ENGL 2338: Introduction to Technical Writing



5W2 Summer II 2015 Dr. Worlow Rev. 13 July 2015

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General Information

Instructor:Dr. Christian WorlowEmail:worlow@uta.edu

Office: Office Hours: CARH 604 T-Th 1:30-3 pm

Email Information

- Include ENGL 2338.n (where *n* is the section number) and a detailed topic in the subject line of all emails; **I will not open emails that do not include a correct subject line**.
- Sign your first and last name at the bottom of each email, so I know who you are.
- I check email daily, except on the weekends. I try to respond to emails within 24 hours.
- If you email me after noon on Friday or over the weekend, you will likely not hear back from me until Monday.

Office Hour Information

- I am only on campus on Monday through Thursday.
- Sometimes, the department schedules meetings during my office hours, and if that happens, I will not be in my office. Always let me know in advance that you are coming, so I can let you know if I have a conflict.

Course Description

ENGL 2338 Introduction to Technical Writing

Sophomore-level course focused on a process-oriented introduction to writing, especially for nursing, science, pre-engineering, and business students. This course includes understanding the writing situation and provides students the opportunity to practice writing in response to professional and technical situations. Students will learn improved writing style and be introduced to design concepts, business writing, and instruction writing. This course includes both individual and collaborative projects. Prerequisite: ENGL 1301, ENGL 1302.

As this course is a 5-week summer course, we move at a brisk pace, and you should expect to invest three or more hours per day to preparing for the next class and working on assignments.

Essential Competencies

Essential competencies for this course include the ability to

- Read and analyze technical documents.
- Write clear, concise, and visually appropriate technical prose for the intended readers in response to various types of assignments.
- Discuss, in class and in small groups, technical documents.
- Use a personal computer with various word processing, e-mail, and graphics software applications.

Required Course Materials

Required Book (1)

Sims, Brenda R. *Technical Communication*, Second Edition ISBN: 978-1-4652-0242-0 Publisher: Kendall Hunt Publishing

- Only this edition of the textbook is acceptable for the course.
- You will need the book to pass this course.
- You must have the book by the first full week of class—no extensions for failing to purchase the book.

I also *recommend* a good writing handbook (or website) that you can refer to for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style.

Required Materials

- Paperclips
- USB Drive
- Headphones to plug into computer for video instructions
- Standard School Supplies: Pens, Pencils, Paper, etc.
- UTA Email address that you check daily (you can set up this address to forward to your primary email address)
- Reliable Internet access (use UTA library if you cannot access the Internet from home)

Course Objectives

- To learn to write clearly, concisely, and correctly
- To learn the value of good writing skills in business and industry
- To learn and practice writing various technical documents common in business and industry
- To learn to use word processing to create effective technical documents
- To learn to write and work as a member of a team
- To learn word processing programs that foster writing
- To learn editing, tracking, and commenting skills
- To learn advanced computer graphic and design programs for the business world

Course Policies

- You must attend class regularly. You cannot perform well in this course unless you attend class. If you miss class for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered and all assignments made.
- If you are unable to attend class for some reason, please e-mail me.
- Submit all assignments on time. I do not accept late assignments. If you are having trouble completing an assignment, talk with me **at least two days before the assignment is due**. If you use Blackboard or e-mail an assignment to me because you have to miss class, then you must bring a physical copy with you to the next class.

- Any assignment not prepared specifically according to instructions in format, organization, or style may receive a grade of F. Refer to the rubrics associated with the different assignments.
- If you miss a quiz because you did not arrive to class on time or missed class, you cannot make up the quiz and will receive a grade of zero.

Late Work

I will **not** accept late assignments for any reason. If your assignment is late, then it will earn a zero. In case of an emergency, make sure you have a friend or relative deliver the assignment to me by the due date at the beginning of class.

Emergency Exit Procedures

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit: (1) go right down the hall; (2) go down the stairs to the first floor; (3) take the exit to the right. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will arrange to assist handicapped individuals.

Plagiarism Information

According to the university catalog, term cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations.
- Dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments.
- The acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; or
- Any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

The term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- The knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgment; and
- The knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. (Student Catalog 92)

In my class, plagiarism includes:

- Turning in any material (even one sentence) that is not your own without acknowledging the source.
- Turning in material that is identical to a classmate's material.
- Using material from a previous course.
- Any student caught plagiarizing may be given an F in the course, and his or her actions will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities—no exceptions.

Attendance Information

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, faculty members are free to develop their own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section for the term of 5W2 Summer II 2015, I will take attendance every class period. Your participation grade will suffer for every class you miss (-10 percent per class until Participation reaches a grade of zero).

Missed Class

If you miss a class, do **not** come to me to ask what you missed. I recommend you exchange emails with your classmates, so that you can find out what we did in class when you were absent.

Excused Absences

The only excused absences recognized by the University of Texas at Arlington are those wherein a student is representing the university in an official capacity or are those religious holidays you notify the instructor of at the beginning of the semester in writing. *These absences will not be excused without appropriate documentation*. Athletes and other students who will miss class for an official university activity **must advise me in writing at least 48 hours in advance of the absence**. Notice only lets the instructor know that a student will be missing class; this notice does not extend due dates for assignments or allow the student to make up missed quizzes. Students must make arrangements with the instructor at least 48 hours prior to the absence for turning in the work. No guaranteed extensions.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UTA. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom, and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Headphones and Music

I do allow students to listen to their own music on headphones during *workshop portions* of the class as long as the volume is low enough that students can hear me if I need to bring something to their attention.

Cell/Mobile Phones

- To avoid distractions during lectures, I expect students to mute their phones and keep them out of sight.
- Students may listen to music on headphones during workshop time, but students should avoid texting, checking email, or surfing the Internet.
- If a student is expecting an important call that he or she needs to take during class, the student should:
- Inform the instructor before class begins.
- Arrange for notes from another student before class if leaving is necessary.
- Go out into the hall to answer the phone and have the conversation.

Restroom Breaks

- Students may leave the class and return without asking permission for restroom breaks.
- Try to time exit or entrance when the instructor is changing slides or switching activities, so the exit or entrance causes the least amount of disruption.
- Be polite and quiet.

Leaving Early

- If a student must leave early, let the instructor know before class.
- Ask another student to give you notes on anything you miss by leaving early.
- Having to work is never an accepted reason for leaving class early.

Computer Etiquette

While we will be using the computers in the classroom to complete both homework assignments and papers, you must use good computer etiquette during class time. Hacking, surfing the net, sending/reading personal emails, or completing work for other courses during class time is strictly forbidden. Failure to adhere to these rules will result in dismissal from the classroom and will count as a zero on any daily work for that class day.

Students may bring their own laptops or tablets to class, but the student is then responsible for having all the software needed for the course and for using the software.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate because of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. You can find information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations at <u>www.uta.edu/disability</u> or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Title IX

The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos. For information regarding Title IX, visit uta.edu/titleix.

Course Evaluation (Grades)

Assignments	Percentage	Due Dates
Quizzes, Homework, & Participation	20%	Daily
Style Exam	10%	July 21
Design Case Study/Brochure	15%	July 28
Resume/Letter	15%	July 30
Team Instruction Project	20%	Aug. 5
Team Feasibility Study	20%	Aug. 13

Students should demonstrate a mastery of grammar, spelling, and punctuation (GSP) as well as the writing skills developed in Composition & Rhetoric I and II. In the professional world, these kinds of errors make you seem unprofessional. All GSP errors found on assignments will result in a -1 point penalty per error: for example, ten grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors on a document will result in a -10 penalty to the grade (an 87% becomes 77%).

Assignment Descriptions

Quizzes, Homework, and Participation (20%)—This part of the grade is a combination of daily quizzes over assigned readings, completed homework that is separate from the major projects, and how each student behaves toward the professor, other classmates, and with respect to class times.

Quizzes—Daily reading quizzes to prove students have read the required material before class. These quizzes are due on Blackboard before the beginning of class. Be sure whatever computer you are using for the quiz can properly and fully run Blackboard. Students will not be able to make up quizzes. Most quizzes appear on the schedule, but your instructor will occasionally include pop quizzes during class.

Homework—Usually, your homework includes completion grades to show the instructor that you did prepare for class by completing work outside of the class. Sometimes, this grade will include drafts of parts of major assignments.

Participation—This grade is based on student behavior such as arriving on-time for class, arriving prepared for class, staying for the entire class period, handing in work on time in the appropriate format, speaking respectfully to classmates and instructor, avoiding playing games, avoiding texting or emailing during class, respecting the time of the instructor and other classmates, and communicating responsibly with the instructor about problems, absences, or other needs. For each class you miss, you lose 10 points from this grade, to a minimum of zero.

Style Exam (10%)—This exam takes place four weeks into the semester and covers chapters 7 and 8 in the Sims' book. Students will have 80 minutes (one class period) to complete the exam. The exam includes three sections:

- Part I is worth 76 points, and includes eight sentences. Students choose six of the eight sentences to answer. Each answer includes
 - Identifying all of the problems with the sentence with the correct style terms.
 - Including the word or phrase that makes up the style problem in parenthesis next to the style term for the error.
 - A rewrite of the sentence that corrects all the errors from the original sentence without creating new errors.
- Part II is worth 20 points, and includes two paragraphs. Students choose one of the two paragraphs to rewrite and correct all style errors. Students do not have to identify errors in this portion of the test; they only rewrite the paragraph.
- Part III is worth 4 points. The grading is all or nothing for this section. Students must correctly name all eight "to be" verbs for this part.
- In addition to the new information from the lectures for Chapters 7 and 8, the instructor will also grade on grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- **NB**: The Style Exam requires you to learn how to spot and how to avoid and how to revise texts for the style errors in Chapters 7 and 8. *The Style Exam will likely be your worst overall grade for the course, and if you do not study or prepare adequately, you will not do well.* This exam has no "curve."

Design Case Study (15%)—Students will design or redesign a brochure chosen by the instructor. The final grade will be based on the written text and on design. Students will receive an assignment sheet and a detailed rubric.

Resume/Letter of Application (15%)—Students will write a resume and a letter of application (also known as a cover letter) to apply for jobs in their fields. Students will receive an assignment sheet and a detailed rubric. You should begin looking for a job ad for a position you would like to apply for, but you do not *have* to apply for the job. You will complete this project as if you were preparing to apply for the position you find.

Team Instruction Project (TIP) (20%)—Students will work in teams of 3-4 to collaborate on a set of instructions. Teams will create team contracts for handling students who fail to do their work as well for setting team expectations. If a team member fails to complete their part of the work on time, the rest of the team must complete the work or risk a lower grade, but the team can vote (if written into the contract) to remove the team member from the team. The removed team member will then be responsible for doing an entire project individually, and it will be due on the same day as the team project.

Students will keep minutes of their team meetings, and they will turn in a final product to the instructor on the due date. If the final product does not meet the assignment requirements, all team members will fail the assignment, thus team members must work proactively to complete the work on schedule even if someone fails to do their part. The reason for these strict rules is to teach the students to respect deadlines and complete projects on time with a team (and sometimes in spite of the team). You will also have an assignment sheet and detailed rubric.

Team Feasibility Study (TFS) (20%)—Students will work in teams of 3-4 to collaborate on a 10-12 page feasibility study. The teams will remain the same from the Team Instruction Project, and students will use the same team contract. If a team member fails to complete their part of the work on time, the rest of the team must complete the work or risk a lower grade, but the team can vote (if written into the contract) to remove the team member from the team. The removed team member will them be responsible for doing an entire project individually, and it will be due on the same day as the team project.

Students will keep minutes of their team meetings, and they will turn in a final product to the instructor on the due date. If the final product does not meet the assignment requirements, all team members will fail the assignment, thus team members must work proactively to complete the work on schedule even if someone fails to do their part. The reason for these strict rules is to teach the students to respect deadlines and complete projects on time with a team (and sometimes in spite of the team). You will also have an assignment sheet and detailed rubric.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q. Do you post your PowerPoints and lecture notes to Blackboard?

A. No. When I do so, students fail to pay attention in class. So pay attention because the notes will not be on Blackboard. I *might* post certain helpful, supplemental notes to Blackboard, but not those materials that I presented in class. I recommend you take notes and ask questions.

Q. Can I turn in late work?

A. No. If your work is late, you get a zero.

Q. What if it's a couple of minutes late?

A. Tough. Don't wait until the last minute.

Q. Can I revise for a better grade?

A. No. Turn it in right the first time. Besides, in my experience, students don't "revise" so much as fix a comma or two and call that a "revision." So no, you can't revise.

Q. What if my assignment is too short/doesn't meet the minimum length required?

A. Then it earns a zero.

Q. What if my assignment is longer than the listed maximum length?

A. If you're a little over the maximum, then don't worry about it. If you're well over the maximum (for example, 10 pages rather than 5), then I'm only reading and grading until page 5.

Q. Can I have an Incomplete?

A. No.

Q. Can I do anything to get a better grade?

A. Do the work in the first place the first time around. If we are approaching the end of the term and you're worried about passing, then you probably should have done more/done a better job/gotten help sooner. If extra credit has already been offered, then do that, but don't expect to magically change a failing grade into a passing one.

Q. But I need this class for my nursing degree/engineering degree/teaching certificate!

A. If you're having problems, maybe that program isn't right for you. You might consider speaking with an advisor for other options with your academic career.

Q. But I need [some particular grade] for financial aid/to graduate!

A. Maybe you should've done better before this point.

Q. How many absences can I have?

A. I used to have a maximum number of absences policy, but UTA has no official attendance policy. I take roll each class, but you have no "maximum" number of absences. Of course, if you miss several classes and several daily/in-class grades, then you'll fail under your own power.

Q. Can I go to the restroom?

A. Yes. Stop asking me. Just go. Be discrete and don't disrupt class, but you aren't in high school anymore.

Q. Can you look at my draft for me and give me feedback?

A. Sure. Bring it by my office as a hard copy. Don't bring your laptop. I will send you on your way if you slide your MacBook towards me. *Print out your draft*. Be aware: My job is not to edit/copyedit/revise your work. I will point to issues or give you guidance on how to improve your draft, but I do not give out a formula to students for specific grades. That is, I do not say, *If you do this and this and this with your draft, you will earn an A*.

Q. But you said my draft looked fine! Why did I get [grade I do not want]?

A. Because your work earned that grade. Do not mistake "You're on the right track" or "This looks okay" for "This gets an A." A *D* is passing. A *C* reflects *average* work.

Q. But I worked so hard on this!

A. Effort does not equal competency or success.

Q. But I submitted my assignment to Blackboard/I had a Blackboard issue!

A. If it's before the deadline, try using a different browser. If that doesn't work, email it to me before the deadline as an attachment. If it's after the deadline, start thinking about how to avoid having this problem on the next assignment. If a quiz has an issue, then contact me before class.

Q. Do you drop any grades?

A. I typically drop a lowest daily grade at the end of the term. If you have perfect attendance, I will drop *another* lowest daily grade.

Q. I was late to class! What should I do?

A. Come to me at the end of class to let me know you were present but late. Do not *assume* I marked you down. If you came in *very* late, then I will likely mark you absent nonetheless.

Q. What does it take to earn an A on an assignment?

A. For technical writing projects, you should demonstrate excellent writing style (including few if any passive constructions or other style issues) and excellent document/graphic design based upon the principles taught in class.

Q. Can I have a letter of recommendation?

A. Two things: Firstly, you cannot have a recommendation until after the class is over. I want to see if you are the kind of student I feel confident and comfortable in recommending for something. Also, I might have something to *talk about* by that point. I've used students' work and projects in my classes as specific examples to *justify* why I recommend students for scholarships, academic programs, etc. Secondly, I only write letters of recommendation for students who earned *A*'s in the course overall.

Q. Can I use Wikipedia, Ask Jeeves, About.com, Ask.com, Metafilter, Reddit, or some other general internet resource as a source in my paper/project?

A. No. If you're in a Literature course, then you should use the MLA International Bibliography or maybe Academic Search Complete via our library. Otherwise, for literature or composition or technical writing, you should be searching for reputable sources—and have a good understanding of what reputable sources *are* and which are appropriate to the project or discipline you are working within.

Q. What citation style should I use for my projects/assignments?

A. My answer varies depending on the kind of course you are taking. For Technical Writing, choose a citation style and stick to it on particular projects. Note that choice on the Style Sheet. NB: The Formal Project requires you to use APA style citation. You will have a Works Cited, References, or Bibliography section as appropriate to the style you choose.

Please note that the library can direct you to more information about those specific styles. I recommend you *avoid* using Citation Machine and similar web services to generate your Works Cited entries unless you are working with printed, hardcopy sources like books and journal articles.

Tentative Schedule

All dates are subject to change by instructor. Important deadlines are in blue.

These instructions replace any old instructions you may encounter for quizzes:

- Time Limit: You have 10 minutes.
- Attempts: You have only one attempt.
- **Deadlines:** Quizzes are due before class starts at 10:30 AM on the day Dr. Worlow has scheduled the quiz. See the schedule below.
- **Open Book & Notes**: Note that if you failed to read, you will be desperately looking through the book for answers.
- **Questions with Multiple Answers**: In the event you have a question like this, wrong answers count against you.
- **No Going Back**: Once you submit an answer, you cannot go back and change answers.
- **Use the Right Computer**: Use a computer and browser appropriate to running Blackboard quizzes. *Your phone's browser does not count*. Use a computer in the library.
- No Makeups: You cannot make up a quiz, even if you register late for the course.
- **Problems:** Take a screenshot of any problems with your quizzes and contact Dr. Worlow via email *with the screenshot of the error*.

Week 1

July 14	Introduction Email Etiquette Exchange email addresses with at least two people in class Syllabus Quiz (in-class or before next class) Grammar Quiz (in-class or before next class) Audience Analysis
	Chapter 2 Chapter 2 Quiz (due before end of day July 17)
July 15	Memos, Letters, & Emails Chapter 12 Chapter 12 Quiz (due before end of day July 17) Style Chapter 7 Chapter 7 Quiz (before class) HW: Exercises 1-6 at end of Chapter 7 (on Blackboard before class) NB: Budget at least three hours to complete this homework
July 16	Style Chapter 8 HW: Exercises 1-11 at end of Chapter 8 (on Blackboard before class) Chapter 8 Quiz (before class) NB: Budget at least three hours to complete this homework

Week 2 July 20	Long Style Quiz (before class) Review and Style Workshop (in-class) HW: Practice Exam (before class on Blackboard; give yourself 120 minutes to practice) Review and Style Workshop (in-class)
July 21	Style Exam (in-class & hard-copy)
July 22	MS Word and Graphics Orientation Organizing Information and Headings Chapter 6 Chapter 6 Quiz (before class) Assign Design Case Study/Brochure
July 23	Creating Visual Information Chapter 11 Chapter 11 Quiz (before class) Introduction to Graphic Design Chapter 10 NB: No Chapter 10 Quiz HW: Header & Organization Text Rewrite (upload before class in Blackboard; bring e-copy to class with you of revised text and visual representations) HW: Visual Representation (upload before class in Blackboard; bring e-copy to class with you of revised text and visual representations)
Week 3 July 27	Brochure Workshop In Class: Project Log, Style Sheet, & Thumbnail Sketch (show me the sketch, and upload the style sheet and project log to Blackboard at the end of class) HW: Draft of Brochure (upload before class in Blackboard and give B&W physical copy to instructor at beginning of class)
July 28	Resumes & Letters of Application Assign Resume & Cover Letter Project Chapter 13 Chapter 13 Quiz (before class) Review Chapter 12 (especially emails and letters) Final draft of Brochure (due at beginning of class and on Blackboard) Resume & Letter Workshop
July 29	Cover Letter & Resume Workshop HW: Drafts of Resume and Letter (upload to Blackboard by beginning of class; bring physical and e-copies to class with you)

July 30	 Final Draft of Resume & Letter (upload before class in Blackboard and bring physical copies to instructor by beginning of class) Instructions Chapter 18 Chapter 18 Quiz (before class) Assign Team Instruction Project (TIP) Team Contract (in-class; upload and signed physical copy) Instructor approved topic by end of class on sign-up sheet Team Workshops on TIP
Week 4	
Aug 3	Instruction Manual Workshop Be ready to work on the design of your instructions in class. HW: Style Sheet
	HW: Thumbnail Sketch of Instructions (make sure all team member names are on page.)
	HW: Revised written and Tested Instructions (upload before class in Blackboard and bring physical copy by beginning of class, bring e-copy to class) NB: To receive credit, every member of the team must upload this draft to Blackboard.
Aug 4	Instruction Manual Workshop Peer Review Day Be ready to put final touches on your Instructions in class—need e-copies. HW: Upload latest draft to Blackboard (upload before class in Blackboard and bring physical copy by beginning of class, bring e-copy to class) NB: To receive credit, every member of the team must upload the draft to Blackboard. NB: Last day to drop class
Aug 5	Feasibility Studies & Formal Reports Chapter 15 Chapter 15 Quiz (before class) Assign Team Feasibility Study (TFS) Final Draft of TIP due (upload before class in Blackboard and bring physical copy by beginning of class TFS Workshop Instructor Approved Topic for Feasibility Study (signup sheet in class) First Draft of Methods Section (upload at the end of class)
Aug 6	 TFS Workshop HW: Style Sheet, (upload before class in Blackboard and bring physical copy by beginning of class, bring e-copy to class) NB: Instructor must approve your methods section before you begin testing. HW: Draft of summary (minus results and recommendation), introduction, layout with charts of results section (no data yet), completed methods section, and basic design elements—(upload before class in Blackboard and bring physical copy by beginning of class, bring e-copy to class)

Week 5 Aug 10	TFS Workshop In-Class Surveys and "Taste Tests" Teams planning surveys must be ready at the beginning of the class. NB: You must attend this class period, or you will lose 20 points from your individual project grade.
Aug 11	TFS Workshop All results from testing should be complete. HW: Draft of summary, results, introduction, discussion/analysis/conclusion, and recommendation text with design elements (upload before class in Blackboard and bring physical copy by beginning of class, bring e-copy to class)
Aug 12	TFS Workshop Revisions and Design HW: Most recent draft of completed document
Aug 13	TFS Final Draft due to Dr. Worlow in his office and on Blackboard
NB: This c	ourse has no final exam and does not meet on August 17.