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Introduction to ENSC 803

Writing for Publication



Learning Objectives

- At the end of this module, you will understand how ENSC 803 is organized and graded.
- You will also know a little about the instructor and your classmates.



Contact Information

- My name is **Steve Whitmore**. I answer to **Steve**. Not so much to Dr., Professor, or Sir.
- My **e-mail** is whitmore@sfu.ca
- My **phone number** is 604-319-2709 (cell)
My **office number** is ASB 9870 (in lab 1)
- My **office hours** are on Monday afternoons (13:00-15:00) and Tuesday mornings (11:30-13:30), by appointment.
- You can also send me an e-mail to book an appointment at other times/dates.



Who Is Steve?

- BA (English), MA (Education), (BCPID) Provincial Instructor's Diploma
- Member of IEEE (*Management and Communication Societies*), NCTE (*National Council for Teachers of English*), and STLHE (*Society of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*).
- Have taught at SFU since 1990 in the ENSC Undergraduate Communication Program
- Have also taught various Graduate Writing Workshops in ENSC, REM, ARCH, and Continuing Studies (MSAT)
- Have taught Industry Writing Workshops for Engineers (Placer-Dome, PMC-Sierra, Epson R&D, Universal Dynamics, Dees Communication, etc.)



Who Is Steve?

- Have provided revising services for user manuals, process redesign documents, and patents (VSM Medtech, Coldswitch, McCarney, Placer-Dome, etc.)
- Have written a textbook: Whitmore, S. and Stevenson, S. 2002. *Strategies for Engineering Communication*. John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Have written many handbooks – almost entirely in support of teaching writing (but also in relation to crisis intervention, study skills, and the mature student experience).
- Academic Integrity Advisor for ENSC (Burnaby).
- Faculty of Applied Science Writing (W) Coordinator.
- Teaches large 1st year classes.



Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, . . .

- 64 years, married, two cats, loves fishing, cooking, and teaching; enjoys wine-making, gardening, and computers.
- Feeds birds, squirrels, and other little creatures.
- Loses names, numbers, (and the occasional word), dislikes writing, detests hidden agendas, doesn't understand trig.
- Often loses house and car keys. (Note to self: check the freezer and the couch!)
- Looks forward to raising chickens and growing vegetables upon retirement (Fall 2022).





Your Turn Now

- Introduce yourself to someone you do not know:
 - ✓ What's your name?
 - ✓ Where are you from (Dept/School/Specialization)?
 - ✓ What is something unusual or distinctive about you or your background?
 - ✓ What do you **most** want to gain from this course?
- After chatting for 5 minutes, please introduce your partner to the class.



ENSC 803

- We meet from 09:30-12:20 on Mondays (BLU 10655).
- Attendance is not mandatory, but please note the following criteria for class participation:
 - Come to class prepared
 - Participate in discussions
 - Participate in group exercises
 - Submit assignments on time
 - You must attend **most** of the classes
 - I take attendance (11 total classes)
- **DO NOT miss the discourse analysis exercise classes.**
I'll forgive one absence; after that, you lose 1/3 of the participation grade for each additional absence.



More ENSC 803

- **Website:** <http://www2.ensc.sfu.ca/~whitmore/courses/ensc803/>
- **Course Maillist:** ensc803-all@sfu.ca. You can communicate with everyone, and I usually respond to these posts. Team maillists will be set up for the discourse analysis exercises. These lists are private (i.e., I exclude myself from membership).
- **Course Text:** Whitmore, S. and Stevenson, S. 2002. *Strategies for Engineering Communication*. John Wiley & Sons Inc. Limited copies in bookstore; 4-5 copies in library (4 hour loan). Additional readings are provided in class and on the website.



Course Method

- Simulation of the processes of writing for professional or trade journals and conferences: extended abstract, initial submission, blind review, revised submission
- Simulation of designing and presenting conference papers and poster presentations
- Analyses of the explicit and implicit organization, format, and stylistic approaches taken in professional journals and conferences



History of This Course (33+ Years)

- ENGL 815-5 in 1987 (*Studies in Rhetoric, Composition and Literacy*). No longer offered.
- ENSC 408-0 from 1990-2000 (*Writing for Publication*). No longer offered.
- ENSC 800-0 from 199x-2004 (*Graduate Seminar in Engineering*). No longer offered.
- University wide initiative to require writing intensive courses for undergraduates started in 2006.
- ENSC 894-3 (*Writing for Publication*) first offered in 2005 and 2006, anticipating the need for writing intensive graduate courses and acting as a model.
- ENSC 803-3 (*Writing for Publication*) approved by Senate in 2007 as a regularly offered course for MASc and PhD students.
- ENSC 803-3 first offered as a credit course for ENSC MEng students in 2015.



Topics Covered in ENSC 803

- The writing process (planning, drafting, and revising)
- The rhetorical context (audience, purpose, and tone)
- Organizational strategies
- Form/format, structure, style, and punctuation
- The publication process
- Writing journal articles
- Poster presentations
- Conference presentations
- The blind review process
- Thesis writing
- Copyright issues



Assignments for ENSC 803

➤ Course Participation	15%	Throughout
➤ Extended Abstract	05%	Mon, May 27
➤ Draft Journal Article*	15%	Mon, June 24
➤ Blind Review of Article*	15%	Mon, July 15
➤ Conference Presentations	20%	Mons, July 08, 15, 22
➤ Virtual Poster Presentation	15%	Mon, Aug 05
➤ Revised Journal Article	15%	Mon, Aug 05

* Note that your **draft journal article** and **blind review** must be submitted on the dates they are due, except in the case of documented extenuating circumstances.



Assignments in Detail #1

- **Extended Abstract (05%):** Following the provided guidelines, write a 1 page (500-600 words) extended abstract that details the topic for your journal article and conference presentation. This topic may be based upon research that you are currently undertaking or may be on a technical topic of interest that you want to explore.
- **Draft Journal Article (15%):** Following the provided guidelines, write a 5-8 page (3,500-5,000 words) journal article based upon the topic outlined in your extended abstract. This article should be suitable for publication in an IEEE journal (or acceptable alternative). Submit 2 copies (one paper copy and one electronic copy).



Assignments in Detail #2

- **Blind Review of Article (15%):** Following the provided guidelines, review, evaluate, and comment a peer's journal article, focusing upon issues such as content, format, organization, style, and correctness. Complete the provided review forms. Submit 2 paper copies (marked up original and a photocopy).
- **Revised Journal Article (15%):** In light of the feedback from the blind review and the course instructor, revise your draft journal article in order to make necessary changes to your content, format, organization, style, and grammar. Complete the provided response form. Submit one electronic copy.



Assignments in Detail #3

- **Conference Presentation (20%):** Based upon the lecture material, design and present a 20 minute PowerPoint presentation on the topic outlined in your extended abstract. A video of your presentation will be made available to you.
- **Virtual Poster Presentation (15%):** Based upon the lecture material, design a poster presentation and prepare it in .pdf format (may be based upon the topic outlined in your extended abstract). Submit one electronic copy.
- **Participation (15%):** Participate in the class by attending class, participating in class discussions and group exercises, and meeting assignment deadlines.



Approaches to Assignments

- Ideally, you are working on research from which you can generate a journal paper, a conference presentation, and a poster presentation.
- For some of you, however, this may be your 1st semester. You should speak with your academic advisor ASAP to find a suitable topic
 - An engineering issue that has already been explored?
 - A survey of current approaches to an engineering problem? (**Caution: possible academic integrity issues.**)
- Suitable journals include major IEEE journals, IEEE *Potentials*, or IEEE *Technology and Society*. (Anyone not in ENSC/MSE needs to choose a suitable alternative).



More Assignment Approaches

- I am quite willing to consider other journals, but these need to be cleared with me prior to starting work.
- Articles for newspapers and most popular magazines are not acceptable.
- Can you use something you have previously written or published? Yes, **but**
 - I expect you to submit a copy of the original article/document to me along with the extended abstract.
 - I also expect that you will undertake a major revision of that original for this class.
 - I expect you to identify your part of a co-authored paper (due to Academic Integrity concerns, I discourage this).
 - The same applies to the conference presentation and posters.



Grading for ENSC 803

A+ = 96-100%

A = 91-95%

A- = 86-90%

B+ = 81-85%

B = 76-80%

B- = 71-75%

C+ = 66-70%

C = 61-65%

C- = 56-60%

D = 51-55%

F = < 50%

- Note that the grade for ENSC 803 appears on your transcript and counts towards your CGPA.
- Consider this course to be moderately difficult (depending upon the level of your current language skills and your publication or presentation experience).
- Mean grade for the past 4 years is 91.75.



EAL Issues?

- Language skills no doubt vary among class members, but all of you should be at a skill level that will assure your success in the course.
- Minor EAL errors (articles, prepositions, subject-verb agreement, etc.) never form more than 10% of the grade for any assignment. Incoherence (i.e., paragraph and document organization), on the other hand, can be a major issue.
- If I have concerns about your ability to achieve at least a B in the course, I will let you know prior to the last drop date: Sunday, July 07, (WD notation).
- This course does not focus on EAL issues, but a range of EAL resources are provided on the website. As needed, these will be noted, and **you are expected to independently study these.**



Motivation is Essential

- If you complete this course saying that it was easy, then you have missed the point of the course.
- You get out of any course precisely what you put into it: low effort equals low benefit – high effort equals high benefit.
- Challenge yourselves – see what is possible.
- Try new approaches with your writing process – experiment.
- Contribute in class.
- Ask questions.
- Listen to other perspectives.



Why Communication Matters

- In studies of the factors considered most important to senior engineer success, **communication tops the list.**
- The **profession** sees communication skills as critical, and thus, **accreditation committees** require they be taught in the undergraduate curriculum.
- Major companies pay many **thousands of dollars** to consultants to offer communication courses to engineers.
- In academia, promotions depend upon communication skills. **Publish or perish is real!**
- **Professional Engineers spend 30-70%** of their time communicating orally or in writing. The higher your position in a company (or university), the more time you will spend communicating.



Our Contract – My Responsibilities

- I will treat you with respect
- I will arrive at class on time
- I will end class on time
- I will come to class prepared
- I will endeavor to make the classes interesting
- I will be fair in my grading practices
- I will grade assignments as promptly as possible
- I will either answer questions that are posed, or I will suggest resources where you can find the answers
- I will help you deal with personal and study problems whenever possible



The Contract – Your Responsibilities

Jane Doe

jdoe@sfu.ca

1. *Responsibility: Meeting deadlines.*
2. *Goal: I want to learn to write faster.*
3. *Concern: I'm concerned about the workload.*
4. *Question: Why do you like cats?*



Conclusion

“We suffer to learn.”

– *Aeschylus*, (c. 525-456 BC)

“We learn to suffer.”

– *Sophocles*, (c. 496-406 BC)

Reading: As listed on the course website

¿Questions?