Syllabus and Course Manual for Introduction to Technical Writing

ENGL 2338.008
Spring 2014
MW 7:00 PM-8:20 PM
Business Building (B) 336

Course Description

ENGL 2338.002 and .008: 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.

This course will include hands-on expeirence and explore education, communication, and learning through games.

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Note: Schedule, due dates, and readings assignments will vary throughout the semester.

Student Letter

Dear Technical Writing Student:

This packet contains your orientation and schedule material for technical writing students. If you registered for my class, you are a technical writing student (at least for this semester).

Technical Writing is a business-oriented course designed to teach you how to present yourself in writing in the professional world. Because the course focuses on the professional world, I run the class as though you were a group of new-hire employees, and I function as both your boss and your instructor. To succeed in this course, you should consider the course as if it were a job.

Your Responsibilities
- Arrive on time to each scheduled workday (class).
- Stay for your entire shift (class) unless your instructor dismisses you early or you have made prior arrangements with your instructor.
- Arrive prepared with your work materials (completed assignments, including reading, on time).
- Arrive prepared to pay attention. Workplaces do not tolerate goofing off on company time, which means you should avoid playing video games, listening to music, chatting online, surfing the Internet, text messaging, taking cell phone calls, and other non-course related activities during class time. These activities often distract other students, and if your instructor discovers you are using class time for personal entertainment, the instructor will ask you to leave class, and your attendance and grade charts will reflect your choice.
- Communicate with your instructor should you have any problems throughout the semester. A boss is almost always more lenient with employees who communicate than with those who are no call/no shows.

Instructor Responsibilities:
- Provide directions, schedule, and deadlines.
- Arrive prepared to teach.
- Provide detailed instructions for each project.
- Provide feedback on completed projects.

You invested money in this course to learn a subject. The University uses your money to pay me to teach you that subject during class time and to grade your work. Your job now is to learn the material and prove that you can successfully apply the material. Your paycheck is the grade you earn based off your performance.

Good luck,
Dr. Elerson

Contact Information

Instructor Name
Dr. Crystal Elerson

Office Location
Carlisle Hall (CARH) 612

Email Information
Elerson@uta.edu (click link)
- Include ENGL course number (2338, 3372, or 3376), section number (.001, .002, or . 008), 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 48 hours.
- If you email me after noon on Friday or over the weekend, you will likely not hear back from me until Monday.

Office Hours
2:00-3:30 PM on MW and by Appointment
- If no one schedules an appointment with me for my office hours, I may choose to use the time another way, so make sure to send an email setting up and appointment to let me know you are coming. You may do walk-in meetings, but I cannot promise to be available or there if I an unaware that you are coming.
- I am only on campus on Mondays and Wednesdays (MW), but I can occasionally meet earlier in the day on those days if you schedule an appointment in advance with me.
- I teach from 4:00 p.m.-9:50 p.m. on MW, so I will be unavailable for individual meetings during those course hours.
- 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.

Note: I only look at drafts in person—you must be with me while I read and respond.

On days assignments are due, I will only look at drafts up to 30 minutes before your class begins (if you are in my first class) or until the end of my office hours on that day.

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. T*echnical Communication*, Second Edition ISBN: 978-1-4652-0242-0 Publisher: Kendall Hunt Publishing

- Only this edition of the text book 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.

Suggested Software (1)

Scrivener 2

Cost: Usually $45.00 (for Mac or PC)—special discount for this class with code will give you 20% off price..

Site: www.getscrivener.com (will redirect you to an esellerate store: https://store6.esellerate.net/store/checkout/CustomLayout.aspx?s=STR5463446766&pc=&page=MultiCatalog.htm).

- Click "Buy" on the regular $45.00 version (Mac or PC) that you need. (The Education License will only give you 15% off; code below will give you 20% off if you buy regular license.)
- Enter Coupon Code: "**ARLINGTON**" (no quote marks).
- Click "Enter" next to Code (should take $9.00 off price near bottom of page).
- Click "Add to Cart."
- Click "Checkout."
- Follow payment directions from there.

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).
- Two folders with two inside pockets and brads for hole-punched papers.
    - Write the following on the cover of your class folder:
        - Your first and last name.
        - Your course and section number (ENGL xxxx.xxx).
        - Your class time (MW x:xx-x:xx PM).
        - Your email address.
        - My name: Dr. Elerson.
    - ENGL 3372.001 (4:00-5:20 PM) must have yellow folders.
    - ENGL 2338.002 (5:30-6:50 PM) must have blue folders.
    - ENGL 2338.008 (7:00-8:20 PM) must have green folders.
    - ENGL 3376.001 (8:30-9:50 PM) must have red folders.
    - You may purchase the folder from any location.

Example Folder

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 work 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 Evaluation (Grades)

Grading Scale

Bloom's Level	Expected Mastery	Letter Grade	Grade Range
Creative Synthesis	Grad--PhD	N/A	
Evaluation	Grad--Masters	N/A	
Analysis	Undergrad	A	90-100
Application	Undergrad	B	80-89
Comprehension	High School	C	70-79
Knowledge	High School	D	60-69
Lacks Education		F	0-59

Projected Assignments & Weights

Assignments	Percentage
Quizzes, Homework, Surveys, & Professionalism	10%
Style Exam	10%
Design Case Studies	10%
Resume/Letters of Application	10%
Proposals	15%
Instruction Projects	15%
Feasibility Studies	15%
Individual Projects	15%

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.
- If you are more than 5 minutes late by the technical writing lab clock, you are absent. On the fifth absence, you will receive a WF or F in the course.
- Submit all assignments on time. I do not accept late papers. If you are having trouble completing an assignment, talk with me at least two days before the assignment is due. If you use Turn In 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.
- 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.

Extra Credit

Extra Credit opportunities will pop up in class, and I will offer them when they do. If you miss the opportunity, you will not be able to take the option later.

Late Work

I will **not** accept late assignments for any reason. 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.

Note: **If you are having trouble completing an assignment, talk with me at least 2 days before the assignment is due, so we can ensure you turn your assignment into me on time. On occasion, I will grant extensions, but you must ask at least 48 hours before a major assignment is due.**

Americans with Disabilities Act

In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will cooperate with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to reasonably accommodate you if you quality as a student with a disability. You must register with the ODA, and present your written request to me on or before the fourth day of the semester.

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 will be given an F in the course, and his or her actions will be reported to the Office of Student Right's and Responsibilities—no exceptions.

Attendance Information

The Department of English expects all students to attend class and will consider absences when determining semester grades. I will include your attendance as part of your professionalism grade.

Number of Allowed Absences

At the discretion of the instructor, a student who **has** the following number of absences, may receive a WF or F:

- 7 absences in a class that meets 3 times a week.
- **5 absences in a class that meets 2 times a week.**
- 3 absences in a class that meets 1 time per week or a summer course that meets four times a week.
- 1 absence in a summer class that meets twice a week.

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. *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 or 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.

Student Tardies
- If a student is running late, come to class anyway. Even hearing part of a lecture can help students understand the necessary concept.
- Be quiet and respectful when entering the classroom late. The instructor is probably already teaching, and lateness should not disrupt the lecture.
- If a student is late to class on a day when an assignment was due at the beginning of class, the student will receive a zero on the assignment. I do not take late work.
- Ask another student for notes over what you missed if you are late.
- Speak with the instructor after the lecture if you have a really good reason for being late (accident, emergency of some kind).
- Having to work is never an accepted reason for being late to class.

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, however, the student is then responsible for having all the software needed for the course and for using the software.

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