.
W-F:	Stress interviews and dress.
Week 15	Apr 20-24
M:	Stress interviews and dress.
Week 16	Apr 27-May 1
M:	Conduct stress interview in appropriate attire.
Week 17	May 4 (Stop Day)-8 (Finals)

Bibliography

Rhetorics and Handbooks:

Alred, Gerald J., Charles T. Brusaw, and Walter E. Oliu. The Business Writer's Handbook. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2009.

---. Handbook of Technical Writing. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford, 2009.

Corbett, Edward P. J., and Robert J. Connors. Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student. New York: Oxford, 1999.

Elbow, Peter. Writing with Power. New York: Oxford, 1998.

Shaughnessy, Mina. Errors and Expectations. New York: Oxford, 1977.

Strunk, William, Jr., E. B. White, and Roger Angell. The Elements of Style. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn, 2000.

Periodicals:

Barron's Magazine.

Business Week. Also <<http://www.businessweek.com>>.

Forbes. Also <<http://www.forbes.com>>.

Fortune. Also <<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune>>.

Inc. Also <<http://www.inc.com>>.

The Kansas City Star. Also <<http://www.kcstar.com>>.

Money. Also <<http://money.cnn.com>>.

The New York Times. Also <<http://www.nytimes.com>>.

TechNews.com. Also <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/technology>>.

U.S.A. Today. Also <<http://www.usatoday.com>>.

U.S. News and World Report. Also <<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/home.htm>>.

The Wall Street Journal. Also <<http://online.wsj.com/public/us>>.

The Washington Post. Also <<http://www.washingtonpost.com>>.

Bibliography (Continued):**Reference Books:**

American Heritage Dictionary. 4th and subsequent eds. Boston: Houghton, 2002.

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Random House Webster's Dictionary. 2nd red. New York: Random, 1997.

Roget's International Thesaurus. 5th ed. Ed. Robert L. Chapman. New York: Harper, 1993.

Stevens, Mark A., ed. Merriam-Webster's Manual for Writers and Editors. Springfield, MA: Merriam, 1998.

Webster's New World Dictionary. 4th ed. New York: Wiley, 2000.

Trade Books:

Blanchard, Kenneth, and Spencer Johnson. One Minute Manager. New York: Morrow, 1986.

Bossidy, Larry, Ram Charan, Charles Burck. Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done. New York: Crown, 2002.

Brereton, John C., and Margaret A. Mansfield. Writing on the Job. New York: Norton, 1997.

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Collins, Jim. Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ...and Others Don't. New York: HarperCollins, 2001.

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Trade Books (Continued):

- Covey, Stephen R. The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. New York: Simon, 1990.
- Diamond, Jared. Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed. New York: Viking, 2004.
- Frank, Milo O. How to Get Your Point Across in 30 Seconds—or Less. New York: Simon, 1986.
- Gerstner, Louis V., Jr. Who Says Elephants Can't Dance? Inside IBM's Historic Turnaround. New York: Harper Business, 2002.
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- . The Tipping Point: How Little Things Make a Big Difference. Boston: Little, Brown, 2002.
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- , and Kenneth H. Blanchard. Who Moved My Cheese? An Amazing Way to Deal with Change in Your Work and Your Life. New York: Putnam, 1998.
- Lancaster, Lynne C., David Stillman, and Harvey MacKay. When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work. New York: HarperCollins, 2002.
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- Mackay, Harvey. Beware the Naked Man Who Offers You His Shirt. New York: Morrow, 1990.

Trade Books (Continued):

- . Dig Your Well before You're Thirsty. New York: Doubleday, 1997.
- . Sharkproof. New York: Harper, 1993.
- . Swim with the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive. New York: Morrow, 1988.
- . Pushing the Envelope All the Way to the Top. New York: Ballantine, 1999.
- Molloy, John T. John T. Molloy's New Dress for Success. New York: Warner, 1988.
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- Miller, Robert B., Stephen E. Heiman, with Tad Tuleja. Strategic Selling. New York: Warner, 1985.
- Morris, Tom. If Aristotle Ran General Motors: The New Soul of Business. New York: Holt, 1997.
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- . The New Murphy's Law: 10 Unconventional Rules for Making Everything Go Right in Your Life and Work. Maynard, MA [?]: Chandler, 1998.
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- . The Status Seekers. New York: Pocket, 1961.
- . The Waste Makers. New York: Pocket, 1963.
- Peters, Thomas J., and Robert H. Waterman, Jr. In Search of Excellence. New York: Warner, 1982.
- . Liberation Management. New York: Knopf, 1992.
- , and Nancy Austin. A Passion for Excellence. New York: Warner, 1985.
- . Thriving on Chaos. New York: Harper, 1991.
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Rubric for Holistic Assessment

- A =
1. Superior lead or angle; clear thesis statement; unique insight into topic; powerful conclusion that ties elements together.
 2. Paragraphs developed fully enough to lead, inform and entertain the reader with significant details and analysis.
 3. Excellent transitions.
 4. Well-written sentences with structural variety.
 5. Exact word choice that brings topic to life by showing, not telling.
 6. No, or virtually no, major, spelling, grammar, punctuation, or format errors.
- B =
1. Strong lead or angle; insight into topic not necessarily fresh; satisfying conclusion.
 2. Paragraphs well-developed enough to lead and inform reader with some interesting details or appropriate analysis.
 3. Good transitions.
 4. Well-written sentences with some structural variety.
 5. Good word choice that captures topic, but tends more to tell, not show.
 6. Few spelling, grammar, punctuation, or format errors.
- C =
1. Trite lead or angle; general treatment of topic; average insight; clichéd or otherwise weak conclusion.
 2. Paragraphs developed adequately to contain major point, but with few details or superficial analysis.
 3. Awkward transitions or loose continuity.
 4. Syntactically correct sentences, with little variety or wordy constructions.
 5. General descriptions or imprecise word choice.
 6. Some spelling, grammar, punctuation, or format error.
- D =
1. Weak lead or angle; poorly defined or treated topic; vague conclusion that makes no point or suggests new topic.
 2. Disjointed or misplaced paragraphs with little informative detail or appropriate analysis.
 3. Few transitions or poor continuity.
 4. Barely functional sentence structure.
 5. Inappropriate or incorrect word choice.
 7. Several spelling, grammar, punctuation, or format errors.
- F =
1. Poor lead or angle; no clear focus on topic; no conclusion; does not fulfill assignment.
 2. Undeveloped paragraphs with no informative detail or appropriate analysis.
 3. Missing transition or no continuity.
 4. Incoherent or unrelated sentences.
 1. Inadequate word choice.
 2. Many spelling, grammar, punctuation, or format errors.
- 0 = Late work or plagiarism.