COURSE SYLLABUS

Business Writing Certificate Program

Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://sdfm.graduateschool.edu/certificates/business-writing-certificate



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Course Outline

This package includes these courses

- Writing Essentials Course (16 Hours)
- Effective Government Correspondence Course (16 Hours)
- Clear Expression through Critical Thought Course (16 Hours)
- Grammar and Editing Essentials Course (24 Hours)

Writing Essentials Course

Build core writing skills for government and public-sector work with a focus on purpose, audience, structure, and plain language. Learn a practical process to plan, draft, revise, and edit documents so they are clear, concise, and easy to act on.

- Apply the four-step writing process: plan, draft, revise, edit.
- Analyze audience and purpose to set the right tone and level of detail.
- Organize content with clear openings, logical middles, and actionable closings.
- Use Federal Plain Language guidelines to cut jargon and improve readability.
- Spot and correct common grammar, punctuation, and style errors.
- Edit for brevity, flow, and scannability with headings, lists, and strong verbs.

Effective Government Correspondence Course

This one-day course equips federal professionals with techniques to plan and produce effective written communication, including letters, emails, and briefing memos, using plain-language principles and DoD-aligned style guidelines.

- Understand the qualities of good correspondence as they apply to a 21st-century government environment.
- Identify and correct weaknesses and errors in correspondence documents, including email.
- Apply the priorities for effective correspondence using a systematic yet flexible writing process. Analyze the intent, purpose, and audience of correspondence-writing tasks.
- Apply techniques to overcome writer's block, reduce stress, and efficiently complete correspondence-writing tasks.
- Prepare drafts through techniques for composition, including modifying templates and model documents.
- Compose drafts from mind maps, notes, and outlines.
- Revise documents for readability and tone.

- Assess whether documents meet the standards of the Plain Writing Act of 2010.
- Create, revise, and evaluate various types of correspondence documents.
- Understand the similarities and differences between paper-based documents and e-mail.
- Coordinate and conclude the document-drafting process; decide when a document is ready for release.
- Apply proofreading techniques for error-free correspondence.

Clear Expression through Critical Thought Course

- Use the seven traits and the writing process to improve written expression.
- Describe the process of critical thinking.
- Apply critical thinking in writing. Implement strategies for appealing to the reader.
- Identify opportunities to use logic in writing.
- Apply logic in creating persuasive arguments.
- Think critically to analyze problems.
- Create solutions to problems using a structured process

Grammar and Editing Essentials Course

Learn to write and edit with accuracy and clarity through a structured approach to essential grammar, usage, and proofreading. This three-day course emphasizes correct sentence construction, punctuation, spelling, plain-language guidelines, and a repeatable editing process.

- Practice creating clear, correct sentences aligned with Plain Language principles.
- Review core grammar rules, including verb agreement, pronoun usage, and hidden verbs.
- Apply punctuation, capitalization, and spelling conventions accurately.
- Use a consistent editing workflow with proven tools and checklists.
- Identify and use authoritative writing resources and style guides.