

**ENGW 4344.01: CAREER PREPARATION**  
*A course exclusively for students who were wise enough to choose the English Writing and Rhetoric Major at St. Edward's University*



**Dr. Amy Clements, M.F.A., Ph.D.**

Fall 2015

MWF 12:00 to 12:50, Fleck 109

***Undergraduate Bulletin Course Description***

This course is designed to help students transition from college to a profession or graduate school. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on the work they have done in the major as they produce a portfolio of writing to present to a faculty evaluation committee and to future employers or graduate schools. They will also have the opportunity to work on a graduate school application, to update their resumes, and to write sample job application cover letters. In addition, students will learn about a variety of career opportunities available to writers [and editors].

*Prerequisite: Senior standing or permission of instructor.*

*Offered in fall and spring semesters.*

**Office hours:**

**Mondays from 3:30 to 5:00**

**Thursdays from 2:00 to 3:30**

*I am also readily available by appointment (including evening phone appointments), and I respond to email queries within 24 hours Monday through Friday.*

*Feel free to communicate with me on the Facebook page I created for students.*

**Office location:** Premont 211

**Campus phone:** 512.485.4622

**Email (best way to reach me):** amyrc@stedwards.edu

**St. Ed's and LinkedIn Sites:** <http://sites.stedwards.edu/amyrc/>

[https://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=33419230&trk=nav\\_responsive\\_tab\\_profile](https://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=33419230&trk=nav_responsive_tab_profile)

**Grading scale used in this course:**

A and A+ = 95 and above, earned by producing SUPERIOR work that

EXCEEDS the minimum requirements

A- = 90-94, representing work that EXCEEDS the minimum expectations

B+ = 87 -89, earned by producing solid work that meets the minimum requirements

B = 84-86 (meets requirements and shows minimal deficiencies)

B- = 80-83 (meets requirements but reflects a few deficiencies)

C++ = a computer programming language

C+ = 75- 79 (adequate work with moderate deficiencies)

C = 70-74 ascribed to adequate work with quite a few deficiencies

D = 60-69, for work that demonstrates significant deficiencies

F = 59 and below, for work that shows severe disregard for the requirements of the assignment

GRADE	POINTS
A+	4.0
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.0
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.0
D	1.0
F	0.0

*Grade points awarded through the SEU registrar's office*

### Required Reading

Personal Branding by Colin Wright, a short, free ebook available at

[http://issuu.com/exilelifestyle/docs/personal\\_branding/19?e=0/11846705](http://issuu.com/exilelifestyle/docs/personal_branding/19?e=0/11846705).

### Tabulation of Final Grade

Written Assignments: 70%

Final Online Portfolio: 20%

In-class tasks: 10%

You'll upload your writing assignments, but you should save copies of everything you write for this course on your own cloud and hard drive until you have confirmed your final course grade online. In the highly unlikely event of a grade dispute, those papers are the only "receipts" you have. It is your responsibility to save them in an organized manner and to track your progress throughout the semester. I will post all grades in Blackboard.

### **Learning Objectives**

Upon completing this course, students will have mastered:

1. How to maximize the benefits of a broad array of job-search resources
2. Networking online and in person
3. Strategies for personal branding and communicating an authentic professional identity
4. Navigating a variety of workplace situations, including competing for promotions and surviving layoffs
5. Building and maintaining a personal-branding website
6. Researching and applying to graduate programs
7. The ethics of the search for employment, from resume writing to the final interview
8. How to discern their best career path

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## Class Policies

- You're allowed 3 absences without penalty. After that, 3 points per absence will be deducted from your final grade. If you miss more than 6 classes (i.e. 2 weeks), I may withdraw you from the class; instructors have the authority to "un-enroll" a student who abandons a course. This applies to absences for any reason—including but not limited to brief illnesses, family vacations, work schedules, and funerals. Save those 3 non-penalty absences for true emergencies, trying to avoid using them at all. You will only be granted additional absences penalty-free in cases of documented hospitalization.
- Check your St. Edward's email every weekday. It's linked to Blackboard, alerting you when I post an announcement.
- Turn off your phone before class. If your phone addiction is severe, it will be necessary for me to keep the device at my desk until class has ended.
- Plagiarism = failing grade in the course. Academic dishonesty is in conflict with the University's core values and with our fundamental purpose of pursuing knowledge. We will discuss this further in class, but be aware that I maintain a zero-tolerance approach to academic dishonesty.

### • Accommodations for Special Circumstances

Student Disability Services coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities (medical, learning or psychological). Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should follow the university's accommodation procedure by contacting Student Disability Services (512-448-8561 or Moody Hall 155).

All students in our courses must meet the same grading criteria, but I am happy to work with all students (whether diagnosed with a disability or not) to develop strategies for success.

### • Additional Resources

St. Edward's provides a variety of services to support you in achieving academic success.

**Computer Help:** Located in Moody Hall. For video support (including video cameras available for you to borrow, free of charge), visit Media Services in the second floor of the Munday Library.

**Tutoring/504 Forms:** Academic Planning and Support is available in Moody Hall 155 or at <http://think.stedwards.edu/studentdisabilityservices/>. Note: the "think" intranet site is being phased out this year, so the pages listed on the syllabus may migrate to the new St. Edward's site.

**Help with anxiety or depression:** The Counseling and Consultation Center in 110 Lady Bird Johnson Hall (<http://think.stedwards.edu/healthcounseling/>) is available for your emotional needs. Another resource is Campus Ministry (<http://think.stedwards.edu/ministry/>).

## Course Calendar

### Monday, August 24

Welcome to the class! I'll collect information from you to help me shape the class.

### Wednesday, August 26

Discussion: *NYTimes* article on working conditions at Amazon. It's posted to Blackboard under Course Documents. Read it before coming to class and be prepared to serve as a spokesperson.

### Friday, August 28

Guest speaker: Adrian Ramirez, Assistant Director, Associate Director, Career and Professional Development at SEU

### Monday, August 31

An overview of graduate school options: MFA programs, law schools, and programs in rhetoric, composition studies, and information science

### Wednesday, September 2

Brainstorming for Statement of Purpose assignment

### Friday, September 4

Guest speaker: Becky Jackson, Director, Texas State University's Master of Arts in Rhetoric and Composition

### Monday, September 7

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

### Wednesday, September 9

### Friday, September 11

Guest speaker: Carrie Fountain on MFA programs and working while parenting

### Monday, September 14

Dilemma Day: Multiple grad-school offers and zero grad-school offers. Also, preparing for an economic downturn.

### Wednesday, September 16

Guest speakers from Dell: Melissa Brown (user experience specialist and MLIS graduate) and Keely Alexander (content strategist)

### Friday, September 18

Guest speaker: Camille Eslick, J.D. candidate at SMU law school

Monday, September 21

In-class curriculum development exercise.

Wednesday, September 23

Class will not meet (ENGW all-day curriculum development meeting).

Friday, September 25

**Monday, September 28**

**\*\*Due, Uploaded to Blackboard by 12:00 noon:** Statement of purpose for graduate program of your choice. In-class discussion of your statements.

Wednesday, September 30

Before coming to class, Google yourself. Write down the top 3 listings in your search and turn in the list to me on hard copy in class. We'll discuss the results in class.

Friday, October 2

**Guest speaker: Mystery writer Linda Amey. Student host: Jade**

Monday, October 5

Discussion: Headshots.

Wednesday, October 7

Personal Finance for English Majors, Part II

Friday, October 9

**Guest speaker: Sam Farias, technical writer at National Instruments. Student Host: Noah**

Monday, October 12

In-class discussion of *Personal Branding* by Colin Wright, a short, free ebook available at

[http://issuu.com/exilelifestyle/docs/personal\\_branding/19?e=0/11846705](http://issuu.com/exilelifestyle/docs/personal_branding/19?e=0/11846705).

Read it before coming to class and be prepared to serve as a spokesperson.

Wednesday, October 14

Introduction to LinkedIn and in-class personal branding exercise.

Friday, October 16

Founder's Day Holiday

Monday, October 19

**\*\*Due, uploaded to BB: Personal Branding 360 Reports.** In-class discussion of them.

Wednesday, October 21

**Un-guest speaker: Me, on government jobs, mainstream publishing jobs, academia, and fiction writing. Student host: Riley.**

Friday, October 23

**Guest speaker: Andrew Weber, reporter for KUT-FM. Student host: Alec**

Monday, October 26

\*\* Due on hard copy for in-class peer editing: LinkedIn summary drafts. If you arrive empty-handed, you'll be considered absent.

Wednesday, October 28

**\*\*Due, uploaded to BB: LinkedIn summary.**

Friday, October 30

**Guest speaker: Janeka Rector, Development Specialist at UT-Austin. Student host: Caitlin**

Monday, November 2

\*\* Due on hard copy for in-class peer editing: Job-application packet drafts.

Wednesday, November 4

Discussion: sizzle reels (at least 60 seconds of video is required if you want to be considered for earning an A- or higher on the portfolio project; note that the reel doesn't guarantee an A). Over the next two weeks, *I will gladly preview your scripts and/or storyboards if you want advance feedback from me.*

Friday, November 6

**\*\*Due, uploaded to BB: Job-application packet.**

**Guest speaker: Jordan Mendez, sales director at W. W. Norton. Student host: Zach**

Monday, November 9

In-class discussion: online portfolios

Wednesday, November 11

In-class hands-on inventory session for your online portfolios

Friday, November 13

**Guest speaker: Sara Ortiz, former NYC book marketer and now a marketer for the Texas Library Association**

Monday, November 16

In-class discussion: Going freelance.

Wednesday, November 18

Discussion: Talking about yourself in elevator speeches and interviews.

Friday, November 20

**Guest speaker: Ari Auber, Liquid Austin columnist for the Austin American Statesman.  
Student host: Jessica**

**\*\*Monday, November 23**

Final troubleshooting session for final portfolios. Portfolios must be finalized by midnight tonight. To earn an A- or higher, your portfolio must include at least 60 seconds of video content.

**Wednesday, November 25 and Friday, November 27**

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

**Monday, November 30**

Mock interviews

**Wednesday, December 2**

Mock interviews

**Friday, December 4**

**\*\*Due: Bureau of Labor Statistics snapshot, brought to class on hard copy.**

Final mock interviews, course/instructor evaluation, and sharing of email addresses.

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