

SEP 19 2000

Grande Prairie Regional College
Department of Early Childhood Development

CD 1130
Communications

HOURS: 45

SEMESTER: Fall 2000

INSTRUCTOR: Rebecca Reynolds

TELEPHONE: 539-2053 (office) or 539-1476 (home)

OFFICE: Upstairs from Starbuck's in the former Public Relations and
Communications office. First day tour will be provided!

OFFICE HOURS : 10:30- 11:30, Wednesdays and Thursdays

REQUIRED TEXTS

Norton, S. and Green, B. : The Bare Essentials, Form A
(4th edition), Harcourt Brace, Toronto. 1999.
ISBN: 0-7747-3636-4

Fitzpatrick, D. and Center Vance, K.: Writing for Success.
Prentice Hall Canada, Scarborough, Ontario. 1998.
ISBN: 0-13-095493-4

A good English dictionary, preferably the Oxford English Dictionary or Collins Co-Build.

RECOMMENDED TEXT

Leech, G.: An A-Z of English Grammar and Usage.
Nelson, UK. 1989.
ISBN: 0-17-556021-8 ,

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OVERVIEW

This course is designed to help students improve their written and oral communications skills. Through the study of grammar, mechanics and syntax and through the process of writing and then orally presenting their work, students will improve their mastery of English. Students will learn to apply their skills to practical business communications, thereby enhancing their capabilities in the workplace.

SECTIONS IN BRIEF

Section 1: Grammar, syntax and mechanics: a review of our language's basic rules and structures.

Section 2: Library research and APA documentation.

Section 3: Paragraph and essay structure, business communications and the "business portfolio".

Section 4: Oral presentations.

SECTIONS IN DETAIL

SECTION ONE: Grammar, Mechanics and Syntax

In this section, students will re-acquaint themselves with the basic structures of English grammar, its mechanics and its syntax. The majority of classwork for this section will come from The Bare Essentials.

Section 1(a)

By the end of section 1(a), students will demonstrate a sound knowledge of the basics of English grammar. This section will be prefaced by a discussion of grammar, its purpose and its inherent usefulness. We will examine how the grammar we use directly and dramatically colours the way in which we communicate with others and how these communications are received. Section 1(a) will become the foundation upon which much of the course will rest.

This section will include, but not be confined to, the study of subjects, verbs and objects, subject/verb disagreement, person, pronouns, and the correct formation of all tenses.

Section 1(b)

In this sub- section, students will investigate **syntax**- the sets of rules that govern the formation of sentences. Here, students will combine the skills they have acquired from the previous sub- section and, together with the rules of syntax, will demonstrate skill in writing clear, correct sentences. Specific attention will be given to such problem areas as dangling and misplaced modifiers, sentence fragments and run- on sentences.

Section 1(c)

In section 1(c), students will re- familiarize themselves with a fundamentally important aspect of effective communications: **mechanics**. Specific attention will be given to some of the many troublesome areas of spelling, capitalization and punctuation. Aspects of this section will be presented on an ongoing basis throughout the course.

SECTION TWO: Research

In section two, students will develop **library and internet research skills** and will study **APA documentation**. Familiarity with APA documentation will assist students in avoiding plagiarism. It will also help them prepare work for the remainder of their ECD courses, all of which require the use of APA. Because APA documentation is used throughout the Department of Early Childhood Development, students are required to understand and apply this formatting system to **all of the researched work** which they write and present. Instructors from each course within the department will expect students to correctly implement this system of documentation. Students will also practice **paraphrasing** techniques and will learn to distinguish between paraphrasing and plagiarism.

Library Tour

A tour of the library will be conducted on **October 13th**. Library staff will help students become familiar with the retrieval system and will provide information on documentation. Students will also be given a tutorial in internet research and will learn how to set up their own email accounts.

APA Workshop

To assist in students' understanding of APA, a staff member from the Writing Centre will present an APA workshop on the morning of **October 20th**.

SECTION THREE: Essays, Business Communications and the Business Portfolio

In this third section of the course, students will apply the lessons of section one to paragraphs and short essays. By learning the **paragraph** and **essay structure**, students will necessarily acquire and apply logical and critical thinking skills. Students will also study the correct format for business letters, memos and e-mails.

Business Portfolio

In this third section of the course, students will encounter the many practical business applications of what they have learned. For their **business portfolio**, a major assignment which is worth **30 percent** of their total mark, students will be required to produce a variety of business communications: e-mails, letters and memos. The weightiest part of this assignment is an **essay**, a project which will bring together all of the writing and research skills that the students have accumulated throughout the course. Reflection and research for the essay can begin in mid-

September, when the students will be asked to choose between three possible scenarios. Students will base their business portfolios on the scenario that they select. The letters, e-mail and memos will be directly related to the essay and therefore to the scenario. A thorough description of this project will be conducted in the second week of classes. Don't despair: this will all make sense!

SECTION FOUR: Oral Presentations

Pairs of students will present the pro and con sides of issues arising from the scenarios. Supporting materials such as visual aids must be used and both sides of the issues must be presented as fairly and rationally as possible. This is not intended to be a debate, but the full and fair presentation of a whole issue. The minimum time limit for the presentations is **ten minutes** and students are asked **not to exceed fifteen minutes**. Students will also be expected to answer questions posed by their classmates.

Presentations will be videotaped so that students may review their work.

Pairs will be established as soon as students have selected the scenarios for their business portfolios. Students are encouraged to develop supportive academic relationships with their partners and assist one another in research.

Marks for this assignment will be assigned to the pair, not to the individual student.

To help students prepare for their oral presentations, a representative from Toastmasters will speak to the class in late November. The date of this presentation will be announced.

COURSE EVALUATION

Participation..... 5 %

- Class attendance
- In- class assignments and homework based on exercises in Bare Essentials and Writing for Success

Quizzes..... 20 %

- Two short quizzes based on grammar, mechanics and syntax

Dates for quizzes to be announced

In- class essay 15 %

- One short essay, five paragraphs in length in which students will demonstrate a) the ability to write a thesis statement and develop it logically through to its conclusion and b) the ability to write clear and concise paragraphs which flow intelligently from strong topic sentences. This essay will be written **during class time** and will be a demonstration of how effectively students can apply the skills of grammar and writing that they have acquired during the course.

Date for the in- class essay: Friday, November 17th

Library/ APA Assignment..... 15 %

- Students will demonstrate the ability to retrieve materials from the library's existing collection and from the internet. Materials will be presented in the form of a "**References**" list and must be formatted according to APA guidelines. It is expected that students will retrieve materials relevant to the scenario which they choose for their business portfolios.
- Students will complete an in- class exercise on APA documentation paraphrasing. This will be an **open book** exercise.

Due date for library/APA assignment to be announced

Business Portfolio..... 30 %

Students will base their business portfolios on one of three possible **scenarios**. Each component of the portfolio will be directly related to the chosen scenario. The scenarios will be presented on **September 22nd** so that the students may have adequate time to consider and research their projects. The completed portfolio will contain the following:

- One e- mail
- One memo
- One business letter (covering letter, letter of inquiry, thank- you letter, follow- up letter etc.)
- One essay in which students demonstrate skill in essay structure, persuasion, research, and documentation.

Due date: Friday, December 1st

Please note: The contents of the Business Portfolio must be typewritten, double spaced and handed in on the assigned date. 5 % will be deducted per day after the due date from students who have not specifically requested an extension.

Oral Presentation (pairs work)..... 15 %

- The mark for this section of the course will be based upon how well pairs of students orally present and examine the issues arising from the scenarios. Visual aids must accompany this presentation. Marks will be assigned to the pair, not to the individual student.

Dates for oral presentations: December 1st and December 8th

Please note: dates given in this course outline are subject to change.

THERE IS NO FINAL EXAMINATION FOR THIS COURSE.