

ENG 4345 - Topics in Professional Writing

Technical Writing & Audience Appeal

Basic Information:

Instructor Name	TBA
E- Mail	
Home Institution	
Office	TBA
Office Hours	TBA, and by appointment

Course Description:

This course is a senior-level topics course within the writing track of the English major offered by the Department of Languages & Literature. This section is offered online, with an emphasis on technical writing genres and audience appeal. Students will gain a broad knowledge of best practices in writing for industry and business, with a focus on audience appeal, genre specifications, and design elements. Students will apply what they learn by blending verbal, written, and multimodal affordances to reach audiences in domains of technical communication. Assignments include technical descriptions, process analyses, proposals, recorded presentations in Prezi and Powerpoint with audio voiceover, feasibility studies, reports, and a professional dossier.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this course students will be able to:

Course Objectives

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts and best practices in technical communication (verbal, written, and multimodal).
2. Produce writing that demonstrates genre specifications within the field of professional writing.
3. Apply their understanding of technical writing principles to personal, academic, and professional domains.
4. Recognize, understand, and respect the complexity of the communication dynamic within industry, business, and non-profit organizations.
5. Develop insight into audience analysis as a rhetorical strategy for reaching readers and listeners.
6. Revise, edit, and proofread for professional quality in technical documents.

Entrance Competencies:

Students are expected to know how to use a computer and web browser, to use a google account for youtube uploads and for google chat, to use Blackboard for course responsibilities, to use Powerpoint and/or Prezi as presentation tools, to communicate with their professor and classmates as scheduled on the online syllabus, to send and receive university

e-mail, to attach documents in e-mail, to use appropriate professionalism in the discussion forum, and to manage their own time wisely to research and plan projects as expected of upper-level students.

Required Course Materials:

Textbook	Edition	Author	Publisher	ISBN-10
Technical Communication: Process and Product	8th Edition	Sharon J. Gerson and Steven M. Gerson	Pearson	0-321-86494-8
Link to e-book purchase address: https://www.amazon.com/Technical-Communication-Process-Product-8th/dp/0321864948/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1508308940&sr=8-1&keywords=technical+communication+process+and+product+8th				

IMPORTANT NOTE: Procedure—in other words, “how we roll” in this course, to establish consistency. You will complete SIX MAJOR PROJECTS while reading and applying over FOURTEEN textbook chapters. I have created a simple, easy-to-follow process that will help you manage your work. For each of the SIX PROJECTS, you may follow these 8 steps:

- 1) READ**
- 2) TAKE A QUIZ**
- 3) POST IN DISCUSSION BOARD**
- 4) PROPOSE TOPIC TO PROFESSOR**
- 5) RESEARCH**
- 6) DRAFT THE PROJECT**
- 7) TRADE PAPERS, REVIEW, REVISE, EDIT, PROOFREAD**
- 8) FINAL TURN-IN**

Course Requirements:

A. Assignments

To fulfill the course requirements, students must complete the following assignments:

1. **Quizzes** - Students will complete “quiz & apply” tests based on chapter readings that are relevant to writing projects. Quizzes will be available for a limited time. Once quizzes are past their deadlines, you may take them, but with a -50 grade penalty (still better than a zero).

2. **WRITING PROJECTS** - There are FIVE writing projects in this senior-level course. Your professor has developed hybrid genres for projects to allow students to demonstrate more than one skill and to practice thinking critically about choices in content, graphic design, and audience need. For example, one project is a proposal by genre but challenges students to use voiceover and Prezi or Powerpoint to deliver the proposal after research, drafting, and planning. Projects will be penalized -10 for each day of the week that they are late, up to 3 days, after which they will no longer be accepted and will be recorded as a zero.

3. Group Discussions - Students will use email, Blackboard, and text messaging to maintain group discussion. Students earn daily grades for each required participation in discussion. *Late discussions will not earn credit.*

- **“Talk Time” with your Professor**—This is part of my “OnlinePlus” approach. Students will receive one-on-one guidance from the professor on topic generation, research, development, design, and even grammar/editing concerns! Use your professional etiquette and text or call between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. as stated on the syllabus.
- **Peer Review in Small Groups**—In the GROUPS feature, you will find a group designation in which you can post and review documents in the “FILE EXCHANGE” feature. Join classmates in peer review of each major project. As a writer, you’ll receive feedback from at least two colleagues. As a reviewer, you will provide specific feedback for colleagues in the group. Please remember to check “NEXT PAGE” in the file exchange feature (I wish Blackboard posted newest on top, but it doesn’t, so you have to click forward to see all drafts posted)

B. Submitting and Grading Assignments

Deadlines for all assignments are set on the course calendar before the course begins. All assignments are due on or before the scheduled due date by **11:59pm CST**. Whereas students may submit completed assignments early, **late assignments will be penalized -10 per day for up to 5 calendar days, after which they will not be accepted.** Quizzes will be submitted either within the Blackboard course management system or email. Students should review and proofread their discussion posts before posting them in the discussion forum.

C. Absence Policy & Participation

In order to succeed in this course, students must actively participate. Active participation consists of logging into our course at a minimum of 5 times per week during a session. Please understand that you have committed to a senior-level course that gives you flexibility to fit your busy life, but demands responsibility and accountability on your part. When a student has missed three due dates without contacting the instructor, the student may be dropped from the class roll by the instructor of the class. For more details, please read the absence policy in the undergraduate [catalog](#).

Course Hours:

The course has 17 class sessions , a 5-hour field trip and four 80-minute after-class discussion. Each class session is 160 minutes in length. The course normally meets from Monday to Friday. This course has a total of 66 contact hours including a final exam. Final exams are scheduled on July 27, 2019.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Week	Session	Day	Topic (s)	Chapter(s)
Week 1	July 4	Th	School Orientation	
	July 5	F	INTRO & PROJECT 1: Technical Description & Process Analysis	READ Chapters 1, 2, and 13, with special emphasis on Chapter 13 for help with Project 1 decisions. —Intro to Tech Writing & Communication Process
	July 5	F	After-class Discussion	

	18:40-20:00			
	July 6	Sat		UPLOAD "QUIZ & APPLY" ANSWERS to Chapter 1, 2, & 13 test
Week 2	July 8	M		POST DRAFT TO discussion board for PEER REVIEW PROCESS.
	July 9	T	FINISHING PROJECT 1 AND COMPLETING PROJECT 2	RESPOND TO YOU ALL OF YOUR CLASSMATES' DRAFTS WITH AT LEAST 5 SPECIFIC COMMENTS using the assignment requirements outlined in the assignment guidelines
	July 10	W		Final Copy of Project #1 DUE BEGIN PROJECT 2: DOSSIER
	July 11	Th		READ Chapter 7—Routine Correspondence
	July 11 18:40-20:00	Th	After-class Discussion	
	July 12	F		READ Chapter 9—The Job Search & POST in Discussion Board UPLOAD "QUIZ & APPLY" answers to Chapter 7 & 9 test
Week 3	July 15	M	FINISHING PROJECT 2 AND PLANNING PROJECT 3	READ CHAPTER 6--Research
	July 16	T		READ CHAPTER 16—Short, Informal Reports UPLOAD "QUIZ & APPLY" ANSWERS to Chapter 6 & 16 test
	July 17	W	FINISHING PROJECT 3 AND PLANNING PROJECT 4	Final Copy of Project #3 report uploaded PROJECT 4: PROPOSAL
	July 18	Th		READ CHAPTER 8—Social Media
	July 18 18:40-20:00	Th	After-class Discussion	
	July 19	F	Field Trip (5 hours)	National Museum of China National Museum of China is the top palace of history and art in China displaying China's excellent traditional culture which has lasted for 5,000 years.
Week 4	July 22	M		READ CHAPTER 18—Proposals

July 23	T		READ CHAPTER 19—Oral Presentations
July 24	W	FINISHING PROJECT 4 AND COMPLETING PROJECT 5	Final Copy of Project #4 uploaded PROJECT 5: TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION REFLECTION ESSAY
July 25	Th		READ CHAPTER 12 (Persuasion) AND CHAPTER 15 (Online Help)
July 25 18:40-20:00	Th	After-class Discussion	
July 26	F	PROJECT 6: PROBLEM-SOLUTION PORTFOLIO PROJECT	REVIEW CAREFULLY THE LIST OF PROBLEM-SOLUTION SCENARIOS PROVIDED BY PROFESSOR. (You will choose 10 from this list for your final exam!)
July 27	Sat		BEGIN WRITING YOUR RESPONSES TO THE 10 PROBLEM-SOLUTION SCENARIOS YOU CHOOSE <u>now!!</u> This portfolio of problem-solution writing is your <u>final exam</u> , and you have an opportunity to do well if you space out your writing sessions over a few days and enjoy the work of demonstrating critical thinking through your answers!

Evaluation & Grading

Requirements	Possible Points & relevant chapters	% of course grade	Grading Scale
Quizzes, Discussion Posts, draft reviews, and editing exercises:	10 POINTS each adding up to 100 possible points		100 POINTS
Project 1: Technical Description and Process Analysis	100 POINTS Chapters 1, 2, 13,+10 &11 skim		100 POINTS
Project 2: Dossier: letter, resume, personal statement, editing document, and 2-minute vesome (video)	200 POINTS		200 POINTS

Project 3: Recommendation report (feasibility study)	200 POINTS Chapter 6 and 16		200 POINTS
Project 4: Proposal (using Prezi/Powerpoint and Voiceover)	100 POINTS Chapter 8,18 and 19		100 POINTS
Project 5: Technical Writing Reflection Essay (4 pp, inc. 3 scholarly articles used)	100 POINTS Chapter 12 and 15		100 POINTS
Project 6: FINAL EXAM Problem-Solution Portfolio (choices provided by professor; student chooses 10 problem-solution scenarios from list)	200 POINTS Final exam grade		200 POINTS
TOTAL			1000 POINTS

Grade Distribution:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Points
100-90	A	4.0
80-89	B	3.0
70-79	C	2.0
60-69	D	1.0
59 or below	F	0.0

University Policies:

A. Academic Integrity

Students should read the current Texas Wesleyan University Catalog and Student Handbook to become familiar with University policies. These policies include but are not limited to grade appeal, sexual harassment, student access to records, and others; policies specified in the current [catalog](#) are applicable unless otherwise stated in this syllabus.

Cheating, plagiarism (submitting another person's material as one's own), or completing assignments for another person who will receive academic credit are impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notebooks, or other sources in order to secure or give help during an examination, the unauthorized copying of examinations, assignments, reports, or term papers, or the presentation of unacknowledged material as if it were

the student's own work. Disciplinary action may be taken beyond the academic discipline administered by the course instructor.

B. American's with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Texas Wesleyan University adheres to a disability policy which is in keeping with relevant federal law. The University will provide appropriate accommodation as determined by the Director of the Counseling Center, Dr. Michael Ellison. Students must notify instructors of any permanent or temporary disabilities and must provide documentation regarding those disabilities prior to the granting of an accommodation. For assistance, students should consult with [Dr. Ellison](#), who may be reached at (817) 531-7565.

C. Computer Use Policy

Students may fulfill course requirements by using their own computers or by using the University's lab computers. Students are responsible for having and using reliable technologies to fulfill course requirements. Assignments missed due to student technical problems (e.g., ISP connection, memory, modem speed, connection traffic, etc.) may NOT be made up. Blackboard WORKS.

Note: Course syllabi are intended to provide students with basic information concerning the course. The syllabus can be viewed as a 'blueprint' for the course; changes in the syllabus can be made and students will be informed of any substantive changes concerning examinations, the grading or attendance policies and changes in project assignments.