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## ENG 3005-002: Technical Communication

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## ENGLISH 3005: TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Instructor: Dr. Terri Fredrick  
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 Office hours: MTWF 11–12; Other MTWF times by appointment

### INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

English 3005 focuses on communication (written, oral, and visual) created within 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. Specific objectives for this class are as follows:

- Critically read and analyze information addressed to readers of differing technical levels
- Develop the ability to adapt communication to specific audiences, purposes, and contexts
- Identify and create generic forms of technical communication (proposals, progress reports, reports, instructions, etc)
- Develop and use effective collaborative strategies
- Develop awareness of your own ability to successfully approach, adapt to, and complete new (previously untried) communication situations
- Learn and implement basic principles of effective document design
- Develop strategies to balance multiple projects and deadlines

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Markel, Mike. *Technical Communication*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition
- Three readings available online or as handouts
- Suggested: the lab requires USB “thumb” drives (also known as “jump” or “flash” drives) for data storage. Please consider buying one.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Article Analysis:** You will choose, read, and analyze an article. You will write a memo discussing the document’s audience, purpose, and context as well as the techniques used by the writers.

**Instructions:** You will create a set of brief instructions telling a user how to put an object together.

**Design project:** You will create a data display of charts, graphs, and tables to represent information most effectively for a target audience.

#### Resume

**Local global impact reduction project:** Throughout the semester, you will work individually and in groups to develop and carry out a project for addressing a global environmental concern (global warming, water conservation, etc) at the EIU or local community level. As part of your project, you will create individual documents such as a feasibility report, proposal, and progress report. You will also co-write a proposal, recommendation report, and presentation with three to four classmates.

600-2008

**Reading Homework:** For each reading assignment, I will post questions on WebCT. 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. A more detailed breakdown of points can be found under the assignments links.

Assignment	% grade
<b>Homework</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Article Analysis</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Instructions</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Design Project</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Resume</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Local global project</b>	<b>60</b>
(Ind) Preliminary ideas	3
(Ind) Feasibility report	5
(Ind) Proposal	7
(Grp) Revised proposal	5
(Ind) Progress report	5
(Grp) Recommendation report	15
(Grp) Presentation	5
(Grp) Record-keeping	5
(Grp) Overall project success	5
(Ind) Contributions to group	5

**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.

#### WRITING CENTERED COURSE

You should consider submitting an essay written for this class to the Electronic Writing Portfolio or EWP. Please visit the following web address for information on the submission process: <[www.eiu.edu/~assess/electronic\\_writing\\_portfolio1.htm](http://www.eiu.edu/~assess/electronic_writing_portfolio1.htm)>. The course deadline for EWP submissions is Monday, December 03, 2007.

#### ATTENDANCE:

Your presence in class is expected; failure to attend class regularly will result in a reduction in your grade. To be more specific:

- You have 200 minutes (4 class periods) of vacation/sick time to use as you choose. Beginning with the fifth absence, each absence will lower your final course grade by 3%.

- 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.
- **Eight absences will result in a failing grade in the course.**
- One-time tardiness of more than 10 minutes or frequent tardiness of five minutes or more will result in a reduction of your available vacation/sick time.
- Dates represented on the syllabus with an asterisk represent workshop days where you may choose whether to work in or out of class (I will be present in the classroom to work with individuals or groups on these dates). Should you choose to work from home on a date with an asterisk, you do not need to count this as an absence.

### **EXPECTED CONDUCT**

This class focuses on communicating in professional settings. In a workplace setting, certain types of conduct would be expected and outlined in a code of conduct. We have one here, too. In addition to your vacation/sick time, pay attention to 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.
- 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 multiple 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 major assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.
- Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. According to English Department policy, “any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism...has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.” If you are in doubt of the appropriate way to identify your source, check with me before turning in the assignment.
- Late assignments will be docked 5% each day until they are turned in. Reading homework may not be submitted once class has begun. The daily syllabus and WebCT calendar list all due dates for assignments. You are responsible for keeping track of any deadlines.

If you find you cannot abide by the conduct code for some reason, deal with the problem as you would in the workplace—professionally, courteously, and in advance.

### **INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Most accommodations may be easily met in this class. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

# ENGLISH 3005: TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

## DAILY SYLLABUS

White rows = Coleman Hall 3210 (computer lab); Yellow rows = Coleman Hall 3140

DATE	DUE	IN-CLASS ACTIVITY
Aug 20	Due: WebCT post (11:59 p.m.)	Introduction to course; computers
Aug 22	Read: Ch 1; pages 354-357	Class: Discuss TC experiences Groups: Exercise page 13, #3
Aug 24	Read Ch 5; pgs 31-35	Class: Discuss writing process; analyzing audience/purpose
Aug 27	Read: Ch 8	Class: Discuss persuasive comm.
Aug 29	Read: Gore chapter (handout)	Class: Discuss article; watch film
Aug 31	Read: Michaels article (del.icio.us)	Class: Discuss articles; assign article analysis
Sep 03	No School	
Sep 05	Read: article (del.icio.us)	Class: Discuss articles
Sep 07	Due: Article analysis	Class: Discuss local-global project
Sep 10	Due: Local-global project ideas Read: pgs 455-463	Groups/Ind: Develop project ideas Class: Discuss feasibility reports
Sep 12	Read: Ch 6; pgs 352-353	Class: Discuss research; memos Ind: Draft feasibility report
Sep 14*		Ind: Draft feasibility report
Sep 17	Due: Feasibility report Read: Ch 16	Class: Discuss/assess group work
Sep 19	No class -- CONFERENCES	
Sep 21*		Ind: Draft proposal
Sep 24	Bring complete proposal draft	
Sep 26	Due: Proposal Read: Ch 4	Class: Discuss collaboration
Sep 28	Due: Proposal ratings (TUES midnight)	Class: Select projects; form teams
Oct 01		Groups: Team meeting
Oct 03*		Groups: Team meeting
Oct 05		Groups: Team meeting
Oct 08	Due: Revised group proposal; team contract; task breakdown; team wiki	Groups: Team meeting
Oct 10	Read: pgs 497-509	Class: Discuss instruction writing; assign instructions assignment



Oct 12		Class: Instructions activities Group: Team meeting (20 min)
Oct 15	Read: pgs 521–523 Due: Instructions draft (x3)	Class: Discuss usability testing Groups: Test/review instructions
Oct 17	Read: Ch 12	Class: Discuss document design
Oct 19	Due: Instructions	Class: Document design activities
Oct 22	Read: pgs 438–437	Class: Discuss progress reports Groups: Team meeting
Oct 24	Read: Ch 13	Class: Discuss graphic design
Oct 26	Due: Global-local progress report (A)	Class: Graphic design activity; assign document/graphic design
Oct 29		Ind: Create design project
Oct 31*		Ind: Create design project Groups: Team meeting
Nov 02*		Ind: Create design project Groups: Team meeting
Nov 05	Due: Global-local progress report (B) Due: Design project	Class: Discuss reports Groups: Outline report
Nov 07		Groups: Draft report
Nov 09	Due: Draft of intro, background, methods (4–5 copies)	Class: Review report drafts
Nov 12	Read: Ch 15 Bring: Most recent resume	Class: Discuss resume/cover letter
Nov 14	Due: Global-local progress report (C)	Ind: Draft resume Groups: Draft report
Nov 16*		Ind: Draft resume Groups: Draft report
<b>Thanksgiving Break – No School</b>		
Nov 26	Due: Resume Read: Ch 21	Class: Discuss oral presentations Group: Draft report
Nov 28	Due: Draft of report (4–5 copies)	Class: Review report drafts
Nov 30*	Due: Global-local progress report (D)	Group: Revise report/plan presentation
Dec 03*		Group: Revise report/plan presentation
Dec 05	Due: Global-local reports	Team presentations
Dec 07	Due: Global-local reports	Team presentations
FINAL		Time and Location TBA