

Preparing Students for Professional Writing Following Graduation

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At the end of this workshop participants will be able to

- Describe examples of professional writing preparation
- Identify potential teaching resources
- Develop strategies for identifying, teaching, and assessing writing skills needed in their profession or discipline

This workshop

- Focuses on specific types and styles of writing used in workplaces
- Does not emphasize
 - Good grammar, composition, diction, and presentation
 - Although they are essential skills in all writing

3 Steps for Preparing Students for Professional/Career Writing

- Step 1: Defining Professional or Career Writing

Academic versus Professional Writing

Academic	Professional / Career
• Tests knowledge	Applies knowledge
• Defines terms and concepts appropriately	Uses terms and concepts
• Supports statements with literature references	Most often applies learning from literature

What type of writing occurs in my field?

- Business writing
 - letters, memos & emails, minutes, reports
- Client contacts
- Action plans
- Proposals & advocacy
- Evaluation

What writing styles are used in my field?

- Objective descriptions
- Critical analysis
- Synthesis of different sources of knowledge
- Persuasion
- Reflective: personal reactions or challenges

3 Steps for Preparing Students for Professional Writing

- Step 2: Develop learning modules for identified writing skills

Link Course Content with Work Experience

- Examples
- Exercises
- Writing skills

Resources

- Writing texts and manuals
- Online materials
- Writing Centres
- Library Resources

Potential Texts: Writing Style Manuals

- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed.)
- Chicago Manual of Style
- Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Manual & Guide to Scholarly Publishing
- American Medical Association Manual of Style
- Canadian Guide to Uniform Legal Citation
- Council of Science Editors (CSE) Manual for Authors, Editors, & Publishers

Potential Texts: Writing Manuals

- A Guide to Writing for Human Service Professionals (Glicken)
- Writing for Business (Harvard Business School)
- The OTA's Guide to Writing SOAP Notes (Borcherding & Morreale)
- Plain English for Lawyers (Wydick)
- A Field Guide for Science Writers (Blum, Knudson, & Heniq [Eds])

Online sources

- Critical thinking
 - <http://www.criticalthinking.org>
- Synthesis writing
 - <http://www.users.drew.edu/sjamieso/Synthesis.pdf>
- Persuasive writing
 - <http://www.geocities.com/soho/Atrium/1437/pers.html>
- Objective description
 - http://www.wadsworth.com/english_d/templates/student_resources/0838405452_connelly/ex_descript.htm
- Reflective writing
 - <http://learningcommons.sfu.ca/resources/writing/writing-reflective.pdf>
- Business letter
 - <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/653/01/>

- The OWL at Purdue
 - <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

3 Steps for Preparing Students for Professional Writing

- Step 3: Creating course assignments that correspond to career writing

In-class Writing Exercises

- Use specific, narrow topic or question
- Short answer
- Focus on form rather than polish
- Small groups (3 or 4 students)
- Read each others' writing
- Give feedback (instructor provides feedback guide)

Group Assignment

- Students take roles of a typical work team
- Specific, narrow task
- Brainstorm, research content
- Identify roles for each group member
- Write a report (present report)

Writing Assignments

- Letter to the editor or response to publication
- Report, Proposal, Summary
- Evaluation or recommendation
- Client Notes or Action Plan

Use these steps in your courses

1. Define professional/career writing
2. Develop learning modules
3. Create course assignments

Thank you for sharing ideas today

Are you able to

- Describe examples of professional writing preparation?
- Identify potential teaching resources?
- Develop strategies for identifying, teaching, and assessing writing skills needed in your profession or discipline?