COURSE SYLLABUS

Business Writing Certificate Program (Self-Paced)

Build the writing skills federal professionals need to produce clear, credible, and reader-focused emails, memos, reports, and correspondence that drive mission outcomes.

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



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Course Outline

This package includes these courses

- Writing Essentials Course (Self-Paced) (16 Hours)
- Effective Government Correspondence Course (Self-Paced) (12 Hours)
- Clear Expression through Critical Thought Course (Self-Paced) (16 Hours)
- Grammar and Editing Essentials Course (Self-Paced) (18 Hours)

Attend the AI for Government Writing & Briefings class for free as part of this certificate. Choose your date after you register for the program.

AI for Government Writing & Briefings (Self-Paced)

Writing Essentials Course (Self-Paced)

Strengthen essential writing skills for government and public-sector communication by focusing on purpose, audience, organization, and plain language. Participants will learn a practical approach to planning, drafting, revising, and editing documents so they are clear, concise, and easy for readers to understand and act on.

- Recognize the core elements of effective written communication, including the 7 Traits and the four-step writing process.
- Practice strategies for identifying your audience and establishing a clear, focused purpose for your writing.
- Explore organizational methods such as the three-part structure (opening, middle, closing) and the use of headings to create a logical flow of information.
- Review the Plain Writing Act of 2010 and the Federal Plain Language Guidelines, including their role in government writing.
- Use Federal Plain Language principles to make writing clearer, more concise, and easier to understand.
- Identify common grammar and punctuation issues and learn how to avoid them.
- Incorporate accessibility and design practices that improve readability for a wide range of audiences.
- Strengthen final drafts by applying revision, editing, and refinement techniques.

Effective Government Correspondence Course (Self-Paced)

- 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.

Clear Expression through Critical Thought Course (Self-Paced)

- Apply the seven traits of effective writing and the writing process to strengthen written communication.
- Examine the fundamentals of critical thinking and how they support clear decision-making.
- Use critical thinking strategies in writing to better address audience needs and expectations.
- Recognize where logic can strengthen clarity, organization, and credibility in written work.
- Use logical reasoning to develop persuasive, well-supported arguments.
- Analyze problems critically to better understand challenges and possible responses.
- Create effective solutions by using a structured problem-solving process.

Grammar and Editing Essentials Course (Self-Paced)

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

- Apply subject-verb agreement rules to compound, correlative, and indefinite-pronoun subjects
- Choose active voice and direct verbs over passive constructions and nominalizations
- Select pronouns whose antecedents are unambiguous in number, gender, and reference
- Detect and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers and apply parallel structure
- Combine clauses with the right conjunction or conjunctive adverb for the relationship being expressed
- Apply the major comma, semicolon, colon, apostrophe, and capitalization rules used in federal writing
- Apply the Federal Plain Language Guidelines required by the Plain Writing Act of 2010
- Run a document through a deliberate two-step revising-then-refining edit using the Seven Traits