

MMC 6936

PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Monday period 9
Weimer 3020
1 credit

PROFESSOR

Ted Spiker @ProfSpiker
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OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday 2-3:30 p.m.: in-person
Wednesday 1-2 p.m.: [Zoom](#)

Also available by appointment

OBJECTIVE

In this 1-credit class, we will strive to improve your writing ability appropriate for a variety of professional settings. We will focus on the values, mechanics, and best practices for strong and compelling writing, and we will use assignments and critiques to put the strategies into practice with the hopes that the lessons can be applied to a number of professional industries and situations.

GOALS

- >>To use a variety of writing techniques to improve writing
- >>To develop and improve skills in all aspects of writing and revision

REQUIRED READING

Writing Tools, Roy Peter Clark (publisher: Little, Brown)

GRADING

You will be graded on a 500-point scale:

A:	460–500	C:	360–384
A-:	450–459	C-:	350–359
B+:	435–449	D+:	335–349
B:	410–434	D:	310–324
B-:	400–409	D-:	300–311
C+:	385–399	E:	0-299

ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

25 points:	Writing Tools quiz
75 points:	Attendance/engagement/in-class assignments
300 points:	Four short writing assignments (75 points each)
100 points:	Revision portfolio

KEY DATES

Short assignments due (email and printed by start of class):

Aug. 30

Sept. 20

Oct. 11

Nov. 8

Writing Tools quiz: Oct. 4 by midnight (available from Oct. 3 to Oct. 4 at 4:05 p.m.)

Revision portfolio: Dec. 1 (not a class day, emailed by midnight)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Weekly topics are subject to change if necessary. We will primarily meet in person but we will have some Zoom sessions that will be announced ahead of time.

Week 1: Qualities and Values of Strong Writing

Week 2: Storytelling Purpose and Structure (assignment 1 due)

Week 3: NO CLASS Labor Day

Week 4: Critiques

Week 5: In-class writing (assignment 2 due)

Week 6: Critiques

Week 7: Discussion on Writing Tools

Week 8: Writing Short (assignment 3 due)

Week 9: Writing with Voice

Week 10: Critiques

Week 11: In-class writing

Week 12: Being Personal with Professional Writing (assignment 4 due)

Week 13: Critiques

Week 14: Workshop revision portfolio

Week 15: Workshop revision portfolio

Week 16: Wrap

GRADING RUBRIC FOR SHORT ASSIGNMENTS

Each **short writing assignment** will be graded based on overall writing quality given the instructions of the assignment. This includes the macro items (the content), as well as the micro (mechanics). This includes overall strength of writing in terms of clarity, concision, and more. The **revision portfolio** will be judged on your overall level of improvement for all writing assignments from the first draft to the final.

LAPTOP

Bring a laptop to class on the following dates. If you do not have access to a laptop, see the instructor to work out alternatives.

Sept. 20

Oct. 18

Nov. 1

Nov. 22

Nov. 29

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: SHORT ASSIGNMENTS

- >>Email a copy of your work in Word to tspiker@ufl.edu
 - >>Print a copy and bring to class
 - >>For revision portfolio, submit first draft with my comments along with revisions
- Failure to follow guidelines will result in a point penalty at instructor's discretion*

DEDUCTIONS

Failure to meet deadlines for writing assignments will result in a 10-point deduction for every 24-hour period that it is late.

ATTENDANCE AND LATE WORK

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Click [here](#) to read the university attendance policies.

CLASSROOM NEEDS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, AND EQUITY STATEMENT

The University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications Department of Journalism embraces a commitment toward an intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class and religion. We expect each of our journalism courses to help foster an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

HONOR CODE

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

This is a workshop-style class in which we will all contribute ideas and critiques of other writers' work and ideas. Please use professional courtesy. Turn cell phones off.

THE INSTRUCTOR

Professor Ted Spiker is the chair of the UF department of journalism and has been a professor at UF since 2001. He was recognized as the University of Florida Teacher of the Year for 2016-17. A graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a former articles editor at *Men's Health*, Spiker has had work published in *The Washington Post*, *TIME.com*, *Esquire.com*, *Outside*, *O the Oprah Magazine*, *Fortune*, *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *Runner's World*, *Reader's Digest*, *Best Life*, and many others. He is also the author of *DOWN SIZE* and the co-author of more than 25 books, including the national bestselling *YOU: The Owner's Manual* series. Twitter/Instagram: @ProfSpiker. Web site: www.tedspiker.com.