Michigan Technological University
Special Topics in Professional Writing:
Reports, Proposals, and Grants
HU 3629
Spring Semester 2005

Instructor: Ann Brady, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Scientific & Technical Communication
Humanities Department
Extension: 7-2066
Email: mabrady@mtu.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11:30-12:30, Thursdays, 3:30-4:30, Room 329-A
Walker Arts and Humanities
Course Hours: T/R 2:05-3:20 PM in Walker 109
Required Texts: Writing Proposals: Rhetoric for Managing Change, Johnson-Sheehan
Grant Seeking in an Electronic Age, Mikelonis, Betsinger, & Kampf
Selected PDF Readings
Class List: 3629-1

Course Description:
HU 3629 prepares you to produce reports that will be used for practical and professional
purposes, develop proposals for consideration by private and corporate sponsors, and write grant
applications for non-profit and profit-driven organizations.

Course Goals:
As discrete genres, reports, proposals, and grants include a wide range of subjects, goals,
information source, readers, and circumstances that lead to their preparation. To be successful as
a writer in these genres, you need to be able to assess audience attitudes, knowledge, and goals
and identify your own complex purposes. HU 3629 thus focuses on expanding your rhetorical
awareness, your abilities for critical inquiry, and your understanding of transactional composing
processes — writing that is used to get things done.

Course Policies and Procedures:
Readings: I expect you to read the texts assigned in the syllabus before the class session and to
discuss them actively and thoughtfully when we meet. Additional readings may be assigned
during the semester for which you will be responsible.

Portfolios: Throughout the semester, you should keep a running file of your work, which will
serve as the basis for a portfolio that you will turn in at the end of the semester. At this point, I’ll
ask you to review the documents you’ve produced in the class and write an accompanying
introduction, or letter of transmittal, in which you reflect on these documents and what you’ve
learned as a result of working on them.

Attendance: Attendance is required. Class discussions and in-class activities are essential
components of this class. If you know you cannot attend, please notify me in advance of your
absence. Even with excused absences, you will be responsible for your homework and in-class exercises, and you must be prepared for the next class meeting. If you miss more than four classes, I will drop your final grade. If you miss more than six, I suggest you withdraw.

**Participation and Punctuality:** Participate in class actively and thoughtfully. Complete all homework and written assignments, contribute to class discussion, participate in peer-reviews, complete in-class assignments, and arrive on time. Punctuality is crucial in business and so it is in this class.

**Getting in touch:** I'll be available to talk with you during my regular office hours, but if you can, please let me know the approximate time so that I can be expecting you. If my hours do not coincide with your free times, we can set up an appointment that is mutually convenient. You can reach me by phone (7-2006) during office hours, leave a message at my voice-mail, or mail me at mabrady@mtu.edu.

**Peer Reviews:** Reviews are essential since they prepare you for the collaborative and critically demanding work of document production, both in the classroom and the workplace. Since the reviews are a privilege and a responsibility, use them to your benefit. Come prepared, be clear, specific, and complete in your assessment of your peers' work and demand the same for your own. If you receive a paper that is not clearly reviewed, return it to your reviewer.

Insisting on feedback in peer review, asking others outside of class to review your work, and coming to see me during my office hours constitute important steps toward producing professionally finished documents.

**Deadlines:** Turn in all papers on time, including drafts. Late work is subject to a penalty. If unfortunate circumstances arise, contact me before the work is due.

**Plagiarism:** Do not copy others' documents without giving credit. It is dishonest and it is illegal. If you are referring to, or using, other sources—including papers you have written before—acknowledge them, using proper form. Evidence of copied or plagiarized work is cause for serious disciplinary action by the University. If in doubt, see me.

**Projects:**

My plan is that we'll do three projects: a proposal you do independently, a grant you do collaboratively in interest groups, and a final proposal or grant that you design and carry out in whatever way best suits your needs and interests. Each project will be detailed in its own syllabus, but you can assume that each project will take a little over a month.

**Grading:**

You can earn an A or B in this class if you complete all assignments and reach deadlines, do quality work and show some genuine commitment. You'll earn a C if you meet deadlines with satisfactory effort or if some of your assignments are incomplete. You'll receive a D or F if your assignments are poorly executed or overdue, or if your attendance, participation, or effort is unsatisfactory. If you have questions about your grade at any time during the semester, let me know so that we can discuss your progress.

**Grading Standards:**

2
A (excellent) An "A" paper is a highly effective piece of professional writing. It makes its purposes clear, reflects concern with its readers' needs and responses, and it is detailed, persuasive, effectively organized, exhibits appropriate format and tone, and is written in consistent, clear, concise, grammatically correct sentence structure.

B (good) A "B" paper is effective and would succeed in professional circumstances, but it lacks the polish or completeness or effective tone/persuasion of an "A" paper.

C (satisfactory) A "C" paper is effective, though it lacks features necessary to succeed completely with a professional audience. For example, its purpose may not be clear, it may not be developed enough, it is ineffectively organized, it does not have an appropriate tone or format, or it is not precisely written or has grammatical errors that make it more difficult to read or understand than necessary.

D (poor) A "D" paper does not communicate effectively for several reasons. It displays an inadequate understanding of purpose or reader. It may lack information or be unpersuasive on important issues to readers. Its organization may be confusing or misleading and its tone or format may be inappropriate. It may be difficult to read and may contain serious errors in grammar or mechanics.

F (unacceptable) An "F" paper does not satisfy the requirements of the assignment.