



THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
MINOR IN PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Whatever your major—English, engineering, music or math—good writing matters to your success in school and after you graduate.

Portfolio Prep Workshop
January 10, 2019

Portfolios for Summer & Fall 2019 internships

- Due Wednesday, January 23, by 11:59 p.m.
- Prepare your 5 portfolio documents in advance
- go.osu.edu/prof-writing-apply
- Fill out online application
- You will receive a confirmation email

Portfolio Requirements – 5 pieces

- Professional cover letter
 - Different from cover letter for a specific job posting
 - Introduces your writing samples, describes context and purpose, and explains skills each one showcases
 - Persuades reader that you will be a skilled, adaptable, and versatile writer in the workplace
- Writing-focused resume
- 3 polished writing samples that showcase your skills

Cover Letter Audience

The MPW Program: Dr. Lindsay A. Martin, Coordinator, Minor in Professional Writing

- The cover letter applies for placement in an internship in a Columbus-area workplace
- It addresses how you'll contribute to a writing workplace in general—not a specific organization

Secondary audience: It will also be sent to the writing workplace you're matched with



The Evidence of the Cover Letter: Discussing the Samples

Consider the cover letter an introduction to the portfolio of 3 samples. These questions should guide you:

- In what context did you write the sample? Class? Internship? Job? Part of a group project?
- What is the genre and purpose of each sample? How are the tone and style you used appropriate for that purpose?
- What writing skills do your samples showcase?

Showcasing Writing Skills

Here are some skills that many of our workplace partners find useful, no matter what kind of organization they are. You may use these or highlight other writing-related skills.

- Writing in a particular genre
 - Press releases
 - Marketing materials
 - Social media
 - Technical writing
 - Others
- Interviewing and telling a story based on interview transcripts
- Researching, processing, consolidating, and condensing large amounts of information
- Writing under tight deadlines
- Shifting tone to suit different audiences/media (show this with versatility of samples)
- Repurposing information for different audiences, documents, or genres

Other tips

DON'T

Emphasize what you'll get from the experience or how it will help you

Focus on what you learned through the process of writing these documents

DO

Emphasize what you'll bring to the workplace.

Focus on how these samples showcase skills you have right now (if you wrote the document, you have the skills!) and how you will use these skills to contribute something specific to a workplace



Sample Cover Letter

Take a few minutes to read over the sample model cover letter.

- What do you notice about this letter?
- How is it similar or different from your expectations for a cover letter?
- What works well in it?
- How might you incorporate some of these moves in your document about your own experience?

Choosing Your Writing Samples

- Choose samples you feel confident discussing as the cover letter prompt indicates.
- Samples should
 - Be **brief**: ideally no more than 500 words
 - Demonstrate a variety of styles and genres
- Samples can
 - Be a selection from a longer piece (Use the cover letter to discuss how the included portion fits into the whole)
 - Come from a group project (Mention this in cover letter and highlight your role in the collaboration)

Small Group Discussion: Choosing Your Writing Samples

- Take 5-7 minutes and consider a sample you plan to include in your portfolio (or one you're considering but unsure of)
- Make some notes on how you would discuss the sample in the cover letter, or draft the actual paragraph for the CL.
- Remember to address:
 - Context written
 - Audience, purpose
 - How do style and/or tone connect with audience and purpose?
 - What skills does the sample showcase?

Your Resume

- Focus on your writing accomplishments
 - in the workplace
 - in clubs, organizations, volunteer positions
 - in coursework
- Illustrate specific skills that you have developed
- Highlight the most relevant accomplishments first
 - * The top 1/3 of your resume is prime real estate

What if you don't have much workplace experience?

- Add a section called “Relevant Coursework” to your resume (Only include writing-related courses)
- Use this section to highlight
 - Writing accomplishments / Products you ended class with
 - Collaborative projects you completed
- Remember your audience. Use course names—Not numbers
- Emphasize accomplishments and products—Not process
 - Not—Learned how to edit documents and fix grammar mistakes
 - Instead—Copyedited and proofread a total of 15 pages, locating and correcting all errors

Tip: Go to your Carmen page/the syllabus and review the written assignments you submitted for ideas!

Resume Bullet-Points and Verbs

- Remember your audience—They need help seeing the connection between your experience and the job
- Focus on your verbs that start each bullet-point. Review the [Action Verbs for Resumes Tip Sheet](#) and focus on these categories.
 - Organizational and Supervisory Tasks
 - Communication Tasks
 - Science and Research Tasks
 - Clerical or Detailed Tasks
 - Possibly Teaching, Computer or Technical Tasks

Organizational involvement

- Remember your audience: Our workplace partners may not be familiar with your campus organization
- Avoid undefined acronyms, and offer a brief description of the organization
- Include the writing-focused activities you engaged in
- Describe collaborative tasks that you accomplished



Why edit your portfolio?

- “Go with the Flow”
- Take a minute. Read first half.
- With a partner, go through and mark any errors with your red pens

What does it mean to be “work-world-ready”?

- The ability to produce clear, correct prose is a skill all workplaces need. The stakes are high!
- Editing is multi-faceted:
 - Big Picture: Do I need to include this?
 - Medium Picture: Should I restructure this? Should I reword?
 - Small Picture: Is the prose correct, proofread and free of errors?
- Know your own tendencies! Learn to edit for those.

Portfolio Submission Information

■ **Deadline**

- Summer and Fall 2019 internships: Wednesday, January 23 by 11:59 p.m.

■ **How to prepare your materials**

- Keep each item as its own file and save as a pdf. See website for help. Use file naming rules on website.

■ **How to submit**

- Online! Go to go.osu.edu/prof-writing-apply and click “Submit your application.”
- You will get a confirmation page and a confirmation email.