Writing 2130G
Building Better (Communication) Bridges: Rhetoric and Professional Communication for Engineers
Winter 2026

Lecture Section 650 (online, asynchronous)

Course Description and Objectives/Outcomes

This course introduces students to rhetorical principles and the practices of written, oral, and visual communication in professional engineering contexts.   Particular attention is paid to identifying and understanding audience, context and purpose; the grammar and effective style of Standard Written English; modes of persuasion; interpersonal communication; the negotiation of cultural difference; and effective scholarly research practices. Students will learn strategies for drafting and designing technical and academic documents and for approaching the editing and revision of those documents. As well, they will gain experience in organizing research effectively for presentation, composing clear and useful visual aids, and presenting research to their peers and the broader public with confidence.

Students who successfully complete Writing 2130 should be able to do the following:
- Write with a greater degree of clarity, confidence, and critical self-awareness to different kinds of audiences [CEAB Graduate Attribute Indicator: CS 3]
- Speak with a greater degree of clarity, confidence, and critical self-awareness to different kinds of audiences [CS 2]
- Understand what constitutes effective, ethical, and correct written and oral communication in a variety of rhetorical situations (and why) [CS 2, 3]
- Identify and define various rhetorical contexts for professional communication, including cultural contexts [CS 2, 3]
- Identify and correct errors in composition, grammar, diction, and mechanics [CS 3]
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources (research vs. review materials) and employ the methods of finding and evaluating such sources efficiently and correctly and of assessing their relative merits
- Understand what is at stake in conducting a review of scholarly literature
- Integrate source materials into written assignments both ethically and correctly, using IEEE documentation [CS 3]
- Revise papers and oral presentations through multiple drafts [CS 2, 3]
- Understand basic principles of document design and visual rhetoric and apply them to a research poster [CS 3]

Antirequisite
Engineering Sciences 2211F/G: Engineering Communications

Prerequisite
Engineering Sciences 1050: Introductory Engineering Design and Innovation Studio

Required Texts
R. Irish and P.E. Weiss, *Engineering Communication: From Principles to Practice,* 2nd ed. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2013.

W.E. Messenger *et al.*, *The Canadian Writer's Handbook: Third Essentials Edition*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2023.

These required texts are available as a package through the Western Bookstore. You can order copies here: https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2024A&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/FIL2230F&courses%5B1%5D=650_UW/WRI2130F

IEEE Citation and Documentation Guide
https://ieee-dataport.org/sites/default/files/analysis/27/IEEE%20Citation%20Guidelines.pdf

Course Requirements

Multiple-choice Quizzes (Best 2 of 3 @ 10% each)	20%
Assignment #1: Description of an important Engineering problem for two audiences (750-1250 words total for two documents)	15%
Assignment #2: Multi-component Research Project, as follows:	
Research "Presentation" (5 minute recorded voice-over, 5-7 slides)	15%
Research Poster	15%
Research Essay (1250-1500 words)	20%
Weekly tutorial discussion postings/responses	15%

Note: Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (https://westernu.brightspace.com/) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the OWL Brightspace Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Submitting Assignments
Assignments are due on the date specified, uploaded through the relevant "Assignments" link (under "Assessments") **on your tutorial's OWL site**. Do not email me (or your TA) any assignments! **Unless you have been granted an extension, late assignments will be penalized a full letter grade at least and <u>may not be accepted at all</u>**. You must talk to your TA about extensions ahead of the due date; they are not automatic.

When using sources in any written assignment, you will be expected to follow IEEE standards for citation and documentation (as well as for formatting). By uploading your assignments to OWL, you will be automatically submitting them to Turnitin for plagiarism checking. Turnitin will generate a report for you, detailing the percentage of your paper that has been drawn from sources; you will be able to see the report, as will your TA. No assignment will be graded until that report is generated and viewed.

Attendance and Participation
It should go without saying that attendance at class is required to improve as a communicator. The most successful classrooms—physical or online—have students and instructors equally engaged in thinking about and discussing the readings, assignments, and weekly topics. **You are expected to complete the assigned readings each week**. As the current circumstances require this class to be fully online, we do not meet formally; thus, attendance and participation on your tutorial discussion board are connected. Online courses are typically asynchronous (and this one is no different), but they are not wholly self-paced. You must attend and participate in class (defined as logging into your tutorial's OWL section and interacting with your peers and TA by posting responses to questions and prompts in the relevant weekly topic sections under the "Discussions" link).

Your class discussion grade will be based on whether you have sufficiently fulfilled the posting requirements, which are listed in more detail below. In general, the grade will be determined by 1) the quality of your posts each week, 2) the frequency and number of quality posts made.

1) Quality of Posting
All posts on your tutorial discussion forum must
- Contribute something meaningful to the board.
- Support your response with sufficient reasons and/or evidence.
- Demonstrate that you have either completed the assigned lecture and/or textbook reading (and/or that you have read your classmates' posts).
- Display good grammar and organization.

Posts should not
- Employ disrespectful, insulting, or offensive language. **Note in particular that the use of racist language or any language that works against the values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will not be tolerated.**
- Be unrelated to the weekly topic.
- Be too long (more than one screen length) or too short (a sentence or two).
- Consist (in the case of responding to classmates) only of statements like "I agree with you" or "Great comment!" Such posts do not contribute any substance to the discussion; thus, they do not count as posts.

2) Frequency and Number of Posts
You must post on <u>at least</u> **two separate days** covering that particular week's forum prompt (in addition to meeting the standards defined under "Quality of Posting"). At least **one post must initiate a new thread** to the discussion, and at least **one post must be a reply to either your tutorial leader or another student**. This means at least **two posts per week**. For the purposes of the class discussion, all weeks run from Monday to Sunday; late posts (i.e., posts that appear after the discussion concludes on Sundays at 11:59 pm) will not count toward your participation grade.

In assessing your participation, we may also look at the number of posts you've read. For instance, if during Week 3, your tutorial has posted 50 times in total and you only read 8 of those posts, that fact may not reflect positively in assigning your discussion grade.

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism
All essays and assignments must be written **in your own words**. Whenever you take an idea or a passage of text from another author, you <u>must</u> acknowledge this debt by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing of all quotation, paraphrase, and summary via in-text citations. **Please note that plagiarism also includes double submission: submitting work from one course for credit in another without written permission from <u>both</u> instructors**. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Scholastic offences such as plagiarism are taken very seriously and attended by academic penalties that may include expulsion from the program. You may read the appropriate policy on what constitutes a scholastic offence by following this link:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com http://www.turnitin.com.

As noted, in this course you will be required to submit an electronic copy of the final version of each of your written assignments to turnitin.com through your tutorial section's OWL homepage.

A Very Important Note on the Use of AI: In this course, the use of AI (such as automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, ChatGPT…) is prohibited, unless there has been discussion with and agreement by the instructor or TA before beginning an assignment. If AI use is suspected, the instructor or TA will ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and/or other materials used in preparing assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

Prerequisite Checking
Ensuring you have the correct prerequisite(s) is your responsibility. The following notation articulates the Senate regulation with respect to the student needing to be responsible for ensuring that course prerequisites have been completed successfully or special permission from the Dean obtained:

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed.   You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

Academic Consideration Policy
University policy on academic considerations is described here. This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation.

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests through the Student Absence Portal, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:
https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation, which may include a Student Medical Certificate. Recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. **However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:**

- **Quizzes:** Because only two of three quizzes get counted in the calculation of the final course grade, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for these missed elements. Should extenuating circumstances arise, students do not need to request Academic Consideration for the first missed quiz. Academic consideration requests will be denied for the first missed quiz.

- **Assignments 1 and 2 (all components):** Because the submission deadlines for these assessments already includes flexibility in the form of three-day windows for submission without penalty, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility. Students are expected to submit each of these assignments by the deadline listed below. Should extenuating circumstances arise, students do not need to request Academic Consideration as they are permitted to submit their assignment up to 72

hours past the deadline without any late penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond 72 hours past the listed deadline, a late penalty as described above under "Submitting Assignments" will be applied.

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Religious Accommodation
Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing (email), prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: (https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.

Statement on Gender-based Sexual Violence
Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, here. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Other Student Support Services
Registrarial Services http://www.registrar.uwo.ca
Student Support Services https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login
Services provided by the USC http://westernusc.ca/services/
Academic Support and Engagement http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing
Please refer to the "Information for All Students in a Writing Course" for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that your instructor does not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean's office of your home faculty.

Intellectual Property and Copyright
All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Lecture, Reading, and Assignment Schedule

Date	Lecture/Tutorial Focus and Assignments	Readings
Week 1: Jan. 5-9	Introduction to the course/syllabus Assessing the rhetorical situation: Purpose, genre, and audience Discussion of Assignment 1 **Tutorial:** Grammar basics: word classes	Syllabus and introductory documents posted to OWL *Engineering Communication* (**EC**): Introduction, Ch. 1, Ch. 3 (pg. 130-36), Appendix C (pg. 337-39, 342-45), Appendix D, Appendix E *Canadian Writer's Handbook* (**CWH**): Chapters 6 (all), 7a-b, 8a-f, 10-13 (all)
Week 2: Jan. 12-16	Purpose, genre, and audience **Tutorial:** Grammar basics continued: Sentence elements (clauses and phrases)	*EC*: Ch. 4; Appendix A, Appendix B (pg. 328-35) *CWH*: Ch.1 a-b, 3
Week 3: Jan. 19-23	Oral presentation basics **Tutorial:** Writing correctly: Sentence boundary errors	*EC*: Ch. 6 (pg. 213-16); Ch. 9 (pg. 280-92, 297-306, 307-8) *CWH*: Ch. 2, 5a-c
Week 4: Jan. 26-30	Oral presentation basics Discussion of Assignment 2 **Tutorial:** Writing correctly: Punctuation **Quiz 1 (closes at 11:59 pm Friday)**	*CWH*: Ch. 15-18, 25; *EC:* Appendix F
Week 5: Feb. 2-6	Employment Communications **Tutorial:** Writing elegantly: Emphasis and "flow" (nominalizations, active vs. passive voice) **Assignment 1 (due by 11:59 pm Fri.)**	*CWH:* Ch. 4, 8h; *EC*: Ch. 3, 5, 6
Week 6: Feb. 9-13	Developing and Designing an Argument: Visual Rhetoric **Tutorial:** Writing elegantly: Emphasis and "flow" (continued) **Quiz 2 (closes at 11:59 pm Friday)**	*CWH:* Ch. 1d-g, 33; *EC*: Ch. 8, 9 (pg. 292-97, 306-7)
Fall Reading Week		
Week 7: Feb. 23-27	Visual Rhetoric (cont.): Research Posters	*CWH:* Ch. 5d-e, 5h; *EC*: Ch. 2, 8

	Tutorial: Faulty Parallelism; Modifier Problems	
Week 8: Mar. 2-6	Visual Rhetoric (cont.) Citing, Incorporating, and Documenting Sources **Tutorial:** Visual Rhetoric and effective Research Presentations **Research Presentation (due by 11:59 pm Friday)**	
Week 9: Mar. 9-13	Strategies for Engaging with Sources Effectively **Tutorial:** Thesis statement review **Quiz 3 (due by 11:59 pm Friday)**	*CWH:* Ch. 34-36
Week 10: Mar. 16-20	IEEE Citation and Documentation **Tutorial:** Incorporating Sources **Research Poster (due by 11:59 pm Friday)**	*CWH:* Appendix A; IEEE Citation and Documentation Guide (linked on syllabus)
Week 11: Mar. 23-27	Research Essay Writing Tips and Strategies **Tutorial:** Writing Research Essays	
Week 12: Mar. 30-Apr. 3	Research Essay help/consultation	
Apr. 6-9	**Assignment 2 Research Essay (due by 11:59 pm Friday)**	