

# ENC 3254: Writing for Non-Profits

## University Writing Program

**Instructor:** Melissa L. Mellon, Ph.D.; [mmellon@ufl.edu](mailto:mmellon@ufl.edu) or 392-5421(emergencies only)

### E-mail Response Policy

I will respond to your e-mails within 24 hours of their receipt (not including weekends).

**This syllabus details all policies for our section. No additional warrants/promises are implied. You are responsible for reading and following all policies herein.**

## COURSE INTRODUCTION

### Course Description

*Credits: 3; ENC 3254 meets for 3 periods per week on MWF*

Every year, non-profit organizations generate millions of dollars to fund work on behalf of their causes. Legally listed under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, non-profits advocate on behalf of people who lack representation and for causes that may not be fiscally valuable. Typically, these organizations rely on a mix of financial resources to fund their work; these include finding one-time- and systematic-donors as well as grants. As a result, non-profits need effective writers to promote their work, solicit donations, and educate legislators and the public alike. Non-profit writers must be adept at writing for different audiences and purposes, and this course provides a practical workshop on the most common forms of non-profit writing.

Throughout the semester, students will write a to connect with donors (a newsletter article and visual argument), to connect with funding agencies (a grant), and to connect with legislators (a position paper). As they navigate these audiences, they will also keep a reflective journal. By the course's end, students will be able to gauge the communication needs of a representative non-profit.

### Course Objectives

In this ENC 3254 course, students will learn to

- plan, draft, revise, and edit documents for use non-profits
- adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts
- research a grant opportunity and draft a grant for an actual agency
- write in a clear, coherent, and direct style appropriate for multiple readers.
- avoid plagiarism

### Required Contact with Local Non-Profit

All students will be required to volunteer or interact with their selected non-profit between 5 and 10 hours before the end of Week 5. The more you glean from these interactions, the more detailed the work of your Non-Profit Communication Portfolio will be.

### Required Readings

**There is no text book to buy for this course.** Course readings are available online.

## ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, AND COURSE CREDIT POLICIES

### Writing Assignment Prompts

Each writing assignment is described in its own prompt on Canvas. These prompts provide details of the expectations for successful writing given the assignments' different readers and purposes.

### Grading Expectations

Successful assignments demonstrate the understanding and practice of professional writing. To receive a passing grade, each paper must reach the minimum assigned word count.

Grade Distribution	Points	Words	Totals
<b>Non-profit Communication Portfolio (515 overall)</b>			1000 points
Solicitation Letter	50	500	7375 words
Special Interest Article	50	600	
Press Release	15	250	
Grant Proposal	100	250	
Capital Campaign	100	1000	
Social Media Infographic	75	250	
Writing Reflections	75	750	
Peer Reviews	50	200	
<b>Position Paper ( overall)</b>			
Annotated Bibliography	75	825	
Position Paper Draft	50		
Position Paper Final	200	2000	
<b>Communication about Non-Profit ( overall)</b>			
Mini-video (w/script)	75	500	
Presentations	25		
Thank-you Letter	10	250	
Participation	50		

### Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

Minor assignments may be dropped or added to the schedule, changing the total points available. In this case, final grades will be based on a percentage of points earned. Grades will not be rounded.

**Note: A grade of C- does not qualify for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit.** For more information on UF's Grading Policy, see: <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html> and <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#hgrades>

## Assessment Rubric

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Paper topic meets needs of prompt and rhetorical context. Material is rich, detailed, and substantial. Support appropriate to genre (i.e., examples, credible sources, etc.) is given.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate support.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents exhibit identifiable structure for topics that is organized by paragraphs, graphics, etc. Paragraphs ably manage progression of ideas and are guided by effective topic sentences.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
VOICE	Documents use confident presentation of ideas, and author has a clear underlying control of material presented. Appeals to reader (pathos, logos, ethos) are appropriate to genre of assignment.	Documents offer assertions or imagery that is weak or flat. Author seems to lack control or to be indifferent to content of the document. Reader feels ambivalent about the document.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style, word choice, and sentence length appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline.	Documents use words inappropriate to the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long, short, or awkwardly constructed. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of satisfactory, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper's argument or points.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

## General Education Objectives

**This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C).** Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (i.e., grammar, punctuation, and usage) and the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive, require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission, and fulfill 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement. Course content will include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches, and formats as well as methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims, and evidence and to analyze writing for errors in logic.

## General Education Student Learning Outcomes

**Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and methodologies used within the discipline.

**Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline.

**Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

### Writing Requirement

**This course also confers 6000 words towards the Writing Requirement (WR)**, which ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. While helping students meet the broad learning outcomes of content, communication, and critical thinking, I will evaluate and provide feedback on students' written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

The end-of-semester assessment for the course has two components, a course grade and credit for the Writing Requirement. **To receive Composition credit, students must complete all of the writing assignments counting toward the Writing Requirement. To receive Writing Requirement credit, students must receive a grade of C or higher and complete all of the writing assignments.**

## COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Attendance and Participation

Writing for Non-Profits is a skills-based class. Because we develop skills by practicing, attendance and participation is vital—the more we write, the better writers we become. Consequently, frequent absences will affect students' success in the course. Because writing skills are gained by experience, instruction is often based on in-class activities, which are difficult or impossible to replicate outside of class.

**1. Attendance.** Attendance is required. Even so, **you may miss THREE (3) classes TOTAL without incurring penalty.** You are advised to save these absences for illness and personal emergencies. Additionally, and you are still responsible for doing class work assigned for an absence day. **If facing a medical, family, or personal crisis affecting attendance during the semester, e-mail me immediately.** For university-sponsored events or absences due to illness or injury, I require a hardcopy of a sponsor's/doctor's excused absence letter for my files.

**a. Late entry. Entering 15 or more minutes late—counts as ONE (1) unexcused absence.**

**b. Poor attendance.** Should you use your three allowed absences but continue to miss class, your attendance grade will be docked. **For the FOURTH (4<sup>th</sup>) absence, you will lose 30 points. For a FIFTH (5<sup>th</sup>) and SIXTH (6<sup>th</sup>) absence, you will lose an additional 10 points each.**

**2. Failure due to excessive absences.** UWP policy holds that **if students miss more than SIX (6) periods during the term, they will fail the entire course.** (The only those absences exempted involve university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays.)

### Classroom Conduct

Our writing and speaking work in class anticipates professional work in the legal field, so behavior in the classroom is expected to be professional as well. Students are expected to be active class participants in their individual work and, when working with peers, to conduct themselves in a professional manner designed to support the success of the group. Classroom conduct should comply with UF's Student Code

of Conduct ([see http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/4041.pdf](http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/4041.pdf)) so that all students show respectfulness toward me and each other. More particularly, you should do the following:

1. **set phones to vibrate at the start of class,**
2. **use laptops, notebooks, etc. for class work only,**
3. remove all backpacks and purses from your desktop (you may hang them on your chair or place them on the floor),
4. limit your talking to classroom discussions, and
5. do not read newspapers, text-messaging others, do homework for other classes, pass notes, or sleep.

If you violate a rule, I give you a warning. For any second infraction, you will be dismissed from class and charged with an absence. If you continue to violating rules, you risk being dropped from class.

### Academic Honesty

As a University of Florida student, your performance is governed by the UF Student Honor Code, <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>. The Honor Code requires Florida students to neither give nor receive unauthorized aid in completing all assignments. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, bribery, and misrepresentation, all defined in detail at the above site.

### Plagiarism

**1. Definition.** Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8, October, 2013) prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code. The University Writing Program takes plagiarism very seriously, and treats instances of plagiarism as dishonesty and as a failure to comply with the scholarly requirements of this course. You commit plagiarism when you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own.

**Important tip:** You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location and citation information for the source.

**2. Penalty for Plagiarism.** If a student plagiarizes all or any part of any assignment, he or she will be assigned a failing grade on the assignment. Additionally, instructors may impose a course grade penalty and report any incident of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. Each student's work may be tested for its originality against a wide variety of databases by anti-plagiarism sites to which the University subscribes, and negative reports from such sites may constitute proof of plagiarism. Other forms of academic dishonesty will also result in a failing grade on the assignment as a minimum penalty. Examples include cheating on a quiz or citing phony sources or quotations.

### Due Dates, Make-up Policy, and In-Class Work

Papers and drafts are due at their assigned deadlines. **Late papers will not be accepted without a valid excuse as outlined above.** In these cases, students should consult with the instructor to turn in the work as soon as is feasible given the situation. Failure of technology is not a valid excuse.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

### Readings and Associated Homework

Readings and assignment preparation are listed on the schedule as homework (HW) to be completed before the next class meeting. Students should complete this work before coming to class that day.

### Conferences and Writing Studio

Students are encouraged to use my office hours if there are questions about progress in the course, work underway, or any other course-related concerns. If there is a conflict with the posted office hours, please contact me to schedule a better time. Having conferences on assignments is often the best way to improve the quality of final drafts. Also, the Writing Studio (<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>) also offers one-on-one assistance on writing projects and is available to students of all levels.

### Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at the URL listed above.

### Personal Student Concerns

During the semester, you may face personal problems that I am not trained to address. If you need help managing stress, depression, family illness, or physical or mental abuse, visit <http://oss.ufl.edu/stg/> or call the Counseling Center at 392-1575. You are not alone: counselors can help with these concerns.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>.

### Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first gather appropriate documentation and then register with the Disability Resource Center at 352-392-8565. Once registered, students will receive a letter which they must present to their instructor. If you have a disability that needs accommodation, follow this procedure as soon as possible. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>.

## COURSE SCHEDULE--TBA