



17. Co-requisites (these are courses that are taken concurrently):

NA

18. Registration restrictions (restrictions on specific degrees, majors, or class level in order to enroll in the course):

NA

19. Enrollment: Minimum  (at least 15) Desired  Maximum

20. Will this course be required or used as an elective in a major or minor program? Yes  No

If "Yes," which major/minor and how? **Please include an updated copy of the major or minor with the new course listed.**

21. If this course is being proposed for inclusion in the Liberal Studies Program, check the appropriate element(s) below.

**Essential Skills**

- Elementary Functions
- Freshman Writing
- Personal Well-Being
- Speech
- Statistics

**Modes of Inquiry**

- Aesthetic – Fine Arts
- Aesthetic – Literature
- Historical
- Mathematical
- Philosophical/Religious
- Scientific – Life
- Scientific – Physical
- Social Scientific

**Interconnecting Perspectives**

- Foreign Language
- Intercultural
- JINS

22. Is this course being proposed as Writing-Enhanced? Yes  No  **If "Yes," please attach the Proposal Form for Template Writing-Enhanced Courses and appropriate accompanying materials.** Contact the Director of Interdisciplinary Studies if you desire assistance.

23. Is this course being proposed as meeting the Missouri Statute Requirement? Yes  No

24. Is this course being proposed as an Honors Scholar course? Yes  No

25. Will this course count toward the 63-hour Liberal Arts and Sciences graduation requirement? Yes  No

26. With the creation of this course, what course(s) will be removed from the General/Graduate Catalog? **Attach a completed Course Update Form for each course that is requested to be removed.**

Will the new course be equivalent to the removed course(s)? Yes  No

27. Facility requirements for scheduling purposes. Type of room: NA

Special equipment, including estimated costs: NA

28. Additional library acquisitions required for the course, including estimated costs:  
NA

29. Textbook and material requirements for students, including estimated costs:

One textbook at approximately \$30.00

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30. Special fees for students: Standard online course fee.

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31. Additional faculty and/or staff required to offer this course, including estimated costs:  
Adjuncts will be used unless interest emerges among current faculty.

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32. What are the course's learning objectives?

**The course seeks to introduce students to:**

- **What technical writing and professional communication are;**
- **How technology has changed technical and professional communication permanently in the last fifteen years;**
- **Employ critical thinking when writing about sensitive situations to a variety of audiences (including supervisors, colleagues, and subordinates);**
- **Learn how to create a successful professional profile;**
- **Be able to walk into an office environment and have the critical thinking tools to address unfamiliar and immediate assignments with confidence and success.**
- **Provide students the opportunity [outside an office environment and with the safety net of your Instructor/Mentor], to gain confidence and experience with professional and technical writing projects, situations, and scenarios.**

**Specific objectives are to:**

**Communicate the real-life experience and expectations of technical writing through class assignments, class discussion, and deadlines. Specifically, this will involve, but is not necessarily limited to:**

- **learning about social media;**
- **creating a professional profile, resume, cover letter, and website;**
- **learning about branding;**
- **learning enough linguistics to be aware of what others are communicating and to be consciously aware of what YOU are communicating;**
- **memos;**
- **reports;**
- **inter- and intra- office communication;**
- **learning to write a peer-reviewed journal manuscript;**
- **logical models;**
- **and instruction manuals.**

33. Please list the OUTCOMES for any [Essential Skill](#), [Mode of Inquiry](#), [Interconnecting Perspective](#), [Writing-Enhanced](#), [Honors Scholar](#), Missouri Statute, or [Liberal Arts and Sciences](#) element(s) this course will fulfill.

NA

**\*\*PLEASE ATTACH AN ILLUSTRATIVE SYLLABUS OUTLINING THE REQUIRED COURSE CONTENT.\*\***

a) Department Faculty Approval, Chair Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  n/a

b) Approved by Dean or designated Associate Dean: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

c) Date Approved by Minor and/or Major Oversight Committee (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_  n/a

Committee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **SEND TO PROVOST & VPAA OFFICE** \_\_\_\_\_

d) Other Required Signatures:

**Honors Scholar Courses Only:**  n/a

Date Approved by Honors Scholar Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

**JINS, Intercultural, and Writing-Enhanced Courses Only:**  n/a

Approved by Director of Interdisciplinary Studies:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Graduate-Level Courses Only:**  n/a

Approved by Dean of Graduate Studies:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date approved by Graduate Council: \_\_\_\_\_

**For LSP, Missouri Statute, Honors Scholar, and Writing-Enhanced Courses, Courses Affecting**  n/a

**More Than One Discipline or of University-wide Significance, or selected LAS courses:**

Date approved by Undergraduate Council: \_\_\_\_\_

Date approved by Faculty Senate: consent item 10/27/11 kaf

**e) Approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**f) Approved by the President (for LSP and interdisciplinary courses only):**

n/a

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Syllabus  
PD 5XX/PD 5XXG Technical Writing

**Instructor Information**

Jennifer Creer, MA  
Cell: 660.341.9232  
Email: [jencreeer@truman.edu](mailto:jencreeer@truman.edu), [jcreer@gmail.com](mailto:jcreer@gmail.com)

Availability: Generally speaking, e-mail is the best way to reach me.

**PLEASE NOTE: I expect you to check the personal email address you have affiliated with this class at least once a day. Please get into that habit now. Not having checked your email will not be accepted as a valid or a professional reason to miss assignments or other required content.**

**The Importance of the Syllabus in the Online Context**

While it is often tempting in an online course to let the posted content drive your planning, this syllabus is an equally – if not more – important piece of the course plan. It has important information that you will be accountable for knowing throughout the course. Please be sure to take the responsibility to not only **read it thoroughly**, but to also **consult it regularly**.

**Blackboard**

Most of the class will be conducted on a shared website that we call Blackboard. I am emailing this syllabus to you ahead of time to give you instructions on how to get started. A copy of the syllabus will also be available on the Blackboard site. In order to get to the class, please follow these instructions:

- 1) Make sure you have a Truman ID and password. Typically this is issued to you when you enroll. If you have not received one, you will have to contact the IT Help Desk to arrange this (call 660.785.4544 **during normal library business hours** and ask them to transfer you ).
- 2) Go to <http://www.truman.edu> (the www is important!) and you will see, in the upper left-hand corner of the screen, a place to sign in with your username and password.
- 3) This will sign you into Truview. From there you can enter Blackboard from the tabs at the top of the page. You can also access Blackboard directly by typing <http://blackboard.truman.edu> and entering logon information at the top left of that page., On your home page, you will see two tabs at the top, left of the page. One says HOME, and the other says COURSES. Click on COURSES. You should see the Technical Writing class listed as one of your options. Click on it, and you should be where you need to be. From there, you will be able to see announcements, tabs for Information, Content, Discussion Boards, etc. IF YOU CANNOT GET THERE, CONTACT ME ASAP or call the IT Help Desk. If you are enrolling in the course from off-campus, you might also consider contacting the Truman Institute for assistance at (660) 785-5384.

## **Required Textbook**

### **Handbook of Technical Writing, Ninth Edition [Hardcover]**

Gerald J. Alred (Author), Charles T. Brusaw (Author), Walter E. Oliu (Author)

**Hardcover:** 624 pages

**Publisher:** St. Martin's Press; Ninth Edition, Revised Edition edition (November 25, 2008)

**Language:** English

**ISBN-10:** 9780312575120

**ISBN-13:** 978-0312575120

**ASIN:** 0312575122

## **Online Resources**

I have already posted, in the Information Section of Blackboard, links to several online resources that can assist you with managing the online technologies of the class. If you are new to online learning, take a deep breath and be patient! You will grow to love it. I, as well as the Truman Institute, and the folks in IT, am here to help you get the most out of the experience.

I will also be posting topic-specific materials that you might find beneficial as you grow as a technical writer, but are not required reading items. Consult the sections below for more information on each week's class unit and assignments so that you will know what's required and what is optional.

## **Teaching Philosophy**

In keeping with Truman State University's liberal arts mission, critical thinking and discussion are emphasized heavily in my classes. You will be expected to be self-directed in your exploration of the online content, but you will also be expected to participate in creating a learning community that all students can benefit from. We are going to be talking a great deal about professional communication, branding, and demeanor (and how it is conveyed when your communication exists only online—which is the case in both this course and increasingly in real-life employment situations). We are going to discuss audience, a touch of linguistics, and concentrate on finesse and concision.

The GREAT thing about this is that you are going to get to learn this juggling act in a virtual classroom setting instead of a real-life office scenario – your first time out of the gate. One of my favorite graduate school mentors used to say, "I am an educator before I am an evaluator." Your two major projects for this class will be 1) to edit a manuscript (that I provide) to meet publication standard, and 2) to write a short instruction manual (10 pages) that incorporates four references. I will provide you the opportunity to submit two rough drafts for my comments before grading.

## **Course Purpose and Objectives**

This course has two broad purposes. First,

**This course seeks to** introduce students to:

- What tech writing and professional communication are;
- How technology has changed technical and professional communication permanently in the last fifteen years;
- Employ critical thinking when writing about sensitive situations to a variety of audiences (including supervisors, colleagues, and subordinates);
- Learn how to create a successful professional profile;
- Be able to walk into an office environment and have the critical thinking tools to address unfamiliar and immediate assignments with confidence and success.

Additionally, the course aims to provide students the opportunity [outside an office environment and with the safety net of your Instructor/Mentor], to gain confidence and experience with professional and technical writing projects, situations, and scenarios.

Specifically, the course expects to communicate the real-life experience and expectations of technical writing through class assignments, class discussion, and deadlines. Specifically, this will involve (but is not necessarily limited to):

- learning about social media;
- creating a professional profile, resume, cover letter, and website;
- learning about branding;
- learning enough linguistics to be aware of what others are communicating and to be consciously aware of what YOU are communicating;
- memos;
- reports;
- inter- and intra-office communication;
- learning to write a peer-reviewed journal manuscript;
- logical models;
- instruction manuals.

Some of these assignments will be very short and concise; these are often more difficult to write than longer assignments.

### **Evaluation**

All assignments will be graded on a point system.. Specific metrics will be provided, outlining expectations for each assignment. I will also be evaluating font and margin size, grammar, spelling, punctuation, content, readability, and completeness. **However, our emphasis in this course is on critical thinking.** I will be guiding you as to my expectations and making comments for you up until the final project needs to be evaluated. I will provide you with every possible opportunity to succeed through feedback. In return, I expect your best efforts.



Grade	Percentage	Points
A	90%	90-100
B	80%	80-90
C	70%	70-80
D	60%	60-70
F	<60%	<60

### **Participation**

Participation is highly recommended. The easiest way to participate is to complete your informal Message Board and Journal assignments every week. In situations where points fall close to the next highest grade, the quality and level of engagement demonstrated in your participation will be considered the deciding factor in whether to raise a grade. Participation is a student's willingness to discuss course content on both the Discussion Board and in your journals. Even before considerations of "making the difference" in your grade, your participation is worth 10% of your initial class grade.

Given the online nature of the course, your time is your own and you do have the flexibility to engage the content at the time of your choosing. That said, I recommend choosing at least three days per week to log into Blackboard and work on your reading and assignments. (For example: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays). You will find a disciplined approach to engaging the course works best.

### **Late Work/Absentee Policy**

It is always within the student's best interest to notify me immediately of a potentially late assignment. Your ability to discuss these matters is a reflection on your professionalism. For the internal deadline portion of the class, late assignments will be allowed with a 10% reduction in the assignment grade per day. For the final projects, no late projects will be allowed. In the real work world, if you miss a deadline, you often don't get a second chance. We will follow that guideline in this class as well, so. Thus, it is in your best interest to get a completed project handed in, even if you feel it is rough.

In the case of a severe family/personal emergency – no notice is expected. However, students must contact the instructor (in person, via e-mail, or phone) as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for missed work. Emergencies should be serious in nature, such as severe illness, an accident, hospitalization, etc.

### **Student Accommodation**

I would like to hear from anyone who has a disability that may require some modification of an assessment, and/or class requirement so that appropriate arrangements can be made. In the interest of fairness to all students, students seeking accommodations must be registered with the Disabilities Office. Please contact me as soon as possible so that I may assist you with your learning goals in this class.

### **Student Diversity**

The topics presented within this class invite discussion on a broad range of topics about the human condition. Students are encouraged to fully participate in class discussions, sharing their beliefs and insights with their peers. Likewise, students are expected to be respectful of those whose views may differ from their own. If a conflict arises with the class (either between student and student or student and teacher) please make every attempt to resolve the issue with that person. If conflicts require further efforts toward resolution, follow the procedure suggested in the paragraph below.

### **Student Conduct**

As stated above, students are expected to treat each other with respect. If you have a significant disagreement with me or another student, the Discussion Board is not the appropriate place to air it. You should first contact the other student (or me), and then if the situation is not resolved, you should bring me in to mediate between you and your classmate, or contact the head of the Truman Institute, Dr. Kevin Minch, to mediate between you and me. Dr. Minch, the Director of the Truman Institute, can be reached at (660) 785-5384.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

#### **Truman policies**

Students are expected to do their own academic work. Any student involved in cheating on a paper, an examination or in any other form of academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from the class, the student's academic program, or the University.

It is the responsibility of faculty members 1) to inspire in their students an appreciation of and a desire for honesty in academic work; 2) to discourage dishonesty and to protect the honest student; and 3) to take appropriate action in instances of dishonesty. Such action may include the reduction or elimination of a dishonest student's score for an affected test or project, the lowering of a grade for the affected class (including the assignment of an "F" grade), or the expulsion of a student from the affected class.

Serious cases of academic dishonesty are reported by the faculty member to his or her Department Chair and to his or her Dean, who may take additional disciplinary action against the dishonest student, including suspension or expulsion from classes in the College or School. The Dean reports the dishonesty to the Provost, who may also report it to the Dean of Student Affairs. The Dean may also report the dishonesty to the College or School in which the dishonest student is enrolled as a major; the Dean of

this College or School may suspend or expel the student from the academic program in the major. The Dean of Students may also suspend or expel the student from the University as outlined in the Student Conduct Code for incidents of academic dishonesty.

Disciplinary action by a faculty member for academic dishonesty may be appealed to the Dean of the faculty member's College or School. Disciplinary action decisions by an academic Dean may be appealed to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs for review and final decision. Disciplinary action by the Dean of Student Affairs for academic dishonesty may be appealed through the same process as other disciplinary actions by the Dean of Student Affairs for student misconduct.

### **Assignments**

**Informal Assignments (10% of your grade)** are designed to facilitate discussion and communication.

**Message Board:** You will have to do (10) total Message Board assignments, which requires (10) weeks of participation. You will be required to post **at least three times** per week:

- Make an original post about this week's topic;
- Respond once to one classmate's post;
- Respond to a comment left on your post.

If nobody comments on one of your posts, you will not lose points. Hopefully, however, your post will be provocative enough to result in a response. If you don't get a response, simply go and post one more time in a thread that you have already posted in. Make sure you post THREE times total. I have included prompts for most weeks. The last three weeks of the class, Message Board/Journals will be optional. Your posts should:

1. Address the prompt
2. Be substantial, clear, and not full of filler.
3. Be at least two substantial paragraphs long.

**Journals:** These will serve as avenues for you to discuss issues privately with me. Journal entries can be very informal. There is no page requirement, but you must check in with me, using the journal assignments I post on Blackboard, at least ten times. We are calling that our "journal." If I sense that there are issues that would benefit the class as a whole to reflect upon, I'll assign a prompt. Topics, however, are largely up to you.

### **Formal Assignments**

**Readings:** You will substantially impede your learning in the class if you do not complete the readings. While I am not going to assign quizzes or tests over the reading, your knowledge of the reading will shape your effectiveness in discussion and on class projects. Your final project is expected to be excellent; how you get there is ultimately up to you, and the readings are designed to assist that process.

The required readings are listed in the table below. I will be providing you with optional links and materials as supplements periodically throughout the course.

**Written Assignments:** After we have talked about the week's topic and completed readings and some research assignments, you will be given one pertinent formal assignment to complete per unit. Units are typically one-week long. During the last six weeks of class, your units will be longer, so your completed assignment then will be for a three-week unit and, therefore, it will be both longer and more heavily weighted (see Table).

Table: Assignments by week and percentage of your grade.

<b>Informal Assignments:</b> 10% (Breakdown: 5% is Message Boards; 5% is Journals)
<b>Week One:</b> Profile analysis (2.5%)
<b>Week Two:</b> Professional profile (2.5%)
<b>Week Three:</b> 2 Resumes (5%)
<b>Week Four:</b> 2 Cover Letters (5%)
<b>Week Five:</b> 3 Memos (10%) and one Response (2.5%) (Total 12.5%)
<b>Week Six:</b> 3 Persuasive Letters (15%)
<b>Weeks 7-10:</b> Elements of Peer-Reviewed Manuscript (20%)
<b>Week 11:</b> Manual of Operation (15%); Identifying a manual to revise (2.5%) (17.5% total)
<b>Final Portfolio:</b> 5 polished and revised assignments with a three-to-five page cover letter (10%)

**Handing in Assignments:** You will be completing the informal assignments on the Blackboard Discussion Board and in Journals. For all formal assignments, you will complete them using Microsoft Word (or other appropriate software), and you will submit each one to me TWICE:

1. You will email it to me as an attachment to [jcreer@gmail.com](mailto:jcreer@gmail.com)
2. You will look on the Blackboard website for our course in the left-hand column. There, you will click on the words COURSE TOOLS. From there, you will see a list of options, and you will select SAFE ASSIGN. This is a link that will take you to a page with an enormous + sign and the word SUBMIT. Follow the instructions from there.

I want two submissions of each assignment because Blackboard might have unanticipated glitches, and I want to make sure your assignments are submitted on time. One of the challenges of technical writing is successful submission. In professional contexts, successful submission falls under the category of "YOUR problem and responsibility." Employers and clients are often not sympathetic to claims of server problems, slow connections, etc. Use this experience as an exercise in preparation for the twists and turns of flawed technology (and flaws in the people who maintain it!). In truly extenuating

circumstances you will have to PROVE the assignment is done and was completed on time if the submission is somehow lost.

## **WEEK ONE**

### **What is Technical Writing?**

What is technical writing? It's synonymous with professional writing. Technical or professional writing is that which communicates something between you and the professional world. It is not personal writing (which communicates something personal between you and a friend, or perhaps between you and yourself in a journal). The very purpose and definition of technical writing is that it is designed to be read and responded to by a professional colleague. However, unfortunately, even when we know who our primary and intended audiences are, it is critical to remember that audiences whom you had no intention of communicating with can also read what you've written—and there can be professional consequences for unprofessional expression in personal situations.

Therefore, technical communication includes any and everything that you post on the Internet. It is all potentially public. Nothing can ever be deleted to the extent that it cannot be recovered. Everything can be subpoenaed. Increasingly, employers are searching for publicly-posted and available information that reveals more about their job applicants than employers can legally ask about.

How does the digital age influence technical writing? It has created fields of technical and professional communication that never before existed:

- Software instructions
- Website text
- Advertising—Craigslist
- Ebay and Amazon sellers' communication with clients (What is repeatedly said in praise of good exchanges? EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION!)
- Interoffice email
- Meeting minutes
- Professional profiles
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- My Space

### **Assignments: (2.5%)**

**Formal: Profile Analysis.** Choose two people (one male and one female) and find their profiles on (3) different types of social networking sites. For example, you might check out (but you are certainly not limited to) Facebook, My Space, Twitter, Reddit, Digg, Spotify, Good Reads, Ebay, Workplace, Blogs,

professional websites, forums, World of Warcraft, YouTube, Monster.Com, Career Builder, etc. Copy and paste their profiles into a Word Document. Then, examine each of the three profiles you have chosen considering the following:

What are the differences in the way these people present themselves on the various sites? Compare across gender, nationality, location, socioeconomic status, education, sexual preference, relationship status, etc.

**Message Board:** What do you reveal about yourself? Go search for yourself with (3) different search engines (Bing, Google, Yahoo, Dogpile, etc.). Are you okay with everything you found? Do you use your real name publicly? Do you self-censor your statuses and online photographs?

**Journal:** Is there anything you're not comfortable sharing with the rest of the class? Concerns, comments, etc.

## WEEK TWO

### **Professional Persona (2.5%)**

We will be creating a professional persona for you over the next three weeks and talking about branding. Your formal assignments will include: (Week Two) a professional profile; (Week Three) 2 types of resumes; and (Week Four) 2 customized cover letters for two discrete positions.

**Reading and Discussions** will focus on elements that should be incorporated into professional profiles, resumes, and cover letters, along with analysis of several examples of resumes from one individual seeking multiple positions.

#### **Assignments:**

**Formal:** Go search the Internet for a job in a field you find interesting. Then, go to Monster.Com or Career Builder (or another site of your choice). Find the profiles of two people who are looking for jobs in the same field (or the same position that you are). One of the profiles should be good, and one should be weak. Copy them both into a Word Document and analyze them to tell me what is effective and what is ineffective.

**Formal:** Create a professional profile for yourself on TWO career websites, seeking two discrete positions (discrete= different enough to warrant two legitimately different resumes and cover letters being developed). **This will require you to start making notes and collecting information for your resume that you will do next week.** Send me links to your profiles.

## WEEK THREE

### **Resume (5%)**

We will be learning, from my professional contacts, what the industry standards are for resumes; how to become a certified resume writer; and what a vast array of tailored resumes can look like.

**Assignments:**

**Formal:**

- Go identify two jobs you could apply for that require both a resume and a cover letter. Copy and paste the job descriptions and links to them into a Word Document.
- Create a generic resume from the information you've gathered for your professional profile.
- Using the examples we have reviewed in class as templates, create from these materials (two) resumes, one for each different position. For example, if you are applying for a graphic design position and a retail position in a paper store, you will need completely different resumes for both positions.

**WEEK FOUR**

**Cover letters (5%)**

**Assignments:**

**Formal:** Create two cover letters, one for each of the positions you've found, that would accompany the resumes you have already created.

**WEEK FIVE (10%)**

**Memos/Emails/Inter- and Intra- office communication**

We will start this section with a lightning-fast primer in linguistics. We are going to talk about using cushioning language, saving face, avoidance, subtext, and tone. We will look at examples of a new employee scolding an established employee via email; and office protocol. We will discuss how to write (so we can avoid it in the future) accusatory, whiny, passive-aggressive, and placating emails about a variety of different office scenarios. We will discuss pitfalls and how to avoid them—and how to recognize, from tone and wording, what our colleagues really think of us. We will also discuss how gender roles influence communication—and how to both recognize and manipulate strengths and overcome weaknesses.

**Assignments:**

**Formal:** Analyze examples and identify linguistic characteristics of three discrete emails. What is the tone being conveyed? How can you tell? What can you tell from linguistic cues rather than content?

Write 3 emails about an interoffice problem (total 10% of your grade)

- Accusatory (Somebody is eating other people's food out of the fridge)
- Passive-aggressive (I don't know WHO is doing this, but...)
- Conciliatory (Hey, we've noticed this shared problem, let's create a shared solution)

Find one partner to exchange emails with; choose one of their negative emails and respond to it in such a way as to diffuse the situation. (2.5%)

**Informal:** On the Message Board, discuss the examples from class and any real-life scenarios you've experienced, both professionally and personally, that stemmed from mis-communication via only email, rather than from personal interactions that include tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions.

## **WEEK SIX (15%)**

### **Persuasive writing for multiple audiences**

This week, we will be looking at how to ask for things. We will be looking at articles about persuasion and rhetoric. We will talk about Peter Elbow, who taught young conscientious objectors to write letters that actually conveyed the sincerity of their beliefs (because some of them were incredibly bad at it, no matter how well-intentioned; those are the ones who went to jail).

We will be writing three different letters:

1. A thank you letter (drafted by an office assistant for a supervisor) to an external consultant who gave insulting and negative feedback to your (now angry) supervisor.
2. A letter to an alumnus of Truman State University asking for donations to support a new Nursing lab. You're going to have to research WHY this is a good thing and then CONVINCE someone who was not a nursing major that they should make an alumni contribution.
3. Write a letter to a professor who gave you a C in a class, asking them to write you a GOOD recommendation for graduate school—and give them the material with which to spin that C into a good letter for you.

## **WEEKS SEVEN THROUGH TEN (20%)**

### **Peer-reviewed manuscript**

For the next three weeks, we will learn the elements contained in both a medical journal article and a journal article using APA style (which social science students will certainly have to master). We will learn about:

- Abstracts
- Introductions
- Background and Literature Reviews
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions
- Qualitative versus Quantitative Research
- Cochrane Reviews
- Methodology papers
- Publication



- Reducing word counts

For these three weeks, I will be primarily giving you examples of manuscripts to review, looking closely at these individual sections.

**Assignments:**

**Week 7**

**Formal:** From scenarios discussed on the Message Boards, choose a research project and write an Introduction and Background section for a paper. Use (4) peer-reviewed (and correctly cited) sources for an APA-style paper.

**Informal:** Based on the readings and examples, come up with three simple research topics. Post in one Message Board post. Then, choose someone else's example for the formal assignment.

**Week 8**

**Formal:** I am going to give you a paper that is completely written except for its conclusion, and you are going to write a conclusion for it.

**Message Board:** Discuss ways in which Introductions and Conclusions are different, and whether it's easier to write the Introduction first... or when?

**Week 9**

**Formal:** I am going to give you a poorly-written qualitative manuscript and a poorly-written quantitative manuscript. Your job is to "review" the manuscripts and identify (5) things that need to be corrected in these papers, and to write a letter to the author telling them what they need to fix before the manuscripts can be accepted for publication.

**Message Board:** Talk about these manuscripts among yourselves. Help each other out. In the real world, you'll reach out to colleagues for help when you're stuck. Do it here, too. Just remember that I'll be keeping track if you take advantage of suggestions by others without providing anything useful yourself 😊.

**Week 10**

**Formal:** You may choose from the following (and information will be posted on Blackboard in advance):

- Take a poorly-written manuscript (I will provide the manuscript and the journal guidelines) to edit and make publishable
- Take data that is completely unorganized to edit and make it publishable (I will provide the data and journal guidelines)
- You can choose from a qualitative or quantitative template
- You can choose whether you want to use APA or Medical Style

**In summary:** You will be editing (one) manuscript and making it publishable. I'll provide manuscripts from you to choose from, and they'll either be drafted into sections or just arranged into raw data—just choose whichever scenario makes you the most comfortable. You'll have several to choose from, in the categories of Qualitative and Quantitative, APA or Medical Style. Basically, take the example you want to make publishable and then do it.

## **WEEKS ELEVEN-FOURTEEN**

### **Manuals of Operation (17.5%)**

We are going to look at examples of well-written and poorly written instructions and manuals of operation.

#### **Assignments:**

##### **Week 11**

**Formal:** Compare two of the examples - one well-written and one poorly -and give me five concrete examples of strength and weakness for both. **(5% of your grade)**

**Message Board:** Provide an example of a set of instructions you have used that have been terrible and that you have fantasized about re-writing. (If you don't have a real scenario, make one up).

##### **Week 12**

**Formal:** Identify an organization on campus that already has a Manual of Operations no shorter than 25-pages long that needs to be updated and revised. Provide me with an electronic or hard copy (I'll provide the address when appropriate). **(2.5%)**

**Message Board:** What organization did you choose? Why? What shape is their MOP in? What edits need to be done to update it? Who will you have to coordinate with to get the information you need?

##### **Week 13 and 14**

**Formal:** Using your Track Changes feature so I can see your edits, re-write and update the bad Manual of Operation in cooperation with organization leaders. **(10% of your grade)**

**Message Board:** What obstacles are you running into?

### **Final Exam: (10%)**

For your final exam, you will submit a polished portfolio of **five** of your assignments with a three-to-five-page cover letter explaining the edits you have made to improve your assignments and why.