AWAKE TO WOKE TO WORK:
WRITING IN THE WORKPLACE AT A TIME OF SOCIAL CHANGE

WRITING FOR THE WORKPLACE (WRTG-21100)   SPRING 2024
Sec. 03, TR: 01:10-02:50 PM   Smiddy 111
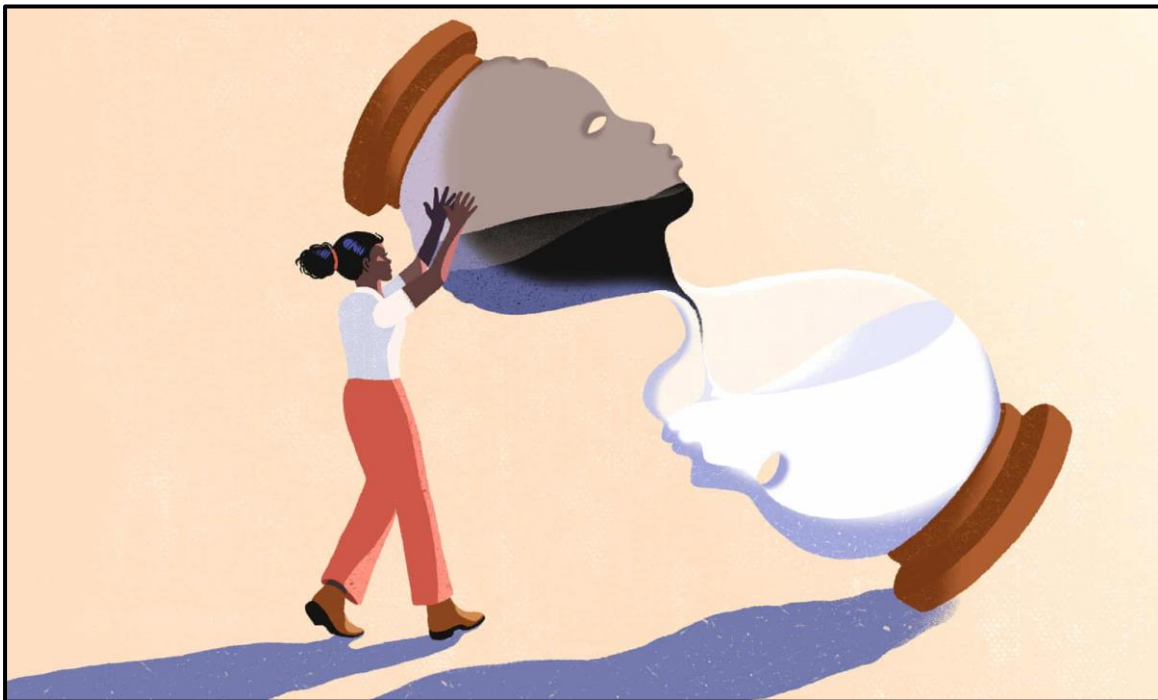Zoom Meeting ID: 929 1117 3740   Passcode: W4W03

Dr. Anthony Di Renzo (*direnzo@ithaca.edu*)   Office Hours: M: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Offices and Phones: Smiddy 426, 4-3614 (*faculty*); Smiddy 430, 4-3138 (*department*)
Zoom Meeting ID: 947 4283 7021   Passcode: Antonio

CLASS TEXTS
- Kolin, Philip. *Successful Writing at Work*. 12th ed. (Wadsworth 2023)
- Lewis, Sinclair. *Babbitt*. (Signet, 2015)
- Mills, C. Wright. *White Collar.* (Oxford, 2002)
- Von Oech, Roger. *A Whack on the Side of the Head*. 25th anniversary ed. (Business Plus, 2008)

Online Readings
- Di Renzo, Anthony, ed. *White Collars, Black Lives: A Reader* (2020)
- Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture* (ProInspire, 2018)

For Your Cubicle

"The plant was in Long Island, and I crossed a bridge in the fog to get there and came down in a stream of workers. Ahead of me a huge electric sign announced its message through the drifting strands of fog: 'KEEP AMERICA PURE WITH LIBERTY PAINTS!' As workers loaded cans on a truck, a foreman boomed, 'White! It's the purest white that can be found. Nobody makes a paint any whiter. This batch right here is heading for a national monument!'"

~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

"Organizations are not race neutral. Scholars, managers, journalists, and many others routinely recognize "black capitalism," "black banks," and "ethnic restaurants," yet we think of banks that are run by and serve whites simply as "banks" and white corporations simply as "businesses." This way of thinking reinforces the fallacy that only people of color have race, and obscures the broad, everyday dynamics of white racial power within organizations."

~~Victor Ray, "Why So Many Organizations Stay White"

"The history of racial capitalism, it must be emphasized, is a history of wages as well as whips, of factories as well as plantations, of whiteness as well as blackness, of 'freedom' as well as slavery."

~~Walter Johnson, *The Broken Heart of America*

"An organization may choose not to take a public position on racial injustice due to a belief that it's prudent to remain uninvolved with societal or political issues. However, that stance is problematic for several reasons. First, racism is not a political issue. It is wrong — full stop. Acknowledging this truth is an expression of core values. Second, silence is itself a position, particularly on an issue of fundamental values where there is no neutral territory between right and wrong. Appearing to ignore the issue can send the message that the organization does not consider it sufficiently important or, worse, that the organization does not recognize racism as a problem. Lastly, silence on this issue undermines any claims the organization makes that it supports diversity, and it can damage its standing among employees and customers to whom those values are important."

~~Enrica Ruggs and Derek Avery "Organizations Cannot Afford to Stay Silent on Racial Injustice"

"Unless and until white America is willing to collectively acknowledge its privilege, take responsibility for its past and the impact it has on the present, and commit to creating a future steeped in justice, the list of names that George Floyd has been added to will never end. We have to use this moment to accelerate our nation's long journey towards justice and a more perfect union."

~~Ben & Jerry's "We Must Dismantle White Supremacy: Silence is NOT an Option"

"Inequality in America was not born of the market's invisible hand. It was not some unavoidable destiny. It was created by the hands and sustained effort of people who engineered benefits for themselves, to the detriment of everyone else. American inequality was decades in the making, one expensive lobbyist and policy change at a time. It will take a concerted effort to reverse all of this, and to remake America in the process."

~~Darren Walker, "Are You Willing to Give Up Your Privilege?"

PURPOSE

This introductory course teaches the basic on-the-job writing necessary to join, manage, and promote any organization in the public, private, or nonprofit sector. We primarily will focus on short forms: résumés, memos, business letters, summaries, brochures, newsletters, press releases, informal proposals and reports. But we also will learn professional research, workplace ethnography, and small group work and use organizational case studies from different professional fields to compose performance evaluations and ethics probes. In addition, we will study the social and economic forces transforming the contemporary workplace, discuss the impact of new media and technologies affecting workplace writing, and ponder the cultural meaning of work itself.

All the same, this writing class isn't exclusively for majors in Business, Strategic Communication, and Professional Writing. All students, whatever their major, urgently need to familiarize themselves with workplace writing—to find and keep a job, if nothing else. Whether you consider work a calling, a joke, a necessity, or a punishment, you will devote most of your waking life to this activity. Whatever your career, you will be expected to write, and to write well, to multiple audiences, both inside and outside your organization. This class can help you do that.

But besides practical training, you should take this course for equally important reasons:

- On a *personal* level, you must understand how the language of the office—its poetry, power, pervasiveness, and perversity—influences your assumptions and aspirations. Most people still see the office as the gateway to the American Dream. Indeed, the middle-class lifestyle to which so many aspire, its symbols and values, are entangled in business, work, and professionalism.

- On a *political* level, your private struggles with office rhetoric have public consequences. "Corporatese," the dialect of Big Blue, Wall Street, Silicon Valley, and Madison Avenue, transcends business and the professions. It has been adopted by hospitals, universities, museums, foundations, charities, research labs, even churches; in short, wherever power and money in our society are encoded in words, symbols, rituals, and structures.

Why should you address these issues? Because you are about to begin your professional career at a time of crisis and change. Even before the Covid-19 pandemic wrecked the economy, before the Black Lives Matter protests forced public and private institutions to reconsider their values and priorities, the American corporate sector recognized that it needed to reform not only survive but to preserve America's social contract.

On August 19, 2019, nearly 200 chief executives, including the leaders of Apple, Pepsi and Walmart, met in Washington D.C. to redefine the role of business in society and to discuss how companies are perceived by an increasingly skeptical and hostile public. Breaking with decades of orthodoxy, this Business Roundtable issued a statement on "the purpose of a corporation," arguing that companies should no longer advance only the interests of shareholders. Instead, the group said, they must also invest in their employees, protect the environment, and deal fairly and ethically with their suppliers.

"While each of our individual companies serves its own corporate purpose, we share a fundamental commitment to all of our stakeholders," the group, a lobbying organization that represents many of America's largest companies, said in a statement. "We commit to deliver value to all of them, for the future success of our companies, our communities, and our country."

This seismic shift came at a moment of increasing distress in corporate America, as big companies face mounting global discontent over income inequality, harmful products, and poor working conditions. If left unchecked, business leaders said, these problems will destroy the public's faith in the free market and American business. But another problem, they conceded, is *capitalism's legacy of racism* in the boardroom and the stock exchange. This historical problem provides the background and context of our work this semester.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Hard work has defined America since its founding. "America is the Land of Labor," Benjamin Franklin declares in "Information for Those Who Would Remove to America" (1784), an educational pamphlet for immigrants, "and by no means what the English call Lubberland, and the French *Pays de Cocagne* [Land of Cockaigne] where the streets are said to be paved with half-peck loaves, the houses tiled with pancakes, and where the fowls fly about ready roasted, crying, 'Come eat me!'"

Nevertheless, Franklin claims, opportunity is available to all. Rank and ancestry might be esteemed in the courts of Europe, but these commodities are worthless, in the American marketplace, which never ask strangers "What are you?" but "What can you do?" People with useful skills, whatever their background, are always welcome, Franklin assures. If they exercise their talent and behave well, they will achieve financial security and social respectability.

This classic version of the American Dream still attracts immigrants from all over the world. "Look how far I come! Look how far I come!" boasts Lin Manuel Miranda in *Hamilton*. "Immigrants, we get the job done!" But behind this bright promise falls the dark shadow of injustice, oppression, and racism. Immigrants who were not white Anglo-Saxon Protestants were rarely welcome when they came to these shores and often were brutally exploited. Worse, newcomers from Africa did not come here voluntarily but were kidnapped and sold into slavery.

The Dark Shadow of the American Dream

Now, it is no secret that slavery is embedded in our nation's history. But many white Americans, especially those aspiring to or already belonging to the white-collar middle class, who believe in the free market and who value education, meritocracy, and professionalism, still see slavery as a tragic footnote, an obscene exception to a dominant narrative of the expansion of economic and political liberty on this great continent. This is because most white American historians for decades depicted Southern slavery as agrarian, anachronistic, and unprofitable, already on its way to extinction before the Civil War, a conflict that some historians considered "unnecessary."

Contemporary historians, such as Edward E. Baptist, disagree. Eli Whitney's cotton gin not only sparked technological innovation in America but corporatized slavery. Cotton itself, the raw material of the early Industrial Revolution, was the most important commodity in 19th-century international trade and its capital accumulated through slave labor flowed into the coffers of Northern and British bankers, merchants and manufacturers. And far from being economically backward, slave owners pioneered advances in modern accounting and finance. They imposed harsh, ever-increasing production quotas for workers and the creation of sophisticated credit instruments.

Rather than representing an alternative system to industrial capitalism, American plantations enabled its development, providing the textile mills of Manchester and Birmingham with cotton to be spun into cloth by the new British working class. As Walter Johnson, one of America's leading historians of slavery, remarks: "There was no such thing as capitalism without slavery: the history of Manchester never happened without the history of Mississippi."

This new history of slavery seeks to obliterate the economic and moral distinction between slavery and capitalism, and between the South and the North, by showing them to have

been all part of a single system. "The history of racial capitalism, it must be emphasized, is a history of wages as well as whips, of factories as well as plantations, of whiteness as well as blackness, of 'freedom' as well as slavery," Johnson concludes

Inevitably, this view has generated intense arguments, not only about how integral the slave plantation was to the national and global economies in the 19th century but also about whether we should regard the end of slavery as an important breakpoint in American history or merely a rearranging of an oppressive and racist socio-economic system into an altered but still essentially oppressive form that continues today.

A Time for Social Change

Many business leaders and young professionals agree with Walter Johnson. They wish to confront the history of racial capitalism and to eliminate structural racism in U.S. companies. They feel compelled to think and act boldly because the time is ripe for social change. Why?

Forty years of economic stagnation, job loss, downward mobility have sapped faith in the American Dream. During the Gilded Age and the Roaring Twenties, most Americans tolerated social inequality because the economy seemed dynamic, open, and expansive. During the Reagan era, however, the rise of neoliberalism and managerial capitalism created an economy that favored shareholders over stakeholders and even consumers. After the financial meltdown of 2008, public outrage over the bailout of the U.S. banking system birthed Occupy Wall Street. The current system, demonstrators claimed, is rigged to benefit the top 1% of society.

We are now experiencing another period of upheaval. The Covid-19 pandemic has revealed intolerable cruelty and inequities in the American workplace. "They call us 'essential workers,'" a popular T-shirt reads, "because 'sacrificial' is just too honest." Likewise, the Black Lives Matter protests have exposed unacceptable corruption and incompetence in our institutions. Mounting demands for racial equality and accountability in the workplace have led a number of corporate CEOs and leaders spanning media, tech, and politics to resign from their positions, with many asking for their successors to be people of color. Ben & Jerry and other corporations have issued public statements calling for the dismantling of institutional racism in the private, public, and nonprofit sector.

This isn't a passing fad or public relations, what cynics dismiss as "woke capitalism." This is unprecedented paradigm shift and a long-deferred reckoning. There is a reason why a burial ground for African American slaves lies beneath Wall Street; why U.S. corporations became "legal persons" by exploiting the Fourteenth Amendment, which granted citizenship rights and equal protection to former slaves after the American Civil War; why the black-white wage gap has not changed since 1950; why the median net worth of black families is less than 10% of those of white families. It is because our nation's legacy of slavery and racism remains codified in its social systems, public and private institutions, and professional discourse. One way to overcome this legacy is transform the structure, culture, and language of the workplace.

Awake to Woke to Work

Progressive corporations, such as Fast Company, have begun adopting a paradigm called "Awake to Woke to Work," first developed by Equity in the Center, an initiative launched in 2018 by the consulting firm ProInspire to create cultures of social equity in the nonprofit sector. If organizations truly wish to improve social equity at work, they must go beyond representation and inclusion to focus on *systems*, scrutinizing all aspects of their operations through the lens of racial equity. This means changing their internal and external systems and regularly assessing their processes, programs, and operations.
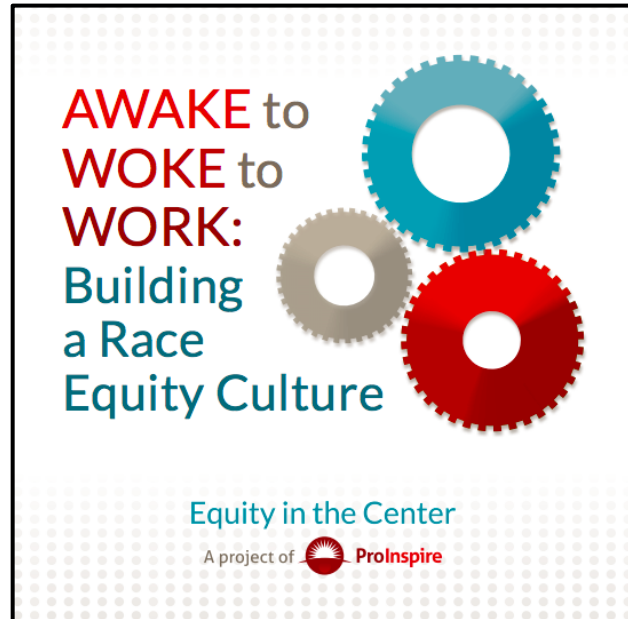
This section of Writing for the Workplace attempts to do something similar on a smaller scale. It invites you to research and reflect on social and racial equity in the American marketplace as you learn how to write for the workplace. By necessity, its goals must be modest because I am a professional writing instructor, not an anti-racist facilitator. I am not trained to hold space nor to moderate dialogue in gatherings whose goal is to further anti-racist practice. However, as a scholar of American business history and a former business journalist, I can narrate the past and report on the present to allow you to form your own opinions and to make your own decisions during these challenging times. We all must become more aware, not so we can list "cultural competence" as a skill on our résumé, or win a gold star from Human Resources, or to virtue-signal in an advertising campaign but to become better professionals and citizens.

If this enterprise daunts you, don't worry. This class emphasizes writing, not history or sociology. But its background material illustrates how workplace writing never emerges from a vacuum, how the past can create false and dysfunctional expectations, how organizational language and culture can demean and harm colleagues, and how even the simplest memo has the most complicated repercussions for stockholders and stakeholders.

Basically, workplace communication falls into two categories—the writing you produce *for* your organization (to increase its efficiency and improve its communications) the writing your produce *in* your organization (to promote and protect your interests). Knowing the difference is the beginning of prudence and the key to survival. Even as this course teaches you to compose the forms common in all organizations, it will train you to see workplace writing as a contextually rhetorical art within a network of competing discourse communities. But most of all, this course urges you to question the enterprise to which you want to commit yourself, to wrestle with the creative and ethical problems of organizational language in the marketplace. Read the fine print before signing on the dotted line.

COURSE GOALS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Our primary goal is to help you transition from the writing you do in your current major to the writing you will do in your future profession. Both academic writing and workplace writing depend on *specialized knowledge* but differ in format and application.

Workplace writing (also known as *professional writing*) communicates business, technical, or scientific information to readers who need to solve problems or complete tasks within organizations. As such, it influences the decisions and actions of people inside and outside of workplace settings in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Although it follows prescribed formats of documentation, workplace writing is neither simple nor mechanical. Contextually rhetorical, it functions within a complex network of intersecting and competing professional and institutional discourse communities mediated by a global market. This requires training in both ancient and modern forms of persuasion.

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- Analyze professional audiences and contexts to produce informative and persuasive documents and presentations.

- Develop individual and collaborative strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading texts.

- Apply the writing and document design conventions common to all workplaces.

- Refine critical thinking, reading, and research strategies and become familiar with and adapt to various workplace communication technologies.

- Reflect on disciplinary and professional identity and confront ethical issues within workplace communication.

- Use workplace writing to propose solutions to complex organizational problems, such as corporate responsibility; diversity, inclusion, and equity (DIE); environmentalism; and labor rights.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is divided into eight sections. Each section addresses a particular form of workplace writing and relates it to a corresponding set of work-related issues.

1) **"FRANKLIN PLANNER"** introduces the course's chief themes and concepts, outlines its historical content, and presents the four principles of workplace writing: *identify your audience*, *establish your purpose*, *formulate your message*, and *choose your style*. As C. Wright Mills documents, the rise of the professional middle class and of written communication complemented and reinforced each other. Accordingly, we will study the dialectic between organizational structure and institutional discourse. How can both reinforce privilege, validate bias, and perpetuate injustice?

2) **"INVISIBLE SOCIETIES"** discusses the evolution of the corporation, from the centralized, hierarchical bureaucracies of the past to the decentralized, project-oriented networks of the present. Using research and case studies from companies like Microsoft and Hallmark, we will write analytical workplace ethnographies and promotional organizational profiles. Ideally, all organizations should capitalize on six key assets *(location*, *structure*, *statistics*, *people*, *history*, *product* or *service*), develop an individual culture, and profess a clear mission. Likewise, workplace writers must narrate an organization's story and articulate its values, particularly during a time of social change. Responding to public criticism, how are some organizations changing their cultures and rebranding themselves?

3) **"OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS"** turns to the job search and the application process. While learning how to sell ourselves through cover letters, résumés, career sketches, and application essays, we will study how economic and social forces over the past 150 years continually redefine the job market and renegotiate the terms of employment. Taking our cue from Robert Reich, we also will measure the impact of a global economy that no longer recognizes national boundaries or companies. In addition, we will study the latest employment shift from mere knowledge workers to symbol analysts, distinguishing the *geeks* (the eccentrics who create new products or services) from the *shrinks* (the hustlers who promote and market them). What specific obstacles and challenges do women and minorities face in the marketplace?

4) **"PERSONA AND PERFORMANCE"** continues this theme by discussing how personality is packaged and monitored by organizations. Significantly, the term *persona* refers to the alter ego writers create in their narratives and arguments. That fact has practical and historical significance for workplace writers. Practically, we will compose promotional profiles of figures in our field for internal and external publications and performance evaluations of ourselves and others for management, human resources, or outside assessors. Historically, we will examine the role of the business biography in American culture, from Benjamin Franklin and Horatio Alger to B. F. Forbes and Earl Graves, how such corporate exemplary tales transform people into characters epitomizing organizational values while we observe how early consultants like Frederick Taylor, Fritz Roethlisberger, and Elton Mayo molded human personality to suit the demands

of work. In both cases, we will examine how racism can shape narratives of and criteria for success from the cubicle to the executive suite, often with dire consequences not only for communities of color but for America's private, public, and nonprofit sectors.

5) **"MEDIUM AND MESSAGE"** addresses press releases and corporate communications. As we learn to summarize, analyze, and synthesize information in article abstracts, we will study the rise of organizational communications in the Progressive Era, how early public relations agents like Ivy Lee created the first press kits not only to obtain more balanced coverage in the media and but to force companies to adhere to their charters and meet their civic responsibilities. Lee's maxim, "Always tell the truth, because the public finds out anyway," is all too often ignored, as evident in the poor crisis management during the current Covid-19 epidemic. In many cases, communication was further marred by racist assumptions and language.

6) **"FORMS AND FILES"** reviews the memos, letters, and informal reports necessary to manage and run any enterprise. As we will see from the writings of Max Weber and the career and work reports of Franz Kafka, the model for 20th century organizations was the centralized bureaucracy, which produced both the blessings and horrors of the past hundred years. The Holocaust and the Soviet gulag system, the New Deal and the Great Society were all produced by this centralized model. But despite decentralization and the rise of the "paperless" office, 21st century organizations still generate paperwork in three areas: management and employee relations, customer service, and operations and maintenance. Small writing work groups will research their own case study and create a dossier of documents for one of these areas.

7) **"PROPOSING CHANGE"** confronts the unique professional and personal challenges create by the New Economy: shifting markets, new technologies, and globalization. How can workplace writers exploit these changes rather than be exploited by them? The best defense is a good offense, which means instigating necessary change through proposals. We will learn three kinds: *internal proposals*, *external* or *sales proposals*, and *research and development proposals*. Identify and analyze a problem, project a cost-effective solution, and outline implementation. Above all, weigh and consider the politics of your proposal and its impact on your organization. Nothing likes to be changed except a wet baby, but don't back away from controversy or conflict if you know and can prove your proposal has merit. Sometimes riding a tiger is the only way to prevent yourself from being eaten.

8) **"EXIT INTERVIEWS"** recaps the course's themes, summarizes debates about the workplace, evaluates class performance, and discusses other suitable professional writing courses. To celebrate the semester, student teams will give *oral presentations* based on their group dossier during exam week.

PREREQUISITES

Academic Writing (WRTG-10600) or Ithaca Seminar in Writing (ICSM-10800) is required for this class; but clear professional goals are also desirable. Focus and direction will enhance your performance.

ASSIGNMENTS

Your final letter grade for the semester will be determined by the following:

Exercises **(50%)**

These short assignments (2 to 4 double-spaced pages) grow out of class lectures, discussions, and readings related to a particular course section.

COURSE SECTION AND GENRE	DOCUMENTS
Invisible Societies: Organizational profiles	• workplace ethnographies • SWOT analyses and consultancy reports • promotional profiles and prospectuses
Opportunity Knocks: Application materials	• cover letters • résumés • career sketches • application essays
Persona and Performance: Personality packages	• professional biographies • performance evaluations
Medium and Message: News kits	• article summaries and media analyses • press releases

All assignments will receive a letter grade. Some can be converted into portfolio pieces for interviews and internships.

Group Dossier and Presentation **(25%)**

Working in small teams, students will create a dossier of 8 to 10 workplace documents for a specific organization. Forming a coherent narrative, these documents will address management and employee relations, customer service, or operations and maintenance. Some possible breakdowns:

SCENARIO	DOCUMENTS
1) Management and Employee Relations:	• paragraph, outline, and news-style memos • inquiry and special request letters • thank you and congratulation letters • position statements • minutes

2) Customer Service, Community Relations:	• requisitions and order letters • sales and promotional letters • complaint and adjustment letters • refusal of credit and collection letters • brochures and newsletters
3) Operations and Maintenance:	• instructions and procedures • periodic, sales, and progress reports • field trip reports and site inspections • client visits and incident reports • research and test reports

This project will teach you to work in groups, handle paperwork, and solve problems through professional and technical writing. During exam week, student teams will give 10- to 15-minute *oral presentations* based on their portfolios.

Proposal   **(25%)**
This final individual or group project (3 to 4 single-spaced pages) requires research. Choose from the following three formats:

1) *Internal Proposal*: Identify and solve a real or imaginary problem for an actual organization.

2) *Sales Proposal*: Promote or sell a real or imaginary product or service to an actual business or organization.

3) *Research Proposal*: Win approval and/or funding for a scholarly, creative, or technical project from a research or grant director.

RESOURCES

What sources should you use for these assignments? Books on your research subject are, of course, invaluable. So are materials you can obtain cheaply and directly from the PR and Customer Relations Department of corporations and institutions as well as local Chambers of Commerce. But here are other resources to consider:

For concise information on company stats, histories, and founders, consult the *Moody's Business Index*, *The Hoover's Handbook of American Business*, *The International Directory of Company Histories*, the four-volume *Biographical Dictionary of American Business Leaders*, and *Everybody's Business: A Field Guide to the 400 Leading Companies in America* (Doubleday, 1990).

For a comprehensive list of those sources dealing with your specific profession, consult the Business Periodical Index. This index is also available on-line as BPER, a database system which not only cites articles but provides abstracts.

The following list, however, is a good overview of the most useful, and stimulating, business publications. If you can't find some of these in our library, check Cornell or downtown:

Advertising Age
Adweek
The American Economic Review
American Economist
Barron's
Black Enterprise
Broadcasting
Bureaucrat
Business
Business America
Business and Society Review
Business History Review
Business Quarterly
Business Week
Chain Store Age Executive w/
  Shopping Center Age
Channels
Columbia Journal of Business
Consumer Reports
Credit World
Direct Marketing
Distribution
Economic Review
The Economist
Entrepreneur
Executive Female

Financial World
Forbes
Fortune
Global Trade
Harvard Business Review
Inc.
Industry Week
Journal of Advertising
The Journal of Business
Journal of Business and
  Psychology
Journal of Business
Communications
Journal of Business Ethics
Labor History
Management Review
Management Today
Marketing and Media Decisions
Marketing News
Mergers and Acquisitions
Modern Office Technology
Money
Nation's Business
New England Economic Review
New York Times Business
Section
The Office

Organizational Dynamics
Psychology and Marketing
The Public Interest
Public Relations Journal
Public Relations Quarterly
Public Relations Review
The Quarterly Journal of
  Economics
Quarterly Review of Economic
  and Business
The Rand Journal of Economics
Research Technology
  Management
The Review of Business and
  Economic Research
Sloan Management Review
Small Business Report
Stores
Southern Economic Journal
Technology Review
Television/ Radio Age
The Wall Street Journal
Variety

IN SEARCH OF EXCELLENCE

Like your future employers and colleagues, I expect only the best from you. Given the current shambles of corporate America, no organization can afford to tolerate fuzzy thinking, sloppy writing, or slipshod ethics. Hence these grading criteria:

- **D** work is *substandard*. Poor effort, empty thinking, weak writing. The assignment is underwritten, incomplete, or riddled with careless mechanical errors.

- **C** work is *average*, competent. Minimum effort, standard thinking, conventional writing. While the assignment is complete and glitch-less, it lacks originality, invention, creativity.

- **B** work is *good*. Genuine effort, sound thinking, solid writing. The assignment takes risks, holds promises, but still needs improvement.

- **A** work is *excellent*. Enthusiastic effort, original thinking, distinguished writing. The assignment demonstrates expertise and style and balances creative and analytical thinking.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

1) **ATTEND CLASS:** Poor attendance will affect your final grade. Keep up with readings and participate in class activities and workshops. Should you miss class, contact a classmate for any missing assignments or lecture notes. Also, turn in work on time even if you cannot do so in person. Two absences are allowed without penalty, but each subsequent absence lowers your final average by half a letter grade. According to Department of Writing, six absences will result in dismissal from this course.

   Please note the holidays listed in the Undergraduate Catalog's academic calendar. In accordance with New York State law, students who miss class due to their religious beliefs shall be excused from class or examinations on that day. Such students must notify their course instructors at least one week before any anticipated absence so that proper arrangements may be made to make up any missed work or examination without penalty.

2) **EMBRACE PRACTICE**: Workplace writing is *recursive*, a *process* more than a product, moving from brainstorming and outlining to drafting and revision and then cycling back. For each written assignment, peers will comment on your draft in class on days marked as "workshop." Instructor feedback will be given prior to due date as well as on submitted drafts. This practice will sharpen your thinking and improve your writing. Indeed, you will learn that writing itself is a way of thinking.

3) **MEET DEADLINES:** They are the bottom line in professional communication. *Late papers will not be accepted.* Revisions are due *one week* after receiving an evaluated first draft. No revisions for final proposal.

4) **BE HONEST:** This isn't a course in industrial espionage. A plagiarized paper will receive an F, and you will be asked to withdraw from the course.

5) **SEEK HELP WHEN NECESSARY:** First, visit The Writing Center, Smiddy 107—a free resource facility where, at scheduled times throughout the week, you may consult with trained student and faculty tutors about your writing.

   Second, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations will be provided to students with documented disabilities on a case-by-case basis. Students must register with the Office of Academic Support Services (110 Towers Concourse) and provide appropriate documentation before any academic adjustment will be provided.

   For more information on policies and resources, read the Appendix (pages 38 to 44).

WRITING INTENSIVE REQUIREMENT, ICC, AND THE E-PORTFOLIO

THE COMMITTEE FOR COLLEGE-WIDE REQUIREMENTS (CCR) has designated this course as "*Writing Intensive*" (W) within the Integrative Core Curriculum (ICC). If you entered Ithaca College in 2013 or later, you are required to take at least one W course and to upload appropriate artifact(s) to your ePortfolio on Taskstream to demonstrate your achievement of the Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) listed below.

Writing Intensive courses build on your ability to use writing both as a process for *making meaning* within a *specific subject area*, as well as for participating in *ongoing conversations* within a *particular academic or professional community*. Upon completion of a Writing Intensive course, you will be able to:

1. Develop and articulate content knowledge and critical thinking in a specific academic discipline or related profession through frequent practice of informal and formal writing.

2. Demonstrate understanding of audience expectations, genres, and conventions appropriate to communicating in a specific academic discipline or related profession.

3. Compose one or more documents totaling at least 3,000 words through multiple stages of writing, including brainstorming, drafting, integrating sources, and revising comprehensively after receiving substantial, formative feedback on drafts.

Writing for the Workplace meets these three objectives and can provide you with many appropriate artifacts for Taskstream, the ePortfolio and assessment system for the Integrative Core Curriculum (ICC). This system is easy to use. On the Taskstream homepage, you will view two Directed Response Folios (DRF) programs, an icon for ICC, and one for Academic Writing 10600. The ICC DRF will include a marker for you to upload artifacts for the Writing Intensive Requirement. I would be happy to make recommendations for your ePortfolio.

If you keep an open mind and ask plenty of questions, you should be fine. And don't be afraid to ask me to restructure this syllabus to better suit your needs. The consensus is that this course is as entertaining as it is disturbing, so have fun and be appalled. When it comes to the dysfunctional romance between Americans and work, truth is stranger than fiction.

> "Come out of the fog. And remember you don't have to be a complete fool in order to succeed. Play the game, but don't believe in it—that much you owe yourself. Play the game but raise the ante. Learn how it operates, learn how you operate."
>
> ~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

AGENDA

FRANKLIN PLANNERS: "Foundations of Workplace Writing"

"In my mind's eye, I see the bronze statue of the college Founder, the cold Father symbol, his hands outstretched in the gesture of lifting a veil that flutters in hard metallic folds above the face of a kneeling slave; and I am standing puzzled, unable to decide whether the veil is really being lifted, or lowered more firmly in place; whether I am witnessing a revelation or a more efficient blinding."

~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

JAN 23: ORIENTATION ("A Tale of Two Wall Streets")

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives*:
- Edward Rothstein, "A Burial Ground and Its Dead Are Given Life," 5-7.
- Bettye Kearse, "Slavery on Wall Street," 8-9.
- Eric Foner, "A Brutal Process: A Review of *The Half Has Never been Told*," 10-12.
- Nicholas Lehman, "Is Capitalism Racist?"13-18.

JAN 25: PRINCIPLES OF WORKPLACE WRITING

Theory

Mills, *White Collar*:
- "Introduction," ix-xx.
- Ch. 1: "The World of the Small Entrepreneur," 3-12.
- Ch. 2: "The Transformation of Property," 13-33.
- Ch. 4: "The New Middle Class, I," 63-76.
- Ehrenreich, "Professions as Class Fortress" (*handout*)

Von Oeck, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*.
- Introduction: "A Whack on the Side of the Head," 11-32.

Practice

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
Ch. 1: "Getting Started: Writing and Your Career"
- "Writing—An Essential Job Skill," 2-3.
- "Writing for the Global Marketplace," 3-7.
- "Four Keys to Effective Writing," 7-16.
- "Characteristics of Job-Related Writing," 16-20.
- "Ethical Writing in the Workplace," 20-33.
- Raytheon, "The Mouse that Knows You," 33-34.

Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*:
- "Executive Summary, Introduction, and Intended Audience," 2-5.

CASE STUDY: "Model Fords"
- Dos Passos, "Tin Lizzy" (*handout*)

JAN 30: INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE, DISCOURSE, AND DOCUMENTATION

Theory

Mill, *White Collar:*
- Ch. 6: "Old Professions, New Skills," 112-41.
- Ch. 13: "The New Middle Class, II," 289-300.

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives*:
- Scottie Andrew and Harmut Kaur, "Everyday Words and Practices That Have Racist Connotations," 19-23.
- *Business Communication Skills for Management*, "Bias-Free Writing," 24-26.

Von Oech, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*:
- Breaktime: "Company Metaphors," 131-32.
- Ch. 8: "Avoid Ambiguity," 177-204.

Practice

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
- Ch. 02: "Ways to Avoid Sexist and Other Stereotypical Language, 52-56.
- Ch. 05: "Respecting Readers' Nationality and Ethnic/Racial Heritage, 149-52.
- Ch. 11: "Designing Successful Documents and Web Sites," 374-400.

Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*:
- "Glossary," 24-25.

CASE STUDY: "Charles Proteus Steinmetz and General Electric"
- Dos Passos, "Proteus" (*handout*)
- Petrowski, "Images of an Engineer" (*handout*)

INVISIBLE SOCIETIES: "Institutional Narratives"

"I have been carrying on a fight with Monopolated Light & Power for some time now. I use their services and pay them nothing at all, and they don't know it. Oh, they suspect that power is being drained off, but they don't know where. All they know is that according to the master meter back there in the power station a hell of a lot of free current is disappearing somewhere in the jungle of Harlem. The joke, of course, is that I don't live in Harlem but in a border area."

<div align="right">

~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

</div>

FEB 01: CORPORATE ETHNOGRAPHIES.

Theory

Mill, *White Collar*:
- Ch. 9: "The Enormous File," 189-212.

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives:*
- Victor Ray, "Why So Many Workplaces Stay White," 27-31.
- Paula Glover and Katie Mehnert, "How Workplaces Can Invite Dialogue on Race," 32-34.

Practice

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work:*
- Ch. 08: "Doing Primary Research," 256-67.
- Ch. 15: Consulting Report, "Creating an Inclusive, Culturally Sensitive Workplace at RPM for Multinational Employees," 504-20.
- Parsons, "What is a SWOT Analysis and How Do You Do It Right?" (*handout*)
- Barry, "How to Do a SWOT Analysis for Better Strategic Planning" (*handout)*
- Panmore Institute, "SWOT Analysis of Apple, Inc." (*handout*)

Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*:
- "Building a Race Equity Culture," 9-19.

CASE STUDIES: "Hallmark and Oskaloosa Brewing"
- Owen, "Card Tricks" (*handout*)
- *Everybody's Business*, "Hallmark" (*handout*)
- Consulting Memo: "Oskaloosa" (*handout*)

FEB 06: PROMOTING ORGANIZATIONS

Theory

Mills, *White Collar*:
- Ch. 3: "The Rhetoric of Competition," 34-59.

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives:*
- Maria Cramer, "After Aunt Jemima, Reviews Underway for Uncle Ben, Mrs. Butterworth and Cream of Wheat," 35-38.
- Elizabeth Buchwald, "Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben's, Cream of Wheat Mrs. Butterworth's Reveal Plans to Rebrand," 39-42.
- Michael Stone, "Farewell Aunt Jemima And Uncle Ben—Brand Symbols Are Falling," 43-46.

Lewis, *Babbitt*.
- "Downtown Zenith," 5-6; "Local Personnel," 101-07; "Statistics," 185-86, 191-92; "A Banker's Mansion," 217-18; "A Fantasia on Street Lamps," 222-23.

Von Oech, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*:
- Ch. 10: "I'm Not Creative," 217-26.

Practice

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
- Citigroup, "Meeting Banking Needs Around the World," 6.
- Southern Company: "Our Environmental Responsibility," 26.
- Texas Institute of Transportation: "In the Loop," 398.
- Richards, "What is the Difference Between Branding and Positioning?" (*handout*)
- Abinati, "Branding vs. Positioning: What's the Difference?" (*handout*)

CASE STUDY: "Organizational Profiles"
- Silverstein, "Smitten with a Club: AAA" (*handout*)
- Gallagher & Shean, "Company Brochure" (*handout*)
- The United Methodist Church, "Marks Known the World Over" (*handout*)
- Volvo, "Ralph and Helen Capo" (*handout*)
- Student Papers: "Merit Metal" and "St. Mary's Hospital" (*handouts*)

| **EXERCISE 1:** | **ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE** | **(2 to 3 double-spaced pages)** |

Research and write a concise but informative profile of an organization in your field, large or small. Depending on your professional or scholarly interests, produce one of the following:

- *Ethnography:* describe and analyze this organization's structure and culture, especially if it is struggling to become more inclusive or racially sensitive. You may write a *feature* for a periodical or trade journal, such as *Fast Company*, *Fortune*, *Harvard Business Review*, or *Inc.*; an *abstract* for a reference guide, such as the Hallmark entry in *Everybody's Business*; or a *SWOT analysis* or a *consulting report* from a consulting firm, such as the research memo on Oskaloosa Brewing (handout) or the field notes on Water Valley Extended Care Center in Phil Kolin's *Successful Writing at Work* (pages 478-79).

- *Promo* or *prospectus*: promote an organization in an informational *brochure*, *circular*, or *newspaper insert*, a company *website*, or an *annual report*. If necessary, rebrand and reposition it in response to the growing public demand for racial equity. Create an engaging narrative and use the most effective combination of location, structure, people, statistics, history, and product or service to sell your organization. Include appropriate headings and other document design elements.

Remember to identify your *audience*, establish your *purpose*, formulate your *message*, and select the right *style*.

FEB 08: ORGANIZING AND EDITING DRAFTS

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*
- Ch. 2: "The Writing Process at Work," 36-57.
- Appendix: "A Writer's Brief Guide to Paragraphs, Sentences, and Words," A1-14.
- Revision Tips: "Getting the Goods" (*handout*)

Von Oech, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*
- Ch. 9: "To Err is Wrong," 205-16.

WORKSHOP.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS: "Writing for the Job Market"

"The bearer of this letter is a former student of ours (I say former because he shall never, under any circumstances, be enrolled as student here again) who has been expelled for a most serious defection from our strictest rules of deportment . . . I beg of you, sir, to help him continue in the direction of that promise which, like the horizon, recedes every brightly and distantly beyond the hopeful traveler."

~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

FEB 13: WORK AND DAYS

√ ***Organizational profile due:***
    2 to 3 double-spaced pages

Mills, *White Collar*:
• Ch. 10: "Work," 215-38.

Bridges, *Job Shift*:
• Ch. 1: "Where Have All the Good Jobs Gone?" (*handout*)
• Ch. 4: "Survey and Recycle Your D.A.T.A" (*handout*)

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives*:
• *New York Times* Editorial Board, "The Jobs We Need," 47-53.
• David Leonhardt, "The Black-White Wage Gap Is as Big as It Was in 1950," 54-56.
• Samuel Scheffler, "Is Economic Inequality Really a Problem?"57-59.

Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*:
• "The Need for Race Equity Work," 6-9.

FEB 15: COVER LETTERS, RÉSUMÉS AND CAREER SKETCHES
Bring in a want ad or recruitment material from your profession.

Theory

Mills, *White Collar*:
• Ch. 11: "The Status Panic," 239-58.

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives:*
• Dina Gerderman, "Minorities 'Whiten' Job Resumes to Get More Interviews," 60-63.

Von Oech, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*:
• Ch. 7: "Don't Be Foolish," 151-76.
• About the Author: "The First Right Answer," 253; "The Second," 253-56.

Lewis, *Babbitt*:
- "Babbitt Wakes," 6-17; "House Beautiful," 17-27; "Car and Commute," 27-35.
- "Power and Prosperity in Public Speaking," 82-83; "The Want Ads," 84-91.

Practice

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
Ch. 5: "Writing Letters: Some Basics," 129-54.
Ch. 7: "How to Get a Job" (Part I.)
- "Job Search Preliminaries," 199-215.
- "Preparing a Résumé," 215-36.
- "Writing a Letter of Application," 236-43.
- Bolles, "Telling Your Story: Writing a Career Sketch" (*handout*)
- Model: "Benjamin Bittman" (*handout*)

EXERCISE 2:	CREDENTIALS FILE	(5 mixed pages maximum)

Submit a credentials file for a job or internship in your field. Before creating your credentials, research the company (its structure, values, and needs) and understand the position's duties and its particular role within this organization.

Your file should consist of the following documents:

- *Cover letter:* Follow the models in Chapter 7 of *Successful Writing at Work*. Your *introductory paragraph* should target the position, identify your source, cite your credentials, and list your qualifications. Your *body paragraph(s)* should substantiate those qualifications, while your *conclusion* should thank your prospective employer and arrange an interview. Single-spaced.

- *Résumé:* Depending on your experience and career goals, choose either the *chronological* or *functional* format found in Chapter 7 of *Successful Writing at Work*. Make your masthead and layout as attractive and practical and possible. To ensure your *selling clauses* are detailed but succinct, use strong verbs, provide relevant background information, and document outcomes. Ideally, your entire résumé should fit on one page, except for your references. Single-spaced.

- *Career sketch:* Few things are more effective or memorable in a job interview than using a short, lively story to illustrate a point. End your credentials file with just such a tale. Following Roger Von Oech's example in *A Whack on the Side of the Head* (253-55), create *parallel career sketches*, contrasting your professional, and personal selves; or tell a *personal anecdote* in which you learn a lesson or solve a problem, such as the examples in Richard Bolles' *What Color is Your Parachute?*; or, taking a cue from Ben Bittman, *annotate a section of your résumé*. Reproduce the body copy for a particular position (boxed and single-spaced), then write a brief autobiographical narrative detailing what really happened on the job. If none of these alternatives appeal to you, draft a two- to three-paragraph *LinkedIn profile*. Double-spaced.

For the best results, practice what Phil Kolin calls the "you attitude"; that is, be *reader-centered* rather than writer-centered, even when (especially when) talking about yourself.

FEB 20: APPLICATION ESSAYS

Theory

Wilson, *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*:
- Ch. 3: "The Most Significant Thing about Me Is" and "Grey Advertising" (*handouts*)

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives*:
- Lincoln Quillian, Devah Pager, Arnfinn H. Midtbøen, and Ole Hexel, "Hiring Discrimination Against Black Americans Hasn't Declined in 25 Years," 64-66.
- Laura Morgan Roberts and Anthony J. Mayor, "Towards a Racially Just Workplace," 67-77.

Von Oech, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*:
- Ch. 1: "The Right Answer," 33-48.

Practice

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
Ch. 8: "Finding a Job" (Part II.)
- "Going to an Interview" 243-48.
- "Follow-Up Letters, Letters Accepting or Declining a Job," 249-51.

CASE STUDY: "Argumentation and the Application Essays"
- Student Application Essay, "Quail Run Physical Therapy" (*handout*)
- Student Application Essay, "The Philadelphia Orchestra" (*handout*)
- Student Application Essay, "Warner Brothers Legal Department" (*handout*)

EXERCISE 3: **APPLICATION ESSAY** **(2 to 3 double-spaced pages)**

Assuming you have been short-listed for a job or internship, write an application essay to an organization in your field. What makes you the best qualified candidate? You are welcome to apply for the same position as your previous assignment or to pursue another lead. Either way, thoroughly research the organization and the position and make the strongest case for yourself.

For your first draft, follow the Baker method used in the class models, then revise and go beyond it. As Tom Rath learns in *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, an effective application essay strikes the right balance between convention and originality. The following template may be useful:

ESSAY PARTS	TOPIC AND GOALS	ELEMENTS
Introduction: *"Let's talk about you."*	Organization & Position: 1. identify and analyze the organization's goals, needs, values 2. outline the position's duties and how they relate to the above 3. list your most relevant qualifications in ascending order	• hook • statement of purpose • three-part thesis (A, B, C)
Body: *"Let's talk about me."*	Qualifications & Experience: 1. follow your thesis points in proper order 2. substantiate your claims with facts and figures 3. link related ideas and maintain coherence	• supporting paragraphs (A, B, C) • transitions
Conclusion: *"Let's talk about us."*	Merger (Joining the Team): 1. circle back to the issues raised in the introduction 2. recap your argument's main points: how can *you* help *them*? 3. end with the big picture	• coda • kicker

From Aristotle to Lee Iacocca, the basic structure of argumentation remains the same: "*Tell your audience what you're going to tell them, tell them, then tell them what you've told them*." If you focus on your reader's needs, relate your case to larger organizational, professional, or economic issues, and keep your argument cogent and timely, you should produce a strong application essay.

FEB 22: WORKSHOP.

PERSONA AND PERFORMANCE: "PR and HR"

"Here upon this stage the black rite of Horatio Alger was performed to God's own acting script, with millionaires coming down to portray themselves; not merely acting out the myth of their goodness, and wealth and success and power and benevolence and authority in cardboard masks, but themselves, these virtues concretely! Not the wafer and the wine, but the flesh and the blood, vibrant and alive, and vibrant even when stooped, ancient, and withered."

~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

FEB 27: PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHIES

Bring in a periodical article showcasing a superstar in a business or profession. Include photo and lay out.

√ *Cover letter, résumé, and career sketch due:*
   5 mixed pages maximum.

Theory

Mills, *White Collar*:
- Ch. 12: "Success," 259-86.

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives*:
- Derek Dingle, "Earl Graves Sr., Founder of *Black Enterprise*," 78-79.
- Roland Barba, "21 Most Successful Black Entrepreneurs Throughout History" 80-84.
- Ruth Umoh and Brianne Garrett, "Black in Business: Celebrating the Legacy of Black Entrepreneurship," 85-88.
- Joyce Beatty, "Statistics: Corporate America Lacks Minorities and Women," 89-90.
- Phil Wahba, "Number of Black CEOs in the Fortune 500 Remains Very Low," 91.
- Gillian B. White, "The Unfulfilled Promise of Black Capitalism," 92-93.

Practice

Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*:
- "The Role of Levers," 12-19.

CASE STUDY: "The Business Bio, from Franklin to Forbes"
- *Newsweek*, "Lee Iacocca of Chrysler" (*handout*)
- *People Magazine*, "Margot Fraser of Birkenstock" (*handout*)
- *Fortune*, "John Phillips of Aristotle Industries" (*handout*)
- *Black Enterprise*, "Ken Chenault of American Express" (*handout*)
- *Government Executive*, "Service to America Medals 2003" (*handout*)
- Student Papers: "Peter Moore," "Jack LaLanne," and "Henry Stern" (*handouts*)

EXERCISE 4: PROFESSIONAL BIO (3 to 4 double-spaced pages)

"So you want my life, death, and Christian sufferings, eh, young man?" manufacturer Silas Lapham asks reporter Bartley Hubbard in W. D. Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885). From Benjamin Franklin and Horatio Alger, to *Forbes Magazine* and *Black Enterprise*, the "success story" has been the primary narrative of the American marketplace. Like Plutarch's *Live of the Noble Greeks and Romans* and the medieval *Golden Legend of the Saints*, such profiles are both journalistic and didactic, factual and symbolic, *exemplary tales* meant to teach a lesson or to transmit values.

With this fact in mind, write a *professional biography* of figure in your field for an organizational newsletter, a trade journal, a mainstream business or professional periodical, or a promotional event, such as an awards ceremony, book launch, conference, or lecture. If you prefer, write a *book review* of a recent biography or autobiography of this figure for the most appropriate publication. Should you profile someone from a historically underrepresented group, however, please avoid stereotypes and tokenism.

Either summarize your subject's entire career or focus on a particular life chapter or achievement. Be detailed but concise and mix engaging narrative with keen analysis. If possible, create an effective *persona* for your subject, as we saw in the class readings: Ken Chenault as Mr. Righteous, Margot Fraser as Sixties Earth Mother, John Philips as Yippy Turned Yuppy. Emphasize motivation and character and, as always, write with a definite purpose for a particular audience.

FEB 29: PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

√ *Application essay due:*
  2 to 3 double-spaced pages.

Phil Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
Chapter 14: "Employee Activity/ Performance Reports," 475-77.

Chan and Lutovich, *Writing Performance Documentation*
- "Sample Documentation for Practice" (*handout*)
- Model Performance Reviews: "Carly Fiorina" and "Rebecca Kurbing"

CASE STUDY: "Theory X *vs*. Theory Y"
- Dos Passos, "The American Plan: Frederick Winslow Taylor" (*handout*)
- *Forbes Weekly*, "Bob Camp and Benchmarking" (*handout*)
- Gabor, "America Rediscovers W. Edwards Denning" (*handout*)
- *Fortune*, "A Concise History of Management Hooey" (*handout*)

EXERCISE 5:   **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**   **(2 to 3 single-spaced pages)**

According to business journalist Geoffrey Colvin, management theory, for better or worse, concerns itself with "the Three M's" of organizational life: *motivation*, *methodology*, and *measurement*. Naturally, these factors bear directly on evaluating employee performance. Whether you are a supervisor, manager, or Human Resources director, you must ask yourself three key questions:

1. Do my workers clearly understand the *purpose* of their assignments?
2. Do they follow *procedures* properly and effectively?
3. Do they meet targeted and quantifiable *goals*?

Any balanced employee evaluation, therefore, should cover *attitude*, *skills*, and *outcomes*.

Following these principles, write a *performance evaluation* of a person or division in your field. Submitted for managerial review, this personnel report should be in *memo* form, with appropriate headings, bullets, and white space. Go beyond the models in Janis Chan and Diane Lutovich's *Writing Performance Documentation* and create your own format. The best templates are based on job duties or department functions and include statistical information or "impact numbers."

Whether you choose your own case study from personal experience, a professional journal, or textbooks like Gary Peterson's *Communicating in Organizations*, be fair, factual, and detailed and always beware of your own biases in forming or evaluating criteria. Address *efficiency* and *effectiveness*. Argue from objective evidence and provide concrete recommendations, especially if improvements are necessary. Taking a cue from W. E. Denning, you should balance the organization's needs with those of the worker. Ideally, they should be identical. As Robert Pirsig teaches in *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, "all human endeavor, ultimately, is about the pursuit of Quality."

MAR 05: WORKSHOP.

MEDIUM AND MESSAGE: "Selling Information"

"Why do I run things on the Q.T.? Because I'm well-informed! Power doesn't have to show off. Power is confident, self-assuring, self-starting and self-stopping, self-warming and self-justifying. When you have it, you know it."

~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

MAR 07: SUMMARIES, ABSTRACTS, AND ANALYSES

√ ***Professional bio due:***
  3 to 4 double-spaced pages

Mills, *White Collar*:
- Ch. 7. "Brains, Inc.," 142-60.

Von Oech, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*.
- Ch. 2: "That's Not Logical," 133-50.

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
- Ch. 08: "Doing Research," 255-81.
- "Documenting Sources," 281-89.
- Ch. 09: "Summarizing Material," 311-26.

Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*:
- "Methodology and Research," 5.
- "Bibliography," 29-30.

CASE STUDIES: "Media Summaries and Analysis"
- "Toys R Us" (*handout*)
- "Time-Warner" (*handout*)

EXERCISE 6: SUMMARIES AND ANALYSIS **(4 to 5 mixed pages)**

In *Working Girl* (1988), three *New York Post* articles inspire secretary Tess McGill to convince Trask Industries, a major food and drug conglomerate, to purchase the Metro Radio Network, a small southern media chain with tremendous potential. These articles are: a) an interview in the business section with CEO Oren Trask, who discusses his lifelong interest in broadcasting; b) an announcement in the entertainment section that jock shock Howard Stern will host an auction at a radio-themed charity ball; c) an article in the society section on Trask's daughter, Susan, who has organized this very ball. By connecting these three pieces of information, Tess creates an original and winning proposal and secures a new job.

Tess's story illustrates the importance of *summarizing*, *analyzing*, and *synthesizing* information in any organization. That means more than merely mastering the facts, however. As Edward Bernays, a pioneer of 20th century public relations, noted, "information is what happens *between* facts, not within facts, and often reflects subjective desires and dreams rather than objective criteria of evidence." Even the simplest and most straightforward summaries, therefore, come freighted with ideological assumptions and serve some hidden purpose. Ultimately, in a capitalist democracy, all information is a form of *selling* and *lobbying*.

Within the context of the market, summarize and analyze three articles on the Covid-19 pandemic or the racial equity movement from the perspective your field or profession. Choose from the following two approaches:

- *Single source:* Select *three* pieces from *different* sections of *one* mainstream periodical: *hard news* (local, regional, national, or international stories and Op-Ed pieces); *economic news* (business section, stock reports, advertisements, want ads); *soft news* (society, lifestyle, book reviews, arts and entertainment). How are these three different pieces related and how does that bear on your profession?

- *Multiple sources:* Select three pieces on the *same* subject from *three* periodicals, at least *one* of which should be a *trade journal* in your field. Limit yourself to features, articles, editorials, and public service announcements. What does the different coverage of the same story reveal about your profession, the media, or the market?

Your *summaries* should be *single-spaced* and between *six* to *eight* sentences long. As in the student samples, create an attractive layout by leaving adequate white space between individual summaries. Be comprehensive but include only the most relevant facts and details. To determine whether to use MLA or APA format, consult the official guidelines of your particular profession. Follow the models on pages 324 and 326 in Phil Kolin's *Successful Writing at Work*: cite author, article title, periodical, date, and pagination, but reserve editorial comments for your analysis.

The analysis itself should be *double-spaced* and come with an *introduction*, *body*, and *conclusion*. You may write as a *journalist* (reporting on industry trends for the general reader) or a *consultant* (advising a client or superior). The essay's introduction should have a clear *thesis*, arguing a specific connection between the three articles. The body may be *one* to *three* paragraphs, depending on your thesis and approach, while the conclusion should provoke thought or recommend action.

MAR 12: Spring Beak.
MAR 14: No Class.

MAR 19: Press Releases

√   *Performance evaluation due:*
    2 to 3 single-spaced pages, memo or letter format

Theory

Mills, *White Collar*:
- Ch. 15: "The Politics of the Rear Guard," 324-54.

Von Oech, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*.
- Ch. 3: "Follow the Rules," 69-86.

Practice

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
- Ch. 09: "Writing Successful News Releases," 326-28.

CASE STUDY: "Ivy Lee and Early Public Relations"
- Gabler, "The Fathers of PR: Edward L. Bernays and Henry C. Rogers" (*handout*)
- Bleifuss, "Flak Attack: A Brief History of Public Relations" (*handout*)
- Bovsun, "Confessions of an Ex-flak" (*handout*)

EXERCISE 7:	PRESS RELEASE	(2 double-spaced pages)

Write a press release responding to the Covid-19 pandemic or the racial equity movement for an organization in your field. Focus, however, on new products, services, or publications; new policies and/ or procedures; personnel changes; new construction and developments; financial and business news; special events and awards. Relate the organization's news to national news.

Your release should include a *masthead* (company logo and contact information), a *slug* (a short, punchy headline), a *lead* (an opening sentence catching the reader's attention and summarizing your story), and a *body* (the supporting paragraphs substantiating the lead). Whenever appropriate, end with a call to action or invite feedback. For a good model, consult page 327 of *Successful Writing at Work*.

As Phil Kolin observes, press releases often fail because too many workplace communicators try to impress rather than inform. To increase your chances of success, remember to:

- ***Write for a Dual Audience:*** Meet the needs of your organization or client *and* those of an outside editor. The latter is the ultimate gatekeeper, after all, and will determine whether or not your release runs, becomes incorporated into a feature, or is chucked in the trash. Front-end your information, since most editors blue-pencil releases from the bottom up.

- ***Be Journalistic:*** Write like a reporter, not a copywriter. Address the *five W's* (who, what, when, where, why) and the *how* of your story, especially in your lead. Always stick to the facts and sparingly use quotes from company spokespersons.

Naturally, professional ethics are paramount. "Always tell the truth," insisted Ivy Lee, the father of corporate communications and the inventor of the press release. "People find out anyway." He also said: "A solid accomplishment, in the long run, does more good than an empty boast." These principles are as true now as they were a century ago.

MAR 21: WORKSHOP.

FORMS AND FILES: "The World of Paperwork"

"The machine will produce the results of a prefrontal lobotomy without the negative effects of the knife," the voice said. "You see, instead of severing the prefrontal lobe, a single lobe, that is, we apply pressure in the proper degrees to the major centers of nerve control. . . and the result is as complete a change of personality as you'll find in your famous fairy-tale cases of criminals transformed into amiable fellows after all that bloody business of a brain operation."

~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*
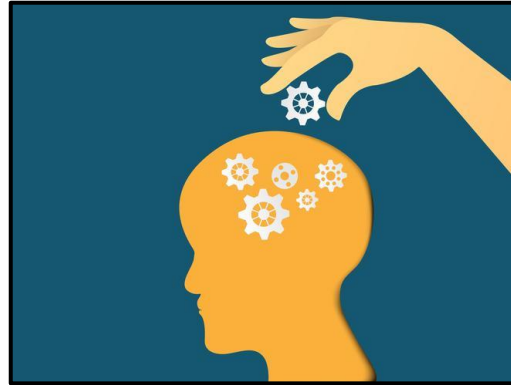
MAR 26: THE ENORMOUS FILE

√ ***Summaries and analysis due:***
  4 to 5 mixed pages

Mills, *White Collar*:
- Ch. 5: "The Managerial Demiurge," 77-111.

CASE STUDY: "Franz Kafka and the Worker's Accident Insurance Bureau of Bohemia"
- Weber, "Bureaucracy" (*handout*)
- Di Renzo, "Golems, Scribes, and Tzaddiks: Franz Kafka's Parabolic Paperwork" and Kafka, Site Inspection Report: "Sawmill Accidents" (*handout*)
- Dombrowski, "Nazi Technical Memorandum" (*handout*)

Form work groups and select an organization.

PROJECT 1:	**GROUP DOSSIER**	**(8 to 10 documents)**

Paperwork is the epic of our time," declared German sociologist Max Weber. That statement applies as much to the decentralized, paperless companies in today's New Economy as the centralized agencies in Weber's day. As Franz Kafka noted, while working as a technical writer and the assistant director at the Worker's Accident Insurance Bureau of Bohemia, "an organization's documentation embodies its ethos and tells its story." Your ability to handle paperwork, therefore, will define your role within an organization's narrative and will determine your participation in a larger community of shareholders and stakeholders.

Working in a team of four to six students, you will create a dossier of memos, letters, reports, and deliverables for an actual organization on the Covid-19 pandemic or the racial equity movement. This portfolio will form a coherent narrative of documents and will address a past, present, or future problem in *management and employee relations*, *customer service and community relations*, or *operations and maintenance*. Using the appropriate forms we will study in Phil Kolin's *Successful Writing at Work*, identify and analyze the problem, propose and implement a solution, and trace and evaluate the outcome.

For the best results:

- ***Do your homework:*** Research you case thoroughly. Work from the actual, not the hypothetical; so get the facts and rigorously argue from them. Always see the big picture. Place your organization's problem within the larger context of its mission and history and current and developing political and economic trends.

- ***Be comprehensive:*** The devil is in the details. Vary your forms and, to do justice to the complexity of your case, gravitate towards short report and deliverables. Ideally, your documents should form a dialogue. How can your organization's different departments cooperate to solve this problem? How well can your organization communicate with other companies, legal, financial, and political institutions, and the general public?

- ***Match substance with style:*** Layout and design are crucial. Be creative, but never lose sight of your purpose. Design logs and mastheads for your documents and properly organize them. Your dossier should be attractive, professional, and user-friendly.

Weak dossiers merely copy the models from the textbook. Strong dossiers tell a story and argue a case. Since a team is only as strong as its weakest member, pool your talents and delegate wisely.

MAR 28: MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

√ ***Press release due:***
2 double-spaced pages maximum

Theory

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives:*
- Ben & Jerry's "We Must Dismantle White Supremacy: Silence is NOT an Option" and "Why Black Lives Matter," 94-97.
- Rob Walker, "Ben & Jerry's Doesn't Have Time for Platitudes," 98-100.
- Rebecca Stewart, "It's Not a Marketing Exercise: Ben & Jerry's on Dismantling White Supremacy," 101-04.
- La'Nita Johnson, "How to Tell If a Company's Black Lives Matter Statement Actually Means Anything," 105-08.
- Enrica Ruggs and Derek Avery "Organizations Cannot Afford to Stay Silent on Racial Injustice," 109-12.

Practice

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
Ch. 4: "Emails, Blogs, Messaging, and Social Media," 96-126.
Ch. 5: "Writing Letters: Some Basics," 129-54.

Ch. 6: "Types of Business Letters and Memos," 158-95.
- Order Letters and Requisitions (*handout*)
- Inquiry Letters, 160-61.
- Special Request Letters, 162-63.
- Thank-You and Congratulation Letters (*handout*)
- Memos: Protocol, Politics, and Format, 186-92.

Ch. 03: "Meetings and Minutes," 85-90.

Troubleshoot your organization's potential or existing management problems.

APR 02: CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

<u>*Theory*</u>

Mills, *White Collar*:
- Ch. 8. "The Great Salesroom," 161-88.

Lewis, *Babbitt*:
- "The Reeves Office Building," 35-38.
- "Dictation: The Muse McGoun," 38-41.

<u>*Practice*</u>

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
Ch. 6: "Customer Relations Letters," 162-85.
- Sales Letters, 162-67.
- Follow-Up Letters, 172-73.
- Complaint Letters, 173-76.
- Adjustment Letters, 176-80.
- Refusal-of-Credit Letters, 180-83.
- Collection Letters, 183-85.

"Promotional Literature and Blogs":
- Ch. 04: "Internal and External Blogs," 104-13.
- Brochures (*handout*)
- Newsletters (*handout*)
- Samples: "National Osteoporosis Foundation" and "Onondaga Historical Association" (*handouts*)

Troubleshoot your organization's potential or existing marketing problems.

APR 04: OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
Ch. 12: "Writing Instructions and Procedures," 401-28.
Ch. 14: "Writing Effective Short Reports," 460-92.
- Periodic Reports, 466-70.
- Sales Reports, 470-72.
- Progress Reports, 472-75.
- Employee Activity/Performance Reports, 475-77.
- Trip and Travel Reports, 477-82.
- Visit Reports (*handout*)
- Test Reports, 482-87.
- Incident Reports, 487-90.

Von Oeck, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*:
- Ch. 4: "Be Practical," 87-104.

Troubleshoot your organization's potential or existing operational problems.

APR 09: APRIL BREAK. NO CLASS.

APR 11: DOSSIER WORKSHOP I: "ORGANIZATION AND DELEGATION"

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*.
- Ch. 3: "Collaborative Writing," 61-91.

APR 16: DOSSIER WORKSHOP II: "DESIGN AND EXECUTION"

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*.
- Ch. 10: "Designing Clear Visuals," 334-69.

PROPOSING CHANGE: "Writing Effective Proposals"

"Sometimes the difference between individual and organized indignation is the difference between criminal and political action."

~~Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

APR 18: MODEST PROPOSALS

√ ***Dossier due:***
8 to 10 documents, including at least one *deliverable* and one *short report*

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
Ch. 13: "Writing Winning Proposals," 431-56.
- "Internal Proposals," 438-45.
- "Sales Proposals," 445-50.
- "Research Proposals," 450-55.
- *Examples*: "Multiuse Campuses," 457-58; "Self-Illuminated Exit Signs," 458-59.

Equity in the Center, *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*:
- "How to Get Started," 20-21.
- "Call to Action," 23.

Von Oeck, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*:
- Ch. 6: "That's Not My Area," 133-50.

CASE STUDY: "A Projecting Age: Defoe, Swift, and Franklin"
- Franklin, "Proposal for the Pennsylvania Stove" (*handout*)
- Flowers, "Rhetorical Analysis"; Proposal: "Midwest Petrochemical" (*handout*)

| **PROJECT 2:** | **PROPOSAL** | **(3 to 4 single-spaced pages)** |

Nothing likes to be changed, except a wet baby," warns Roger Von Oech. Nevertheless, promoting necessary change will ensure your organization's survival and advance your career. Both goals require you master the politics and rhetoric of proposal writing. Can you convince a skeptical and sometimes hostile audience that your ideas are innovative, practical, and cost-effective? No task is harder and more rewarding in any organization.

For your final assignment, then, write a proposal addressing the Covid-19 pandemic or the racial equity movement for an organization in your field. This proposal should be in memo or letter format and professionally bound. Whether you decide to work on your own or with one or more partners, choose from the following three genres in Chapter 13 of *Successful Writing at Work*:

1. ***Internal Proposal*:** Identify and solve a real problem for an actual organization.

2. ***Sales Proposal*:** Promote or sell a real or imaginary product or service to an actual business or organization.

3. ***Research Proposal*:** Win approval and/or funding for a scholarly, creative, or technical project from a research or grant director.

Whichever kind you choose, thoroughly research your proposal. Argue from the facts, include any necessary tables, charts, and graphics, and trouble-shoot all potential problems. "A proposal's success rate," Phil Kolin emphasizes, "is in direct proportion to the quality of its follow-through."

APR 23: PERFECTING THE PITCH

Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*:
- Ch. 16: "Making Successful Presentations at Work," 523-41.

Von Oeck, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*:
- Ch. 5: "Play is Frivolous," 105-18.

Lewis, *Babbitt*:
- "Babbitt Prepares a Speech," 161-65; "Keynote Address," 184-94.
- Dos Passos, "Boy Orator of the Platte" (*handout*)

WORKSHOP.

| **PROJECT 3:** | **ORAL PRESENTATION** | **(10 to 15 minutes)** |

From informal introductions to formal talks, oral communication is essential in the workplace. Using the guidelines in Chapter 16 of *Successful Writing at Work*, collaborate with teammates to prepare a 10- to 15-minute PowerPoint presentation based on your group dossier. Choose from the following three options:

1. ***Case Study*:** Summarize and analyze your case organization's background and problem, drawing on the academic disciplines represented within your team. Connect ideas and theories from other college courses to this class

2. ***Practicum*:** Discuss how your team researched, drafted, and designed key documents in its portfolio, applying the practical lessons learned in our class. Borrow concepts and models from Phil Kolin or lecture from another professional writing textbook.

3. ***Pitch*:** Posing as professional consultants, present a formal talk to your case organization, based on your portfolio. Explain the causes of a problem and outline the implementation of a solution for an actual audience

All team members should contribute to and participate in this exam-week presentation. Please dress for the occasion and produce attractive and effective visuals for your talk, using pointers from Garr Reynolds' online guide *Presentation Zen*: Start with the end in mind, concentrate on your audience, tell a story, and keep it simple.

APR 25: PROPOSAL WORKSHOP I

√   ***Revised dossier due.***

APR 30: PROPOSAL WORKSHOP II

EXIT INTERVIEWS: "PTW and You"

MAY 02: CLASS EVALUATIONS

√   ***Proposal due***
    3 to 4 single-spaced pages

CASE STUDY: "George Eastman and Kodak"
- Dos Passos: "Vacancy," "The Image Maker," and "The House of Fame" (*handout*)

MAY 07: TAKING STOCK

Mills, *White Collar*:
- Ch. 14: "White-Collar Unionism," 301-23.
- Keizer, "Crap Shoot" (*handout*)

Di Renzo, *White Collars, Black Lives*:
- David Gelles and David Yaffe-Bellany, "Shareholder Value Is No Longer Everything, Top C.E.O.s Say," 113-16.
- Andrew Ross Sorkin, "How Shareholder Democracy Failed the People," 117-19.
- Robert B. Reich, "When Bosses Shared Their Profits," 120-22.
- Mehrsa Baradaran, "The Neoliberal Looting of America," 123-25.
- Darren Walker, "Are You Willing to Give Up Your Privilege?" 126-28.

Von Oech, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*:
- Conclusion: "A Whack on the Other Side of the Head," 227-50.
- Department of Writing, "Professional Writing Courses" (*handout*)

EXAM WEEK: ORAL PRESENTATIONS
May 09, 01:30-04:00 PM: Section 03 (Smiddy 111 or Zoom)

COLLEGE DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Ithaca College values diversity because it enriches our community and the myriad experiences that characterize a college education. Diversity encompasses multiple dimensions, including but not limited to race, culture, nationality, ethnicity, religion, ideas, beliefs, geographic origin, class, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, disability, and age.

We are dedicated to addressing current and past injustices and promoting excellence and equity. Ithaca College continually strives to build an inclusive and welcoming community of individuals with diverse talents and skills from a multitude of backgrounds who are committed to civility, mutual respect, social justice, and the free and open exchange of ideas. We commit ourselves to change, growth, and action that embrace diversity as an integral part of the educational experience and of the community we create.

To learn more about the college's commitment to diversity, visit:

- https://www.ithaca.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-statement

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Conduct

The Ithaca College Policy Manual describes the Standards of Academic Content embedded in the Student Code of Conduct. It is the responsibility of every student and faculty member to be familiar with, and comply with, these expectations for rigor, authenticity, trust, and honesty in academic work. You may find the full policy at:

- https://www.ithaca.edu/policies/vol7/general/070104/

We will discuss this policy more thoroughly in our course, but as the Policy Manual states: "Because Ithaca College is an academic community, ignorance of the accepted standards of academic honesty in no way affects the responsibility of students who violate standards of conduct in courses and other academic activities."

Class Attendance

Students at Ithaca College are expected to attend all classes, and they are responsible for work missed during any absence from class. At the beginning of each semester, instructors must provide the students in their courses with written guidelines regarding possible penalties for failure to attend class. These guidelines may vary from course to course but are subject to the following conditions:

- In accordance with Federal Law, students with a disability documented through Student Accessibility Services (SAS) may require reasonable accommodations to ensure equitable access. A student with an attendance accommodation, who misses a scheduled course time due to a documented disability, must be provided an equivalent opportunity to make up missed time and/or coursework within a reasonable timeframe. An accommodation that affects attendance is not an attendance waiver and no accommodation can fundamentally alter a course requirement. If a faculty member thinks an attendance-related accommodation would result in a fundamental alteration, concerns and potential alternatives should be discussed with SAS.

- In accordance with New York State law, students who miss class due to their religious beliefs shall be excused from class or examinations on that day. The faculty member is responsible for providing the student with an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirement that the student may have missed. Any such work is to be completed within a reasonable time frame, as determined by the faculty member.

- Any student who misses class due to a family or individual health emergency or to a required appearance in a court of law shall be excused. If the emergency is prolonged or if the student is incapacitated, the student or a family member/legal guardian should report the absence to the Dean of Students or the Dean of the academic school where the student's program is housed. Students may consider a leave of absence, medical leave of absence, selected course withdrawals, etc., if they miss a significant portion of classwork.

A student may be excused for participation in College-authorized co-curricular and extracurricular activities if, in the instructor's judgment, this does not impair the specific student's or the other students' ability to succeed in the course.

For all absences except those due to religious beliefs, the course instructor has the right to determine if the number of absences has been excessive in view of the nature of the class that was missed and the stated attendance policy.

Students should notify their instructors as soon as possible of any anticipated absences.

Student Accommodations

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations will be provided to qualified students with documented disabilities. Accommodations are available for remote, hybrid, and in-person study. Students seeking accommodations must register with Student Accessibility Services and provide appropriate documentation before any accommodations can be provided.

Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, so timely contact with Student Accessibility Services is encouraged. Students who wish to meet with an SAS specialist can email sas@ithaca.edu to schedule an online or phone appointment.

Title IX

If you disclose an experience related to sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, dating violence, and/or stalking, sexual harassment or sex-based discrimination, your professor can inform the Title IX Coordinator (lkoenig@ithaca.edu) of all relevant information, including your name. The college will take initial steps to address the incident(s), protect, and, support those directly affected, and enhance the safety of our community.

The Title IX Coordinator will work with you to determine the best way to proceed. Information shared in class assignments, class discussions, and at public events do not constitute an official disclosure, and faculty and staff do not have to report these to the Title IX Coordinator. Faculty and staff should be sure that access to campus and community resources related to sexual misconduct are available to students in the case these subjects do arise. Any other disclosure to faculty and staff needs to be reported to the Title IX Coordinator. For more information: https://www.ithaca.edu/share.

Zoom Recordings and Privacy

Instructors will record all online class sessions to help students recover missed lectures and discussions if they are absent. This is permitted under federal laws that protect your educational privacy (FERPA), since the recording is only available to students enrolled in a course, and anything an enrolled student would learn about another student from watching the recording is the same that they would learn about each other if they were both in the class at the same time.

"Breakout" or small group discussions in Zoom, however, are *not* recorded; only all group portions of the class are included. That said, be assured that this is a safe learning environment. If you have any concerns about recording, please speak with me if your instructor.

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

Center for Academic Advising

The Academic Advising Center supports IC students and has transitioned to a virtual model of advising. Students are able to set up both scheduled or drop-in appointments using Zoom and connect with an Academic Advisor. Contact the Advising Center to discuss registration questions, review degree requirements, talk about ICC requirements, discuss adding or changing majors or minors, receive help with study skills and strategies, and get help with any other academic advising related questions. You may also email advisingcenter@ithaca.edu with your advising questions.

To schedule an appointment, go to: https://www.ithaca.edu/academic-advising-center.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

The Ithaca College Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) promotes and fosters the academic, personal, and interpersonal development of Ithaca College students by providing short-term individual, group, and relationship counseling, crisis intervention, educational programs to the campus community, and consultation for faculty, staff, parents, and students. Their team of licensed and licensed-eligible professionals value inclusivity, and they are dedicated to creating a diverse, accessible, and welcoming environment that is safe and comfortable for all those they serve and with whom they interact.

CAPS continues to serve all enrolled students at this time via Telehealth. The center has decided not to provide in-person services at this time to ensure the safety of students and staff. Staff in the office will answer questions by phone at (607) 274-3136; please leave a voicemail if you do not reach a live person. You can also reach the office via email at counseling@ithaca.edu.

Should your instructor suspect that you need additional support, they will express their concerns. It is not their intent to know the details of what might be troubling you, but simply to let you know that they are concerned and that help, if needed, is available. Remember: getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do.

Writing Center

The Writing Center aims to help students from all disciplines, backgrounds, and experiences to develop greater independence as writers. We are committed to helping students see writing as central to critical and creative thinking. For the duration of Spring 2021, the Writing Center will be offering synchronous video conferences using a combination of Zoom and Google Docs. The physical location in Smiddy 107 will not be open to clients.

Appointments can be made at Ithaca.mywconline.com, which is also linked on the apps.ithaca.edu page. During business hours, you can message ithacacollegewritingcenter on Google Hangouts or email ithacacollegewritingcenter@gmail.com to get real-time assistance or drop-in (subject to tutor availability).