

WRITING FOR SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY
WRIT 566-001
SPRING 2016

Biography and Questionnaire

Due: Sunday, Jan. 19, 10:00 PM

Assignment Overview

In both workplace and educational settings, email is a major mode of communication. As *The MIT Guide to Science and Engineering Communication* explains, while hardly new – the first technical communication articles to address email date back to the late 1960s – email is still a transitional, evolving form of communication. Key issues to effective email communication include identifying your purpose and genre (memo- and letter-like messages are the most common forms of professional email correspondence), concision, scannability, and informative subject lines.

And if you include attachments, meaningfully descriptive file names are also crucial, as is ensuring that the attachment has identifying information when possible. Sending an attachment with the file name “paper1” or “proposal” when the recipient will receive multiple papers or proposals ensures that your document is hard to find. Naming files with your last name or your company name along with a descriptive file name means that your file can be found more readily (for example: Warwick-NBT-Grant2015.doc or Casey-WRIT566-AnnBib.doc). Likewise, you can’t assume that an attachment will always travel with the original email; therefore, it is crucial that you include identifying information such as your name, date, title, etc. in the attachment as if you were handing someone a paper copy. Not only might the attachment be downloaded and the original email deleted, the attachment itself might be printed out and filed while the electronic file is deleted as well.

Tasks

Complete the Course Questionnaire and attach it to an email that includes a short (one- or two-page) biographical summary introducing yourself. In completing this assignment, you should do the following:

- Complete the Course Questionnaire and save it as a .doc file. Make sure that the document includes identifying information you would include with any printed-out assignment as well as a descriptive file name.
- Use a descriptive subject line with the email.
- Include a brief biographical summary about yourself. Where are you from? What are your interests and hobbies?
- What are your academic and professional goals?
- Describe your current post-graduation plans.
- Explain why you are taking WRIT 566 and what you hope to get out of this class.
- Describe any current papers or pending presentations or publication projects in process. Are you working on anything that might be relevant for WRIT 566?

Course Questionnaire

Directions: The purpose of this questionnaire is to start to get a sense of who you are, what you hope to get from this course, what expectations you might have, and how I might be better able to develop and structure the course for you. Most responses can be answered in 50-100 words.

Part I: General Questions

1. Your name.
2. What drew you to this course? (If you're taking this course because it fulfills a requirement, tell me why *this* course rather than other courses that could fulfill the same requirement.)
3. What do you hope to learn in this course (skills, areas of knowledge, methods, practices, etc.)?
4. If you've taken a fully online course before, please identify some specific aspects of that course that you found particularly effective or helpful as a student in that class. Please try to explain why you found the aspects effective.
5. If you've taken a fully online course before, please identify some specific aspects of that course that you wish had been done differently or that you did not find particularly effective. Please try to explain why you did not find these aspects effective.
6. As we start the semester, do you have any concerns about this course that I might be able to address or help you with?

Part II: Office Hours

Because I am teaching this course remotely from Washington, DC, we will have to hold office hours online. Currently, my scheduled office hours are Mondays (7:00-9:00 PM).

7. In a typical week, would you be able to get online and talk with me via Skype during some part of these office hours?

8. Would you be interesting in having *some* office hours held as a voluntary (drop-in) small group discussion format using group conferencing software such as Google Hangouts?

Part IV: Syllabus Questions

By submitting this questionnaire, you are certifying that you have read the course syllabus and are aware of the following policies, including but not limited to:

- The requirements for the course,
- What constitutes attendance and participation,
- The late assignment policy,
- Issues of academic honesty,
- Have read the English Department's *The Correct Use of Borrowed Information*,
- How to contact the instructor during office hours,
- How to contact the instructor outside of office hours,
- What questions should be sent to course listserv and what questions should be emailed privately to the instructor,
- Appropriate email etiquette regarding subject headings, salutations, and closing.

If you have any questions regarding the syllabus and/or the policies and procedures for this course, please list them here.

Your Questions