

ENG 330 Introduction to Technical Writing
Summer II 2008; Credit 3; CID 8467 & 8468

Location: Online
Instructor: Dr. Carroll Ferguson Nardone
Contact Info: cfnardone@shsu.edu
Hours: Open; send e-mail for response within 24 hours. Most often response time will be much shorter.

Course Description

This course, according to the catalog description, will introduce students to the special problems of technical literature and technical report writing. Additionally, students will study and practice formal and informal writing in professional settings. Prerequisite: 6 hours of freshman English.

Drawing on rhetorical theory as its foundation, this course helps students understand the unique features of writing in professional settings and teaches them to analyze situations in order to create effective communication. Students will create documents in a variety of workplace genre, including employment documents, correspondence, and formal technical reports. Students will be expected to work on individual and team projects through Blackboard, and are encouraged to design writing projects reflective of their own disciplines' practices. A large component of this course is teamwork, although most grades are individually earned.

Course Objectives

- Analyze rhetorical components of writing situations.
- Research, design, create and prepare informal and formal documents suitable for the workplace.
- Balance visual and verbal elements of documents.
- Search for and report information.
- Edit documents for accuracy and precision.
- Respond effectively to others' writing.

Required Textbooks and Technology

- Markel, Mike. *Technical Communication*. 8th ed. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007. (ISBN-13: 978-0-312-44197-5)

Available from: [Bedford St. Martin's Publishing](#)

Note: The 8th edition of the Markel text is available as an e-book and in print. I will use the e-book as I teach this fully online course; however, some students have successfully used the print version. Choose whichever best suits your personal learning preferences. If you keep textbooks as workplace references, as many students do, purchase the paperback.

This book is an integral component of the course and students are expected to have access to it from the first day of class. Students will also be able to use web supplements available at the companion website, [TechComm Web](#).

A word about the book: You cannot be successful in this class without reading and using the text as part of our discussions and your writing practices. It is a useful, well-designed document that will help you work through this class; it is loaded with gems. I will refer to it often and will expect you to do the same. In addition to assigned readings, you will be using the text as a handbook to help you format assignments, check for proper language use, and guide your projects. Note the detailed appendices that will help guide your writing and editing. Use the text as your first stop to find answers to questions about the field or about your assignments. If you need further elaboration, feel free to ask me.

- **Internet service and access to Blackboard.** You will access course materials and post all assignments through **Blackboard**, so you will need readily available internet access, preferably high-speed access.

Notes on Technology

Home: If you plan to work on your class from home, you must have DSL or cable modem line to guarantee solid, high-speed access.

Work: If you plan to access the course from work, try connecting now. Some businesses have very rigid settings on their firewalls that do not allow participation in activities such as chat, or the interactivity necessary to take a quiz online. Some companies even block access to BlackBoard.

- **Time Commitment.** The following table estimates the commitment you will have to make to be a successful student in this class. Consider the course requirements and your own responsibilities outside of this class carefully before you decide to continue in the online summer class. Online classes are not for everybody and are often more challenging than face-to-face classes because so much of your work must be accomplished independently and on firm deadlines.

Time Requirements for a 3 Credit-Hour Course, 5-week Summer Term	
2 hrs x4-5 days = 8-10 hrs/week	Hours/day in a classroom per 3 credit-hour course Days per week (5-week summer term) Number of hours "in" class per week
2 hrs x16-18 hrs/week	Recommended minimum hours of preparation per hour in class Minimum preparation time per course
= 24-26 hrs/week	Minimum time allocation per course during a 5-week summer term

Students need to allocate at least 24-26 hours per week for each 3-credit course during a 5-week summer term. Taking two courses during a five-week summer session requires a commitment of 50-52 hours a week. Thus, being a full time student (6 hours in summer) is a full time job.

Class Policies

Attendance

Even though attendance is not a component of the online course, you must be “in attendance” to course requirements every day. Note that some assignments require you to interact with your colleagues. You must be online to do so; thus, your ability to participate fully in this class not only impacts your own grade, but that of your classmates. Please make every attempt to be attentive to the needs of others in completing assignments. You will all be counting on each other.

Exercises, blogs, and other online work may cover material not found in the textbook and are designed to help you do well on your projects. Regular participation is vital to your understanding of the material and to your success in the class.

- Be prepared to take an active role in course discussions, exercises, and workshops.
- Your participation in weekly writing workshops is especially important, both to you and your classmates.
- In all cases, you are responsible for homework assignments, readings, and material covered online or provided in BlackBoard, as well as any changes to the syllabus.

This is not a self-paced class. Although you will not be in a traditional classroom at a set time, you will spend a significant amount of time online each week. In an interactive online course, such as this one, you will attend class and do your readings and course preparation several times a week via the

engage in full “re-visioning” strategies for their assignments will receive an “F” for that assignment.

Plagiarism in any of its forms will not be tolerated and will result in **automatic failure of the course** and university disciplinary action. You should be especially careful when using the Web for your research. Technology allows for easy “borrowing” of ideas and information. However, all intellectual property must be respected. You will be expected to follow proper citation format. We will discuss proper citation format and discuss alternate ways (based on disciplines) of citing material. Feel free to ask questions so that we can discuss this fully and so that you will have no doubt about expectations. We will use Turnitin.com in this class and students will be expected to upload their assignments through the appropriate links.

Late work

No late work will be accepted for any reason.

Exams

We do not have traditional exams in this class. Your final deliverables in each genre serve as the equivalent of an exam.

Grades

Your final grade will be earned according to the following table:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Deliverable</u>	<u>Points</u>
1. Instructions	Instruction Exercise	10
2. Job Portfolio	Resume & Application Letter	15
3. Research Project	Recommendation Report Project	45
	3a. Informal Proposal	10
	3b. Progress Report & Bib.	15
	3c. Final Rec. Report	20
Reading Logs	Blogs	20
Participation	Writing workshops, exercises, tutorials, quizzes	10
<i>Total Points for the Semester</i>		<i>100</i>

Note: Color-coding of deliverables corresponds to calendar activities

Overview of course tasks

Each week you will be required to complete several tasks. In order for you to receive full credit for the weeks' deliverables, you must complete all preparatory work. A successful student will:

- **Read the chapters and use the course support materials** such as flash cards, self-study guides, etc. These will assist you in learning the needed material for each week's activities. Reading assignments are not optional, particularly in an online class. You will be expected to keep up with the reading and to use the information to work through the course. The textbook is full of interactive exercises to help you think through the reading material and implement new ideas. Take full advantage of the resources available online.
- **Blog each week** as directed by the guidelines. Blogs serve an instructive purpose and show that you are engaging with the course material. Actively participating in the blogging activity is your opportunity for class discussion. Because we are a fully online course, your blog posts, along with those of your classmates and instructor, will form a large part of your learning.
- **Draft assignments** as directed. Drafting is an important component of working through written coursework. Writing is a process. Students who actively use the process are more successful than those who skip this step or haphazardly use the process.
- **Workshop drafts** with others in the class. Students are all responsible for posting drafts and responding to drafts of other students. When you respond to the draft of other students, remember to give constructive feedback and to be the kind of reviewer you'd like to have review your own writing.
- **Revise final documents** after you receive peer feedback. The document you turn in for evaluation to your instructor should reflect a revision of your original draft. Thoughtful consideration of peer feedback is expected.
- **Write a completion report** for each assignment. These reports will allow you to give important feedback to your instructor before your document is graded. Your instructor will use this feedback to determine how well you understood course material and how she can assist you in further developing your skills as a writer. Use this component of the course to reflect upon your own learning and to assess your own skills and areas for improvement.
- **Upload your final documents** by the appropriate deadline. The system will only accept documents up until the assigned time. No late work will be accepted, no matter the reason. Documents can always be submitted early, if the need arises.

Academic Honesty All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any

form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Americans with Disabilities Act It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

Religious Holidays Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code. Students are required to file the appropriate paperwork by the semester deadline in order to avail themselves of this particular right.

Tentative Schedule of Topics and Assignments

- The following schedule may be revised or replaced as the term progresses. Watch Blackboard for updates.
- You are responsible for completing and submitting assignments on time.
- Readings are from *Technical Communication*, 8th edition, by Mike Markel (2007).
- Tutorials can be found at [TechComm Web](#)

Week of	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat/Sun
July 8		<p>Read Ch 1, 14, 19</p> <p>Post Blog</p> <p>Learn an advanced feature in Word or Excel, using online help</p>	<p>Read & Respond to 2 Blogs</p> <p>Draft a memo evaluating the instructions and your learning experience (follow specs)</p>	<p>Post draft of instructions memo <i>by 8:00 AM</i></p> <p>Workshop: Peer Review 2 Instruction Memos <i>by 11:55 PM</i></p> <p>Complete Tutorial: <i>Designing Docs w/Word</i></p>	<p>Revise Instructions Memo</p> <p>Submit Instructions Memo on or before 11:55 PM Friday</p>	<p>Read Ch 11, 12, 15</p> <p>Find job ad; Participate in AJR interview; Do BLS analysis--all as directed in instructor blog</p> <p>Post Blog by 11:55 p.m. Sunday</p>
July 14	<p>Read & Respond to 2 Blogs</p> <p>Draft Job Portfolio (read specs carefully)</p>	<p>Post workshop draft <i>by 8:00 AM</i></p> <p>Workshop: Peer Review 2 Job Portfolios <i>by 11:55 PM</i></p>	<p>Revise Job Portfolio</p> <p>Submit Job Portfolio <i>on or before 11:55 PM Wednesday</i></p>	<p>Read Ch 3, 5, 16</p> <p>Post Blog</p> <p>Submit XYZ Statement (via e-mail to instructor)</p>	<p>Read & Respond to 2 Blogs</p> <p>Draft Audience Analysis & Informal Proposal</p>	<p>Complete Tutorial: <i>Evaluating Online Sources</i></p>

Week of	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat/Sun
July 21	<p>Post workshop draft by 8:00 AM</p> <p>Workshop: Peer Review 2 Informal Proposals by 11:55 PM</p> <p>Complete Tutorial: Preparing Effective Charts & Graphics</p>	<p>Revise Informal Proposal</p> <p>Submit Informal Proposal <i>on or before 11:55 PM Tuesday</i></p>	<p>Read Ch 6, 8, 17</p> <p>Post Blog</p> <p>Research</p>	<p>Read & Respond to 2 Blogs</p> <p>Research</p>	<p>Draft Progress Report & Ann. Bib</p>	<p>Work on draft</p>
July 28	<p>Post workshop draft by 8:00 AM</p> <p>Workshop: Peer Review 2 Progress Reports & Annotated Bibs by 11:55 PM</p>	<p>Revise Progress Report</p> <p>Submit Progress Report <i>before 11:55 PM Tuesday</i></p>	<p>Read Ch 10, 13, 18</p> <p>Post Blog</p>	<p>Read & Respond to 2 Blogs</p> <p>Draft Recommendation Report</p>	<p>Work on draft</p>	<p>Work on draft</p>
Aug 4	<p>Post workshop draft by 8:00 AM</p> <p>Workshop: Review 2 Recommendation Report by 11:55 PM</p>	<p>Revise Recommendation Report</p>	<p>Submit Final Recommendation Report in Blackboard on or before 11:55 PM, Wednesday, Aug 6</p>			