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ENG 3005-001: Technical Communication

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English 3005: Technical Communication

Fall 2014 | (3 credits)

Instructor: Dr. Terri Fredrick

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Office hours: Tues 11–12; Wed 11–12; Thurs 11–12 and 2–4; other times by appointment

Instructional Objectives

English 3005 focuses on communication (written, oral, and visual) created in professional settings. Particular emphasis is placed on adapting communication to specific audiences and purposes. In addition to teaching new content material, this course is designed to be a professionalizing experience. For this reason, skills such as collaboration, technology use, and independent management of deadlines and policies make up an important part of the course. Specifically, by the end of the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate the following primary objectives:

- **Adapt common genres of technical communication (proposals, progress reports, reports, instructions, etc) to specific audiences, purposes, contexts, and media**
- Critically read and analyze information addressed to readers of differing technical levels
- Use effective collaborative strategies
- Implement basic principles of effective document design
- Use revision and editing to improve your own and others' writing
- Write clear, correct sentences

You will also be asked to demonstrate the following secondary objectives:

- Demonstrate awareness of your own ability to successfully approach, adapt to, and complete new (previously untried) communication situations
- Successfully balance multiple projects and deadlines

Required Materials

- Markel, Mike. *Technical Communication*, 9th edition
- Readings available via D2L

Course Requirements

Portfolio: You will complete many writing assignments—both in-class and for homework—in this class. The majority of these assignments will be evaluated, but not graded. At the conclusion of the semester, you will select from these assignments to create a portfolio that demonstrates your command of the six primary learning objectives.

Instructions: In groups, you will revise and conduct usability testing on a set of instructions.

EIU sustainability project: Throughout the semester, you will work individually and in groups to develop and carry out a project that will present information about EIU's sustainability work to a public audience. As part of your project, you will create individual documents such as a proposal and progress report. You will also co-write a proposal, recommendation report, and presentation with three to four classmates.

Reading Homework: For most reading assignments, I will post questions on D2L. The questions must be answered prior to class time in order to receive credit. You are welcome to use your book as you answer the questions. Note: If class discussions or homework results indicate that students are not completing the reading effectively, I will incorporate quizzes as well, but no one wants that.

Assessment

Assignments will be graded holistically on content, organization, expression, and correctness as adapted to the audience and context for which you are writing. Each assignment will include specific assessment criteria.

Assignment	% grade
Homework	10
Instructions (grp)	10
Portfolio	30
Local-global project	50
(Ind) Proposal	10
(Ind) Progress report	5
(Grp) Project/Completion report	20
(Grp) Presentation	5
(Grp/Ind) Collaboration	10

Note: I reserve the right to make additions and alterations to this assessment breakdown should the need arise. Students will be informed in class and in writing prior to any changes being made.

Attendance:

According to the *Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills* published by the Department of Labor, the number one reason employers cite for firing young, post-collegiate employees is absence and tardiness. Contrary to popular belief, getting out of bed and to work on time does not get easier after graduation, so plan to use this course to practice the professional skill of prompt attendance.

- You may use up to four days of vacation and sick time. Each additional absence will reduce your grade by 2%.
- Missing a class that has been designated a “team meeting” will result in the penalty established by the team in its contract for missed meetings.
- If you must miss a class, you are still responsible for meeting assignment deadlines and completing in-class writing assignments. Submit assignments via the D2L drop box.
- Some activities, such as submitting drafts and peer reviewing others’ work, can impact the grade on an assignment. You should arrange alternate methods for submitting such work when you must be absent.
- If you want to know what you missed in class, talk to a classmate. Assignment sheets and most handouts will be available on D2L.

Deadlines

Due dates for homework and assignments are listed on the course syllabus.

- Reading homework questions (on D2L) must be answered before the start of class time. The questions will disappear at 9:30 am on the day the reading is assigned.
- Drafts and any other homework must be submitted by the beginning of class time on the date listed. Late drafts will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- Unless otherwise noted, graded assignments listed in bold on the syllabus must be submitted by 11:59 pm on the date listed. Late projects will be docked 5% or 2 points (whichever is greater) each day until they are turned in.

Expected Conduct

This class focuses on communicating in professional settings. As in a workplace setting, we have a code of conduct. In addition to your vacation/sick time, note the following course policies:

- Class correspondence (i.e., emails you send to someone in the class, including me) should be written professionally and according to the expectations of the business world. Expect to receive feedback from me on the style, content, and organization of your emails.
- You are expected to convert your documents as necessary to be able to work on them in class. I will give you advice and out-of-class assistance at your request, but I expect you to have a basic understanding of word processing and/or the willingness to spend time out of class learning features of software programs that will improve the appearance of your documents.
- Keep copies of all the work you produce for this class. Don't delete files once you've turned in the assignment.
- Class time is for doing work related to the course. Checking or sending email, surfing the web, using Facebook or instant messenger, text messaging, etc. should be done on your own time.
- All assignments listed on the syllabus must be completed in order to pass the course.
- Academic integrity—Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's [Code of Conduct](#). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards. If you are in doubt of the appropriate way to identify your source, check with me before turning in the assignment.

Writing Intensive Course

Any individually written assignment of 750 words or more may be submitted to the [Electronic Writing Portfolio \(EWP\)](#). If you choose to submit an assignment from this class to the EWP, you must do so **by Thursday, Dec 04**.

Information for Students with Disabilities

Most accommodations may be easily met in this class. If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call (217) 581-6583 to make an appointment.

The Student Success Center / Writing Center

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding

procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call (217) 581-6696, or go to Ninth Street Hall, Room 1302.

Students who would like assistance with writing assignments from this or any other course may go to the Writing Center. The Writing Center works with students from all disciplines, majors, and academic backgrounds at any stage of the writing process. To make an appointment, call (217) 581-5929, or go to Coleman Hall, Room 3110.

ENGLISH 3005: TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

DAILY SYLLABUS

DATE	DUE	IN-CLASS ACTIVITY
Aug 26	Due: D2L post (11:59 p.m.)	Introduction to course; computers Activity: Reading difficult texts
Aug 28	Read: Ch 1; Ch 5	Discuss TC experiences; analyzing audience/purpose Assignment: Revise clock warranty
Sep 02	Read: Michaels and Gore articles	Discuss / analyze articles Activity: Reading critically Introduce: Article analysis assign.
Sep 04	Read: Ch 8; article for analysis assignment	Assignment: Article analysis wkshts
Sep 09	Read: Read pp. 540–557 and McBride article	Discuss definitions / descriptions and ethics Assignment: Munger case 2
Sep 11	Read: Content principles article	Discuss content Assignment: selecting content
Sep 16	Read: Organization principles article	Discuss organization Assignment: bottom-line org
Sep 18	Due: two-page discussion of environmental activism at EIU	Meet with Ryan Siegel Introduce: Local-global project
Sep 23	Read: Ch 16 Due: Local-global project ideas	Discuss proposals Activity: Develop project ideas (p. 115, 1 st three steps)
Sep 25	Read: Ch 10	Discuss tone Assignment: Revising for style
Sep 30	Read: Communicating for Results, Ch 10 Due: Proposal draft	Discuss collaboration Activity: Proposal peer review
Oct 02	Due: Proposal	Assignment: TBA

Oct 07	Read Ch 4	Activity: Form teams, create contracts and task lists
Oct 09	Due: Group contract / revised proposal Read: pp. 464–471	Discuss progress reports Activity: Team meetings
Oct 14		
Oct 16		
Oct 21		
Oct 23		
Oct 28		
Oct 30		
Nov 04		
Nov 06		
Nov 11		
Nov 13		
Nov 18		
Nov 20		
Thanksgiving Break		
Dec 02		
Dec 04		
Dec 09		
Dec 11		
FINAL	Wed, Dec 17, 8 am–10 am	