

- Fall 2010

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This writing course is designed to introduce you to the principles of professional communication. But more than that, it is intended to help you develop the knowledge and skills necessary to act powerfully and ethically in all types of professional communication situations. The projects in this course are designed to help you develop skills in planning, producing, and revising documents to meet a variety of business communication needs. Throughout the semester we will address some of the most common errors and stylistic choices that detract from a writers' credibility or ethos. However, good writing is about more than correctness and style. It's about assessing your audience's needs and expectations and crafting the most effective appeal within the situation at hand. This is the kind of approach to writing we'll be taking throughout the semester.

*Textbook:* Johnson-Sheehan, Richard.

themselves and their prospects to potential employers. This project asks you to work individually, but there will also be chances for you to work with your peers to exchange ideas and feedback. The Employment Project includes the following components:

- Resume
- Cover Letter
- Self-Assessment

### *White Paper*

Also called "backgrounders," white papers are commonly used to summarize the accepted thinking on a process, product, or solution to a common problem. White papers function in a number of disparate settings:

- If used internally, the white paper is intended to update long-term professionals on current trends and developments. It is often written by newly graduated professionals who bring new research and processes from their university training.
- If prepared for governmental projects, white papers often help bring legislators and others up to speed on a topic that is vital to making good policy decisions.
- If prepared by professional organizations, white papers function to identify positions on solving problems and to advertise the expertise of a particular organization.

In this project, 4-member teams will conduct primary, web-based, and library research in order to produce an informative white paper that helps campus decision-makers decide whether or not to implement a sustainability initiative proposed by a campus sustainability committee. Your research will result in a visually sophisticated (well-designed) document of 1700-2000 words that presents findings to an appropriate audience(s) and rhetorical situation(s).

### *Proposal Project*

Working with your white paper group, you propose a solution to the sustainability problem you investigated in the previous assignment. Your audience will be the decision makers on campus or elsewhere who might actually have the power to solve the problem. This project includes the following components: (unless otherwise indicated each of the following are group authored)

- Technology Presentation using PowerPoint and other relevant audiovisual aids
- Email requesting a personal interview and thank-you email (individual)
- Proposal (1,700 – 2,000 words)
- Progress Report (individual)
- Activity Report (individual)

Employment Project 25%

White Paper Project 30%

Proposal Project 30%

In-class work, Reading Responses, and Class participation 15%