

SPRING 2019 ♦ ENGL 2311-1000 ♦ TECHNICAL & BUSINESS WRITING

INSTRUCTOR: Janene Amyx Davison
OFFICE: N-322
OFFICE HOURS: M/W: 11am-12:30pm
T/Th: 9:30-11:30am
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Welcome to ENGL 2311, Technical and Business Writing, which I prefer to call Technical Communication (or Tech Comm). I look forward to working with you this semester to enhance your writing and communication skills. Tech Comm is a writing and design course. By the end of this semester you will have learned about best practices in graphic design, document design, and web design - all with an eye toward accomplishing specific objectives for a Galveston non-profit client. Through client-based assignments, your schoolwork will be achieving real good in our community and you'll see how our course's skills can be applied in the world around us. I also hope this will make your class experience more meaningful.

I come into this course with a Master's degree in Communications, an in-progress PhD in Technical Communication, a professional background in advertising and medical communication, and over a decade of higher-education teaching experience. But above all else, I am a big nerd who loves learning new things. I look forward to learning with you this semester as we tackle new challenges for our client!

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Intensive study of and practice in professional settings. Focus on the types of documents necessary to make decisions and take action on the job, such as proposals, reports, instructions, policies and procedures, e-mail messages, letters, and descriptions of products and services. Practical individual and collaborative processes involved in the creation of ethical and efficient documents.

TEXTBOOK

Markel, M. & Selber, S. (2019). *Practical strategies for technical communication: A brief guide* (3rd Ed.). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Analyze the audience, purpose, and context of technical communication projects, including cultural and ethical considerations
- Create technical documents of varied genres to solve practical problems
- Write effective technical prose
- Create documents and graphics using principles of effective information design
- Collaborate on technical communication projects
- Critically evaluate and choose technologies and tools that are appropriate for technical communication projects.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Grades in this course are based on achievement and mastery of an assignment's required competencies. While you should put forth your best effort on every assignment, final grades do not reflect effort. Rather, final grades will be determined by your mastery of the contents, skills, or knowledge outlined in each assignment grading rubric. Making a good grade in Tech Comm is less about flawless design, and more about organization and knowledge put into practice. Listen in class,

take good notes, review the assignments carefully, and ask questions if you don't understand something. I expect nothing less than your full effort on every assignment, but you have to work smart too. Graded course assignments are as follows:

Assignment	Points
Infographic introductions	100 pts.
Rhetorical analysis project	100 pts.
Instructions project	100 pts.
Job application packet	150 pts.
Class Activities	100 pts.
Semester Applied Project:	
Project proposal	150 pts.
Progress memo	50 pts.
Project deliverable	150 pts.
Final presentation	100 pts.
TOTAL POINTS:	1,000 pts.

I use the Canvas grade book, so you can keep up with your grades. On a point system you can calculate your grade by dividing your cumulative points against the possible points, and then multiply that by 100. So if you have 475 points out of 600 possible points:

$$475/600=0.7916 \times 100 = 79.16$$

With a thousand point scale, points translate to the following letter grades at the conclusion of the semester.

A = 900 to 1,000 pts.

B = 800 to 899 pts.

C = 700 to 799 pts.

D = 600 to 699 pts.

F = 0 to 599 pts.

COURSE OUTLINE

DATE	MATERIAL WE'LL BE COVERING:	ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:
Week 1 Tuesday, 1/22	<i>What is technical communication and when will you ever use it?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to tech comm. (Ch. 1) 	
Week 2 Tuesday, 1/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating Graphics (Ch. 8) Oral presentations (Ch. 15) 	<u>Thursday, 1/31:</u> Infographic introductions due (100 pts.)
Week 3 Tuesday, 2/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing and designing for an audience & situation (Ch. 6) 	
Week 4 Tuesday, 2/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethical communication (Ch. 2) 	<u>Thursday, 2/14:</u> Rhetorical analysis project due (100 pts.)
Week 5 Tuesday, 2/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing descriptions and instructions (Ch. 14) 	
Week 6 Tuesday, 2/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applying for a job (Ch. 10) 	<u>Tuesday, 2/26:</u> Instructions project due (100 pts.)

Week 7 Tuesday, 3/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corresponding in print and online (Ch. 9) Select groups and topics for research projects 	<u>Thursday, 3/7:</u> Job application packets due (150 pts.)
3/11-3/15	<i>Spring Break</i>	
Week 8 Tuesday, 3/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal writing & writing collaboratively (Ch. 3 & 11) 	Midterm grade conferences
Week 9 Tuesday, 3/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document design (Ch. 7) 	
Week 10 Tuesday, 4/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> User research (Ch. 5) 	<u>Thursday, 4/4:</u> Project proposals due (150 pts.)
Week 11 Tuesday, 4/9	Special topics (application projects): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media Web design Newsletters Video production 	
Week 12 Tuesday, 4/16	Special topics continued	<u>Tuesday, 4/16:</u> Progress reports due (150 pts.)
Week 13 Tuesday, 4/23	Special topics continued and group work time	
Week 14 Tuesday, 4/30	Group work time	
Week 15 Tuesday, 5/7	Course wrap-up	<u>Tuesday, 5/7:</u> Project deliverable due (150 pts.)
Week 16-ish Thursday, 5/9	Final exams in progress	<u>Thursday, 5/9 @ 1:00pm</u> Project presentations (100 pts.)

REVISING ASSIGNMENTS

Most major assignments may be revised and resubmitted. In these instances, your initial grade(s) may be increased based on quality of revision. I will not lower grades for revised assignments. No assignment may be formally revised more than once, and all revisions must be submitted within 14 calendar days after receipt of initial grade. No revisions are possible on the final reflective assignments or oral presentations.

To submit a revised assignment:

- Review feedback left on Canvas by the instructor
- (Optional) E-mail, attend office hours, or set up an appointment with the instructor if there are any questions or concerns on feedback.
- Prepare a memo that details what was changed from the original assignment to the submitted revision.
- Submit to the instructor your memo, the revised assignment and the original assignment.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute which provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with documented

disabilities be guaranteed reasonable accommodation for those disabilities. If you believe that you have a disability requiring such accommodation, please contact the Galveston College Counseling Center or call (409) 944-1223.

LGBT+ SUPPORT

I identify as an ally to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender + community, and I am available to listen and support you in an affirming manner. I can assist in connecting you with resources on campus to address problems you may face pertaining to sexual orientation and/or gender identity that could interfere with your success at Galveston College.

EMAIL ACCOUNTS AND COMPUTER ACCESS

Please obtain a Whitecaps email account by the first class day. However, it is my preference that you email me through Canvas. Canvas email accounts can be set-up to forward to another email account (go to your Canvas Account and see Settings and Notifications). You will need computer and internet access for this course. This access may be through the campus computer labs, library, or a home computer.

Galveston College provides computer resources for the purpose of accomplishing tasks related to the mission of the college. Authorized users are allowed to use the college's computer resources for school related and incidental purposes, subject to the College's Computer Use policy and other applicable college policies, and state and federal law. For additional information concerning the College's computer usage policy and/or procedures, please consult the Galveston College Catalog and/or Student Handbook.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend all lectures and laboratory periods, and an accurate record of each student's class attendance is kept by each instructor for the duration of the course. Any student, who misses 10% of the total clock hours of instruction not excused by the instructor may be withdrawn from class by the instructor with a grade of "AWN." Students are expected to report to class on time. At the discretion of the instructor, tardiness may be treated the same as an absence and the Awn policy may be applied. If an Awn is processed before a student completes the drop procedures, the "AWN" will become the grade of record. The student, instructor, and financial aid office will receive copies of the Awn form. Programs with special attendance requirements mandated by local, state, or national accrediting or professional agencies will observe the agency attendance requirements which affect student certification, registry, or licensure, as well as those of the College. All special attendance requirements must be approved in writing by the Vice President of Instruction. Successful completion of this course requires regular attendance. At the beginning of each class I take roll, review upcoming due dates, make announcements, and provide homework reminders. Students who arrive late are responsible for checking with me to make sure they are counted present, and for checking with a classmate to catch up on missed notes. Excessive lateness or leaving class early may count toward absences. To prevent getting dropped from class, come to class. But, if you meet any of the following conditions, you may be dropped from the course at my discretion: Students who miss a major assignment (counting for 10% -- 100 points -- or more of your grade) and fail to discuss it with the instructor; Students who have more than 3 absences by the Awn date; I am not quick to drop students, and typically reserve Awns for students who regularly fail to attend class without any communication. It is the responsibility of the student to contact me as soon as possible if unable to complete an assignment or attend class due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances. Students should expect to spend about 4-6

hours per week on the course outside of class including reading the chapters and working on individual and group projects.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student is charged with the responsibility of maintaining scholastic integrity. When written assignments require excerpts from material published by others, the student must give full credit to the author to avoid the possibility of plagiarism. For more information refer to "Students Rights and Responsibilities section (F) Student Code of Conduct." Any student violation of scholastic integrity for plagiarism or cheating falls properly within the realm of student/faculty relations and is subject to a faculty recommendation to the college administration for loss of credit for a particular assignment, examination, or unit of work; failure in a course; or, dismissal from the college.

INCOMPLETE POLICY

An Incomplete (I) is a contract between the instructor and the student, provided for students who have emergency situations that render them unable to complete the class on schedule. Students do not have to reenroll to complete the course (or repay tuition/fees). However, incompletes will not be given unless requested by the student, and then only granted at the discretion of the instructor. Typically, a student must have completed at least 75% of the course work to be considered for an incomplete. After the filing has been accepted, it is the student's responsibility to complete future coursework as required. If coursework is not completed within the required time frame, then the Incomplete will revert to a failing grade (F).

LATE WORK

In this class we will be producing real work for a real client, and therefore missing deadlines is unacceptable unless there is a true emergency that interferes with your ability to get the job done. In the professional world missed deadlines result in lost money, lost business, and maybe lost jobs. So make every effort to turn in your work on time, and communicate with me if deadlines are unrealistic. Assignments turned in after the due date will be accepted on a case-by-case basis, but you must contact me as soon as possible. Unless there are extreme circumstances late work will receive a 20% reduction in points. If you miss a major assignment and do not contact me within 2 working days of the due date, I reserve the right to drop you from the course (AWN). See the "Attendance Policy" portion of this syllabus for other droppable offenses.

LIBRARY

If you plan to use the Galveston College library or computer lab to access online material, please pay attention to library (LRC) hours. It currently has limited hours most weekends, and is closed on holidays.

You should log into Canvas the first week of class. Canvas is Galveston College's online learning management system used for administering course resources. Through Canvas you can access a detailed course schedule, assignments, and other tools to help you be successful in the class. Access to Canvas is generally not available any sooner than the first class day, and students who register late will be loaded into Canvas periodically throughout late registration. Use the Canvas link on the right-hand column of www.gc.edu to log into Canvas. If you have log-in or password problems, please contact the IT Help Desk at (409) 944-1352 or helpdesk@gc.edu.

The best way to reach me is via Canvas email. It is checked several times a day during the week and usually once over the weekend. If you really need to reach me fast then you can call or text my mobile phone. I respond to texts more promptly than voicemails though not always immediately. I'll get back to you as soon as I conveniently can! Office: N-322 Work Phone: (409) 944-1329 Mobile Phone: (409) 276-5394 - texts preferred