SYLLABUS & INSTRUCTIONS FOR ENC 3250: PROFESSIONAL WRITING • FALL 2014
University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee (USFSM) • Instructor: T. E. Roberts (thorsdag@comcast.net)
Website for this course: http://www.todroberts.com/USF/3250_welcome.htm • Date: 22 July 2014

Welcome
This syllabus is a contract. It sets forth expectations, responsibilities, instructions, and policies that obligate both instructor and students. Read and consult it throughout the Fall 2014 semester. Every student is expected to submit via email to tr@sar.usf.edu a signed information sheet indicating that he or she has read this syllabus and agrees to abide by its terms; this form also functions as a record of first-week attendance in this online course. If it is not received by Friday, Aug. 29, 2014, 6 p.m., the student will be reported to the registrar as “not attending” and will be dropped from enrollment.

If you find an error or inconsistency in the syllabus, please accept my apology and notify me immediately. To download the student information sheet and the most current version of the syllabus, please see the course website: http://www.todroberts.com/USF/3250_welcome.htm. In cases where information in this document differs from what appears on the course website, the website should be regarded as the most current and authoritative source.

I. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE
ENC 3250, Professional Writing, Fall 2014; Section 522, CRN 86188, ONLINE COURSE. There will be no meetings on campus at all. However, this is not a “correspondence course” in which one merely writes assignments. Students will be required to hear lectures, complete assigned reading, and communicate with the instructor (and fellow students, as needed) regularly via email.

II. INSTRUCTOR CONTACT AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Instructor: Thorold (Tod) Roberts. (Please refer to me as “Mr. Roberts.”) To contact me, send email to tr@sar.usf.edu or thorsdag@comcast.net. (Spell my email address accurately!) Most of our communications will be via email, but if necessary, please phone me at 941-927-2898 (Sarasota residence) between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. I prefer email because it creates a written record of our communications and because it gives students practice in writing, one of the main purposes of the course. Because I am rarely on campus, do not leave a message on my campus phone or in my campus mailbox. You have no restrictions on the length or number of emails you may exchange with me, but please use good judgment in this matter. Because of the large volume of email I handle, every message you send must bear your last name and the course number in the SUBJECT line (for example: “Robinson, Question on ENC 3250, Assignment 2”). If a student question or comment appears of general value or relevance, I will send it and my response to all students in the course. For information on my background, see http://usfsm.edu/faculty-members/prof-thorold-tod-roberts/ or http://www.todroberts.com. For students’ numeric scores and comments on my past USF courses, see http://www.todroberts.com/USF/Roberts_Evaluations.htm.

If you wish to meet with me in person, please arrange an appointment. Because of my driving distance from campus and because all of my teaching is online, I prefer to schedule such meetings when I am present for other faculty activities. We may also meet off campus if possible.

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE
From the USF Catalog: (Prerequisites: ENC 1101 and ENC 1102, or ENC 1121 and ENC 1122) The course is an introduction to the techniques and types of professional writing, including correspondence and reports. It is designed to help strengthen skills of effective business and professional communication in both speaking and writing.

IV. COURSE GOAL
To help the student advance in knowledge and practice of skills, tools, and work ethic needed for using effective written and spoken English in business, industry, organizations, and professional occupations.

V. COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES
The objectives of ENC 3250 are as follows:

A: DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
OUTCOME A1: Demonstrate competence in planning, drafting, and revising text to produce clear, concise, and complete professional and technical documents that meet the stated needs of specific users and readers.

OUTCOME A2: Demonstrate proficiency in creating messages on time, on budget, and on target for the person(s) or organization for which the student will be working.

OUTCOME A3: Demonstrate familiarity with the nature and application of the media and types of publications or projects which a graduate in this program will be expected to understand and use effectively upon graduation.

B: CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS
OUTCOME B1: Demonstrate competence and efficiency in understanding the intellectual dimensions of emerging concepts, media, and vocabulary and applying those discoveries to technical and professional communications projects.
C: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

OUTCOME C1: Demonstrate an ability to read, interview, interpret, and apply the forms of expression and knowledge required to serve as a bridge between advanced business and technical professionals and non-specialist users of those professionals' communications.

The assignments draw on the instructor's experience as a professional writer and editor serving clients and employers in diverse business settings and as a university teacher of writing. In addition to written assignments, the course involves familiarity with writing handbooks, online lectures, and email exchanges, as detailed in the Schedule of Weekly Assignments below. It also requires the use of computerized word processing using MS Word software, electronic communications, and internet-based research. Each student must have access to a reliable computer and knowledge of how to use it for word processing, email, internet search, and access to the password-controlled USF Canvas online learning system (my.usf.edu).

VI. ENC 3250 COURSE CONTENT AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Course Content: Each of the first three writing assignments will be around 500 words long; Assignment 4 will consist of a 2,000- to 2,500-word prose document and other components. No conventional printed textbook is required; instead you will be assigned selected readings from the internet which supplement web-posted lectures. A final exam covering course content will be taken online via Canvas between Dec. 9 and 11. All students are required to complete an online evaluation of the course via the eXplorance system at the end of the semester and to email the instructor a confirmation of that evaluation (directions for this will be posted later on the course website). (See “Official USFSM Policies and Procedures” in Section XI of this syllabus.)

Method of Presentation: Students will perform in a distance-learning environment, with guidance from the instructor. Course objectives and procedures will be presented in the first lecture before the session begins on Aug. 26, 2014. Your official USF email address will be used for most communications; if you forward mail from your personal address, be sure you are receiving all messages. An individual student's questions and my emailed responses will be sent to all students if the questions and answers appear to be generally relevant and useful. I welcome student emails about assignments, lectures, or other aspects of the course as long as they are focused, relevant, and professional. I try to answer all email promptly. If you use a mobile phone to receive and respond to email, be sure that you are saving all course-related messages and attachments to your computer. Students who fail to do this may encounter problems leading to possible loss of learning progress and grade points.

Canvas and Other USF Technology Tools: For help with Canvas, Blackboard, USF email, OASIS, or other USF technology, see http://it.usf.edu/, send an email (help@usf.edu), or call 941-359-4295 (or -4215), or 813-974-1222 (Tampa). For live online help, see http://usf.service-now.com. Tutorials: http://www.sar.usf.edu/Academics/DE/current_students.php. Canvas Quickstart Guide: http://guides.instructure.com/m/8470.

Lectures: As noted on the course website, you will download two lecture files (.mp4 audio and PowerPoint slides) each week. Depending on the capabilities of your computer, you may need to hear the MP4 files on your computer using either Apple QuickTime or VLC Media Player (see links for these free downloads on course website). Do not try to hear the lecture audio as a streaming file over the internet -- you may find it interrupted. Just download and listen to it on your computer while viewing the PowerPoint slides. Save the audio and the slides inside your 3250 folder -- you will need to review them to prepare for the final exam. The lectures provide important information on written assignments.

Audio Codes to Facilitate Attendance Checking. To simulate in an online environment the required tracking of student attendance expected in an on-campus class, each audio lecture will contain embedded spoken code words which you must send to me via email by deadlines noted in the Weekly Schedule below. This will ensure that you are listening to the lectures soon after they are posted, and not letting them accumulate for later listening. Regular listening to -- and note-taking on -- lectures is vital to your success in the course. Failure to send the audio codes by deadline may result in two unpleasant consequences: (1) ignorance about assignment instructions leading to weak performance and (2) a penalty to your final grade in the course.

Email Messages: You will send me all assignments attached to email messages as MS Word files with the .doc or .docx file extension. I will evaluate and grade your work electronically and, as explained below, return it to you by email upon request. Be sure to indicate your preferred email address if it is not obvious from your message. I will acknowledge, via email, the receipt of your email message and attachment. All of your written work must bear a filename in this format: Lastname_3250_X.doc (or .docx) (no spaces), where X refers to the assignment number (1, 2, 3, or 4). Do not send your work with a generic name such as “Assignment2.doc” or “research.doc.” The first time you do this, I will ask you to fix it. If this happens again, your submission will simply be counted as missing and will be penalized accordingly. Orderly procedures and file naming are essential because I serve scores of students who submit hundreds of thousands of words of gradable work to me. (I receive and answer 100 to 150 student emails per week.) Occasionally a student or instructor or both may experience problems with email. If this happens, notify me by phone (941-927-2898) and, if necessary, send a message to my alternative email address (thorsdag06@yahoo.com -- the 0 is a zero, not the capital letter "O"). DO NOT SEND TO THE YAHOO ADDRESS WITHOUT PHONING ME. If you do not receive my prompt response to an emailed assignment or a question, contact me as soon as possible. As noted above, each email requires a subject line with your name, the course number (3250), and a brief phrase such as “Assignment 2 question.” Make sure your USF email account is working, especially if you have messages forwarded from there to a different address.

VERY IMPORTANT: Make sure you receive my acknowledgment of your assignment submission. If you do not receive such a message by 9 p.m. following a 6 p.m. deadline, send the document to me again. Otherwise, your work will be penalized for being late or missing. I will normally use the email header time-stamp to determine whether you have met the deadline or not. (See Section VIII, Grading and Evaluation, for
information on the penalty for late submissions; for information on email headers, see [http://www.tod roberts.com/USF/Email_Headers.pdf](http://www.tod roberts.com/USF/Email_Headers.pdf). Be sure that the clock in your computer is accurate. I am too busy to acknowledge all submissions as they arrive, so please do not call or email me about your submission if you send it before the 6 p.m. deadline. I will usually acknowledge submissions AFTER the 6 p.m. deadline, not before.

**Last Day to Withdraw from a Fall 2014 Course Without Academic Penalty (and Without Refund of Fees):** Saturday, Nov. 2, 2014, 5 p.m.

Confer with your academic advisor before this date to discuss the impact of this action on your degree progress and student loan status. If you are not submitting required work but remain in the course, you will likely earn an "F." (USF imposes limits on the number of times one can withdraw from a course without penalty; check with your advisor.)

**Format for Written Assignments:** See the formatting instructions included with the assignment directions. Formatting is an important element of professional writing and as such will play a role in your learning experience and grade. All written assignments must be prepared on a computer (Macintosh or PC) using Microsoft Word or equivalent software. NOTE: If you use MS Works or WordPerfect or any software package other than MS Office, you must create and save a document as a WORD file (ending in .doc or .docx). Do not use the proprietary Apple software PAGES for your documents. You will not receive credit for work that I cannot read using MS Office on the Macintosh. If you lack MS Office for your personal use, you may also use a shareware program called OpenOffice (www.openoffice.org), but you may find it limited compared to the Microsoft version. Check with the USF Computer Store ([http://www.computerstore.usf.edu/](http://www.computerstore.usf.edu/)) for discounted prices on MS Office software.

**Computer Use:** All professional writing today requires use of a computer and the internet for document preparation and revision, research, and communications. Put all work for the course (assignments, drafts, email messages, syllabus, bookmarks, lectures, etc.) into a separate folder labeled 3250_Fall14. Back up that folder at least weekly on a USB flash drive, CD-ROM, or online archive. Send a copy of your messages and attachments to your secondary email address for safe-keeping. **An assignment lost as a result of carelessness or ignorance will diminish your learning experience and grade.** If an assignment calls for the use of unfamiliar tools such as PowerPoint for slides, advanced application of MS Word or Excel, or a website composition tool such as WordPress, budget the time and effort required for you to learn them. Those seeking a professional career today simply cannot survive without such knowledge.

**Course Website:** [http://www.tod roberts.com/USF/3250_welcome.htm](http://www.tod roberts.com/USF/3250_welcome.htm). Links to syllabus, assignments, lectures, and helpful resources are available on this site. Students should visit this page at least daily. Read all links on this page before the end of the Fall 2014 session. Specific links of most relevance to the final exam will be highlighted a short time before the exam. If you find a link not functioning correctly, please report it to me promptly by email.

**Student Success in This Course:** To succeed in ENC 3250, **think and act like a professional, not like a student.** Put learning ahead of grades and challenge yourself to work beyond your comfort zone. Read and respond to email, submit work on time, read all assigned material, listen to and take notes on lectures on schedule, keep your mind open and unbiased, and ask questions. If you are like most USF Sarasota-Manatee students, you are probably not only studying for a degree but also earning a living and perhaps caring for a family. Thus, to succeed in ENC 3250, especially in a primarily online environment, prioritize your time and effort wisely.

Your investment in improved writing and thinking skills will pay off significantly over the course of your career. If you doubt this, talk to students who have already taken my writing courses at USFSM and are now working as successful professionals. As the instructor, I am eager for you to experience an excellent return on your investment of time, money, and intellectual energy. If you are not having such an experience, contact me immediately so that we can work together in solving problems and taking advantage of opportunities. Do not assume that you are a mere number in a vast bureaucracy. To me, you are an individual human being who is sincerely willing to improve his or her abilities using the opportunities available to you.

**Attendance, Absences, Making Up Work, Extra Credit:** Because this course is delivered 100 percent online, conventional attendance records are irrelevant. However, the required submission of audio codes for online lectures functions as a simulated means of checking “attendance.” The specific rules regarding audio codes are explained above (see “Lectures”). **There is no provision for re-doing an assignment already submitted, rewriting a plagiarized submission, grade forgiveness, grade rounding, extra credit, makeup work, or grade negotiation.** Penalties for late submission of student work are specified below in Section VIII, “Grade Penalty for Missing an Assignment Deadline.” **Online courses require maturity and self-discipline.**

**USF Academic Calendar, Fall, 2014** (for details, see [http://www.registrar.usf.edu/enroll/regist/calendt.php](http://www.registrar.usf.edu/enroll/regist/calendt.php))

| Mon Aug 25: first day of classes | Tue Nov 11: Veteran's Day |
| Mon Sep 1: Labor Day | Thu-Fri, Nov 27-28: Thanksgiving holiday |
| Sat Nov 1: Last day to drop class without academic penalty | Fri, Dec 5: Last day of classes |
| | Sat-Fri, Dec 6-12: Final exam week |

**VII. SCHEDULE OF ENC 3250 WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS, FALL 2014**

Detailed directions for all written assignments are provided in this syllabus and the course lectures. Assigned readings will be announced via lecture and email. Note that all written assignments are due to me on Mondays at 6:00 p.m. Lectures discussing assignments and course content will be posted on the course website as both PowerPoint slides and as audio recordings in MP4 format, usually by Wednesday. You must send lecture audio codes via email as noted below. **This schedule is subject to change because of circumstances beyond the instructor’s control. Check your email at least daily for announcements.**

ENC 3250 FALL 2014 SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT OR TASK</th>
<th>LECTURES &amp; WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Aug 25</td>
<td>WEEK 1 LECTURE</td>
<td>Semester begins Aug. 25; lecture will cover course objectives and procedures; send background information via email by Aug. 29, 6 p.m., or you will be dropped from enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 1 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 2 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 8 (Mon)</td>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Assignment 1 (20% of grade) - Basic Business Memo; send audio codes for Weeks 1 + 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 15 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 3 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 22 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 4 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 29 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 5 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 29 (Mon)</td>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Assignment 2 (20% of grade) - Employee Reprimand; send codes for Weeks 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 6 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 6 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 13 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 7 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 20 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 8 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 20 (Mon)</td>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>Assignment 3 (20% of grade) - Job research, Cover Letter, Resume, LinkedIn profile; send codes for Weeks 6, 7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 27 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 9 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 3 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 10 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 3 (Mon)</td>
<td>Assign 4 outline</td>
<td>Assign 4 - outline of Business Report, Proposal, or Plan (required but not graded); send codes for Weeks 9 and 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 10 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 11 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 15 (Sat)</td>
<td>LAST DAY TO DROP</td>
<td>Last day to drop course without academic penalty; consult with your academic advisor about the impact of this decision on your degree progress and student loan status (max number of withdrawals is limited)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 17 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 12 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 24 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 13 (holiday)</td>
<td>Thanksgiving holiday – no lecture (campus closed Nov. 27-28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1 (Mon)</td>
<td>WEEK 14 LECTURE</td>
<td>Lecture topic relevant to current assignments; readings will be assigned via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1 (Mon)</td>
<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>Assignment 4 (30% of grade); send Week 11, 12, 13, and 14 codes (2000-2500 words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 5 (Fri)</td>
<td>WEEK 15 LECTURE</td>
<td>Final lecture - exam preparation tips; fill out online course evaluation – deadline and instructions TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 7 (Sun 8 am)</td>
<td>to Dec 10 (Wed 11 pm)</td>
<td>End of Fall semester</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Classes end; final exams are held Dec 8 through Dec 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Aug 25</td>
<td>Final Exam (Canvas)</td>
<td>45-minute exam (10% of grade): multiple-choice and true/false; covers syllabus, website links, readings, assignments, course-related emails, and lectures; final grades will be posted by Fri, Dec 13, 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIII. TEXT AND OTHER RESOURCES

- Textbook: none required; see course website for recommended texts
- Computer (Mac or PC), Microsoft Office or equivalent software, Internet access, email account, and collegiate dictionary (bookmark the course website: http://www.tod roberts.com/USF/3250_welcome.htm)
- Junior/senior-level competence in English grammar, vocabulary, spelling, sentence structure, thesis and supporting evidence, and basic academic research skills
- Access to handbook of English usage, online or on paper (an effective online handbook is at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/: also, memorize the USAGE TIPS at the end of this syllabus)
- Miscellaneous web-based information assigned or recommended by instructor

IX. GRADING AND EVALUATION

The grade you earn on an assignment will be a numerical score. For assignments in this course and for the Fall 2014 semester total score, numerical values are equated with letter grades as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94.999-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-89.999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89.999-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86.999-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83.999-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79.999-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75.999-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>73.999-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69.999-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65.999-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>63.999-60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No assignment submitted or plagiarized submission = zero points.

Definitions of Grades

A = exceeds objectives of the assignment; three or fewer major errors in language usage, sentence structure, or organization; clear, logical thought; originality, creativity, and maturity

B = meets objectives of assignment; no more than four major errors in language usage, sentence structure, or organization; logical but uninspired thought; no major surprises

C = meets objectives but just barely; five or more major errors in language usage, sentence structure, or organization; some lapses in logic; often, a cautious effort to “give the instructor what he wants”

D = tries but fails to meet objectives; six or more major errors in language usage, sentence structure, or organization; jumbled, weak flow of ideas; confused understanding of the assignment
Undergraduate catalog is as follows:

Allowing an "Incomplete" and must have only "a crisis or family emergency. You may be required to submit a Medical Form to the Academic Regulations Committee (available at http://www.registrar.usf.edu/data_display.php?link_type=Forms).

Inability to Complete Course Requirements On Time

Grade Penalty for Missing an Assignment Deadline

Grade Penalty for Failing to Hear Lectures On Time

Student Evaluation of Instructor and Course

Final Grade in Course: Your final grade in the course will be computed on Canvas using the following weighted formula:

- 60%: Assignments 1, 2, and 3 (20% each, combined total of around 1,500 words)
- 30%: Assignment 4 (2,000 to 2,500 words)
- 10%: Final Exam (via Canvas, Dec 7-10)

The final grade, as explained below, will be reduced by penalty points (if any) for failing to send lecture audio codes on time. To repeat my earlier point, no extra credit, do-overs, grade rounding, makeup work, or grade forgiveness are allowed, so please do not request such considerations. The grade you earn, not the grade that I "give," is what I report to the registrar using the following plus-and-minus scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>A-</th>
<th>B+</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>B-</th>
<th>C+</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>C-</th>
<th>D+</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>D-</th>
<th>F</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
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<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Evaluation of Instructor and Course: All students are required to submit a fair and complete online evaluation of the course and to email verification of this submission to the instructor. Directions and deadline for this will be announced.

Grade Penalty for Missing an Assignment Deadline: Because deadlines for on-the-job writing are taken seriously by clients and employers, deadlines in this course will be treated the same way. An assignment loses one entire grade -- for example, from a "B" (85) to a "C" (75) -- for each 24-hour period (or portion thereof) it is late (including weekends and holidays). A penalty for late submission begins at the hour when the assignment is due (usually Monday at 6:00 p.m., via email). The clock time noted by your outgoing email server will determine whether you have sent the submission by the deadline. **IMPORTANT: IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE MY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF YOUR SUBMITTED ASSIGNMENT, SEND IT AGAIN. OTHERWISE YOU RISK A PENALTY FOR LATENESS.** As mentioned previously, I am too busy to acknowledge all submissions as they arrive, so please do not call or email me about your submission if you send it before the 6 p.m. deadline. I will usually acknowledge submissions AFTER the 6 p.m. deadline, not before.

To extend a deadline without penalty, you must present compelling evidence of need as defined by the instructor. This varies in individual circumstances, but such leniency is more likely for a student who has demonstrated a desire to work hard and succeed in the course by, for example, submitting optional revised work. You are always much better off turning in a late assignment than none at all. The grade of "F," at 59 points, will be far less damaging to one’s final course grade than a score of zero points for a missing assignment. If you’re inclined to regard this as a harsh penalty, remember this: Lateness in meeting a deadline on the job usually results in your being demoted or even fired.

Grade Penalty for Failing to Hear Lectures On Time: The codes embedded in the lecture audio files must be sent to me via email along with your written assignments, as shown in the weekly schedule noted above. For example, your email transmission of Assignment 1 will not only include your attached submission with .doc file extension, but also in the body of your email you will note the audio codes for the Week 1 and 2 lectures by matching a specific code to a specific slide (EXAMPLE: Slide 3: document, Slide 7: edit, Slide 11: submit). You will lose two points from your final grade calculation for each missing set of codes and one point for each set sent late. This will be computed manually at the end of the Fall 2014 term. EXAMPLE: your total points earned on assignments and the exam are 86 (B+), but you sent three lecture code sets late and failed to send two sets at all. This means you would lose seven points from your total, resulting in a final grade (to be reported to the registrar) of 79 (C+).

REALITY CHECK: Any student who rushes through a lecture’s audio file merely to grab the audio codes and thus ignores the content of the lecture would be wise not to take this course at all. If you have no more interest in learning than this, drop out of school and do something else so you can make room for a serious student. You apparently lack the ethics and motivation needed for earning a college degree.

Inability to Complete Course Requirements On Time: A mark of “Incomplete” is allowed only in rare cases such as a documented health crisis or family emergency. You may be required to submit a Medical Form to the Academic Regulations Committee (available at http://www.registrar.usf.edu/data_display.php?link_type=Forms). Work to remove the “Incomplete” must be finished under these conditions: Work to remove the "Incomplete" must be finished under these conditions: (1) you must be passing the course at the time you request the "Incomplete" and must have only “a small amount of work” yet unfinished; (2) all required assignments must usually be finished within six weeks after the end of the semester or session in which the "Incomplete" occurred; (3) you must meet the terms of a contract signed by the instructor and the student; and (4) you must meet all USF academic and procedural requirements.

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"I" Grade Policy (http://usfsm.edu/catalog/graduate/academic-policies-regulations/graduate-grading-system/incomplete-i)

Definition: An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor’s discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. This applies to all gradable courses, including pass/fail (S/U).

Students may be eligible for an "I" only when:

- a majority of the student’s work for a course has been completed before the end of the semester
- the work that has been completed must be qualitatively satisfactory
- the student has requested consideration for an "I" grade as soon as possible but no later than the last day of finals week.

The student must request consideration for an Incomplete grade and obtain an "I" Grade Contract from the instructor of record. Even though the student may meet the eligibility requirements for this grade, the course instructor retains the right to make the final decision on granting a student’s request for an Incomplete. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed one semester from the original date grades were due for that course.

The instructor must file a copy of the "I" Grade Contract in the college that offered the course by the date grades are due. The instructor must not require students to either re-register for the course or audit the course in order to complete the "I" grade. Students may register to audit the course, with the instructor’s approval, but cannot re-take the course for credit until the I grade is cleared.

An "I" grade not cleared within the next academic semester (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract. "I" grades are not computed in the GPA, but the grade noted on the contract will be computed in the GPA, retroactive to the semester the course was taken, if the contract is not fulfilled by the specified date. When the final grade is assigned, if applicable, the student will be placed on academic probation or academically dismissed (refer to Automated Academic Probation Procedures for information). Students cannot be admitted to doctoral candidacy or certified for graduation with an "I" grade.

Example:

Current Semester

- student has a "B" in the course, not including the grade for the missing assignment, therefore is eligible for an "I"
- student’s grade, including a zero for the missed work, would be a "D"
- student and instructor complete the "I" Grade Contract, assigning an "ID" (Incomplete + "D" grade)

Deadline Agreed Upon in Contract (e.g. two weeks)*

If the student completes the work as agreed upon in the Contract by the noted deadline

- instructor submits a change of grade
- student earns final grade comprised of all completed course work

If the student does not complete the work as agreed upon in the Contract by the noted deadline

- "I" automatically drops off and the grade of "D" remains.
- GPA is recalculated for the current semester and retroactively recalculated for the semester in which the "I" was granted.

*Although the instructor establishes the deadline for completion of the work, the deadline may only extend through the end of the subsequent semester.

Grading Process. I do not return your graded submission to you except upon your request. You have two options in this process:

Option 1. If you want the submission returned with detailed marks and comments, you must agree to rewrite or revise the entire paper in response to those comments and marks. The revision is due to me no later than one week after you receive the marked paper from me. If you choose this option, the submission you send must be labeled Lastname_3250_X_markup_graded.doc, where "X" refers to the assignment number. You will receive from me a document labeled Lastname_3250_X_markup_graded.doc. You will then rewrite/revise this and return it to me labeled Lastname_3250_X_revision_graded.doc. Omit spaces and insert underscores in filenames exactly as shown. Leave all of my original marks and comments in place and insert your revisions nearby in blue boldface text so that I can quickly compare the original and the revision. (See detailed revision instructions and sample revision on course website, http://www.tod roberts.com/USF/3250_welcome.htm.)

Option 2. If you want your grade simply posted on Canvas with no marks, comments, or returned submission, just name your file Lastname_3250_X.doc.

The rewriting/revision process is entirely your option, not a requirement. You may choose to revise one or more of Assignments 1 through 3. (Assignment 4 occurs too late in the term to allow revision; however, I will provide a brief comment on it if you submit it with this filename: Lastname_3250_4_comment.) I do of course evaluate your work carefully, but I provide detailed comments only for those papers on which students are willing to perform the extra work needed for revising the submission. IMPORTANT: Submitting the revised/rewritten submission will NOT result in a change in your grade except under this condition: If you request the detailed mark-up, you must submit the revised/rewritten work within one week of receiving it graded from me. If you do not, your grade will be dropped by one grade (10 points) -- for example, from a B+ to a C+ -- for each day or portion of a day you miss the deadline.

Please note that grading a student paper is considerably more demanding than simply reading it; the intensity of this process, combined with other faculty duties, permits me to evaluate only about 10 to 15 submissions per day; given my typical workload of 80 to 90 students per semester, you should not expect a grade to be posted sooner than a week after you submit your work.

Reason for This Grading Process. Because of my heavy teaching load (around 450,000 words of graded student writing per semester), I lack the time needed for marking all student work in sufficient detail as a regular procedure. My grading process therefore offers a compromise. It
recognizes that some students are content merely to pass the course in order to satisfy a graduation requirement. This usually means they are willing to settle for an “acceptable” grade. A student’s definition of “acceptable” varies, but based on my experience, many students are satisfied with anything from a “C” to an “A.” Students who are enrolled just to satisfy a graduation requirement will likely have personal reasons for not wanting to submit a complete revision. They may be too busy with other courses, jobs, or other responsibilities, or they may simply regard the revision process as not worth the required work. However, this opportunity is open to every student.

The amount of effort for me as instructor to prepare a detailed mark-up (typically requiring 30 to 40 minutes per individual submission) is commensurate with the extra effort required by the student to revise it. This effort is understandably beyond what some students prefer to do or have time to do. However, I do not discriminate in any way against those who do not want to perform this extra work. I merely offer an opportunity for this expanded learning experience to those who see value in such an approach.

IMPORTANT: Students have no obligation to take advantage of the rewriting process and will suffer no direct penalty for not participating in this additional work. It should be obvious to you, however, that optimal learning is more likely with, than without, the extra work.

Special Note for Students Concentrating in Business and Technical Writing or majoring in Professional and Technical Communication: Students in this discipline should not enroll in ENC 3250 merely to satisfy a graduation requirement. They should be serious about honing their writing and editing skills to the level required of a professional who can earn a living using the knowledge and experience gained in this field of study at USF. They are therefore expected (but not required) to request detailed markup and to submit revisions of their work. Word to the wise: any BTW or PTC student who fails to request detailed markup should be aware that this fact will be noted as negative feedback on future Letters of Reference prepared by the instructor.

Grievance Procedure for USF Students: The 2014-2015 USF-SM Undergraduate Catalog (USF Policy 10-002, “Student Academic Grievance Procedure”), emphasizes that a student should first contact the course instructor before filing a grievance:

III. Statement of Policy

A. Resolution at the Department Level. 1. The student shall first make a reasonable effort to resolve his or her grievance with the instructor concerned, with the date of the incident triggering the start of the process (i.e. the issuance of a grade; the receipt of an assignment) and if the instructor determines is feasible and may be productive, the instructor shall accommodate a reasonable request to discuss and attempt to resolve this issue.

If, after conferring with the instructor, the student believes he or she is justified in filing a formal grievance, the procedures outlined in the USF Undergraduate Catalog must be carefully followed. A grievance is an extremely grave matter that requires many hours of attention from the student, the faculty, and USF administration. Therefore, pursue it only when other means of redress have completely failed.

Advice About Grades: A grievance will not automatically or necessarily result in a change of grade for an assignment or a course. Over the course of several decades teaching thousands of college students, only two of my students have filed formal grievances (1974 and 1997), and in both cases my original grade and teaching approach were upheld by a grievance committee of students and faculty.

I take seriously my duty to be not only a competent and effective instructor but also to help you succeed, not fail. If you believe I am not meeting your objectives as a student, talk with me. I will listen to your perspective and seek a mutually satisfying solution to problems. Any student who writes an anonymous negative review of my teaching or course content at the end of a term but who has never communicated with me in person, by phone, or by email about specific issues lacks credibility. Such a person demonstrates immaturity, ignorance, cowardice, and indifference regarding professional and ethical standards of conduct. That person should in turn expect the same treatment from others.

The time to focus on your grade, if you worry about such a thing, is during the term, not at the end after you receive the final grade calculation. Students who complain about final grades but who have made little if any sincere effort to excel on each assignment, to submit revised work, and to confer individually with me can count on little response from the instructor. You have four written assignments (for three of which you are invited to receive detailed markups and to prepare revisions) and a final exam to build a satisfactory final grade, and you are urged to communicate with me at any time regarding your work.

Contrary to many students’ view, a grade is earned by you, not given by me. Your job is to perform as well as possible. My job is to evaluate your performance fairly, based on experience, judgment, and workplace expectations. There is nothing personal in this process; it is simply a matter of defining, applying, and meeting professional criteria. I am not judging your appearance, gender, sexual preference, ethnicity, philosophy, politics, religion, personal values, or social status. (In fact, because my contact with and knowledge of students occurs almost completely in an online environment, I am not even aware of most of those characteristics!) I am interested only in your academic performance and your demonstrated improvement thereof.

Please don’t ask for a grade to be “rounded” to a higher mark. The grading system is designed to record your achievement accurately to three decimal places, so the effect of rounding has already been considered. Grades are calculated by the Canvas system based on the instructor’s individual scale, but if you believe a mathematical error has occurred, notify me immediately.

Read carefully and repeatedly the definitions of grades in this syllabus so you have a clear understanding of the standards that students are expected to meet. If you are confused, simply ask me for clarification. Education begins with you, not with a university, course, or teacher. I recommend also that you read the following links so that you have a clear understanding of my approach to teaching:

- Student evaluations of all my USF courses from 2003 through Spring 2014
- A Perfect Storm in Undergraduate Education, Part 1
- From Students, A Misplaced Sense of Entitlement
- Student Evaluations, Grade Inflation, and Declining Student Effort
IX. PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

The use of others’ words, images, sounds, ideas, or expressive work regardless of medium, without permission and/or without providing proper credit, is PLAGIARISM. Taking credit for another person’s work, or submitting your own work as that of another person, is CHEATING. Both activities constitute a serious breach of ethics that harms other students and society in general. The penalty for such an act may include any or all of the following:

- A score of zero points on an assignment (the same as if no assignment were submitted at all), with no opportunity to resubmit the plagiarized work
- Failure in a course (the student’s permanent USF transcript may bear the grade of “FF” to indicate academic dishonesty),
- Dismissal from school, and/or
- Formal prosecution for theft of intellectual property.

USF’s Policy 3.027 on Academic Integrity of Students is stated in the online and printed catalog. Every student must read and follow this policy. Before you stoop to stealing someone else’s words, images, or ideas, ask yourself: “Would I accept this behavior in other students if it helped them and harmed me?” The student code of conduct and related documents are also available here: http://sarasota.usf.edu/students/SRR/.

WARNING: Plagiarism from online and other sources is easy for me to detect using the USF-supplied SafeAssign® software and other means of analysis. Students who violate the rules will tell you that the experience of being caught by me in an act of plagiarism is something they regret now and probably for the rest of their lives. Potentially exemplary careers can be and indeed have been ruined by such short-sighted, unethical behavior.

I take plagiarism and cheating seriously because I have a duty to protect the rights and expectations of honest students who work hard to earn a grade based on ethical practices in research and writing. If your work appears unusually better than I might reasonably expect it to be based on your academic or workplace experience, I may suspect plagiarism and will investigate. You may be required to submit complete citations and copies of all source material consulted for a given assignment.

Note that in addition to listing all references used in your work under the heading “Sources Consulted” at the end of a submission, you must also provide parenthetical citations within the text to any direct or indirect quote, idea, or words derived from a work other than your own. The Modern Language Association (MLA) format for parenthetical citations and listing of references is explained through a link on the course website (http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/research/mlaparen.html).

USF Official Statement regarding use of SafeAssign® and/or TurnItIn®: The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows instructors to submit student assignments to be checked for plagiarism. I reserve the right to submit assignments to this detection system. Assignments are compared automatically with a huge database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted papers. The instructor receives a report showing exactly how the student’s paper was plagiarized.

Privacy Protection: Pursuant to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), prior to submitting work to Turnitin or SafeAssign, students should delete any personal information (e.g., name, address, telephone) from the work being submitted. This protects students from having personal information disclosed to vendors or other outside agencies.

X. OFFICIAL USFSM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Religious Observances: The University recognizes the right of students and faculty to observe major religious holidays. Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class for a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, by the second week of classes. See http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-10-045.pdf for information. In this online course, where no in-person attendance is expected, this policy may apply to the due dates for assignments; contact the instructor regarding individual circumstances.

Disabilities Accommodation: Students are responsible for registering with the Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) in order to receive academic accommodations. Reasonable notice must be given to the SDS office (typically five working days) for accommodations to be arranged. It is the responsibility of the student to provide each instructor with a copy of the official Memo of Accommodation (for online courses, send this Memo via email to the instructor). See http://www.sarasota.usf.edu/Students/Disability/ for information.

Academic Dishonesty: The University considers any form of plagiarism or cheating on exams, projects, or papers to be unacceptable behavior. Please review the university’s policy in the USFSM Undergraduate Catalog or USFSM Graduate Catalog and the USF Student Code of Conduct.

Undergraduate: http://www.sarasota.usf.edu/Academics/Catalogs/
Graduate: http://www.sarasota.usf.edu/Academics/Catalogs/
USF Student Code of Conduct: http://www.sa.usf.edu/snr/page.asp?id=88

Academic Disruption: The University does not tolerate behavior that disrupts the learning process. The policy for addressing academic disruption is included with Academic Dishonesty in the USFSM Undergraduate Catalog or USFSM Graduate Catalog and the USF Student Code of Conduct.

Undergraduate: http://www.sarasota.usf.edu/Academics/Catalogs/
Graduate: http://www.sarasota.usf.edu/Academics/Catalogs/
USF Student Code of Conduct: http://www.sa.usf.edu/snr/page.asp?id=88

Contingency Plans: In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USFSM to suspend normal operations. During this time, USFSM may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Canvas, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It’s the responsibility of the student to monitor the Canvas site for each class for course-specific communication, and the main USFSM and College websites, emails, and Mobull messages for important general information. The USF hotline at 1 (800) 992-4231 is updated with pre-recorded information during an emergency.

Web Portal: Every newly enrolled USF student receives an official USF e-mail account. Students receive official USF correspondence and Blackboard/Canvas course information via that address. Therefore it is the student’s responsibility to check his or her USF email regularly.

Instructor Copyright: Students may not sell notes or other course materials. You are free, however, to refer others to course websites, lectures, syllabi, and other resources without payment.

XI. ENC 3250 ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Assignment 1: Basic Workplace Memo (20% of Grade): Due Mon, Sept. 8, 2014, 6 p.m.

BACKGROUND. When writing to professional peers who are unknown to you personally, you must minimize the use of acronyms, jargon, or inside references that your readers may not understand. One approach is to imagine an individual reader as you draft your document. You should base your message upon either knowledge or intelligent speculation about answers to these questions:

- What can you reasonably assume this reader knows and does not know?
- What are the reader’s “hot buttons” (that is, key issues and phrases that stimulate the reader’s interest)?
- What information, questions, solutions, or action steps does the reader expect from your message?
- What is the urgency of your communication with the reader? Does your message require minutes, hours, days, weeks, or months for a response? Is it a “policy statement” that will endure for a long time?
- What is the main purpose of your communication with the reader -- response to reader’s previous message? call to action? information? heads-up (warning)? suggestion? recommendation?

Answers to these questions will have a major impact on the length and style of your message.

BUSINESS SCENARIO FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT. You are a department manager who needs to help your company improve two important aspects of the business -- (a) service to customers, and (b) sales revenues. (You may use an actual company or an invented company as the basis of the message.) You have been assigned the task of outlining a preliminary strategy to achieve these two objectives. You must prepare a memorandum (memo) addressed to the following individuals: Barbara Baker, CEO; Perry Jackson, Executive Vice President; Marvin Kramer, CFO; and Grace Hooper, Senior Vice President for Customer Relations (your direct supervisor). You must address the following issues:

- Current company performance
- Business goals over the coming fiscal year (12 months)
- How these goals should be met and how performance should be measured against the goals
- Costs and benefits of the strategy
- Specific action steps needed for implementing the improvements (who is responsible for doing what when?)

USEFUL ADVICE. The sample memo from a student in ENC 3250, included on the course website, provides guidelines to style and content. Read your memo into an audio recorder and play it back for yourself later to hear how it flows. Ask a person you can trust to be objective and honest with you to read it and provide you with feedback on its clarity, conciseness, and persuasiveness. Proofread carefully to eliminate errors in spelling, grammar, logic, and sentence structure.

Consult the online handbook at http://ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/ for help and MEMORIZE THE USAGE TIPS in this syllabus. The success of your message is measured in part by the fact that the reader understands its main point upon first reading, without clarification or follow-up. One expert has estimated that up to 30 percent of letters and memos in industry and government do nothing more than seek clarification of earlier correspondence or respond to that request for clarification. Obviously, such activity wastes time, energy, and money.

A WORD ABOUT CONCISENESS: “Conciseness” is not the same as “briefness” or “brevity.” Conciseness means conveying the most meaning in the fewest words that are organized and presented in the clearest and most meaningful way. Two simple examples of concise communication include a road sign with a curvy arrow to indicate a winding road ahead, and the word “FIRE!” shouted in a burning building. What do these examples imply about communicating in a business setting? If you want to sell your vehicle by parking it along a busy road and placing a sign in advance, and the word “FIRE!” shouted in a burning building. What do these examples imply about communicating in a business setting? If you want to sell your vehicle by parking it along a busy road and placing a sign in the window, which of the following would work best?

- 95 Ford SUV 112K $2995 OBO (26 characters and spaces)
- FOR SALE, LOW-MILEAGE 1995 FORD EXPEDITION, 4-DOOR SUV, 112,000 MILES, ASKING $2995, WILL CONSIDER OFFER
  (104 characters and spaces -- four times longer than the previous example)

In addition to the dramatic difference in number of words, note also that the first example can actually fit in the windows of a car (if formatted correctly). This means that a person driving by at 30 miles per hour can actually read it. This is what I mean by “conciseness.” Apply this lesson to all of your writing in ENC 3250.

FORMAT. Use MS Word to create a single-spaced memo of around 500 words. Use 12-point type, 8-1/2” x 11” document size, with default margins (1.25” right and left, and 1” top and bottom) Use 12-point boldface, upper case for section headings within the body of your memo. In short, follow formatting directions in this syllabus and the sample student memos on the course website.

SUBMISSION. Turn in your completed assignment via email by 6:00 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 8 with the SUBJECT line Lastname 3250 Assignment 1. Send the document to me directly via email (thorsdag@comcast.net), not via Canvas, as an email attachment with one of these filenames:
Assignment 2: Employee Reprimand (20% of Grade): Due Mon, Sept. 29, 2014, 6 p.m.

DIRECTIONS. In this assignment you will create an unpleasant but necessary document that all managers must eventually write -- an employee reprimand.

BUSINESS SCENARIO. You will pose as a supervisor writing a critical review of an employee’s performance. The primary readers are (1) the employee, (2) your boss, and (3) the head of Human Resources. You might enjoy preparing such a document when the employee has shown weaknesses or problems. However, every supervisor must at some time write such a reprimand in a professional, effective way.

Use your imagination in choice of situation, detail, headings, organization, and tone of this document. Focus not on personality but on behavior and facts. Effective business communications emphasize the message, not the writer or reader. For examples of, and advice about, such a document, insert the search term “employee reprimand” in the Google search engine. Do not, however, copy ideas or language from such a source in your own work -- just use them for general guidance.

Be aware that documents of this kind must usually meet certain legal and policy guidelines set down by your company and by courts or government employment boards. (See http://www.todroberts.com/USF/SampleReprimand.htm for information on the recommended style of a reprimand, but follow the memo format shown in this syllabus.)

STICK TO THE SUBJECT. A business writer’s main concern should be the subject (message) of the communication. In addition, the writer should use a dispassionate, objective tone. The focus should be not on personality or hearsay but on facts and results. "Dispassionate and objective” do not, however, mean boring, tedious, verbose, or weasel-worded. See the relevant links concerned with professionalism and conciseness on the course website.

FORMAT. Use MS Word to create a single-spaced memo of around 500 words. Use 12-point type, 8-1/2” x 11” document size, with default margins (1.25” right and left, and 1” top and bottom) Use 12-point boldface, upper case for section headings within the body of your memo. As in Assignment 1, follow the memo formatting directions in this syllabus.

SUBMISSION. Turn in your completed assignment via email by 6:00 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 29, 2014, with the SUBJECT line Lastname 3250 Assignment 2. Send the document to me (thorsdag@comcast.net) as an email attachment with the filename indicating your preference:

Assignment 3: Job research, cover letter, resume, LinkedIn profile (20% of grade) - Due Mon, Oct. 20, 2014, 6 p.m.

DIRECTIONS. In this assignment you will write two brief documents that can help you succeed in finding a satisfying job: (a) a professional resume and (b) a cover letter. You will also use your resume to prepare a LinkedIn.com profile. The resume and the cover letter must each be no longer than one page of readable and graphically pleasing text. The format of this assignment is shown later in this syllabus; any deviation from the formatting instructions will result automatically in the loss of at least one entire grade point (for example, a drop from 95, “A,” to 85, “B”).

FIRST PAGE: JOB ANNOUNCEMENT. Visit www.monster.com or any of numerous other websites or printed publications. Find a job announcement that appears suitable for your post-graduation plans. Choose one that includes considerable detail about what the company wants and needs. You will write your resume and cover letter specifically in response to this announced job opening. (Include the job announcement on a separate page preceding your cover letter.) Another aspect of career research is to visit the website of a company that you’re interested in to learn everything you can before you apply there for a job. To learn about the overall job outlook in various occupational fields, see www.bls.gov. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).

SECOND PAGE: COVER LETTER. Your letter should be short and easy to read. Its most important content is a clear statement about how your qualifications match those of a position being advertised by an employer. Before you begin drafting the cover letter, prepare a simple two-column list like this (obviously, you need to personalize this -- the items below are just suggestions; edit this list into concise bullet points for the letter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATED REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>PROOF THAT I CAN MEET THEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-starter, strong initiative, minimal need for supervision</td>
<td>In my job at ___ I successfully managed xyz (indicate specific number of staff, dollar amount of sales or inventory, etc. -- details that show the reader that your employer trusted you with important duties)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent speaking and writing skills</td>
<td>I earned a grade of ___ in professional writing and a ___ in public speaking at USF. I also served on the Help Desk at _________ for two years and successfully resolved complaints and questions for dozens of customers every month. I earned the “Superior Customer Service” award three times.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You will then analyze this list and edit it for use in your letter. However, you are advised not to use an actual table as shown above. Choose three to five bullet-point highlights of your qualifications, but no more or fewer than that. Editing is hard because it requires thinking and rethinking about the match between what you mean and how your reader will understand what you say. In addition to being concise, your writing
must also be so clear and direct that one and only one meaning can be understood. This is not a poem full of subtle ambiguity and wity puns.

**THIRD PAGE: RESUME.** Use the same editing process for your resume. You need to revise and polish this document until you can barely stand to open it on your computer screen. Think of your resume and cover letter this way: You are a doctor performing open-heart surgery and know that your patient can die at any second if either the life-support equipment or surgical procedure is botched. As a job seeker, the life-support equipment is your resume and the surgical procedure is your cover letter. Your career is the patient.

Scores of books, articles, and web pages purport to tell you the best way to create a resume. If you are like most people, you may even have your Uncle Joe or your mom or dad or Cousin Susan telling you how to do this. While these sources may offer valuable guidance, you will benefit most from a simple and proven method. Learning this is your goal in Assignment 3.

I have prepared a brief discussion of resumes and cover letters and published it on the course website. This document also contains a well-written article about types of interviews you may encounter even early in your career. Reading and applying this information is required for this assignment. Here is the link: [http://www.todroberts.com/USF/Roberts_JobHuntingAdvice_May-2014.pdf](http://www.todroberts.com/USF/Roberts_JobHuntingAdvice_May-2014.pdf).


**FOURTH PAGE: LINKEDIN.COM PROFILE.** This will be based on -- but different from -- your resume. Follow the tips listed below (plus others you can find on your own):

- [http://jobsearch.about.com/od/networking/a/linkedinprofile.htm](http://jobsearch.about.com/od/networking/a/linkedinprofile.htm)
- [http://clearedjobs.net/blog/seven-linkedin-first-time-user-mistakes/](http://clearedjobs.net/blog/seven-linkedin-first-time-user-mistakes/)

**SUBMITTING THE ASSIGNMENT.** Submit a single document containing four pages, formatted as shown on pages 14-17. (Pages must be separated from one another by a FORCED PAGE BREAK -- do this correctly or you will lose points from your grade.)

**Page 1.** The job announcement (copy this from the website or other source and paste it as plain text into a blank page with the following title aligned left in 12-point boldface at the top: LASTNAME - Job Announcement; position cursor at the bottom of job announcement; see INSERT menu, choose BREAK, and then PAGE. The job announcement should be in plain 10-point text, not a table.

**Page 2.** The cover letter is next; position cursor at the bottom of letter; see INSERT menu, choose BREAK, and then PAGE

**Page 3.** The resume is the next of the four pages.

**Page 4.** The last is your one-page LinkedIn.com profile.

**DO NOT USE A FOOTER ON THIS DOCUMENT.** Proofread carefully to eliminate errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage. Consult the Usage Tips at the end of the syllabus. Errors may result in a prospective employer tossing your cover letter and resume automatically into the “DO NOT CALL” pile.

**SUBMISSION.** Turn in your completed assignment via email by 6:00 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 20, 2014 with the SUBJECT line Lastname 3250 Assignment 3. Send the document to me (thorsdag@comcast.net) as an email attachment with the filename indicating your preference:

Lastname_3250_3_markup.doc: a detailed markup (you must revise and return the graded submission to me within a week)

Lastname_3250_3.doc: mere posting of your grade on Canvas (no comments or returned paper).

Remember to include the appropriate lecture audio codes within the body of your email.

**TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LETTERS AND RESUMES:** In addition to [http://www.todroberts.com/USF/Roberts_JobHuntingAdvice_May-2014.pdf](http://www.todroberts.com/USF/Roberts_JobHuntingAdvice_May-2014.pdf), the tips below (based on students’ past work) will help you perform well on this important assignment:

1. Avoid unprofessional references such as “I feel” or “I would love to work for....”
2. Check all lists, whether in bullet-point or sentence format, for correct parallel construction; see [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/623/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/623/01/) for help with this. Vague or inconsistent use of verbs and nouns in such lists marks your work as amateurish and imprecise.
3. Proofread carefully -- one student wrote that he was responsible for dispatching “sick trucks” in his job; do you suppose he meant “six”? Such errors may appear harmless and even entertaining, but the reader will be laughing at, not with, him. The word “RELEVANT” is often misspelled by students as “relevant,” “relevent,” “relevant,” “relavent,” “relavent,” and in one case, “redolent” -- a prize winner! Seemingly small matters such as correct spelling (for example, “manager” vs. “manger” or “Excel” vs. “excel”) are not the province of fussy English teachers -- many companies scrutinize such mistakes carefully because they want to EXCLUDE the people who make them.
4. Pay scrupulous attention to instructions for content and formatting; several students ignored my repeated emphasis on this and consequently submitted substandard work. For example, many students paid no attention to the correct way to create horizontal rules under major headings in the resume. Others failed to insert a forced page break between pages, relying instead on repeated blank lines to position the beginning and end of a page (this causes formatting problems). Such disregard signals a weak, careless approach to reading and applying simple directions. As I have emphasized in previous comments, format in itself may be of minor importance, but following instructions for content and format is of crucial importance. Almost no employer wants even to interview, let alone hire, a person who shows a casual attitude toward such matters.
5. Use simple words that generate quick and positive attention; readers typically scan the letter and resume at a speed five to six times faster than the speed at which you read it to yourself. A list of qualifications in the cover letter should be at least three but no longer than five items; beyond this, the reader’s attention will waver. You are rewarded for conciseness and preciseness in a cover letter and resume more than in any other business communication except possibly the shouting of “FIRE!” in a burning structure or vehicle.
6. The cliché “you have only one chance to make a first impression” applies especially to cover letters and resumes. Very few prospective employers will give you a second opportunity. This is why your work needs to be flawless.
Assignment 4: Business Report (Option A), Business Proposal (Option B) or Business Plan (Option C) (30% of Grade) / Outline Due 6 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 3, 2014; Submission Itself Due 6 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 1, 2014

Begin thinking about this document as soon as the term begins. You will need as much time as possible to do a good job. Write and research for about one to two hours at a time. This will keep your ideas fresh and will help spread the workload over weeks rather than a few days of panic. For guidance, see examples of other students’ submissions on the course website. Keep in mind the following four qualities that every effective submission must demonstrate:

Conciseness: transmit the maximum message in the minimum number of words
Clarity: present one meaning and one meaning only
Completeness: omit nothing important, include nothing unnecessary
Creativity: stimulate the reader not just to receive the message but also to remember and act upon it

OPTION 4-A, BUSINESS REPORT

You may invent a completely new subject, choose a subject of importance at a current or previous job, or choose a subject that I suggest below. You may choose a topic drawn from Assignment 1, 2, or 3 in this course, but may not adapt a document you have already prepared for another course. The report should be on a topic one may ordinarily expect in a business or professional setting. For example, it may deal with management, marketing, technical capability, business expansion, doing business abroad, supply-chain strategy, accounting, or human resources. I offer suggestions below:

Report on expanding services or products: consider at least two of the following factors: financial costs, human resources, supply chain, technology, and marketing
Report on security issues in information network: you are reporting to clients on technical and competitive aspects of a proposed solution to security problems
Report on searching for a new division vice president: you are the junior member of a screening committee who must update management on search progress
Report on research into career options you would like to consider after you earn your undergraduate degree: you may build on the information you acquired while preparing your resume and cover letter in Assignment 3.

Create your own report topic on a business-related subject (this excludes the topics typically found in undergraduate courses outside the School of Business; you may not adapt a paper already written for another course but may build upon knowledge already acquired in courses or other experiences).

THE BEST REPORT YOU CAN WRITE?

The best report you can write will be on a subject that you find interesting and useful. This could derive from a business topic that you want to explore, from a situation in your current or past employment, from a desire to learn how to write a winning business proposal, or from a career opportunity that you want to pursue in the future. The choice is yours. Make the most of it. Do not write on a topic merely because you think the instructor finds it “worthwhile.” My personal or professional preferences are irrelevant to the quality of your report, but I will be happy to offer suggestions to you.

If you are like other students, you will discover that this assignment can help you learn how to produce -- quickly and efficiently -- professional communication that contributes significantly to the success of you and your employer. Whether you aim to become head of your company one day or not, this quote might help you understand the importance of language skill: “Communication needs to be a core competency of any business. It starts with the CEO.” (Source: Sun Microsystems former CEO Scott McNealy)

You will be wise to treat this assignment as a potentially valuable showcase for your analytical and communications abilities that you can present to a prospective employer or investor. Several of my students have been amazed to discover how much their work on Assignment 4 impresses others as a demonstration of the students’ business insights, analytical skill, and writing ability. I will discuss examples of such submissions in my lectures.

IMPORTANT: No matter what topic you choose, I must approve it

Do not send an Assignment 4 submission on a topic that you have not previously cleared with me, and do not change your approved topic at the last minute before the submission is due. This will immediately arouse my suspicions that you have plagiarized or cheated. Do not use a canned paper obtained from the internet or elsewhere -- if you are so tempted, be prepared for severe plagiarism penalties as described earlier in this syllabus. Your work must be your own and it must be prepared specifically for this assignment. Remember that 30 percent of your course grade depends on Assignment 4. Remember also that plagiarism or cheating of any kind will likely result in a severe penalty that may not only result in a failing grade but also ruin you and your future.

ORGANIZATION OF YOUR BUSINESS REPORT

If your report presents the analysis of an issue or opportunity, the following five sections and headings offer useful guidance on how to structure the document. You also need to create an insightful and clever title that will both communicate factual content and stimulate your reader's interest. For example, “Cashing in On Americans' Obesity: An Expansion Opportunity?” or “Do You Get a Bank With That Toaster?”

1. Executive Summary: a summary of the entire report which allows the reader to understand and remember your key message (normally, this is written last by the report writer, after the entire report is completed, but it is published at the beginning of the report). (suggested length: one page)
2. Introduction & Methodology: the reasons for the report, how it was prepared, who prepared it, your qualifications, and what results, recommendations, and conclusions you will be presenting. (suggested length: one page)

3. Background: facts and hypotheses that are pertinent to the topic (for example, market statistics, financial figures over time, or trends as predicted by internal and external sources). Graphs, charts, illustrations, and tables are appropriate tools for efficient communication of background. (suggested length: one to two pages)

4. Analysis & Interpretation: explaining what the facts mean (for example, the company has experienced a big increase in the sales of winter parkas in the off-season in certain market regions; careful analysis shows that this is tied in with the popularity of a certain rap singer who dresses in such clothing in his music videos). (suggested length: two to three pages)

5. Conclusion & Recommendations: wrapping together all your facts, analyses, and interpretations into a concisely stated logical conclusion which leads to recommended actions. BEWARE: "conclusion" and "summary" are not the same thing. A conclusion is derived logically from a well-structured argument and set of facts; a summary is merely a concise restating of a document’s key points. (suggested length: half a page)

If you prefer a different type of organization, be sure that it is logical and coherent and that all headings and subheadings communicate clearly the intended content to the reader. The headings are like signs on a highway -- they help the reader navigate through your argument to a convincing and clear conclusion. A lost reader is an unhappy reader. If that reader influences your job performance, you will also be lost.

OPTION 4-B: BUSINESS PROPOSAL

A proposal is one of the most valuable communications tools available to anyone planning a career in business. It is presented by one business to another as a formal and detailed sales pitch. The eight sections of this document are described below:

1. BACKGROUND. Nature of prospect’s company and industry, brief history of his firm, current and future business challenges in the specific area(s) where you are proposing to assist his company. For example: The ABC firm is pleased to present this proposal to the XYZ Company to provide consulting services needed for a successful reengineering of XYZ’s customer service systems. The XYZ company seeks this assistance because ... [explain brief history of XYZ, problems with customer service, why internal efforts to fix the problems have failed, etc. ... anything that will show that ABC understands the primary issues and knows how to sum them up in a concise, insightful way.]

2. PROJECT MISSION AND SCOPE. Broad but clear statement of what will be done, how much will be done, and what will be achieved.

3. PROJECT APPROACH AND DELIVERABLES. Breakdown of mission into broad actions to be carried out and results for which your company (as supplier) will be responsible.

4. PROJECT WORKPLAN AND TIMELINE. Specific tasks, meetings, communications flow, and individuals’ responsibilities (team members will be from both vendor and client); look up GANTT CHART if you are not familiar with this and create said chart for this section of your proposal (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gantt_chart for info). The GANTT CHART is a requirement.

5. PROJECT STAFFING. Who will manage the effort, from both client and vendor side, and who will act as staff and in what capacity; include brief (three or four lines) résumés of all key players. Put these in a separate paragraph for each person; include academic or professional certifications if appropriate (for example, a Ph.D. in biology for an environmentalist, or CPA designation for an accountant).

6. PROJECT BUDGET. Estimate of costs for labor, materials, and profits. Use both brief prose statements and table to show cost calculations. CAUTION: This will be incorporated in a legally binding contract if you win the proposal.

7. PROPOSER’S QUALIFICATIONS. Concise summary of company’s achievements.

8. CONCLUSION. The final pitch ... ask for the business and reiterate why your company is the best choice!

See format guidelines in this syllabus. I will present additional discussion of the structure, content, and purpose of a proposal in the weekly lectures. In addition, see examples of effective proposals on the course website. Note that a business report or plan is double-spaced but a business proposal is single-spaced.

Before choosing to write a business proposal, consider whether a feasibility or recommendations report would be more suitable for your topic. See this link for information: http://www.prismnet.com/~hcexres/textbook/feas.html.

OPTION 4-C: BUSINESS PLAN

NOTE: If you prefer to prepare a BUSINESS PLAN for Assignment 4, consult with me early by email or phone. A plan differs from a report or proposal in both content and format. This document is normally used to help secure financing for a new entrepreneurial opportunity or to expand an existing business into new lines of production, marketing, sales, and distribution. See sample business plans posted on course website and in lectures for guidance to format, style, and content. Your plan must include all necessary financial statements as well as information on business organization, legal structure, strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats (SWOT analysis), and projections of performance based on legitimate and valid mathematical models. A plan is by nature more complex and demanding than a report or proposal and is permitted only for students who have at least a basic understanding of accounting, finance, investment, and/or business management. (Explain this in an email to me, citing specific courses/grades and professional experience which justify your choice.)

ASSIGNMENT 4 OUTLINE -- A REQUIREMENT, NOT AN OPTION (due Monday, Nov. 3, 2014, by 6 p.m.)

You will send me an outline of your topic before beginning work on the assignment. The outline will consist of a brief statement (100-150 words) of your proposed topic, thesis, and list of likely sources. Send this via email to me. Put this information into the body of your email message, not in a separate MS Word attachment. In the SUBJECT line of your email, write Lastname_3250_4 outline. For guidance, see sample outlines on the course website. I will respond to your outline promptly. Although the outline is not graded as such, I will not accept any Assignment 4 submission for which I have not approved an outline ahead of time. If you fail to observe these instructions, your #4 submission will earn a grade of zero (0) points.
RESOURCES FOR ASSIGNMENT 4
Many websites offer information on how to create business reports, proposals, or plans, but you should focus instead on researching the topic of your document. You may conduct research not only on the web but also by means of interviews, printed articles, newspapers, brochures, corporate annual reports, and books. A major challenge in such a report is to decide not just what to include but also what to exclude. Don't hesitate to ask questions of me, other faculty, your classmates, or your boss or peers at work. Document sources accurately, whether quoted, paraphrased, or merely referred to. Remember that you must supply parenthetical citations within the text in addition to a list of all sources consulted at the end of the submission. DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIRED REGARDLESS OF WHETHER YOU SUBMIT A REPORT, PROPOSAL, OR PLAN.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS
Assignment 4 should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words in length. Send your completed submission to me in two ways: (a) as an email attachment with the filename Lastname_3250_4.doc, using email subject line “Lastname 3250 Assignment 4,” and including all required audio codes in the body of the email; and (b) via Canvas so the work can be checked using the TurnItIn application. This assignment occurs too late in the term to be eligible for detailed markup. However, if you would like a brief emailed comment on the submission, please request that by naming your submission Lastname_3250_4_comment.doc. It is due no later than Monday, Dec. 1, 2014, 6 p.m. Except in case of a documented illness or similar reason, late submissions will be subject to penalties stipulated in this syllabus. No submission will be accepted at all after Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014, 6 p.m. except through individual arrangements with instructor and only if you can document the reasons for late submission.

TIPS FOR ENSURING HIGH-QUALITY WORK
• Proofread for content, logic, coherence, format, grammar, spelling, and conciseness.
• Follow assignment directions and deadlines carefully.
• Document everything you have found in all sources, including interviews, articles, websites, news publications, and books.
• Follow MLA guidelines carefully for citing references parenthetically within the text and in the SOURCES CONSULTED section at the end. Do not guess at how to do this – it must be completed correctly. See these links for assistance:
  http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/
  If you prefer to use APA format for your submission, please contact me via email for advice.
• If you have any question, no matter how minor or “stupid” you think it is, contact me. I am eager to help you create a work that you will be proud to share with prospective employers, family, faculty, and fellow students.
ADHERENCE TO FORMATTING DIRECTIONS PLAYS A ROLE IN THE GRADE YOU EARN ON AN ASSIGNMENT. It also tells me how serious you are about functioning in a professional environment, where indifference to rules and protocol can get you demoted or fired. Students who consider these rules to be an expression of extremely anal-retentive pickiness are encouraged to ask current or future employers how they feel about employees who take a casual approach to procedures, rules, and communication protocols. (When you receive an answer to that question, please let me know what it is.)

BUSINESS MEMORANDUM (MEMO) (Assignments 1 and 2)

SPECIFICATIONS. Use a single tab at 1” for opening lines (DATE, FROM, TO, etc.). For headings within text, use all caps boldface followed by a period. Then start text immediately on the same line. See below for information on how to set tab. Text should be 12-point, in boldface where shown, aligned left with ragged right margin (do not use right/left justified style).

KEY POINTS FOR EFFECTIVE MEMOS

- A salutation (“Dear Mr. Magoo”) and valediction (“Sincerely yours,”) belong in a letter but not a memo.
- Keep the typography and design as simple and traditional as possible -- do not use MS Word templates because they often create distorted appearance, especially when sent electronically. (Avoid ALL MS Word templates.)
- The subject line of your memo should tell the reader at a glance what he or she is about to read -- do not use a generic or broad subject such as “Operating Improvements”; instead, write “Reducing warehouse operating costs 12 percent.” This will save your reader’s time by announcing exactly what you are discussing. (A busy person has no time to waste on vagueness.)
- Assume that your reader has several memos to read besides yours. The more concise and direct your message, the more likely it will be read and remembered and, if appropriate, acted upon. Think of your own reaction to wordy, lengthy memos!
- Use correct tone and style -- avoid stuffy jargon or bureaucratic language such as “It has come to my attention” or “due to the fact that”; this creates wordiness that slows down the reader and makes you sound like a pompous windbag.
JOB ANNOUNCEMENT, COVER LETTER, RESUME, AND LINKEDIN.COM PROFILE - Assignment 3
(four separate pages, but one single document)

This assignment consists of four separate pages combined into a single document called Lastname_3250_3.doc or Lastname_3250_3 Markup.doc. The first page is separated from the second, the second from the third, and the third from the fourth, by means of a FORCED PAGE BREAK, as explained below. If you deviate from the prescribed format in this assignment, you will automatically lose at least one whole grade in addition to penalties for other mistakes.

FORMAT FOR JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Use Arial or Times New Roman in ordinary text for all three documents (do not use unusual or non-standard typeface; it may cause your documents to look distorted when sent via email in MS Word format). Use 1” margin on all four sides, single-spaced, aligned left with ragged right margin (do not use right/left justified style). Title of announcement is in 12-point boldface, aligned left. Place name etc. in 10-point type in upper right corner of Job Announcement page -- do not place this information in a header, and do not use a footer with these documents.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Use ordinary text for this -- do not use MS Word table or template

Firstname Lastname
ENC 3250 - Mr. Robertson
Assignment 3 - xx Month 20xx

use 10-point type for lines above, aligned right

Entire announcement should fit on a single page.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT - [STUDENT LASTNAME] [12-point type]

Staff Accountant [body copy should be in 10-point type]

National company with a division office in Sarasota is searching for a Staff Accountant to join their finance team. This position will be responsible for preparing journal entries, processing accounts payable, assisting with the preparation of the budgets, assisting with month end close and other ad hoc responsibilities within the accounting department. This position offers a competitive compensation, outstanding benefits and a tremendous opportunity for growth. Qualified candidates will possess a Bachelors degree in Accounting, strong computer skills including MS Excel and the desire to grow with an industry-leading company. Send resume including your grade point average.

Source: http://jobview.monster.com/
Taylor White Recruiters, Position 010707

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------- INSERT FORCED PAGE BREAK HERE -----------------------------------------------
FORMAT FOR COVER LETTER AND RESUME

Follow these tips: http://www.todroberts.com/USF/Roberts_JobHuntingAdvice_May-2014.pdf. Stick with the basic format shown in this syllabus. You will be graded to some extent on how well you can follow these directions. If you rebel against authority or are simply lazy and indifferent about proper procedures, you are advised either to conform or to give up on a professional career. Rebellion is expected and encouraged when fighting tyranny; when trying to get a job, it is just foolish.

MELANIE J. STUDENT
7744 Circle Street • Anywhere, Florida 34201
(941) 555-5555 • mjs_usf@gmail.com

Month Day, 20xx

Firstname Lastname, Title
Taylor White Recruiters
c/o Monster.com
Online Application

Reference: Taylor White Recruiters, Position MAC 010707 (www.monster.com)

Dear Mr. Lastname:

The opening for the position of Staff Accountant fits my qualifications very well. After completing my University of South Florida (USF) B.A. in accounting in Month Year, I would like to begin my professional career in a position such as that described in your announcement.

I am well suited to serve in the Staff Accountant position because I offer [match the language here with that in the job announcement and provide brief explanatory detail -- these are the all-important hooks that help determine whether you will be called for an interview or not]:

• A strong foundation in everyday accounting problems, situations, and solutions: have helped more than 50 clients maximize tax savings in personal and business returns
• Teamwork with fellow professionals: as member of Advanced Services Group, I work with senior accountants as my mentors on important corporate projects
• Skill at managing stress and work/life balance: success as full-time staff accountant while earning high grades as full-time college student and caring for family needs
• Knowledge of relevant software: proficiency in multiple ledger systems, Quickbooks, ProSeries, and all Microsoft Office applications
• Solid client communications ability: recipient of two “Superior Performance” awards for exceptional workshop presentations resulting in acquisition of six new small-business clients last year; earned top grades in college writing and speech courses

Please call me at (941) 555-6772 or email me at mjs_usf@gmail.com. I look forward to meeting with you for an interview at a mutually convenient time.

Sincerely Yours,
Melanie J. Student
Enclosure: Professional Resume

----------------------------- INSERT FORCED PAGE BREAK HERE ----------------------------------

KEY POINTS ABOUT COVER LETTER

• Emphasize the specific match between prospective employer’s announced needs and your qualifications
• Check even the tiniest details (example, punctuation, spacing, margins, abbreviations) for accuracy and correctness
• Restrict letter to a single page -- your reader is busy and appreciates an applicant who knows how to be concise and direct
• Top lines (name, address, etc.) in cover letter and resume should match exactly in format and style.
• Do not mix typefaces -- everything in letter and resume should be the same, either Times Roman or Arial. Do not use an unusual typeface which may be distorted when viewed on the recipient’s computer.
• Ask an impartial person to read your letter and resume and provide honest feedback to you.
• Read the letter and resume aloud -- slowly -- into an audio recorder and then listen to yourself the next day. Be on the lookout for tedious, boring, rambling, generic, or otherwise unappealing language and style. If it is unappealing to you, then it will be the same to the reader.
RESUME FORMAT

MELANIE J. STUDENT
7744 Circle Street • Anywhere, Florida 34201
(941) 555-5555 • mjs_usf@gmail.com

DO NOT INSERT A “PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE” – see explanation below.

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

February 2006 to Present, NumberCruncher CPAs, PA, Sarasota, FL
Staff Accountant
• Valuable experience in all areas of accounting and working with clients.
• Preparation of tax returns including 1040, 1065, 1120, and 1120S
• Efficient and accurate exchange of information with clients
• Thorough review and application of accounting rules, regulations, and code

January 2005 to February 2006, Pro Golf of Florida, Sarasota, FL
Sales Associate
Head of a retail team. Applied working knowledge of specifications and golf product features, maintained updated awareness of technological advancements in equipment, attire, and environmental conditions related to the field of play.

EDUCATION

May 2009, University of South Florida, Sarasota FL
Bachelor of Arts: Accounting, GPA: 3.55
• Recipient of the Brunch on the Bay Academic Scholarship for 2008-2009
• Member of Accounting Society
• Earned A+ in Professional Writing and gained valuable experience in communicating with clients and associates through memos, proposals, and reports

May 2004, University at Wisconsin, Green Bay WI
Bachelor of Science: Business Administration (Marketing), GPA: 3.0
Senior Thesis: Conception and development of a business model for an existing industry (available at www.myname.com/thesis). Active leader of project team; responsible for creation, supervision, and delegation of the overall business and marketing plans. Prepared and presented overall plan to professors and entrepreneurs on opinion panels. Received positive feedback.

PERSONAL ACTIVITIES
• Volunteer for American Diabetes Association and American Cancer Society
• Long-distance runner, aspiring triathlete
• Avid golfer, New York State Amateur Contestant

References available upon request.

Date of resume: xx Month 20xx

KEY POINTS ABOUT RESUME

• Do not include a “Professional Objective” or “Summary of Qualifications” -- this may limit your chance of being interviewed because the employer may use details to screen you OUT, not IN.
• Use mix of boldface, italics, and rules for emphasis and clarity, but avoid clutter. The long rule under a heading such as EDUCATION is formed using the BORDERS command (see FORMAT menu), not using the UNDERSCORE or DRAWING command.
• Choose only those facts that will help show your suitability for a given job (avoid generic resume).
• Do not indicate GPA unless a job announcement requires it -- if it’s low, it will make you look weak; if it’s higher than the interviewer’s, you will likely be at a disadvantage. Most business employers care far less about GPA than about your match with their needs.
• Remember this old saying: “A” students become professors; “B” students become middle managers; “C” students drop out of college, become entrepreneurs, and control the hiring and firing of “A” and “B” students. (While meant to be humorous, there is considerable truth in this statement.)
• Check even the tiniest details for accuracy and correctness.
• Do not list references in the resume unless specifically asked to do so; get permission of everyone from whom you expect to request a letter of reference (if you forget this, expect negative references!).
• Restrict resume to a single page. Use type no smaller than 10-point -- plentiful white space is a sign of quality; crowded, hard-to-read text is a sign of ignorance and carelessness. This document is not a life history; it is just a summary of truthful, relevant facts that effectively match you with the hiring objectives of a prospective employer. Save space by EDITING, not by cramming in a lot of useless verbiage.
LINKEDIN PROFILE FORMAT
Search LinkedIn.com for key words that fit your interest to find sample profiles that can guide you in creating your own. Search Google for “LinkedIn sample profiles and tips” as well.

FORMAT FOR EMAIL MESSAGE
Every email software package (“client”) handles details differently, but it is important to follow basic guidelines regardless of these individual differences. Below left is the general appearance of your outgoing email to me. Save all course-related outgoing and incoming messages in a separate folder with the label “ENC_XXXX” (without quote marks, where XXXX is the course number). Below right is Dilbert reminding you to include every original message (or message thread) in a reply email.

KEY POINTS ABOUT EMAIL MESSAGES
- Always send yourself a copy of your message and attachment at an address different from the one where the message originates; this will provide a safety backup in case the original email is lost. (This also functions well for emergency backup of an important document such as an assignment; if you don’t have external storage available, just email the draft to yourself.)
- If replying to a previous message, always quote the preceding email(s) so that your recipient is aware of the discussion thread; set your email preferences to do this automatically.
- As mentioned above, save your course-related messages in a separate ENC 3250 folder; you may need to prove to me that you sent the message and attachment in time to meet the deadline (see details in syllabus). If you don’t know how to view and capture the internet header information for a message, see http://www.todroberts.com/USF/Email_Headers.pdf. Otherwise, the work you claim was sent on time but did not arrive at my email provider (Comcast) on time will be penalized for lateness.
- Always include the course number, your name, and the nature of your message (assignment, question, clarification, etc.) I have dozens of students sending me many emails during the term. I do not have time to research the sender’s identity, the sender’s course number, or the reason for the message -- you must indicate these explicitly. Anything that causes me extra work will make a negative impression. Your future work associates and employer will react in the same way, but with harsher penalties for unprofessional practices (including demoting or even firing you).
- If your email address has little or nothing to do with your actual name, change it. It is unprofessional to use an address such as KittyKat0677@aol.com or OfficeSpaceHell@yahoo.com for school-related or work-related purposes. You may expect that a prospective employer (or professor) will assume you are ignorant of basic etiquette and will treat you communications accordingly. (Incidentally, the ancient Norse word “thorsdag” is related to my given name “Thorold.”)
- Include your name within the body of your email; don’t force your recipient to guess at who you are. This would be the equivalent of sending a message on paper with no signature or return address.
- When sending a message to an employer, prospective employer, professor, or professional contact, use formal standards of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and word usage. If you want to be taken seriously, you need to show that you understand such standards. If you routinely send emails containing all-lower-case or all-upper-case writing, misspelling, slang, vulgarity, hit-or-miss punctuation, and other signs of immaturity and ignorance, it’s time for you to learn and display the behavior of an educated, responsible adult. (Incidentally, please do not address me as “Hey Prof!”) In other words, the adolescent Facebook style may be OK with your peers. But if you communicate this way with professional contacts, your career may plateau at washing dishes or flipping burgers.
BUSINESS REPORT, PROPOSAL, OR PLAN - Assignment 4

FORMAT FOR BUSINESS REPORT (Option A for final assignment in ENC 3250)

Title

Title must both entice the reader and clearly sum up your topic; use upper/lower case, 14-point, bold, centered, no underscore, no italics -- use this style also for Sources Consulted at end.

1. Executive Summary
Text starts here, on first line below heading. ... 12-point plain type, flush left, double-spaced; do not tab or indent to start a new paragraph. Use ENTER key to insert a blank line between paragraphs and sections. Major section headings are bold, upper/lower, 12-point, flush left; do not start each section on new page -- run all text continuously. Margins = 1” on all four sides.

The ENTER key is denoted by the paragraph symbol: ¶

SUBHEAD. Subheading is all caps bold 12-point, with period at end. Text starts on same line as subhead, as shown in the word “SUBHEAD” in this line.

Sub-subhead. Upper/lower case, boldface, period at end; text starts on same line as sub-subhead. Use the “BULLET” command (from FORMAT menu) for default indentation and placement of bullet point. Text will be SINGLE-SPACED. This should be used only for relatively brief text passages (no more than four or five lines).

2. Introduction & Methodology
3. Background
4. Analysis & Interpretation
5. Conclusion & Recommendations

Sources Consulted <= 14 pt, bold, centered, u/lc, no underscore, no italics

Use standard MLA style for references; to save time, use the Noodlebib tool if you wish. You must provide parenthetical citations within the text in addition to list of references at end of report. See http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/research/mlaparen.html for information.

DON’T PLAGIARIZE! Everything from another source, no matter how minor, must be documented -- this includes direct quotes, indirect quotes, paraphrases, and even factual references. An exception would be something obvious such as the statement that “the sun rises in the east” or “there are 12 months in the year.” If you fail to document an item WITHIN THE TEXT but do document it in your SOURCES CONSULTED, you will be considered guilty of plagiarism. (All student submissions will be checked using the SafeAssign® tool on USF Canvas.)

Sources themselves will be single-spaced, with individual entries separated by blank line (ENTER key).

Footer command (VIEW menu => HEADER AND FOOTER) is explained below:

This is how it looks when you’ve done it right (the page number symbol $#" is a programming code which creates the actual page number when completed):

THREE IMPORTANT TIPS FOR ASSIGNMENT 4

• Tailor this for two readers: (a) the instructor and (b) a prospective employer who may see this work as a reason to interview you.
• Allow time to check for conciseness, completeness, correctness, and creativity -- challenge yourself to produce the best quality possible.
• Proofread carefully and ask a trusted classmate or co-worker to proofread (but not write or edit!).
GUIDELINES FOR BUSINESS PROPOSAL (Option B for final assignment)

Margins: 1" top and bottom, 1.25" left and right sides (this is the MS Word default for "Normal" document)

HEADINGS. Section headings should be in all caps boldface, followed by a period. Text starts immediately on same line. This is the same as in standard submissions and memos.

BODY TEXT. All text will be in 12-point Times or Arial, single spaced, aligned left. Do not indent for new paragraphs. Instead, add a blank line (ENTER key) between paragraphs. This is traditionally known as “Block Style.” (Why is a business report double-spaced and a proposal is not? A proposal is traditionally regarded as less formal and academic than a report.)

TITLE OF PROPOSAL. Put all title text at top of first page in bold, 14-point type, centered; use upper case and upper/lower case as shown below. Title information goes on first page of document. Text starts a couple of lines below that information.

Proposal to XYZ Company
City, State

by
ABC Firm
City, State

REENGINEERED CUSTOMER SERVICE SYSTEMS
title should be concise and descriptive

Day Month 20xx

[Begin text a couple of blank lines below the date, on the same page, aligned left.]

TABLES. Text within tables should be no bigger than 10 point and no smaller than 8 point. If you don’t know how to create a table in MS Word, read the tutorial information on the course website or within the HELP screens of the software. Allow plenty of time for this -- it can be a very frustrating job if you are new at it. You may create your GANTT chart using MS Excel (see link on course website.)

REFERENCES. All source material must be listed in MLA style at the end of the entire document (after the CONCLUSION), under the heading Sources Consulted (14-point, bold, centered, upper/lower case; sources should be single-spaced, 12-point text, with blank lines separating them).

FOOTER. Include a footer on your document showing the usual information (see Option-A/Report formatting instructions for details).

REQUIRED GRAPHIC. Every proposal must include a GANTT CHART to explain project timing, staffing, and similar information. See course website for tips on how to create this important information tool.

Obviously, you need to replace generic terms such as XYZ Company with real or real-seeming names. Be sure you understand the meanings of these words: client, prospect, deliverables, proposal, vendor, supplier, and project. If you merely think you know what they mean, ask me for help. Student-written proposals may fail because the writer misunderstands these important terms. (Nothing will mark your work as amateurish more emphatically than a misuse of terminology.)

EIGHT SECTIONS OF BUSINESS PROPOSAL

1. BACKGROUND. Nature of prospect’s company and industry, brief history of his firm, current and future business challenges in the specific area(s) where you are proposing to assist his company. For example: The ABC firm is pleased to present this proposal to the XYZ Company to provide consulting services needed for a successful reengineering of XYZ’s customer service systems. The XYZ company seeks this assistance because ... [explain brief history of XYZ, problems with customer service, why internal efforts to fix the problems have failed, etc. ... anything that will show that ABC understands the primary issues and knows how to sum them up in a concise, insightful way.]

2. PROJECT MISSION AND SCOPE. Broad but clear statement of what will be done, how much will be done, and what will be achieved.

3. PROJECT APPROACH AND DELIVERABLES. Breakdown of mission into broad actions to be carried out and results for which your company (as supplier) will be responsible.

4. PROJECT WORKPLAN AND TIMELINE. Specific tasks, meetings, communications flow, and individuals’ responsibilities (team members will be from both vendor and client); look up GANTT CHART if you are not familiar with this and create said chart for this section of your proposal (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gantt_chart for info). The GANTT CHART is a requirement.

5. PROJECT STAFFING. Who will manage the effort, from both client and vendor side, and who will act as staff and in what capacity; include brief (three or four lines) résumés of all key players. Put these in a separate paragraph for each person; include
academic or professional certifications if appropriate (for example, a Ph.D. in biology for an environmentalist, or CPA for an accountant).

6. **PROJECT BUDGET.** Estimate of costs for labor, materials, and profits. Use both brief prose statements and table to show cost calculations. CAUTION: This will become part of a legal contract if you win the proposal.

7. **PROPOSER’S QUALIFICATIONS.** Concise summary of company’s achievements.

8. **CONCLUSION.** The final pitch … ask for the business and show why your company is the best choice!

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**BUSINESS PLAN (Option C for Assignment 4 -- follow the same physical format as that shown for a Business Report.)**

If you prefer to prepare a BUSINESS PLAN for Assignment 4, consult with me early by email or phone. A plan differs from a report or proposal in both content and format. This document is normally used to help secure financing for a new entrepreneurial opportunity or to expand an existing business into new lines of production, marketing, sales, and distribution. See sample business plans posted on course website for guidance to format, style, and content. Your plan must include all necessary financial statements as well as information on business organization, legal structure, strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats (SWOT analysis), and projections of performance based on legitimate mathematical models. A plan is by nature more complex and demanding than a report or proposal and is permitted only for students who have at least a basic understanding of accounting, finance, management, and/or business investment.

**TEN SECTIONS OF A BUSINESS PLAN** (This list has been adapted from [http://cpa.utk.edu/FAQs/prodev_q6.htm](http://cpa.utk.edu/FAQs/prodev_q6.htm))

1. **Executive summary.** The executive summary is a one-page summary of your business plan. The summary should briefly describe your enterprise idea and discuss the conclusions made in your financial strategy. This section comes first in your business plan, but it is normally written last.

2. **Mission statement.** The mission statement reflects the core purpose of your business, stating your values in a focused sentence of less than fifty words.

3. **Business concept or idea.** Your business idea comprises a one-page, concise, complete and persuasive statement describing the what, where, why and how of your enterprise. This section includes your:
   - Enterprise idea
   - Product(s) and/or service(s)
   - Target audience
   - Enterprise’s “fit” with others in the market, both competitive and complementary

4. **Measurable goals, expected outcomes, objectives and action steps.** This component of your business plan describes the goals of your enterprise as well as the outcomes you expect, objectives and steps you will take to reach your goals. Goals describe the long-term plans (three to five years) you want to achieve. Objectives are your short-term (one year or less) plans that identify how you will meet your goals. Goals are what is to be accomplished, and objectives are how it is to be accomplished.

5. **Background information (industry research and market analysis).** Background information relative to your enterprise is explained in this section. This section includes background on why you are choosing to develop a value-added enterprise and market analysis information. You may describe the need for your enterprise in your area and trends in the industry.

6. **Management needs and management history.** The management needs and management history section of the business plan explains how you will run your business and describes your management team, the legal structure of the enterprise, insurance needs and staffing needs. It also notes what regulatory agencies you will be working with and how you will address their requirements.

7. **Marketing strategy.** This section of the business plan describes the strategies you will use to market your enterprise. Marketing strategies should be developed for “the four P’s of marketing” -- product, price, place and promotion. Start-up costs for the enterprise will need to be estimated.

8. **Financial strategy.** Your financial strategy is basic to making management decisions and obtaining financing. In this section, you will identify sources of existing debt and financing needs. You will also develop financial statements including a 1) profit-loss statement, 2) balance sheet, and 3) cash flow projection including sales projections. These statements will be summarized in this section of the business plan.

9. **Exit strategy.** An exit strategy specifies situations by which you plan to exit the business or situations which may necessitate the closing of the business. The exit strategy should also outline the method that will be used in exiting the business.

10. **Appendix.** The appendix, located at the end of the business plan, contains supporting documents. Financial statements, customer support statements, and credit terms available should all be included. (To meet length restrictions for Assignment 4, just list the Appendix content.)

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**USING TABLES IN MS WORD**

1. Contents of table should be in 10-point type, single-spaced
2. To adjust size, select the entire table, go to TABLE menu => AUTOFIT => AUTOFIT TO CONTENTS
3. Align numbers in a table column using the DECIMAL TAB.
4. Use TABLE PROPERTIES command in TABLE menu to adjust various aspects. For example, to prevent table from breaking over two pages, go to TABLE menu => PROPERTIES => ROW = Check OFF at “Allow row to break across pages.”

5. Column headings should be boldface and centered.

6. If confused, look at MS Word HELP screens or simply look on the internet. Use Google to search for “MS Word tables.”

EXAMPLE (use Formula = SUM command to create the “Total”):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$214,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>14,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rentals</td>
<td>1,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>43,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$272,746</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See http://www.tod roberts.com/USF/TypesettingTables.pdf for excellent advice on how to make your tables stand out.

**USING RULES AND BORDERS IN MS WORD**

If the software you are using treats the creation of borders, rules, tables, and other formatting features in a way substantially different from what is shown here, do a Google search for assistance or check the HELP screens provided with your software.

For information on other Word features, use the built-in Word HELP menu, the links on the course website, or a basic Google search when you are stuck trying to figure out how to use this or any software. Other users will likely have already posted a solution for you.
ENC 3250 • English Usage Tips: Memorize and Apply These in All Assignments

Listed here are some common errors found on student papers. While some errors result simply from careless proofreading, others may represent a deeper misunderstanding. A respect for language customs is the mark of a person who understands and observes the basic civilities of a free and educated community. Every student is expected to prepare flash cards for these tips and to commit this information to memory. Beginning with Assignment 3, penalties for any error that could be avoided by applying these tips will be DOUBLED.

**PUNCTUATION**

Comma splice: this means joining two independent clauses together with a comma; this often happens when the word “however” is used. An easy fix is to begin a new sentence with “However” and separate this word from other words with a comma. “However, he missed the plane.”

Apostrophe: this seemingly unimportant punctuation mark can create confusion if not used correctly. If used in “it’s,” it means “it is.” When referring to possession, “its” never has an apostrophe.

Hyphen: this is needed in compound modifiers such as “end-of-century art movement” or “Bush-influenced domestic policy.”

Dash: a space plus two hyphens and a space (--) This can be used to introduce an amplifying phrase, or to join two clauses. Example: “The student saw a major opportunity in graduating early -- he could begin his career immediately.”

**WORDINESS**

Writing concisely takes perception to see alternative ways to express a thought, and practice to eliminate unnecessary words. In addition to passive-voice verbs, common phrases that contribute to wordiness are these:

- due to the fact that
- in light of the fact that
- being that
- there (is) (are)
- under these circumstances
- the reason is because

**PRONOUN REFERENCES:** A common error in student writing is the use of *they, their, them* when a singular pronoun (*he, his, him*) is needed. This often occurs after indefinite pronouns such as anyone, someone, no one, each one. Each of these is singular and requires a singular reference. Modern teachers and editors, recognizing concerns about “sexist language,” may insist on the awkward he/she, his/her, him/her combination in such cases, but I find these forced pairs awkward and bureaucratic-sounding. Use either the masculine or feminine, but not both. Contrary to some feminists’ claims, the masculine he/him/his historically has nothing to do with male biological identity; it simply refers to “a person.” It appears “masculine,” but only in an archaic sense of grammatical gender. This is still evident in languages such as German, which assigns a masculine gender to “moon” (der Mond); the French do just the opposite, calling the moon feminine (la lune). Considering these “genders” in the same way a person is male or female is absurdly ignorant.

Better yet, convert the reference into a plural to eliminate the problem. Instead of “Any person who goes into business for himself/herself ...” write “People who go into business for themselves ...” Another pronoun reminder: in formal professional writing, use *that* or *which* to refer to ideas and objects and who or whom to refer to persons.

**SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT:** In U.S. English, a collective noun such as “group” or “band” takes a singular, not plural, verb. It also takes a singular, not plural, pronoun. Other collective nouns treated as singular include company, organization, and management. Example: “The management of ABC Corporation has ensured its survival by use of the golden-parachute tactic.”

**PARALLELISM:** When listing items using bullet points or as a series in a sentence or paragraph, put these items in parallel grammatical form. Don’t mix verbs and nouns in such a list.

**GENERAL USAGE TIPS**

In prose, spell out as words all numbers ten or smaller; use the word percent, not the percent sign (%). An exception to this practice is allowed in a table or chart.

Use *either/or, neither/nor, and between* only with two items of comparison, never three or more. Use the word *among* for three or more.

Differentiate *ensure, insure, and assure.* We ensure a result, we insure an auto against damage, and we assure a person of his safety.

Distinguish between the verbs *serve and service.* The latter refers to the process of having the oil changed in your car ... or to bringing a bull and cow together in unholy matrimony. If you say your company services customers, you may lose business.

Learn how the verbs *effect and affect* differ. To *effect* means to bring about: “The dean effected an important change in the way office space was allocated.” To *affect* means to influence: “The actor’s performance in *Hamlet* deeply affected me.” Don’t confuse the noun forms of these words! (See dictionary.)

Spell out an *acronym* the first time it is mentioned in your paper so the reader knows what it refers to.

*Alien vs. a lot:* The first is a common misspelling of the second; it’s too informal for professional writing.

*Between you and I vs. between you and me:* The pronoun “me” is required because it is the object of a preposition; using “I” in writing or speaking will brand you as ignorant.

* Lay vs. lie:* These verbs are confused even by supposedly educated speakers and writers, so those who understand their proper use will be a step ahead; “lay” is normally used as a transitive verb (one that takes a direct object); for instance, “If you lay your head on the pillow, you’ll fall asleep”; “lie” is an intransitive verb and thus cannot have a direct object (“If you lie down on the bed, you’ll fall asleep”). More confusion: “lay” is the past tense of “lie”: today he lies in a ditch – yesterday he lay in bed.

*Hopeful vs. hopeful or hope:* This confusion is commonplace but still a sign of ignorance; “hopefully” means “full of hope,” as in “She looked hopefully upon the teacher as a source of forgiveness for her goofing off all term.”

*Who’s vs. whose:* The first one is a contraction of “who is” or “who has”; the second is a possessive relative pronoun.

*There vs. their vs. they’re:* These homophones are commonly confused; the first is an expletive or adverb; the second is a third-person plural possessive adjective; the third is a contraction of “they are.”

*Your vs. you’re:* The first is a second-person possessive adjective; the second is a contraction of “you are.”

*Number vs. amount:* The first is used as a collective noun referring to countable items (as in “the number of hours in a day”); the second is a collective noun referring to uncountable items (as in “the amount of dust generated by excessive testosterone”).

*Different from vs. different than:* The first is standard in U.S. English; the second is preferred by the British. (And don’t spell “than” as “then!”)

*Verbal vs. oral:* The first refers to any communication expressed in words, whether written or spoken; the second refers only to communication expressed in speech. “Verbal agreement” in reference to a spoken agreement is misleading.

*Imply vs. infer:* Only a speaker or writer can “imply”; only a reader or listener can “infer.”

*Anxious vs. eager:* Although used interchangeably by some speakers, these two words differ considerably in meaning. Anxious refers to “having anxiety.” “Eager” means “looking forward to or anticipating with pleasure.”

For additional information on grade penalties in this course, see http://www.todroberts.com/USF/grade_penalties.pdf.