

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
INSTITUTE OF APPLIED AGRICULTURE  
**Written Communication -- Fall 2010**

Course #: INAG 111  
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Office Hours: WF 1-3, and by appointment

### **Course Description**

A comprehensive study of written business communication, this course is designed to improve your writing skills through practical applications and practice. The course involves critical thinking, audience analysis, and peer review. The course prepares you for the kinds of writing you will be asked to do in your career.

### **Course Objectives**

When you complete this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a command of English and feel confident writing
2. Explain the nature of business communication and understand the communication process
3. Analyze your audience and tailor your writing for that audience
4. Use various patterns of topic development and organization to compose your business messages
5. Compile a business report
6. Understand and use current communication technology

### **Sustainability Objective**

Whether you are planning a career in golf course, sports turf, landscape, or ag business management, most of you will become stewards of our natural resources. As such, you will be faced with issues of sustainability and with challenges of communicating your land and water management practices to various stakeholders. Therefore, during the semester, we will explore the “green movement” within the green industries and discuss how it may affect our communication strategies. Selected writing assignments will focus on sustainability issues.

### **Required Materials**

1. *Business Communication*: 8th ed. by Krizan, Merrier, Logan and Williams. South-Western, 2011. [ISBN: 978-1-4390-8015-3]
2. Blank Notebook for Think Log

### **Grading**

Grades are determined by a 10-point scale: 100-90:A, 89-80:B, 79-70:C, 69-60:D, 59 and below:F.

- 30% Classwork and Homework
- 30% Hourly Exams
- 15% Business Proposal
- 25% Final Exam

**Attendance**

You are expected to come to class on time and prepared. You are responsible for all materials presented in class when you are absent. Please make arrangements to obtain notes, handouts, and assignments from a classmate. Since in-class participation is an integral part of the course, absences can affect your grade.

**Late and Make-up Work**

All work is due as assigned. Late papers will be accepted up to the start of the class period one week after the due date, but they will be penalized one letter grade. Students will receive a zero for all work not submitted within the one-week grace period. The business proposal is due as assigned and will not be accepted late. A paper is considered late if received anytime after class has ended on the given due date. In-class assignments may not be made up. Students who are absent will receive a zero for that day's classwork. The hourly and final exams must be taken on the exam date. No late tests will be given.

**Writing Policy**

All out-of-class writing assignments must be typed according to the specific format assigned. Typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors will directly affect your grade. All written assignments should demonstrate a clear, concise and correct use of language.

**Smoking Regulations**

Smoking is not allowed in campus buildings or within 15 feet of an entrance or window.

**Academic Policy**

Students are expected to maintain academic integrity. The Institute of Applied Agriculture's Policy on Academic Integrity prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. The IAA's and the university's policies on academic integrity will be enforced in this class.

**Honor Pledge**

The University of Maryland has a nationally recognized Honor Code, administered by the Student Honor Council. The Student Honor Council proposed and the University Senate approved an Honor Pledge. The University of Maryland Honor Pledge reads:

"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination."

**Special Needs**

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodation, please see me within the first two weeks of class. If you have a disability and have not registered it with Disability Support Services, you will need to do so as soon as possible.

**University's Writing Center**

The writing center (0125 Taliaferro Hall) offers individual assistance with writing assignments for all undergraduate courses. It is best to make an appointment several days in advance.

Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Phone: 301-405-3785 Grammar Hotline: 301-405-3787

**CourseEvalUM**

Your participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you hold as a student member of our academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University as well as to the tenure and promotion process. CourseEvalUM will be open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses during the beginning of December. Please go directly to the website ([www.courseevalum.umd.edu](http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu)) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

**INAG 111: Written Communication**  
**USING YOUR THINK LOG**

1. You should obtain a notebook to use exclusively as your Written Communication Think Log. Bring your think log to class with you.
  
2. At least once a week you are to write in your log (you may write more frequently). Date each entry. Length will vary, but your entries should be a minimum of 225 words (about a page long). You should write in your log on one of the following topics:
  - a. Choose one concept from this week's lectures and discuss how it relates to something in your life outside the classroom--something that has happened at home or work, or something you read or saw on television.
  - b. Choose one aspect of this week's lectures that you did not understand very well. Try to analyze why you are having trouble understanding this particular information. What questions might you ask or what background material might you research in order to help you better understand this information.
  - c. Choose a new concept or piece of information that you learned in this week's lectures or discussions. Discuss why this new concept or information is particularly interesting to you.
  - d. Choose a piece of business writing, either yours or another person's. For example, it may be a letter you get in the mail, an email from work or school, an advertisement, or something you write. You must include a copy of the writing in your log. Analyze the writing. Is it well written, is it clear, does it effectively accomplish what it sets out to do?
  - e. Choose a topic from class discussion or lectures with which you disagree. Argue your point of view.

You should vary your topics from entry to entry. Periodically, I will give you prompts or questions for you to discuss in your weekly writing.

3. Three to four times during the semester, I will collect your think logs, respond to your entries, and grade your logs on the following criteria:
  - a. the number of entries
  - b. the general quality and length of your log entries

Your log grades are averaged with your classwork/homework grades. Logs will be accepted up to one week late, but your grade will be penalized by one letter grade.

**INAG 111: WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**  
**Course Outline Fall 2010**

8/30	Introduction and course overview
9/1-9/3	Chapter 1: Business Communication Foundations
9/6	Labor Day Holiday. No Class
9/8	Business Communication Barriers
9/10	Seminar A: Parts of Speech
9/13	Global Communication & Technological Considerations
9/15 – 9/22	Chapter 4: Principles of Business Communication
9/24 – 9/29	Chapter 5: Print & Electronic Messages
10/1	Seminar D: Style
10/4	Revising, Editing and Proofreading
10/6	Chapter 6: Message Formats. <b>Think Logs due</b>
10/8	Review for Exam. Assign Business Proposals
10/11	IAA OPEN HOUSE—class participation
<b>10/13</b>	<b>Hourly Exam (Chapters 1-6, Seminar A &amp;D)</b>
10/15 -10/22	Chapter 7: Positive, Neutral & Social Business Messages
10/25 - 10/29	Chapter 8: Negative Messages
11/1 – 11/5	Chapter 9: Persuasive Messages
11/8	Review for exam. <b>Think Logs due</b>
<b>11/10</b>	<b>Hourly Exam (Chapters 5-9)</b>
11/12 – 11/15	Chapter 10: Business Research and Report Writing
11/17 – 11/19	Chapter 11: Proposals, Business Plans & Special Reports
11/22	Letters of Complaint.
11/24	Chapter 12: Visual Aids
11/26	THANKSGIVING BREAK. NO CLASS. ENJOY.
11/29	Legal & Ethical Considerations
12/1	Public Relations
<b>12/3</b>	<b>Rough Drafts of Business Proposals--in class review</b>
12/6	Writing Letters of Application. <b>Think Logs due</b>
12/8	Writing Directions
12/10	<b>Business Proposals Due.</b> Review for final
TBA	FINAL EXAM (cumulative)

\*NOTE: This schedule is tentative and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.