

## Professional Writing Client Project Overview

### English 470: Professional Writing Skills, Spring 2017

Originally opened in 1839 as the Farmville Female Seminary Association, the institution was chartered as a Female College in 1860 with 7 faculty covering Mathematics and English, French and English Branches, Piano and Guitar, Drawing and Painting, and Music and Organ. Longwood University in 2017 is now a liberal arts university with a faculty of 288 spanning the colleges of arts, sciences, business, health and human services, in addition to pre-professional tracks such as teaching, athletic training, nursing, and graduate programs. As the school has grown, so have the procedures and policies.

We are taking the opportunity to re-design and revise 30+ pages of the 2014-2015 Faculty Procedures and Policy Manual. Your guiding principles are to polish the document for 1) readability, 2) fluency, and 3) memory.

### Steps for the project

#### Research

In class, we will discuss samples of other manuals in higher education to review the genre for its language, formatting, and purpose. You should then search independently for samples of university faculty manuals that can shape your ideas.

In small groups, you will interview faculty in order to understand users' experiences with the FPPM. You will also read (in Canvas under Modules) interviews with users (a dean and a few professors) of this manual for their practices and perspectives on the contents.

#### Drafting and Design

This work involves removing redundancies, cutting long sentences, and re-ordering paragraphs for better organization of ideas. You should not change meaning. You should enhance or bring forward meaning. The Federal Plain Language guidelines [[www.plainlanguage.gov](http://www.plainlanguage.gov)] will be our strongest guide for understanding how to write clearly for an audience.

You will also employ the design principles from the *Non-Designer's Design Book* to make the white space and text space more readable and memorable.

While you work on the manual, we will also have some grammar, mechanics, and editing lessons to sharpen your focus on the mechanics within the sentences.

#### Check-in with clients

We will bring back faculty to have them review the work your team would like to submit. Selecting just a representative page or two, you will show the faculty member what you have done and why to get their feedback.

#### What's due in the end

Each student will turn in two pdfs: a letter to the Provost as a progress report and your final draft of the selected section of the FPPM. Save the pdf as "Your last name first initial [name of document].pdf"

- The **final draft** will be a clean draft of your revised FPPM with nothing highlighted.

- The **progress report letter** (follow the sample in Writing that Works p. 355) will have with 3 subheadings. Your audience will be Provost Joan Neff, Vice President of Academic Affairs of the university.

The **first subheading** will be *Content Changes* in which you justify 3 of your more significant content changes. Quote from the FPPM to illustrate the sample changes.

The **second subheading** will be *Design Changes* in which you justify 3 of your more significant design choices. Quote from the FPPM to illustrate a sample change.

All 6 changes should be explained according to audience, purpose, and/or context by citing the sections/ pages of the FPPM.

The **final subheading** will be *Recommendations* in which you explain whether this work should continue or not for the rest of the manual. You may also forward good suggestions you heard during interviews or considered on your own.

**Note in your letter** the reduction of word count in your version.