

ENGL 3743: PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Instructor: Holly Wells

Course Code: 1348

Room: DeBH 207 (PW&E Lab)

Time/Day: MWF 1:00-1:50

Prerequisite: Completion of English 1551 or equivalent

Text: Markel, Mike. *Technical Communication*. 6th ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.)

Materials: One ZIP disk formatted for PC (Lab 207 computers are 250MB ZIP disk compatible; Lab 251 uses 100MB disks only); 3 1/2" floppy disks, as needed

Contact Your Instructor:

Office: DeBartolo Hall 239

Phone: (330) 742-1633

Office Hours: MWF 12:30-1:00; MW 3-4;

Sat 8:30-9:00 and 11:45-12:30

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Course Objectives

Professional and technical writing instruction is useful for many disciplines:

- ☐ Business: Scientists, engineers, managers, executives, technicians, and administrative personnel are all called upon to write professionally.
- ☐ Education: Teachers, from elementary to higher education, need the ability to communicate professionally.
- ☐ Professional/technical writers: Journalists, copy editors, layout/design artists, copy writers, and other professional writers need a basic overview of professional writing.

Types of professional communication we will learn:

- Letters and memos
- Resumes and cover letters
- Technical/procedural manuals
- Proposals
- PowerPoint presentations
- Web sites

Software we will use:

Microsoft

- Word
- PowerPoint
- FrontPage

Adobe

- PageMaker / Distiller

What we'll be doing:

- Learning to define audience and purpose
- Learning to use the appropriate tone, style, and format for the audience/ purpose
- Designing and editing documents from scratch
- Critically evaluating and revising our own work
- Presenting a selection of work as a Web site

What we'll be reading:

You will read a selection of chapters from Markel's *Technical Communication* text. I will also recommend some supplemental texts for those who plan to continue in the PW&E field. For example:

- An appropriate style manual for your field (in English we use MLA; your field may use another, such as Chicago or APA)
- *PageMaker for Dummies*
- *The Office Bible*
- *The FrontPage Bible*

If these are not available at the bookstore, you may purchase them online at, for example, Amazon.com.

What I require of you, in addition to the assignments:

- Academic honesty
- Good proofreading and editing skills
- Ability to write clearly and logically
- Willingness to learn the software
- Willingness to work with colleagues
- Good attendance

NOTE: Any changes to this syllabus will be given to you both in writing and on the Web site!

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

You are responsible for the material covered in class, whether you show up or not. For the purposes of attendance recording, I make no distinctions between excused and nonexcused absences. Missing more than 25% of classes will result in an automatic F grade for the course. If you have problems outside of class that prevent you from attending 1/4 of the time, there is really no reason you should pass; in fact, you should probably be assessing whether you might need to withdraw for the semester. If you miss class, see a colleague for help catching up.

YSU policy on incomplete grades: You must be passing the course with a C or better and the problem must be out of your control. The instructor determines whether an incomplete is warranted. Incompletes not completed within 1 year automatically revert to an F.

Policy on Late Work:

Rough Drafts MUST be on time, and you must accompany them to class! We will be doing in-class reading and editing of one another's work; you and your draft must be present to participate, or your colleagues will suffer.

Rough drafts that are not turned in on time will not be read, and you may not revise them later, after receiving your final grade.

Final Revisions should be turned in on time; however, you will be able to exercise ONE late option, provided you check with me in advance. Final work may be revised later for a grade provided you turned in your rough draft on time and participated in the editing session that day.

The Forum:

In the hope of experimenting with virtual class meetings, I have created for us an online forum at <http://forums.delphiforums.com/YSUtechcomm/>

You should register for this forum as soon as possible by visiting the above link. The group registration code is YSU3743HW.

As the semester goes on and we spend more time in the workshop format, we may be able to meet once or twice online; this can save some driving time for a few of you. We will discuss the possibilities further during our class meetings. If you have any questions about the forum once you are registered, please post them there. If you have trouble registering, e-mail or call me, and I will help you.

Grading:

In-class work will count for 25% of your grade and will include quizzes and other assignments, to be announced.

Out-of-class work will count for 75% of your grade.

Out-of-class assignments will be weighted as follows:

- Resume/Cover Letter Package: 10%
- Business Memo Package: 10%
- Proposal Package: 10%
- Graphics Package: 10%
- PowerPoint Presentation: 10%
- Instruction Manual: 10%
- Webfolio: 15%

The Assignments:

You will complete a total of six projects, plus a Web portfolio of your best work. Your PowerPoint project will involve presenting and speaking in front of your colleagues; proper business attire is expected for this presentation.

Individual Projects:

- Resume/Cover Letter package
- Business Memo Package
- Proposal Package
- Graphics Package
- PowerPoint presentation

Group Projects:

- Instruction Manual
- Web site w/portfolio

I will provide you with detailed assignment handouts before you start each task.

What Else?

Our class materials, including this syllabus, are available online at my Web site: <http://cc.ysu.edu/~hmwells/>.

The Technical Communication Web site, available at <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/techcomm/>, contains a plethora of helpful materials. We will make extensive use of them during this semester.

And help is always, always just a phone call or e-mail away. Keep in touch!