

English 3330: Introduction to Technical Writing

Spring 2017, Section 24. Online (3 Credit Hours)

Prerequisites: ENGL 1301 & 1302.

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Office Hours	Virtual (through Blackboard) In-person by appointment

Textbook *Technical Communication, 11th edition*, by Mike Markel. ISBN: 9781457673375

Course Goals This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of technical and professional communication. Throughout the semester, you will work to accomplish these goals:

- Analyze a rhetorical situation and craft the appropriate documentation to meet its constraints.
- Identify the elements of effective technical writing style and apply these elements to a variety of professional documents.
- Design documents that are usable and visually engaging.
- Create, edit, and revise prose to produce professional, polished documents.
- Produce documents as a member of a team.

This course meets the requirements for the Food Science and Nutrition Knowledge Requirements for Dietetics #2.1: opportunities to develop communication skills necessary for entry into pre-professional practice.

Course Evaluation

Your grade for this course will be determined according to the following:

Major Documents (4)	40%
Formal Project	25%
Participation	15%
Job-Correspondence Portfolio	10%
Final Examination	10%

Grading Standards

I assign grades on a 100-point scale, which corresponds with the University's letter grades as follows:

Quality of Work	Score	Grade
Excellent work – exceeds all requirements with minimal or no errors. In the workplace, your supervisor would be impressed and would pass the document along to others, as is. A customer would use the document successfully and with ease.	90 – 100	A
Very-good/good work – exceeds/meets most requirements with few significant errors. In the workplace, your supervisor would appreciate your work, but would want you to revise it before passing it along. A customer may notice simple mistakes and draw conclusions about the quality of your company.	80 – 89	B
Fair/adequate work – meets most/some requirements, but with fundamental errors. In the workplace, your supervisor would be disappointed with the document and would want it revised significantly before passing it along. In addition, the supervisor could begin to doubt your ability to complete similar assignments successfully. A customer might wonder whether your company deserves her/his business.	70 – 79	C
Flawed work – meets few requirements; has excessive errors. In the workplace, your supervisor would have another employee re-do the document. A customer would likely abandon the document and resent your company for wasting her/his time.	60 – 69	D
Does not meet the assignment's requirements. In the workplace, your supervisor would assume that you don't care about your job. A customer would withdraw business, find your company's replacement, and/or ask to work with a different representative from your company.	0 – 59	F

Policies

Please read these policies carefully and keep them in mind as you complete this course.

Online Attendance

- “Attend” class regularly. We do not have synchronous class meetings, but you do have due dates and deadlines; this is not a self-paced course. Late work is not accepted, so be sure to keep up with the syllabus and calendar.
- Plan for extenuating circumstances. For example, students traveling for extracurricular events are responsible for staying up to date and completing assignments on time. If you have a major conflict with your schedule, talk with me. Unless you and I have a special arrangement assignments are due as scheduled, whether or not you are physically at your home address. That's the beauty of an online class—you can keep up with the course no matter where you are.
- Participate! In addition to attending to class activities regularly, you are responsible for making thoughtful contributions to discussions and team-based activities.
- Respect your classmates. We are engaged in higher education, so come to our BlackBoard site ready to learn from your classmates and me. Treat us respectfully and professionally; we will extend the same courtesies to you.

Assignments

- Complete scheduled readings and assignments as scheduled
- Submit assignments on time. Each assignment will have a specific date and time by which you must complete it.
- Follow assignment guidelines closely. Any assignment not prepared according to my instructions in format, organization, style, or content could receive a grade of *F*.

Academic Honesty

- Students at SHSU are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach, so you are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all academic experiences. Just because we are not physically in a classroom your behaviors should still mirror those of the classroom. Use best practices in researching on the web; consider traditional sources.
- Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, or the abuse of resource materials.
- Students who submit plagiarized work for my review will receive a zero for the assignment—even if only a portion of the document violates academic honesty standards. A second offense will result in an *F* for the course.

Student Disabilities

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). I also encourage you to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will remain strictly confidential.

Note: I can make accommodations only after you've registered with Services for Students with Disabilities and I've received relevant paperwork from that office. For more information about registering for these services see: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/disability/procedures-to-request-services.html>

Religious Holy Days

Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, United States Tax Code.

Overview of Activities

Throughout the semester, you will complete a variety of assignments—both graded and ungraded. I will provide detailed assignment sheets, supporting documents, and due times/dates. These documents will be available via BlackBoard

Note: The prerequisites for this course are ENGL 1301 and 1302; accordingly, you must have full understanding of basic grammar and writing mechanics before taking this course. Students who lack proficiency in basic grammar and writing mechanics cannot expect to pass this course.

Readings from Your Text

All students must obtain a copy of the textbook by the first day of class. Your textbook offers a wealth of information regarding theories, genres, methods, and real-world applications of technical writing. I will assign readings that supplement the activities and deliverables for this course. Our assignments and class discussions will rely on your having already read assigned chapters before you get to class.

Exercises

I will assign exercises from your text on occasion as a way to develop your proficiency with the materials. Sometimes I will review the materials for completion; sometimes you will share them with teammates. Either way, do not consider them as extra work. They are integral to your understanding of the material and completing them will assist you in completing the graded assignments at a higher level.

Workshops

Workshops afford opportunities for experimenting with documentation techniques, collaborating with teammates, providing/receiving feedback, and applying principles covered in our readings and discussions. Throughout the semester, we will have several digital workshop sessions. I will provide specific instructions for completing each workshop.

Peer Review	Online peer review can help you hone your documents and focus ideas as you work closer towards a final draft. I will help you identify and practice constructive peer-review techniques, and I will give you notice of dates on which we will conduct peer-review sessions.
Correspondence	E-mail is a part of our daily lives—whether at home, school, or work. This key genre in technical writing must be used effectively, and you will have many instances to practice your daily writing skills via e-mail. Because we are in a technical-writing course, every e-mail that you send to clients, your classmates, or me must demonstrate what you are learning in this advanced writing course. We will focus on principles of effective correspondence early in the semester, and you will practice these principles for the remainder of your professional life.
Major Documents	<p>You will complete a series of major documents, which will allow you to practice working with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence • Technical-writing style and document design • Proposals • Instructions • Job correspondence
Formal Project	Your formal project is a medium-to-large technical document that allows you to apply the principles learned from all major documents. I will provide a detailed description of the formal project early in the semester, so you will have opportunities to plan and workshop your ideas.
Instructor Evaluations	Toward the end of the semester, students will have the opportunity to evaluate this course and its instructor. These evaluations allow students to rate the efficacy of the instructional methods as well as their perceptions of the course in general. Any information provided by students is anonymous, and instructors do not receive students' evaluations until the following semester.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

The following schedule provides an overview of the topics that we'll cover and the general pace for readings/assignments. Because our course will be organized by Learning Modules in Blackboard, full assignment details, any smaller assignment due dates will be provided within each module. Due dates for major assignments are listed here. Please note that all dates are approximate and subject to change.

Dates	Topic	Chapter Readings	Activities
Aug. 23-25	Welcome!	1 & 3	Introduction to the Course
Sept 5-8	Ethics & Correspondence	2 & 14	Blog 1 (Post Tuesday; respond Thursday) Team Introductions complete by Wednesday; Analysis memo-due: Sept. 10th by 11:59
Sept. 11-15	Writing Collaboratively	4 & 17	Blog 2 (Post Monday; respond Wed) Team Discussions Team Charters Due Sept 17 th by 11:59 p.m.
Sept. 18-22	Audience Awareness	5	Blog 3 (Post Monday; respond Wed) Team discussions; Team Writing Major Document 1; Part 1 Deliverable, Thurs., Sept. 21st, by 11:59 p.m. Part 2 Deliverable Sept. 24 th , by 11:59 p.m.
Sept. 25-29	Style	9 & 10	Style exercises Team Discussions
Oct. 2-13	Document Design	11 & 12	Blog 4 (Post Monday; respond Wed) Peer Review Major Document 2 Deliverable October 15, by 11:59 p.m.
Oct. 16-27	Proposals	16	Blog 5 (Post Monday; respond Wed) Peer Review Major Document 3 Deliverable Oct. 29 th , by 11:59p.m.
Oct. 30-Nov. 3	Instructions Job Correspondence	15 & 20	Blog 6 (Post Monday; respond Wed) Peer Review Major Document 4 Deliverable November 5, by 11:59 p.m.
Nov. 6-Dec. 1	Formal Project	20	Team Discussions Peer Review Project Deliverables due Saturday, December 2 nd , by 11:59 p.m.
Wed., Dec. 6 th	Final Exam Document must be uploaded by 11:59 p.m.		

Addendum A: Agreement for Working Honestly and Ethically in ENGL 3330

Please read the following carefully:

This course focuses on developing *your* writing skills; accordingly, I can grade only your original work during the semester. To avoid any confusion over what constitutes "original work," read and consider the following statements. Signal your understanding of each statement by initialing the corresponding blank. If you do not understand a statement, then ask me for clarification before initialing.

I understand that I should *never* copy and paste information from outside sources –
 even if I cite them.

I understand that I must create original content (whether text or images) for all
 assignments.

I understand that I may research information via interviews, internet searches,
and/or library visits. But I also understand that duplicating text/content from
 documents that I find from any research method is unacceptable for this class.

I promise to seek Dr. Nardone's guidance if I am unsure about how to treat
 researched information. Dr. Nardone will be more than happy to help.

I understand that this course is not an editing course and that I will not be able to
simply revise, modify, or reformat existing text(s) for my Major Documents or the
 Formal Project.

I understand the concept of *plagiarism* and how both SHSU and Dr. Blackburne have
 used it in describing expectations for my performance in this course.

I understand that Dr. Nardone will require me to submit documents to turnitin.com
 via the course's Blackboard site.

I understand that if I submit a document containing *any* amount of plagiarized
content, I will receive a zero for that assignment. A second offense will result in an F
for the course and academic sanction. I further understand that any resulting grade
 will be non-negotiable.

I certify that I have read the above statements and that I will comply with them. In addition, I will adhere to the standards of Academic Honesty described both in this syllabus and in the Sam Houston State University Student Guidelines.

Student's Name

Student's Signature

Date