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ENG 3005-001: Technical Report Writing

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3005-001

Technical Report Writing

English 3005 Spring 2002

Course Description & Policies

Rooms: Coleman 3120/3130

Texts & Materials

Course Goals

Course Format

Requirements

Conferences

Students with Disabilities

R. L. Beebe

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3841F Coleman Hall 581-5013

Office Hours: M,W 10-11:00; 1:15-2:15

Thurs. 10-11:30 & by appointment

Evaluation

Attendance Policy

Submitting Work

Late Work

Revising Your Work

Format for Projects

Plagiarism

Texts & Materials

- Anderson, Paul V. *Technical Writing A Reader-Centered Approach*. 4th ed. Fort Worth, Texas. Harcourt Brace, 1999.
- Hilligoss, Susan. *Visual Communication: A Writer's Guide*. New York, NY: Longman, 2000.
- A good collegiate dictionary
- An e-mail account (if you don't already have one, you should contact User Services in the Student Services Building to activate your student account)
- 2 computer disks (3.5" high-density). You should also have a carrying case for them.
- Drafts of work in progress

Goals

The main goal of this course is simple: to help you develop your writing and communication skills so you can use them as functional and persuasive tools in your chosen career. Learning to understand how the meanings of "functional" and "persuasive" may differ from document to document—often quite dramatically—will be a significant part of our discussions. Therefore, each writing project will not only stress the broader concerns of writing (such as, clarity of purpose, development of ideas, invention and sentence strategies), but will also introduce you to strategies of document design, audience accommodation, and visual rhetoric. In addition, this course will serve as an introduction to web publishing and the many complexities and possibilities for technical writing therein.

Some Tips on How to Succeed in this Course:

1. Check the course WebCT site daily for updates, for messages from classmates, and for other resources and tips that I will be posting throughout the semester.
2. Follow instructions carefully and explicitly.
3. Turn in your work on time.

4. Do your share of the work in group assignments.

5. Allow time to revise & proofread your work.

Course Format

CLASS MEETINGS:

Most of the course (approximately 60-70%) will take place in an on-line environment; the remainder will be in the traditional classroom. We'll be using WebCT (an on-line course environment) to help facilitate the on-line portion. While this format will no doubt help alleviate the drudgery of rolling out of bed for an 8:00 am class, it will also increase your responsibility to check WebCT daily for new material and to stay current with your writing duties.

For the first two weeks of class, we'll meet in the classroom to help familiarize you with WebCT and with the expectations of the course.

The course schedule indicates when we will be meeting in the classroom. PLEASE NOTE: this schedule is subject to change and any changes will be posted on WebCT. It is your responsibility to note any changes in meeting times. (See Attendance Policy below.)

REAL WORLD SCENARIO: In order to give a rhetorical structure to the writing projects and to help you appreciate the demands of writing in the real world, you will assume that you're working for a large engineering and manufacturing firm called TCI – Technical Communications, Inc.. You name it—TCI does it.

In the first writing project, you'll be applying for a management position and will need to demonstrate your expertise in a field of study and your ability to supervise employees and communicate effectively. The remaining writing projects—including brief writing assignments—will all be structured around some aspect of working for TCI.

Your job performance will be based on how well you handle the writing tasks given to you—that is, how effectively you complete the task; how well you respond to the rhetorical situation of each task; your punctuality in completing your work, and how well you work with your colleagues.

To understand how your overall job performance (your final grade) will be assessed, see Requirements below.

Requirements

To pass the course, you must satisfactorily complete ALL major writing projects in sequence. Failure to complete and submit a major writing project will result in a failing grade for the semester. Your final grade will be determined according to the following breakdown of points (500 total points):

Writing Projects

1. Job Application Packet	50 points
2. Description & Analysis Document	60 points
3. Proposal	60 points
4. Instruction Manual	60 points
5. Final Project	170 points
	400 points
Other Writing Activities (see MTP below)	100 points
	500 points

Management Training Program (MTP)

In addition to the major writing projects, you will also be asked to complete several minor writing tasks as part of TCI's Management Training Program. These tasks will vary in scope and serve to reinforce good writing skills or some concept at work in the major writing project you are currently completing. All tasks for the MTP are due strictly on the date indicated. THEY MAY NOT BE TURNED IN LATE FOR ANY REASON.

Evaluation

Each time we begin a new project, I will spell out explicitly the grading criteria for each particular project. Usually, the criteria will emphasize particular concepts that we have been discussing in the writing project. However, superior papers are always those that express purpose clearly, that are well-designed (in respect to format and overall look), and that are stylistically polished.

Since we will be following the idea of "writing as a process"—the idea that good writing comes from a continual rethinking of form, content, and audience—it is important that you begin the writing for each project as quickly as possible, so that you can identify weaknesses and smooth them out before the final draft is due.

Attendance Policy

You need to attend every scheduled class session. Since we won't be meeting much in the traditional classroom, attendance is especially critical. ~~More than 3 unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.~~

Submitting Your Work

You may submit an assignment on time in any one of three ways:

1. Submitting it in class on the due date (if we are meeting as a class on that day).
2. Turning it in to me (or in my mailbox, CH 308) by 4:30 p.m. on the day it is due.
3. Sending it to me via an e-mail attachment on the day it is due.

You may, of course, turn in the assignment before the scheduled due date.

Plagiarism

I abide by the English Department's policy on plagiarism which is as follows:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language

If you are not clear about what plagiarism is or are not sure how to handle source material for any paper

Late Assignments

A late assignment must be accompanied by a persuasive cover memo that explains why it is late. The

Please talk to me in advance of the due date if you have some kind of difficulty in completing the paper

Conferences

If you are having any problems with a paper, I encourage you to come by and see me during my office hours or make an appointment (581-5013) for a more convenient time. I will be more than happy to talk any number of times about a single paper or particular writing problem.

Writing-Intensive Course

English 3005 is a Writing-Intensive course. You may use a document from this course to meet part of the requirements for the Electronic Writing Portfolio. Please see me for more information.

Student with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.