Preparing for the CMWA may seem like a mystery, but with this guide and some effort, you should feel more confident about the assessment. Preparing for the CMWA will also help you to do better in BC 230 and/or BC 290!

What is the CMWA?
- The College of Management Writing Assessment tests your writing and grammar skills.
- It is a two hour timed test.
- There is an objective/multiple choice grammar section and a short essay section.
- The CMWA is required to place into BC 230 or BC 290, which is a prerequisite for many upper level management courses.

The Grammar Section
- Must get 32/50 to get into BC 230, 40/50 to get into BC 290
- Some key items to review:
  - Verb conjugation/subject-verb agreement
  - Punctuation (apostrophes, commas, periods, etc.)
  - Subject vs object pronouns
- Study resources:
  - Quizzes on every topic: [https://www.usingenglish.com/quizzes/](https://www.usingenglish.com/quizzes/)
  - Verb Tense Overviews and Exercises: [https://www/englishpage.com/](https://www/englishpage.com/)
  - FCE Prep Use of English practice tests: [https://www.flo-joe.co.uk/fce/students/tests/](https://www.flo-joe.co.uk/fce/students/tests/)
  - The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html) (search the topics for overviews and exercises)

The Writing Section
- You must get 7/10 to get into BC 230 and 8/10 to get into BC 290.
- You are writing a response to a case study. It’s NOT A THESIS. Follow the instructions for format specified on the test. The format is:
  - Introduction/Summary of the scenario
  - Analysis of one option/action,
  - Analysis of a second option/action
  - Optional analysis of another action
  - Conclusion with your recommendation
- You must analyze both sides of the issue reference in the question. You cannot focus only on why one side is good/better because there are ALWAYS benefits and negatives to both options.
- Pay attention to your verbs – subject-verb agreement, time meaning, etc.
- Every sentence counts – it is better to write few sentences well than many sentences poorly.
Resources/Strategies to improve your overall skills:

- Write! Practice is the best way to improve.
  - Practice summarizing.
  - Practice writing about both sides of an issue (not just one side).
- Read as much English as you can. Here are some good sources of business English for reading:
  - The Harvard Business Review: [https://hbr.org/](https://hbr.org/). Sign up for a free account and access up to 15 articles per month (without an account, you can only access five articles per month). There are hundreds of articles written at a high level of Business English on all sorts of Business related topics.
  - The Wall Street Journal: [https://www.wsj.com/](https://www.wsj.com/). There is lots of good content here, though you may need a subscription or at least an account.
  - The Economist: [http://www.economist.com/](http://www.economist.com/). Again, there is good content, but you can only access a certain number of articles each month without an account.
  - Forbes: [https://www.forbes.com/](https://www.forbes.com/). You’ll find lots of shorter articles that are easy to read, as well as longer, more in-depth stories.
  - Paul Krugman’s blog in the New York Times: [https://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/](https://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/). This is a blog, so you will notice some differences between this and a standard newspaper article (Use of “I,” a more casual and conversational tone, etc.) You can read up to ten free articles per month at nytimes.com. After that, you need a subscription. Paul Krugman is an excellent author, and as an economist, he addresses finance and other technical topics.
- Listen to as much English as you can. Here are some good sources of business English for listening:
  - [https://www.englishpage.com/listening/index.htm](https://www.englishpage.com/listening/index.htm)
  - “5 Business Podcasts to Start Listening to in 2016” from Entrepreneur [https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/270070](https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/270070)

Where to go for more info/help:

- For questions regarding reservations, email: The CMWA Program at CMWA@umb.edu
- For questions regarding the CMWA and placement process, contact: Kathryn Archard, CM Writing Program Director: kathryn.archard@umb.edu
- For guidance on studying and preparing for the CMWA: Katie Almeida Spencer, CM Writing Tutor Mentor: katherine.almeida@umb.edu