Fall 2017 Online Orientation Letter
for CAWT 116 Business Communications

All Sections

Instructor: Dr. Holt

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Dear Students:

Welcome to CAWT 116 Business Communications!

Your course page on Canvas will open about one week before the semester starts. Please get yourselves acclimated to Canvas as soon as possible and make sure you check your CoC email daily for urgent and important information. Online registration to Cengage APLIA gives you free access to everything you need, including electronic text, for 2 or 3 weeks. Therefore, "I could not afford/get in time the textbook" will not serve you as a legitimate excuse for late or missing homework or participation. Acquiring hard copy of the course textbook is not necessary.

Please read ALL information available in our class shell on Canvas – the syllabus, “how to,” “is online learning for you?”, communication and attendance requirements, etc. Your success in the class depends on your compliance with all course “rules.”

This course is facilitated entirely online, through Canvas Learning Management System – a very convenient format for a busy professional or somebody juggling school and family commitments, or even someone who is overseas or constantly traveling. Wherever you are during any given week of the semester, online courses give you the flexibility to learn, participate in class discussions, and submit all assignments from anywhere you have access to the internet. That said, in order to be successful in the course, plan to dedicate 8 – 10 hours of study each week.

Also, please keep in mind that this is an intensive reading and writing class with very tight weekly deadlines for all homework (labwork through Cengagebrain, editing challenges, and daily forum participation). The class starts immediately on the first Monday of the semester with a very heavy grammar/punctuation/online forum “bootcamp.”

Although you do not need to have any “textbooks” or other course materials right away (you get free access to everything for 3 weeks), you will need to complete and submit the first set of homework files by the end of Sunday the first week of the semester. If
you are more of a social or auditory type of learner, you may find it challenging to stay motivated throughout the entire 16 weeks of class. College level reading comprehension, together with the ability to pay attention to every detail and follow all directions precisely, is an absolute must.

Our class starts on Monday, February 6, and completes with the final exam on Monday June 5. To gain access to your course, please follow this link, where you will also be instructed on how to create a Canvas account – if you do not have one already:

https://coc.instructure.com/login/canvas

The following links introduce you to online learning resources available through CoC, including troubleshooting any software-related issues and tips for success:

https://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DistanceLearning/Pages/SucceedInDistanceLearning.aspx

and

https://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DistanceLearning/Pages/default.aspx

In addition to interacting with your classmates and me, your course facilitator, through Canvas, you will need registration for the lab activities and exams at Cengagebrain APLIA. Registration fees include access to our electronic text.

Please follow this URL to register for Aplia:

   (this information will be provided one week before semester starts)

or     http://login.cengagebrain.com

Before registering for CengageBrain APLIA and as soon as possible, please take a moment to follow the links to visit Aplia First Day of Class support site where you will find the Student User Guide Getting Started with Aplia along with other important materials to assist you in registering for and participating in this class, including troubleshooting links.

1. Connect to http://login.cengagebrain.com/

2. **If you already have an account, sign in.** From your Dashboard, enter your course key: I (I will supply this information one week before class starts) in the box provided, and click the Register button.

   **If you don't have an account,** click the Create a New Account button, and enter the same course key when prompted: **(will be available one week before class starts)** Continue to follow the on-screen instructions.
If you choose to pay later, you can use Aplia without paying until 3 weeks after the start of the semester. After paying (by card or PayPal), you will have the option to purchase a hard copy of the book at a discounted price. However, you do not have to have a hard copy of the textbook: everything you need for the course is available to you electronically for CengageBrain Aplia $90.00 sign-up fee (the price may have gone up by 5 or 10%). Owning (or renting) a hard copy of the text, in addition to access to its electronic version, is an individual choice based on your personal preferences.


To access resources for CoC students with disabilities, please follow this link:

http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DSPS/Pages/Contact-Information.aspx

If you need to reach me to discuss a course-related issue, please email me, and I will get back to you within 24 hours. My virtual office hours are on Mondays 2 – 4 pm, during which time I will respond to you even faster. Please note that I do not have a capability to meet you face-to-face on campus or elsewhere. If you feel you need help understanding course requirements, assignments, etc., please visit TLC.

Holt_s@canyons.edu

Course Philosophy:

Every student is expected to help promote a learning classroom culture, a culture characterized by critical analysis, meaningful discussion, and respect. The role of the instructor is that of a facilitator in a moral partnership whose purpose is the development of the intellectual and social potential of the student.

Communications:

Please follow the directions for submitting all assignments precisely: resubmitting them for a higher grade will not be permitted. All documents must be saved in .docx or .pdf format. Please note that I cannot process documents created in “Pages”. If your file cannot be opened, or if your file is posted to the wrong link, you will receive zero points for the assignment.

If you have a course-related question or issue, please send me an email to the following address: holt_s@canyons.edu (there is underscore between the “t” and the “s”), and I will respond to you within 24 hours. My online office hours are on Mondays 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. and on Sundays 8 p.m. – 10 p.m. (PST). During these times, you will get a response even more quickly. Whenever you email me, please identify yourself as a
CAWT student and briefly state the nature of your inquiry in the **subject line** of the message: for example, *CAWT116 Jones Week 5 Participation Grade.*

You can also post your question to the current week’s *Help* Forum in Discussions on our course page in Canvas, and one of your colleagues who is able and willing to help or I myself will respond as soon as possible.

**Regular participation in Discussion Forums is essential for your success in this class.** Participation is defined as contributing quality and quantity to class discussions, completing homework/projects on time, and sharing in all other course related activities.

Outstanding contributors adhere to the following:

The points made are relevant to the discussion in terms of increasing everyone’s understanding, not regurgitating the facts. The comments take into consideration the ideas offered by others earlier in the class rather than being isolated and disjointed. These comments must reflect excellent preparation, good listening, as well as integrative and interpretative skills. Contributors must be willing to interact with other class members by asking questions and challenging conclusions.

**Attendance:**

To avoid being dropped from the class during the first week as a “No Show,” each student must check in with “I am here” reply posted as a simple, one sentence, message to *First Day Attendance* Forum thread in Discussions on our course page in Canvas before 11.59 p.m. on Tuesday of the first week of class. If I do not hear from you before this important deadline, I will drop you and give away your space to a waitlisted student.

Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis. Any student absent for any reason for more than 10% of the class meetings may be dropped by the instructor prior to 75% of the course. After 75% of the course, the instructor may not withdraw the student from the course, nor may the student withdraw from the course. The student must earn a grade in the course.

For distance education courses, the instructor and student must have regular and substantive interaction. The student’s absence from an online course shall be determined by the last day on which the student was academically engaged and participated in an academically related activity in the class. Any student who receives Federal financial aid and completely withdraws or fails to complete any units during the payment period or period of enrollment, will be required to repay any unearned financial aid funds. (See 2016-2017 College of the Canyons College Catalog, page 19.)

Students who do not participate in class for three consecutive class meetings may be dropped from the course without prior notice at the discretion of this instructor. A **CLASS MEETING** for this online course is considered a Login to Canvas and participation in one of current week’s *Discussion Forums* (*Critical Thinking Forum* or *Chat about It Forum*). Students who do not login to Canvas for three
consecutive days will be considered to have missed one class meeting. Students are expected to login to Canvas a minimum of three times a week to review Announcements, share their assignment experiences on the Help Forum, reply to posts on the Help Forum, and participate in the weekly Critical Thinking Questions and Chat About It forums.

**Late Work:**

Although late work may be acceptable under **exceptional** circumstances, please do not wait until the last moment before the deadline to submit your weekly assignments. Plan ahead for emergencies, which always happen when they are least needed. If you anticipate submitting an assignment late, please first get a clearance from me. If approved for late submission, “Critical Thinking” and “Editing Challenge” assignments will always be assessed 10% grade deduction (from what is earned for the assignment) for each late day. In addition, **“Editing Challenges” will not be accepted after 12 am (midnight) on Wednesdays (which means they can be late by a maximum of two days.) Missed forum discussions participation can never be made up.**

Welcome on board, and best of luck with this class and the rest of your education! I look forward to working and learning together!

Dr. Holt