ENGL 4321-W01: Grant Writing for Nonprofits

Instructor contact information:
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Office Hours: Tue. 10-12, Wed. 10-12, Thurs. 10-11

Texts and supplies:

Catalog description:
Introduces students to the grant writing process and provides them with experience writing grant applications on behalf of local non-profit organizations.

Detailed description:
English 4321 is an intense seminar intended to teach you the grant writing process and to provide you with experience writing real, submitted-to-funding-agency grants. The ability to write grants is a highly marketable skill. In the seminar, students will learn the basics of grant writing, including needs assessment, identifying potential funding sources, creating goals, and creating assessment plans. A large group project will involve the entire class in the creation of a significant grant proposal on behalf of a local community service or government agency, and, later in the semester, each student will write a smaller grant for a local agency. Upon completion of this course, you will know how to write a grant and will be able to list actual grant writing experience on your resume.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):
By engaging in the course activities, students will:
- Identify a need or problem by describing the factors involved
- Generate a viable solution to the need or problem
- Create a document that reflects an effective interweaving of purpose and audience
- Demonstrate an understanding of the grant writing process
- Create two ready-to-submit grant applications on behalf of local nonprofit agencies

Writing Workshop:
This class is designed as a hands-on writing workshop. You will have an active role as you work on the phases of each project and interact with your classmates. This interaction will include the offering of comments and having others comment on your work. This is the way writing usually works in professional environments—you write something, you get feedback, you revise, and you meet your deadline. Writing is iterative.
Much like in professional settings, you will decide what tasks to do, when, with which resources to meet deadlines. The instructor and your fellow students will be there to support you. This class will require regular communication between you, me, your classmates, and university and community sources.

Because of this approach, you need to be in class. You will treat this class as your workplace, and you will work on your assignments regular and independently. Writing is an active process, and the more you actively participate, the better results you will see in your writing. Missed deadlines are the equivalent to not showing up for work.

**Attendance:**
Although we do not have formal class meetings, things must be done on time, as they are found in the class schedule. I mention this because some students "forget" they have an online course, and try to do the work sporadically, trying to "load up" and trying to attempt the work in a few "bursts of activity."

You will need to log into this class and complete work 3-4 times per week. And just so you know in advance, Blackboard, our course management software, monitors how many times you log in per week, how long you were on, and what you are doing.

An online course is just as much work as a regular class. You have to "keep up," you have to ask questions of your professor if you need a course concept clarified, and, as mentioned, there will be writing workshops. Your work has to be posted on time (so people can read and respond to your work), and reading and responding to the writing of others is part of the regular business of what we do. Class discussion in an online course is "posting" in discussion forums. Your work needs to appear in these discussion forums regularly.

This is NOT a correspondence course, or a "Work at Your Own Pace" course. An online course gives you the freedom to work at your own convenience--you can do your work at 2 o'clock in the morning or over your lunch hour--but, like any other course, it has real deadlines, with real due dates. I mention this because, in the past, some students have confused online courses with correspondence courses or other "do it when I can courses" and have tried to pack all the assignments into a few days at the end of the course. These students were not successful; e.g., they did not pass.

**Office Hours:**
I offer several ways that you can contact me for assistance:
You can call me during my office hours if you want to insure you can speak to me directly. Or, you can leave a voice mail. Please leave a callback number. I will keep online office hours, which means I will be in a chat room on Blackboard where you can speak to me live. I will also be on Skype and Google Hangouts during my online office hours; you can contact me via either medium. My Skype ID is Dan.Riechers. Google ID is danieljriechers@gmail.com.

You can e-mail me at daniel.riechers@tamucc.edu. I will respond to your email within two business days. If you email me on Friday, I might not respond until Monday. I am also available for in person
meetings in my office. Outside of office hours, I do accept appointments. Email me to set a meeting.

**The Grant Writing Process:**
In this class you will examine and practice the process through which grant proposals are researched and written. Elements of this process include learning:

- The various types of granting agencies and the types of grants that they make available
- How to determine eligibility for a funding opportunity
- How to help an organization identify and assess its needs
- How to create clear goals and objectives
- How to develop means for an agency to evaluate itself—so the granting agency can be sure its money is well spent
- How to address the issue of "sustainability", or, what happens when the grant money runs out?
- How to appeal to the very specific audience of granting agencies
- How to write an effective grant proposal
- How to insure all elements of a grant proposal are met
- How to format your grant proposal so it meets the funding agency’s specifications
- How to work in a grant writing team
- How to work with clients and funding agencies
- How to ask lots of questions when you don’t know the answer
- A variety of grant-related research techniques
- What to do if your proposal is funded/not funded

**Grades:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning Memorandum</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abstract Reflections</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Proposal</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Proposal</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Class Structure:**
This is a project-based course. This means that, in lieu of class time, you will be doing things (reading, writing, and researching). Expect to spend the same amount of time you spend on a regular class (or more) on this class.

The class is structured into two units:
1. **Group Grant**—we will work together to write a grant application on behalf of a nonprofit in the Coastal Bend
2. **Individual Grant**—you will each write a grant application on behalf of an area nonprofit agency.

Each week you will
- **Watch** videos of interviews with working nonprofit professionals and of me that contain info about the class
- **Read** work by professionals and your classmates
- **Write** to learn, meaning you will do "in class" writings designed to demonstrate that you understand the material—and to ask questions that you have, as well as turning things in that will be graded.
- **Track** the schedule and deadlines carefully. Generally, reading and writings are due Friday, and your critiques of other people's drafts are due by Tuesday. Final drafts are often due on Thursdays.

**Planning Memorandum:**
Your planning memo asks you to
- introduce yourself
- share your writing history
- outline what you hope to accomplish in the course
- explain what you are going to contribute to the Large Group Project and how you are going to work on it
- explain in detail and with contact information your Individual Project

**Responsibility:**
This class is a writing workshop, so the single most important thing you will do all semester is to show up prepared and ready to work. We are going to write two grants—a group proposal for a local nonprofit and a smaller one for an organization of your choosing. In other words, we are doing "real" work for the "real" world. Not only are your classmates depending on you, but so are the people for whom we write. You need to contribute regularly to the business of the class.

**Abstract Reflections:**
Each week, we'll complete readings about grant writing. Your Abstract Reflection requires two things. First, you will provide a 1 page abstract of each reading, presenting the main points. Second, you need to reflect critically—what did you find interesting, what did you agree with, what didn't you agree with, what didn't you understand? In other words, present what was said and then tell me what you thought about what was said. Abstracts are due on Friday and cover THAT WEEK's reading.

**Group Project:**
As a group, we will write a grant proposal for a local nonprofit. Each group will be responsible for a separate portion of the grant proposal. You will be graded on the quality of your individual grant section, on your contribution to that section, on your contribution to the grant as a whole, and on your reflective essay in which you write about what you learned from the process and in which you evaluate the group as a whole.
**Individual Project:**
On your own, you will write an individual grant for a local non-profit agency. You can find a long list of possibilities on Blackboard. The list is thorough but not exhaustive; if you know of a local organization that needs a grant proposal written, set a meeting with me to discuss. For this project, you will need to follow and document each step, using forms from the group project or creating your own. You will also write a reflective memo in which you examine your writing process and what you learned from it.

**Course Policies**

**Disabilities Accommodations**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Academic Advising**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

**Grade Appeals**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure...
Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean's office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

**Late Assignments**
Late assignments are not accepted without prior arrangement. Please let me know in advance if you need more time.

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**

**Definition:** In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Plagiarism is a violation of academic expectations, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes:

- Using the work of another as your own,
- Downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- Using resource materials without correct documentation,
- Using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
- Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules and APA documentation rules is available at Purdue University's OWL: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/), and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Classroom/professional behavior**
Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.
**Resources**
The Writing Center, part of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA), provides free help for students at any stage in the writing process. Writing center consultants are trained to work with writers one-on-one to help them find ideas, organize their thoughts, cite sources, and succeed at all aspects of the writing task. The writing center works closely with faculty across campus to understand the writing projects they assign and to help students meet the expectations of those assignments. The writing center is located in the Glasscock building. Both drop-in and scheduled appointments are available. More information, including hours of operation, is available at http://casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php.

**Reminder to English Majors**
As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of your work (including pre-writing exercises, working drafts, and submitted drafts) so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.

**A Note on Reading Assignments**
Readings must be completed by the date noted. Some of the readings are lengthy. To avoid falling behind, you will need to determine how much time you require to get the reading done and build that time into your schedule.

**In Conclusion**
This should be a worthwhile and even enjoyable class. You can count on me to make class as interesting and as stimulating as possible. Finally, I am here to help you, but I cannot do so unless you let me know when you need help. Communicate.