

Bus300
Writing As A Small Business
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Course Description:

Writing as a Small Business covers a wide variety of topics related to writing for profit, including tips on evaluating style, obtaining an agent, contracts, negotiating fees, and soliciting clients. This is not a course intended to teach you how to write, but rather how to market yourself and your writing to generate income.

Course Goal:

This course is intended to help students market themselves, their writing and ideas, and as a result make money doing so.

Required Readings:

Holm, Kirsten, Editor. Writers Market: 2002. New York: F&W Publications, 2002. ISBN: 1582970491. \$49.99.

Strunk, William, Jr. and White, E.B. The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000. ISBN: ISBN 020530902X. \$7.95.

Assessments:

Coursework in Bus300 will be assessed by:

- Contributions to Discussion (10%)
- Written Assignments One through Four (10%)
- Written Assignment Five (80%)

Course Outline

I. Introduction to the course

II. Ghostwriting

A. definition

B. the relationship between ghostwriter and client

C. making money at ghostwriting

1. fees

2. early payment

3. sharing royalties

4. charging the client

D. major problems to solve in ghostwriting

1. finding clients

2. selling yourself

3. agreeing on the project

4. money matters

5. planning and beginning the project

6. choosing the right style

7. using sources

8. dealing with publishers

E. identifying potential clients

1. self-made men

2. corporations

3. professional and issue-oriented organizations
4. elected officials
5. candidates seeking office
6. foreign governments
7. celebrities
8. people with unusual stories

F. finding clients

1. building a resume
2. establishing contact with publishers
3. getting an agent
4. spreading the word by mouth
5. advertising
6. PR and consulting firms
7. CEO's and other corporate executives
8. appearances on local radio and TV
9. using the internet
10. e-mail and faxes

G. landing clients

1. how to impress clients
 2. how to determine your fee
- H. how to begin the project
1. drawing up a contract
 2. the downside of contracts
 3. laying the groundwork for the project
 - a. determining the structure of the work
 - b. predetermining a beginning and an end
 4. getting the details
 5. thoughts and feelings
 6. dialogue and dialect
- I. completing the project -- work habits

J. dealing with publishers

1. establishing contact with editors
 2. getting an agent
 - a. why agents are necessary for some projects
 - b. how to find an agent
 - c. how to sell yourself to an agent
- K. some final tips

III. Writing Under Your Own Name

A. major problems

1. establishing a reputation
 - a. beginning small
 - b. agents and publishers
 - c. fiction v. non-fiction
 - d. books vs. articles
2. getting paid
 - a. what free-lance writers get paid
 - b. making ends meet as a free-lance writer
3. selling your book-length manuscript
 - a. writing proposals
 - b. allowing advice of agent or publisher
 - c. preparation of manuscripts
4. selling op-ed pieces and articles
 - a. establishing a home-base
 - b. making connections

- c. targeting
- d. length and style
- e. scale of pay
- 5. speech-writing
 - a. elements of good speech-writing
 - b. finding clients
 - c. client relations
 - d. scale of pay
- B. tips
- IV. Technical Writing
 - A. some characteristics of technical writing
 - 1. content
 - 2. style
 - B. getting into the game
 - 1. finding clients
 - 2. your fee
- V. Final Assignment

I. Assignment #1 -- Read Parts I-II of The Elements of Style.

II. Assignment #2 -- Read Parts III-IV of The Elements of Style.

III. Assignment #3 -- Read Part V of The Elements of Style.

IV. Assignment #4 -- Familiarize yourself with the contents of Writers Market: 2002 and commence reading "A" through "H" cited below.

Readings for Assignment IV.

A. "Where to get Great Article Ideas," by Greg Daugherty -- pp.15-18. Mainly, Daugherty tells you how to find the source for articles within yourself.

B. "Query Letter Clinic" -- by Don Prues and Cindy Laufenberg -- pp. 19-27. This is a remarkably useful reference article. You should refer to it every time you write an inquiry.

C. "Ten Tips for Finding Markets Online" -- by Debbie Ridpath Ohi -- pp. 39-41. A brief article featuring the highlights of her book The Writer's Online Marketplace.

D. "Writing for Online Markets" by Anthony Tedesco -- pp 42-50. I have only written a couple of pieces for online publications, and the client came to me; so I know little about these markets. However, this lengthy article seems useful and authoritative.

E. "Breaking and Entering: Public Relations Writing" by John Clausen" -- pp. 63-66. If you want to be a media consultant and write copy PR copy for clients, this is a good short discussion of the subject -- but not enough on which to build a career.

F. "Setting Your Sights on Syndicating Your Column" by Monica McCabe Cardoza. If you're interested in becoming a syndicating columnist, you should read this article -- if only to learn how difficult it is to achieve your goal. For six years, Cardoza edited columns for the New York Times Syndicate.

G. "How Much Should I Charge?" by Lynn Wasnak -- pp.70-82. This article is thorough and highly specific -- much more so than my discussion of the subject. Wasnak gives you precise dollar figures for most kinds of work. Also, in this lengthy list of literary activities and fees, you will find some additional ideas for projects and clients.

H. "Before the Script: How to Write Outlines and Treatments" by Pamela Wallace -- pp. 83-88. I can't give you any first-hand advice on this subject. Pamela Wallace can. She is an Academy Award winner.

V. Assignment #5 -- Create a five-page plan of action to write and market a book, article, op-ed piece, or other commercial work. Be sure to include in your plan:

- (1) an outline of the work,
- (2) to whom you will send it, and
- (3) how much you expect to be paid.