

**ENGLISH 395.0601: WRITING FOR THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS
FALL 2014**

Monday and Wednesday, 2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., 0221 Tawes Fine Arts Building

Instructor: Dr. Scott Wible

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Tip for effective email use:

(1) Begin the subject line with ENGL 395

(2) Complete the subject line with a concise phrase describing your question or concern.

Office: 1220 Tawes Hall

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. (1220 Tawes)

Additional physical and virtual office hours by appointment (Skype: scottwible).

English 395: Writing for the Health Professions serves those students who are studying and preparing for careers in the health professions, from doctors, nurses, physicians assistants, and pharmacists to physical therapists, occupational therapists, and athletic trainers, to public health researchers and educators. These professionals need to make technical information available to those people who need it, whether those audiences be coworkers in the hospital or clinic, other experts in the field, government agencies and non-profit organizations, public policymakers, patients and their families, or the broader public. This advanced course in writing will give you the opportunity to identify and explore the discourse practices prized in your disciplinary, institutional, and professional communities—and help you to manage those discourse practices effectively in your own written work. In this way, you will learn and experiment with just some of the many writing strategies and tactics that medical and health professionals need in order to write successfully for their jobs.

This particular section of English 395: Writing for the Health Professions participates in the University of Maryland's Chesapeake Project, which aims to integrate sustainability education throughout the curriculum in order to deepen students' understanding of environmental, economic, and social sustainability and heighten their awareness of how these concepts relate to their academic disciplines and their future professional and civic lives. In this particular course, you will learn both to define "health" and "sustainability" and, as you analyze several specific contexts, explain how health and sustainability concerns are closely linked. For example, what is the current state of pollution, habitat, and fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay, and how do those qualities influence the health of those people who live within its 64,000-square mile watershed? How does the safety and security of physical and social environments in Prince George's County affect the health of the county's residents? What are the health, environmental, economic, and communal reasons that have led Maryland public schools to begin serving students more food that has been produced on the state's farms? How does the location of grocery stores and of health care facilities as well as public transportation routes to these places affect people's health? In this course you will learn to use research and writing to pursue answers to questions such as these. You will analyze how our natural and social environments influence public health, and you will apply this knowledge to create solutions to public health problems on campus, in the local community, and across this state and region.

I have designed this course so that you are able to demonstrate or make significant progress toward achieving the Fundamental Studies Professional Writing learning outcomes:

- Analyze a variety of professional rhetorical situations and produce appropriate texts in response.
- Understand the stages required to produce competent, professional writing through planning, drafting, revising, and editing.
- Identify and implement the appropriate research methods for each writing task.

- Practice the ethical use of sources and the conventions of citation appropriate to each genre.
- Write for the intended readers of a text, and design or adapt texts to audiences who may differ in their familiarity with the subject matter.
- Demonstrate competence in Standard Written English, including grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, coherence, and document design (including the use of the visual) and be able to use this knowledge to revise texts.
- Produce cogent arguments that identify arguable issues, reflect the degree of available evidence, and take account of counter arguments.

In this particular section of English 395, you will also working toward achieving these additional learning outcomes:

- Define sustainability and health as they relate to your topic, your academic discipline, and your future professional and civic lives.
- Use systems thinking to analyze a public health problem and articulate its relationship to sustainability concerns.
- Use design thinking processes to brainstorm, develop, evaluate, and propose solutions to a public health problem.
- Collaborate effectively and ethically within a writing team.

Required Text

Wolfe, Joanna. *Team Writing: A Guide to Working in Groups*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. ISBN-10: 0-312-56582-8.

Social Justice Statement

The University of Maryland is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Accessibility Statement

The University of Maryland is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this class, complete course requirements, or benefit from the university's programs or services, contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) as soon as possible. To receive any academic accommodation, you must be appropriately registered with DSS. The DSS works with students confidentially and does not disclose any disability-related information without their permission. For further information about services for students with disabilities, please contact the DSS.

Office of Disability Support Services
 0106 Shoemaker Building
 301-314-7682
dissup@umd.edu
<http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/>

I assume that all of us learn in different ways, and that the organization of any course will accommodate each student differently. For example, you may prefer to process information by speaking and listening, so that some of the written handouts I provide may be difficult to absorb. Please talk to me as soon as you can about your individual learning needs and how this course can best accommodate them. If you do not

have a documented disability, remember that other support services, including the Writing Center and the Learning Assistance Services Center (<http://www.counseling.umd.edu/LAS/>), are available to all students.

Grades

When grading each of your assignments, I will ask one overriding question: “Does this document do its job successfully?” The “job,” or purpose, of each document will be explained on the individual assignment descriptions that appear later in this syllabus, and we will spend ample time in class discussing how you can create a rhetorically successful text for each assignment. I will use the following criteria to evaluate your major writing projects:

A	<i>Exemplary work.</i> The text demonstrates originality, initiative, and rhetorical skill. The content is mature, thorough, and well-suited for the audience; the style is clear, accurate, and forceful; the information is well-organized and formatted so that it is accessible and attractive; genre conventions are effectively used; mechanics and grammar are correct. The text is well-edited, well-written, well-argued, and well-documented and requires no additional revisions.
B	<i>Good work.</i> The text generally succeeds in meeting its goals in terms of audience, purpose, and rhetorical skill without the need for further major revisions. The text may need some <i>minor</i> improvements in content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics.
C	<i>Satisfactory work.</i> The text is adequate in all respects, but requires some substantial revisions of content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics; it may require further work in more than one area. For instance, central ideas may generally be apparent, but may often lack adequate explanations, rhetorical analysis, or documentation necessary for different audiences and purposes.
D	<i>Unsatisfactory work.</i> The text generally requires extensive revisions of content, presentation, writing style, and/or mechanics. The writer has encountered significant problems meeting goals of audience, purpose, and acquiring command of rhetorical principles.
F	<i>Failing work.</i> The text does not have enough information, does something other than is appropriate for a given situation, or contains major and pervasive problems in terms of content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics that interfere with meaning. A failing grade is also assigned to plagiarized work.

Your final grade will be determined by the grades you receive on both individually authored and collaboratively authored assignments, according to the following weighting:

Individually Authored Projects and Texts (50% of your final grade)

1. Discussion Board Posts (10%)
2. Exploratory Essay (10%)
3. Analyzing Stakeholders Essay (10%)
4. Defining a Public Health Problem (10%)
5. Reflective Writing Activities (5%)
6. Participation (5%)

Collaboratively Authored Projects and Texts (50% of your final grade)

7. Team Charter (2.5%)

8. Team Schedule (2.5%)
9. Brainstorming and Sorting Possible Solutions (5%)
10. Technical Description of 3 Solutions (10%)
11. Report for Decision Making (25%)
12. Oral Presentation (5%)

I will use the following grading scale to calculate your grade for each assignment and the course:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
97%	93%	90%	87%	83%	80%	77%	73%	70%	67%	63%	60%	0%

Participation in English 395

Your participation grade for the course will be based on the following criteria:

A	<i>Superior participation</i> shows initiative and excellence in written and verbal work. The student helps to create more effective discussions through her or his contributions. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. Interaction and collaboration with peers is tactful, thorough, specific, and often provides other students with a new perspective or insight.
B	<i>Strong participation</i> demonstrates active engagement in written and verbal work. The student plays an active role in the classroom but does not always add new insight to the discussion at hand. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. Interaction and collaboration with peers is tactful, specific, and helpful.
C	<i>Satisfactory participation</i> demonstrates consistent, satisfactory written and verbal work. Overall, the student is prepared for class, completes assigned readings and writings, and contributes to small group and large class discussions. Reading and writing assignments are completed on time. Interaction and collaboration with peers is tactful and prompt.
D	<i>Weak participation</i> demonstrates inconsistent written and verbal work. The student may be late to class, unprepared for class, and may contribute infrequently or unproductively to classroom discussions. Reading and writing assignments are not turned in or are insufficient. Interaction and collaboration with peers may be lacking, disrespectful, or off-topic.
F	<i>Unacceptable participation</i> shows ineffectual written and verbal work. The student may be excessively late to class, regularly unprepared, and not able to contribute to classroom discussions or small group workshops. This student may be disruptive in class. Reading and writing assignments are regularly not turned in or are insufficient. The student has a pattern of missing class, being completely unprepared, or being disruptive.

Attendance

You are expected to attend class every day, and you should also have that day's reading assignment (or notes on the assigned reading) with you, in either print or electronic form. An occasional absence is perhaps understandable, but habitual absence is inexcusable. *For any unexcused absence after three, you will receive an F for "Class Participation."*

I will follow the University of Maryland Faculty Senate's policy on "excused absences" such that legitimate reasons for missing a class include regularly scheduled, University-approved curricular and extracurricular activities; medical illness; and religious observances.

Missing Class Due to Illness

Regular attendance and participation in this class is the best way to grasp the concepts and principles being discussed. However, in the event that you must miss a class due to an illness, the policy in this class is as follows:

- For every medically necessary absence from class, you should make a reasonable effort to notify me in advance of the class. When returning to class, bring a note identifying the date of and reason for your absence and acknowledging that the information in the note is accurate.
- If you are absent more than 2 times for the same illness, upon returning to class, bring documentation signed by a health care professional. Please note that this documentation should not disclose any details of your illness; it should only note that your illness prevented you from participating in class on the days noted.

Requirements

You will be expected to

- attend all class meetings, prepared for work (see "Attendance" below);
- participate in class discussions;
- complete both in-class and out-of-class writing exercises;
- participate in all draft workshops;
- draft, write, and revise each course writing project;
- submit all work *on time*, on the hour/day it is due (see "Promptness" below).

Please note: Passing the course requires timely completion of all of the assignments, long and short, in-class and out-of-class.

Writing Project Standards

In this course, I will hold you to the professional standards that prevail both throughout the university and within the field of science and science communication.

Promptness. In this course, as in the working world, you must turn in your work on time. All *major writing projects*, reflective writing pieces, and homework activities must be submitted by the beginning of class on their respective due dates. Unless you have made arrangements with me in advance, major writing projects turned in late will lead to the grade for that assignment being lowered one full letter grade (e.g., A becomes a B, B becomes a C, and so on).

Development. In all the writing you do for this course, strive to compose "substantive" writing. You should make your argument and your purpose clear to readers and, where appropriate, provide convincing evidence, concrete details, and relevant examples.

Rhetorical Strategy. Throughout this course, you will be learning various rhetorical theories and techniques for persuading your audiences, from composing effective *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos* appeals to creating a specific sentence-level style and tone. Your formal writing projects should reflect your efforts to apply these theories through your planning, drafting, and revising process.

Appearance. All work should be neatly prepared on a computer using spacing and design techniques that are conventional for the genre. Whether it is a essay, proposal, wiki entry, electronic portfolio, or email, your communication should exhibit appropriate format.

Grammar, Spelling, Proofreading. At work, even a single error in spelling, grammar, or proofreading can jeopardize the effectiveness of some communications. Grading will reflect the seriousness with which these matters are frequently viewed in the working world. If you would like special assistance with these skills, I can recommend sources for extra help.

Expectations

In addition to the requirements outlined above, you are expected to work until the class period has ended; to complete all reading and writing assignments on time; to help your classmates learn by your participation in class discussions and group activities; to spend at least six hours per week out of class for research, writing, and class preparation; and to be courteous and considerate.

Conferences

Meet with me when you have questions about an assignment, when you would like to try out some ideas before a document is due, when you have questions about a comment, or when you want to know where you stand in the course. You should also see me to get help with particular writing-related problems or to resolve differences about grades. Finally, I am open to your suggestions for improving the course, so please discuss with me your ideas about how the course is going. If you cannot make my scheduled office hours and would like to meet with me, we can work together to find a convenient time for conferencing.

Undergraduate Writing Center

Please consider taking your ideas and your written work to the Writing Center, where trained peer tutors will consult with writers about any piece of writing at any stage of the writing process. The Writing Center is located in 1205 Tawes Hall. You can schedule appointments with the Writing Center in three different ways:

Phone: 301.405.3785

Email: writadmin@umd.edu

Scheduling Website: <http://rich65.com/umd/>

For more information about Writing Center programs as well as for materials to help you negotiate various stages of the writing process, visit the center's website:

<<http://www.english.umd.edu/academics/writingcenter>>.

Academic Integrity

The University of Maryland defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity; respect other students' dignity, rights, and property; and help to create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. For university procedures that I intend to follow when addressing academic dishonesty cases, please consult the University of Maryland's Student Honor Council webpage: <<http://www.shc.umd.edu/SHC/Default.aspx>>.

Code of Academic Integrity and the Honor Pledge

The University of Maryland is one of a small number of universities with a student-administered "Code of Academic Integrity and Honor Pledge"

<<http://www.orientation.umd.edu/VirtualFolder/academicintegrity.pdf>>. The code prohibits you from cheating, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without permission of both instructors, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures.

Following University Senate recommendations, I ask you to write the following signed statement on each major writing portfolio you submit for this course:

“I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.”

You may choose not to write the pledge, but in such an event, I will want to discuss with you your reasons for declining. Please note that compliance with the Code is administered by the University of Maryland Student Honor Council, which strives to promote a “community of trust” on the College Park campus.

Descriptions of Major Writing Assignments

Each graded writing project or activity is explained below; these descriptions emphasize the audience and the purpose for each writing project and explain how each project relates to others in the course. We will also spend ample time in class discussing how you can create a rhetorically successful text for each assignment.

Individually Authored Projects and Texts (50% of your final grade)

1. Discussion Board Posts (10%)
2. Exploratory Essay (10%)
3. Analyzing Stakeholders and Defining Their Community's Health Problem (20%)
4. Reflective Writing Activities (5%)
5. Participation (5%)

Collaboratively Authored Projects and Texts (50% of your final grade)

6. Team Charter (2.5%)
7. Team Schedule (2.5%)
8. Memo: Brainstorming and Sorting Potential Solutions (5%)
9. Technical Description: Prototyping Potential Solutions (10%)
10. Report for Decision Making (25%)
11. Oral Presentation (5%)

Individually Authored Projects and Texts (50% of your final grade)

1. Discussion Board Posts (10% of your final grade)

Compose a 200-word response to the following questions about that particular day's readings. Post your response to the discussion thread that I have created for that day on our course Canvas page.

Post #1 (Due Sept. 8): As a group, the readings offer several definitions of "health" and "sustainability." Which definitions resonate with you the most, and why?

Post #2 (Due Sept. 10): What surprised you the most as you read the *2012 State of the Bay* report? Why?

Post #3 (Due Sept. 15): In ways can the discussion of food help us to think about the link between health and sustainability?

Post #4 (Due Sept. 24): What thoughts and emotions did you feel during Ms. Erica Estrada-Liou's workshop on design thinking and innovation?

Post #5 (Due Sept. 29): Think of a time when you were involved in a group project at school or at work. Which collaboration method or methods did your group use? How did your choice of collaboration methods contribute to the group's success? How did your choice of collaboration methods lead to conflicts, inefficiencies, or poor project quality? What would you do differently if you were to start the project from scratch?

Post #6 (Due Oct. 6): Have you ever been on a team in which different people had different ideas about what the project should be, do, or look like? At what point in the project did you recognize these different perspectives? How might a team charter have helped your group handle these different perspectives?

Post #7 (Due Oct. 13): Do you ever have problems responding positively to feedback or criticism? Which of the strategies that Joanna Wolfe (Chapter 6: "Revising with Others,"

Team Writing, pp. 59-79) outlined for responding productively to feedback do you think would be most helpful in improving how you respond to criticism?

Post #8 (Due Oct. 27): Complete Exercise 2 (Parts a, b, and c) in Chapter 8 of Joanna Wolfe's *Team Writing* (pp. 122-123), which asks you to analyze troubling communication that has developed between two hypothetical team members and to recommend strategies for resolving it.

2. Exploratory Essay: Medicine, Health, and Sustainability

In this short essay (500 words), probe the connections between sustainability and medicine or public health. You may want to analyze a particular medical or public health issue that interests you and examine what new insights can be created by viewing the issue through the lens of sustainability. Or you might try to articulate the definitions of "health" and "sustainability" in greater depth, identifying those places where the concepts do or do not seem to come together. You might even describe local contexts where you clearly see this link between sustainability and public health. Now would also be a good time to begin thinking about your major research and writing projects for this course, so you may choose to investigate a particular medical or public health issue to determine whether it is or is not one that has enough depth to research and write about for the next three months. The idea here is for you to take up a medical or public health issue that we addressed in class or another one that interests you and push your analysis further than we were able to in our class and online discussions.

3. Analyzing Stakeholders and Defining a Community Health Problem

In the Exploratory Essay you began to examine the connections between a medical or health problem and its relationship to environmentally, socially, or economically sustainable designs for communities. In this project, you will take the next step in the semester-long research and writing process toward recommending a solution to that problem, one that works to create a more sustainable design that positively influence the health of a particular group or community.

As you learned through our full-day workshop with Erica Estrada-Liou, the human-centered design thinking process centers on the people for whom one is solving problems and designing solutions. A problem-solver needs to learn about the people who are experiencing a particular problem and for whom a solution is going to be created. The problem-solver needs to understand how their experiences, understanding, and worldview lead them to define the problem, for successful solutions are not ones that simply address the problem as the designer sees it but rather ones that solve the problem as the potential users or beneficiaries experience it.

This writing project supports your work through the "Empathize" and "Design" stages of the design process. Empathizing, as we have read, is "the work you do to understand people within the context of your design challenge. It is your effort to understand the way they do things and why, their physical and emotional needs, how they think about the world, and what is meaningful to them." Defining, meanwhile, involves your work to analyze what you have learned about the stakeholders in this problem and to synthesize this information into a precise, meaningful, actionable problem statement, one that will focus and drive your design work through the rest of the semester.

For this project, then, you will write a brief paper that identifies people who are influenced by the medical or health problem at the heart of your major research project and describes and explains each group's experiences with, perspectives on, and understanding of the problem. One of your goals for this paper is to capture and clearly, ethically represent these different stakeholders' perspectives on the medical or health problem you are studying.

At the same time, your ultimate goal for this project is to synthesize these different perspectives on and experiences of the health problem you are examining. Your goal is not simply to list the different stakeholders' perspective on the issue but rather to synthesize the information you've gathered and the ideas you've generated in order to compose a focused, meaningful, actionable problem statement. How will you reconcile differences, whether significant or slight, in how different individuals or groups define a particular problem? Should any individual or community's perspectives and investment in the topic be weighed more heavily than others, and if so, why? Should you adopt one group's definition of the problem and use it to guide your problem-solving this semester, or should you work to compose a composite definition that pulls together elements from different groups' definitions of the problem?

As you compose this coherent, focused definition of the design problem, you should also analyze and explain how the medical or health problem can be understood in relation to sustainability concerns. Do the various stakeholders describe the medical or health problems in terms of or in ways that resonate with issues of environmental, economic, or social sustainability? If not, what might be reasons why? What dimensions of the problem can be better understood when it is defined as a sustainability concern? How might this reframing conflict or align with the stakeholders' experiences with and understanding of the problem?

You will write this paper individually, but the primary audience for this paper will be the other members of your writing team. This paper will help to prime the pump for your collaborative brainstorming of solutions through the middle part of the semester. A secondary audience for this paper will be me, your de-facto manager, who will be looking to make sure that you are taking a holistic view of the problem and carefully considering the broad reach of the problem in terms of both its causes and its effects, its victims and its beneficiaries. Another secondary audience will be the groups about whom you are writing. Your goal should be to describe their experiences and perspectives and to define the problem from their viewpoint in such a way that they would be able to recognize themselves in your characterization; that does not mean that you should shy away from making critical insights or evaluating the relative merits of their perspectives, but your representation of them should be ethical—balanced and well-supported.

5. Reflective Writing Activities

At three key points in the semester you will take to time review, critically examine, and write about your learning experiences in the course.

Reflective Writing Activity #1: "Establishing Expectations" (due Monday, September 8)
Examine the syllabus and the learning outcomes for the course, the required textbooks, our first class meeting, and any conversations you have had with friends or classmates about this or any other Professional Writing course. Pay close attention to policies,

procedures, assignments, and expectations for this particular Writing for the Health Professions course.

Now, write one single-spaced page explaining how you expect to do in this course. Be specific, provide details and descriptions, and explain your reasoning as you address these types of questions:

- What writing assignments or activities do you think you will do well on in the course? Explain why.
- What writing assignments or activities do you think will be difficult for you? Explain why.
- What parts of your reading, researching, and writing history (for example, your past classes, internships or work experiences, organized groups in which you participate, or your personal hobbies) make you confident about some parts of the course and hesitant about others? Explain why.

Reflective Writing Activity #2: “Mid-Term Self Assessment” (due Monday, October 20)

This reflective writing prompt asks you to take stock of how you’re doing in this Writing for the Health Professions course at midterm, examining what strategies are or aren’t working for you, why writing knowledge and skills you have acquired or refined thus far, and what aspects of your research and writing you need to concentrate on for the remainder of the course.

To begin this reflection, conduct an inventory of all the writing you have done for this course, looking both forward and backward at your progress in the course. Once you have done so, write a one-page, single-spaced reflective piece about where you stand at midterm and where you’d like to go during the second half of your Professional Writing course. Reflect on what you’re learning about your writing process, your strengths as a writer, and your preferences and writing habits. Be specific, provide details and descriptions, and explain your reasoning throughout this brief reflective essay.

Reflective Writing Activity #3: “Revisiting Your Expectations” (due Monday, December 8)

This prompt asks you to revisit all of the writing you have done this semester, particularly your formal writing assignments and your two previous reflective essays. First, revisit the learning outcomes for the this Writing for the Health Professions course, which you can find in your syllabus. Second, review your written response to the “Establishing Expectations” and “Mid-Term Self Assessment” prompts, reflecting on what you wrote about your expectations for the course at the beginning of the semester as well as your assessment of the first half and predictions for the second half that you made at the mid-semester point. Third, reread all of the major writing assignments you composed for this course; look for signs of progress you made in your writing abilities, noting specific writing strategies you learned how to deploy to achieve your rhetorical goals.

Once you have reviewed the course learning outcomes and the writing you’ve done this semester, compose a one-page, single-spaced essay that highlights the major writing skills and writing-related knowledge you developed in this course. You need not discuss

each and every thing you learned; instead, focus on three or four skills that you feel you've improved the most from the beginning to the end of the semester, that best demonstrate the type of writer you are or have become by the end of the course, or that you expect to draw on in your future professional or civic lives. Be specific; provide examples, details, and descriptions from writing projects you created this semester, and explain your reasoning throughout this brief reflective essay.

Collaboratively Authored Projects and Texts (50% of your final grade)

6. Team Charter (2.5%)

As Joanna Wolfe explains, a team that spends time at the beginning of a project “discussing goals, expectation, and team norms can save substantial time and stress later on in the project.” This assignment aims to give you the time and space to have such a focused discussion. You will create a brief, relatively informal document that describes your larger, “big picture” goals and priorities for the collaborative research and writing projects and also describes the norms or expectations for group activity that you can use to resolve any problems or confusion that might arise later in the project. This project gives all team members a chance to explain their goals, expectations, and commitment level to the project, and it gives the team a chance to talk about how to resolve or work through or around any differences before work begins on the project.

Your team charter should include your description and explanation of the following:

1. Overall, broad team goals for the project
2. Measurable, specific team goals
3. Each team member's personal goals
4. Individual level of commitment to the project
5. Other information about team members that may affect the project
6. Statement of how the team will resolve impasses
7. Statement of how the team will handle missed deadlines
8. Statement of what constitutes unacceptable work and how the team will handle it.

Please draw on Joanna Wolfe's *Team Writing*, Chapter 3, “Getting Started with the Team Charter,” to frame your group discussions about these subjects and to guide your drafting of the team charter.

Your team itself is the primary audience for this document, as you will be composing a document that gives focus and direction to your research and writing activity and a document to which you can return to resolve problems if and when they occur. I will be your secondary audience in my role as “manager” overseeing all of the team projects in this course. I will want to see that you have taken this planning process seriously; I will want to see that each team member has thought honestly about and openly discussed those issues that will focus the team's work and that could help the team to anticipate and resolve problems that might arise in its collaboration this semester.

7. Team Schedule (2.5%)

While the team charter assignment is important almost as much for the conversations it prompts your group to have as for the document that results from these discussions, the task schedule

likely will be the most important document for organizing and guiding your team’s research and writing activity this semester. The task schedule helps your team to plan the details of its project to ensure there are no surprises at the end, and it helps the team stay on track by documenting who will do what and when. Creating a task schedule also helps your group to make sure that it leaves plenty of time for the review and substantive revision of major writing projects. Finally, composing a task schedule can help your group to ensure that the labor of the project has been divided equitably among the team members.

For this project, then, compose a document that does the following:

1. Identifies major tasks the team will have to perform along the way of creating the major project.
2. Assigns tasks to the team members according to a particular guiding logic (e.g., expertise, motivation, learning goals).
3. Schedules the tasks, allowing sufficient time for each task while also ensuring there is time for fellow team members to review and respond to major tasks.
4. Balances the workload, assigning value to individual tasks and calculating the overall value of each team member’s tasks in order to ensure an equal division of labor.

Please draw on Joanna Wolfe’s *Team Writing*, Chapter 4, “Getting Started with the Task Schedule” (pp. 40-48), to frame your group discussions about the task schedule and to guide your drafting of this important document.

As with the team charter, your team itself is the primary audience for the task schedule, so compose it in a format that makes the most sense to your team members and that will be usable to all team members as you refer back to it throughout the semester. I will be your secondary audience in my role as “manager” overseeing all of the team projects in this course. I will want to see that you have created a sensible, feasible plan that includes ample time to complete the major projects and allows sufficient time for peer review; that you have assigned tasks and distributed your work load according to a particular guiding logic; and that you have created your schedule in a format that is clear and easily readable for all team members through the rest of the semester.

8. Memo: Brainstorming and Sorting Potential Solutions (5%)

This writing project will document your team’s work through the “Ideate” phase of the Design Thinking process. The goal of this stage, of course, is *not* to stop with the first solution that comes to mind and then proceed with developing it from there. Instead, your goal through the Ideate stage is to think broadly and to generate as many solutions as possible—from ones that perhaps seem to be immediately useful to those that might seem far-out and decidedly impractical. All potential solutions are good ones at this point, as they can help to fuel your team’s collaborative invention of even more solutions.

Following the design thinking process, after your team has invested significant time and energy in brainstorming activity, you then begin to sort these potential solutions according to some guiding logic; you might even consider several different classifications for these solutions. The point of this classification activity is to shine light on those dimensions of solutions that distinguish them from one another or to highlight characteristics that they hold in common with some others. Again, you might consider working through multiple rounds of this sorting activity, creating classifications that emphasize different dimensions of the potential solutions.

Your memo should capture both the breadth of your team’s brainstorming activity and the insights you gained about your potential solutions as you sorted and analyzed them. You can try to accomplish that goal in several ways, whether it be through attaching convenient titles and writing brief descriptions of each solution, creating tables to show how you sorted them, and then composing several paragraphs to explain what you learned about the solutions—and perhaps even about the original problem—through this exercise in classification. Or perhaps your group might want to create visualizations that capture the essence of the solutions and display how you sorted each one, along with paragraphs or lists or some other textual representation of what you learned as you classified and divided your brainstormed solutions. Whatever strategy you pursue for composing this document, keep in mind that the Ideate phase puts more emphasis on breadth and volume of invention rather than digging down deep to develop every last detail of just one or two potential solutions.

I will be your primary audience in my role as “manager” overseeing all of the team projects in this course. I will want to see that you have invested significant time in this brainstorming and sorting process. I will want to see that your team pushed to create a wide variety of potential solutions to the problem; that your team analyzed these solutions in a logical, thoughtful way; and that your team has started to identify a productive path toward the next stage of the design thinking process, when your team develops the most promising solutions in greater detail.

9. Technical Description: Developing Workable Solutions (10%)

Toward the end of the Ideate phase, your group began to sort potential solutions as a means to identify key features of different solutions. The Prototype phase requires your team to select the most promising solutions and begin to fill in more specific, substantive details about each one..

Your technical Description should deliver a detailed, in-depth description of the two or three solutions that you have determined to be the most promising ones for addressing the particular medical or health problem on which your team is focused. Here you are developing them in significantly more detail, helping your team members to think through all of the important details and dimensions of these solutions. Your goal is to create a description of the solutions that would help stakeholders to understand and think through how it might effect their lives and how it might begin to address the original problem. In some cases, designers will create porotypes that different stakeholder groups and intended users could work with in order to get their feedback; in other cases, designers or technical writers create a detailed technical description of each solution, adding significant depth to and likely adding many more dimensions to the solution created in the Ideate phrase.

As with the previous project, your group has options in terms of how it would like to develop this particular writing assignment. I anticipate that many of you will be composing a traditional technical description in which write extended, detailed explanations of your solutions, helping your readers—stakeholders, beneficiaries, people in positions to enact your solutions, as well as me, your de-facto manager—to visualize each of your solutions in our mind’s eye, to understand how the solution would be implemented, how it would effect people’s day-to-day lives, how it would it target particular aspects of the original problem you described. Depending on the particular solutions that your team invents, though, you might wish to and be able to create low-fi prototypes of you potential solutions in order to have something to get into the hands of stakeholders and targeted users.

Your primary audience for this document are the community stakeholders who would be most directly affected by your solution, especially those who would be interacting with or using your solutions on a day-to-day basis. I once again am your secondary audience in my role as de-facto manager of all the team projects in this course; I will want to see that your team has devoted equal energy and attention to

developing each one of your multiple solutions; created and described key details of each solution in a logical, thoughtful way, particularly in terms of thinking about how each solution directly addresses the problem as you defined it; and that your team has started to identify a productive path toward the next stage of the design thinking process, when you will analyze each solutions in order to make a final recommendation about which one to implement.

10. Report for Decision Making (25%)

Your team spent the first half of the semester analyzing and defining a medical or public health problem and then transitioned into the second half of the semester by brainstorming and then refining and describing solutions to the problem. The final phrase in this semester-long design process is to analyze several of your best solutions and make a final recommendation about which one, if any, should be implemented. Toward this end, you will write a Report for Decision Making (sometimes called a Recommendation Report) that defines the problem in detail, describes the various solutions your team has created, identifies and justifies criteria to use in analyzing the different solutions, presents quantitative and/or qualitative research to examine how each solutions measures up to the different criteria, and evaluates the significance of these findings, and ultimately recommends a specific action to solve the problem. The audience for this report will be an organization or individual that is in a position to effect change on your particular issue and either implement or support implementation of the solution.

Your Report for Decision Making needs to do more than simply recommend a solution, and it should not read as a document-long defense of one solution. Instead, the report needs to make clear the research and analysis process through which you arrived at that recommendation. Toward those ends, your team's report needs to clearly define the problem that you have identified. Your report needs to describe and classify the particular solutions that your group has created to potentially address that problem. Your report needs to explain and justify the criteria that you have selected for evaluating the different solutions, and it needs to justify these criteria to the readers, who bring particular perspectives, values, beliefs, expectations, and needs to the topic. Your report needs to marshal relevant, convincing research about each solution as a means to support your careful analysis of how these solutions do or do not fit those criteria. And finally, your report needs to synthesize this analysis in order to arrive at a logical recommendation as to which solution, if any, can and should be implemented as a means to solve the problem.

Your team's Recommendation Report should not read as a document-long defense of one specific solution. Instead, it should articulate a genuine question about one or more of your potential solutions, present focused research about and analysis of those solutions, and then clearly, definitely answer that question by the report's end. Your Report for Decision Making likely will center on one of these types of research questions:

- Will X work for a specific purpose? (feasibility study)
- Is X, Y, or Z better for a specific purpose? (comparative analysis)
- Why does X happen, and what can be done to address those causes? (cause-effect analysis)
- How can we use X to best advantage? (optimization study)

Evaluative Criteria and Research

Your analysis of the solutions in your Report for Decision Making should make logical,

consistent use of evaluation criteria. Your work will involve selecting the most relevant technical, managerial, and social criteria (see pp. 506-510 of the *Technical Communication* textbook reading on Canvas); justifying to your readers why these criteria are the most important ones to use in analyzing the solutions, and explaining how your team will measure or evaluate each solution in relation to these criteria.

Your research methods will probably include library (or secondary) research, but since the problem is particular to a time and place, you will also conduct research by “primary” means of information gathering, whether that be through interviews, questionnaires or surveys, site inspections, or Internet research. Your decisions about which types of research to employ and how much research is necessary to create a persuasive argument through your Report for Decision Making should be guided by your analysis of your audience, the particular solutions you have created, and the specific criteria you have selected to focus your study.

Format

Your decisions about what specific document design and format your Report for Decision Making takes should be guided by your analysis of your audience and their expectations, preferences, and needs. That being said, here’s a list of parts that typically appear in the Report for Decision Making genre.

- Letter of transmittal
- Title page with descriptive abstract
- Table of contents
- List of visuals (if you have more than two)
- Glossary (if necessary)
- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Discussion sections organized according to the criteria for decision making
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Appropriate documentation, according to the citation style used in your field or the citation style expected by your readers/audience
- Appropriate supplements (e.g., copies of research instruments, such as survey forms)
- Visuals (e.g., tables, graphs, drawings, photos)

The body of the report, including introduction and conclusions, will probably run about 2,500 words. The preliminary and supplemental pages will be additional.

Grading the Report for Decision Making

I will evaluate your team’s report according to these expectations:

- A. The **executive summary** reflects the entire report concisely. Introduction, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are covered. Significant factual information is present. Sentences are efficient, and the summary does not exceed one page.
- B. The **introduction** states a problem (with who-what-when-where-why-so what information), identifies a research question, explains methods, and forecasts the rest of the report. Here you will

- C. The **body sections** reflect criteria for decision-making. Headings are parallel. Each body section is a mini report, with an introduction, findings, and conclusion. The introduction defines the issue and explains its significance. The findings report what you have discovered through research. The "conclusion" (just on that issue) tries to define the significance of the findings for the research question and to reconcile any conflicts.
- D. The **conclusion section** for the entire report weighs the results from all the criteria and answers the research question. All the criteria should be accounted for. The conclusion does not introduce any new criteria. The section includes interpretive (not just factual) statements: words like "more important because..." or "a more immediate need" or "long term benefits outweigh short-term costs." You put the findings for each criteria in relation to one another. You justify and explain your answer to the research question. The conclusion answers the research question: An explicit statement will say something like "A is the better choice" or "X is not feasible at this time."
- E. The **recommendations** direct specific action (without explanation or justification). The recommendations may (but do not have to be) in list form. If there is a list, the verbs may be "command" verbs (imperative mood). Items in the list are in parallel form.
- F. All the **report parts** are present (title, table of contents, executive summary, report, illustrations, references etc.). Illustrations support the argument (they highlight important information that would be harder to understand with words alone) and they are constructed and labeled according to conventions. Format reveals the structure. Headings show main divisions. A running head and page numbers help readers find their place. Preliminary pages are numbered with roman numerals. Sentence style emphasizes strong verbs. Grammar and mechanics are correct. References are complete and accurate. The citation style is the one used by the writer's discipline (e.g., APA for social science and business, reference notes for engineering, MLA for literature, Chicago-author/date for technical writing).
- G. The problem is significant, research is good, reasoning is sound. The report is convincing and important.

11. Oral Presentation (5%)

Your team will translate your Report for Decision Making into a ten-minute presentation. Your imagined audience for this presentation will be the entire body of community stakeholders, including those most directly affected by the problem and your potential solution on a day-to-day basis as well as those people or organizations in the best position to implement or substantively support the implementation of your solution.

Your aim will be to recommend the solution to the problem, a decision you arrived at through the process of researching and writing that Report for Decision Making. As in that report, then, you will want your presentation to do more than simply present a one-sided argument in favor of your solution. Instead, you will want your audience to understand the range of solutions you invented, the process through which you analyzed those potential solutions, your final evaluations of those various solutions, and the rationale supporting your final recommendation.

I will evaluate your team's oral presentation using the evaluation rubric developed by the University of Maryland Oral Communication faculty, which I will distribute later in the semester.

**ENGLISH 395: WRITING FOR THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS
SPRING 2014**

COURSE SCHEDULE

WK	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY
1 9/1 & 9/3	LABOR DAY. NO CLASS.	Topics: Course introduction: Health and Sustainability; Writing and Collaboration. Assign Reflective Writing Activity #1.
2 9/8 & 9/10	<p>Topics: Defining Sustainability, Defining Public Health. Introduce Exploratory Essay Assignment.</p> <p>Writing due: Reflective Writing Activity #1. Discussion Board Post #1.</p> <p>Reading Due: Northwest Earth Institute, "Definitions of Sustainability"; Carolyn Raffensperger, "The Diagnosis of the Unknown Physician"; Lee Thirer, "Beyond the Patient"; Kenny Ausubel, "The Coming of Ecological Medicine"; Sandra Steingraber, "The Rabies Principle"; Jim Robbins, "The Ecology of Disease." <i>All readings posted on Canvas.</i></p>	<p>Topics: Analyzing the Relationship Between Local Environments and Public Health.</p> <p>Writing due: Discussion Board Post #2.</p> <p>Reading due: Chesapeake Bay Foundation, <i>2012 State of the Bay</i>; Burke, Litt, and Fox, "Linking Public Health and the Health of the Chesapeake Bay." <i>Both readings posted on Canvas.</i></p>
3 9/15 & 9/17	<p>Topics: Analyzing the Relationship Between Local Environments and Public Health (cont.) Exploring Public Health and Sustainability Problems for Research and Writing.</p> <p>Writing due: Discussion Board Post #3.</p> <p>Reading Due: Selected texts on the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative, the Maryland Farm-to-School Program, and the Maryland Pesticide Network. URLs will be posted in the Announcements section on our Canvas page.</p>	<p>Topics: Exploring Public Health and Sustainability Problems for Research and Writing (cont.).</p> <p>Writing due: Draft of Exploratory Essay due in class on Wednesday, Sept. 17.</p> <p>Final draft of Exploratory Essay posted to Canvas by Friday, Sept. 19, 5 p.m. *</p> <p>Reading Due: Selected passages from the UMD School of Public Health's <i>Transforming Health in Prince George's County, Maryland: A Public Health Impact Study</i>, Prince George's County Health Department's <i>Prince George's County Health Report 2014</i>, and</p>

		PGCHD's <i>Prince George's County Health Improvement Plan 2011 to 2014</i> . All readings will be posted on Canvas; look for details on which pages to read.
4 9/22 & 9/24	Topics: Design Thinking. Guest lecture/workshop conducted by Ms. Erica Estrada-Liou of the UMD Academy for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.	Topics: A Systems Thinking Approach to Analyzing Public Health and Sustainability. Forming Writing Teams. Writing due: Discussion Board Post #4. Reading Due: Northwest Earth Institute, "Systems Thinking." Stanford Institute of Design, "Introduction to Design Thinking: A Guide." <i>Both readings posted to Canvas.</i>
5 9/29 & 10/1	Topics: Understanding and Executing the "Empathize" Phase of the Design Process. Planning Collaboration and Designing Effective Program Management Strategies. Writing due: Discussion Board Post #5. Reading Due: <i>Team Writing</i> , Chs. 1 and 2 (pp. 1-26).	Topics: Research Strategies for Understanding Users. Creating a Team Charter. Reading Due: <i>Team Writing</i> , Ch. 3 (pp. 27-39)
6 10/6 & 10/8	Topics: Understanding and Executing the "Define" Phase of the Design Process. Creating a Task Schedule for your Writing Team. Writing due: Discussion Board Post #6. Reading Due: <i>Team Writing</i> , Ch. 4 (pp. 40-48).	Topics: Analyzing User Perspectives to Create Actionable Problem Definitions. Creating Team Conditions for the Healthy, Respectful Debate of Ideas. Writing due: Draft of Team Charter and Task Schedule. Final drafts of both Team Charter and Task Schedule posted to Canvas by Friday, Oct. 10, 5 p.m. Reading Due: <i>Team Writing</i> , Ch. 5 (pp. 51-58).
7 10/13 & 10/15	Topics: Revising With Your Writing Team. Writing due: Discussion Board Post #7. Reading Due: <i>Team Writing</i> , Ch. 6 (pp. 59-79).	Topics: Constructive Conflict and Team Revising (cont.). Writing due: Draft of "Analyzing Stakeholders and Defining the Problem." Final draft of "Analyzing Stakeholders and Defining the Problem" posted to Canvas by Friday, Oct. 17, 5 p.m.
8	Topics: Understanding and Executing the	Topics: Brainstorming Strategies. Frames for

10/20 & 10/22	“Ideate” Phase of the Design Process. Writing due: Reflective Writing Activity #2.	Analyzing and Sorting Potential Solutions. Recognizing Communication Styles and Valuing Team Diversity. Reading Due: <i>Team Writing</i> , Ch. 7 (pp. 80-103).
9 10/27 & 10/29	Topics: Understanding and Executing the “Prototype” Phase of the Design Process. Recognizing, Defining, Evaluating, and Solving Team Problems. Writing due: Discussion Board Post #8. Reading Due: <i>Team Writing</i> , Ch. 8 (pp. 104-123). <i>Technical Communication in the 21st Century</i> , Ch. 14, “Technical Descriptions” (pp. 442-458). Reading posted on Canvas.	Topics: Troubleshooting Team Problems. Writing due: Draft of “Brainstorming and Sorting Possible Solutions.” Final draft of “Brainstorming and Sorting Possible Solutions” posted to Canvas by Friday, Oct. 24, 5 p.m.
10 11/3 & 11/5	Topics: Understanding and Executing the “Test” Phase of the Design Process. Understanding the Rhetorical Situation and Purposes for Decision-Making Reports. Reading Due: <i>Technical Communication</i> , Chapter 14, “Reports for Decision Making” (pp. 501-538). Reading posted in Canvas.	Topics: Draft Workshop. Researching and Writing Recommendation Reports. Writing due: “Technical Description of Potential Solutions.” Final draft of “Technical Description of Potential Solutions” posted to Canvas by Friday, Nov. 7, 5 p.m.
11 11/10 & 11/12	Topics: Conducting Primary and Secondary Research to Test Solutions.	Topics: Analyzing and Synthesizing the Data Gathered Through Testing.
12 11/17 & 11/19	Topics: Drawing Conclusions and Recommending Solutions.	Topics: Draft Workshop. Writing due: First Draft of Report for Decision Making.
13 11/24 & 11/26	Topics: Strategies for Planning Rhetorically Effective Group Presentations.	THANKSGIVING RECESS. NO CLASS.
14	Topics: Draft Workshop. Planning Group Presentations (cont.).	Topics: Strategies for Delivering Rhetorically Effective Group

12/1 & 12/3	Writing due: Second Draft of Report for Decision Making.	Presentations. Writing due: Final draft of Report for Decision Making posted to Canvas by Friday, Dec. 5, 5 p.m.
15 12/8 & 12/10	Topics: Group Presentations. Evaluating Team Members. Writing due: 10-Minute Group Presentations (1/2 the class). Reflective Writing Activity #3.	Topics: Group Presentations. Course Wrap-Up and Evaluations. Writing due: 10-Minute Group presentations (1/2 the class). Individual Evaluation of Team Members.