English 3330W: Introduction to Technical Writing
Spring 2018, Online (3 Credit Hours)
Prerequisites: ENGL 1301 & 1302.

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Office Hours	• Only by appointment

Classroom Online

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 (5)	40%

    - Includes MD 1 parts 1&2 and MDs 2-4

Formal Project	25%
Discussion Board Posts	20%
Participation	15%

    - Includes assignments 1&2, activities 1&2, group discussion posts, peer editing

***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 polices carefully and keep them in mind as you complete this course.

Attendance

- Attend class regularly. This is an asynchronous online class, but you must login and keep up with your responsibilities. You are responsible for the individual and collaborative assignments and topics that we cover; accordingly, find a buddy in this class and exchange contact information so that you can stay up to date if you are not able to logon to Blackboard or are confused. I'm happy to answer questions after you've spoken with your classmates about what you missed.
- Consider your schedule; regular participation is essential to do well in this course. Your participation grade is determined by your completion of peer editing activates, assignments, and group discussion board participation. This policy applies to all students—including those involved in extracurricular activities.
- Plan for travel dates. Students traveling for extracurricular events are responsible for staying up to date and completing assignments on time. Unless I state otherwise in writing, assignments that fall on a student's travel dates are due as scheduled; additionally, students should return from travel having completed scheduled readings and exercises.
- Participate! In addition to logging into Blackboard regularly, you are responsible for making thoughtful contributions to discussions and class activities.

- Respect your classmates. We are engaged in higher education, so approach this class ready to learn from your classmates and me. Treat us respectfully and professionally; we will extend the same courtesies to you.

Mobile Phones & Devices (onsite students)	• Before class starts, kindly turn off your mobile phone or put it in "do not disturb" mode; more importantly, put it away with other personal devices (headphones, Bluetooth headsets, iPods, etc.). If you use your phone/device during class, then I will mark you absent. Deductions from your participation grade will be made regardless of why you're marked absent.
	• If you have an unusual situation that requires your being accessible by phone (e.g., ill child or significant other), then please notify me of the situation before class starts and choose a seat near the door. If you must leave the room to take an emergency call, discretely leave the room and re-enter when you'll make minimal disruption to the class. If you have an ongoing emergency or work situation that requires your regularly receiving calls during class, then you will want to choose a section of this course that better fits with your personal schedule.
	• In keeping with University Policy, I must issue a grade of zero to any student who uses or displays a mobile phone (or other personal electronic device) during an exam—even if the device is turned off.
	• In the event of a campus emergency, I am the designated contact for our classroom. I will receive a call and text message from campus authorities with relevant information.
Assignments	• Complete scheduled readings and daily assignments before coming to class, and arrive prepared to talk about the readings.
	• Submit assignments on time. Each assignment will have a specific date and time by which you must complete it. If, for any reason, I don't have your assignment by the specified time, then your assignment is late. Late assignments will lose 10 points per class-day late. If you must turn in an assignment late, please submit your document within 48 hours (including weekends) of the original due date.
	• 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—both in and out of our classroom.
	• 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.
Classroom Visitors (onsite)	Only registered students may come into our classroom. Student visitations or audits are not permitted.

Overview of Activities

Throughout the semester, you will complete a variety of assignments—both in and out of the classroom. I will provide detailed assignment sheets, supporting documents, and due times/dates. These documents are all available on 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 and provide handouts to engage you in the theory and practice of creating effective documents. All exercises should be submitted to the proper location on the due dates. I will review exercises as part of your participation grade.
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 participate in several workshop sessions on Blackboard, and your participation are required for all of them. I will provide specific instructions for completing each workshop.
Peer Review	Peer review is required and 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.
Assignment Drafts	You will produce drafts and/or mockups of your major documents and the formal project. Drafts are integral to producing effective, professional documents, and they allow me opportunities for helping you improve your documents before you submit them for my final review.

Major Documents   You will complete a series of major documents, which will allow you to practice working with the following:
- 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 contains readings, assignments, and in-class activities for the semester. Please complete the readings and exercises for a given date before you come to class. **This schedule is subject to change** throughout the semester; please keep up with in-class activities and announcements.

<mark>** Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due at midnight on the specified date**</mark>

Weeks 1, 2 (Jan. 17-28)

What we'll complete	Introduce the Course; Discuss Technical & Professional Writing
What to read	Chs. 1, 3 & 14; watch video in module 1
What's due	Discussion Board Post 1 (DBP1) (by Jan 21)
	Respond to DBP1 (by Jan 23)
	Assignment 1: Post an Introduction **IN YOUR GROUP DISCUSSION BOARD** (by Jan 21)
	* Say hello/respond ↑ (by Jan 23)
	Assignment 2: Analysis memo (by Jan 28)

Week 3 (Jan 29 – Feb 4)
Module 2: Collaborative writing

What we'll complete	Identify and practice effective habits for group writing
What to read	Chs 4 & 17; BB post in Module 2 titled "Background on Working Collaboratively"
What's due	DBP2 (by Jan 31)
	Respond to DBP2 (by Feb 2)
	Activity 1: Choosing a Point of Contact (POC) (should be completed by Jan 31)
	Activity 2: Writing a team charter (by Feb 4)

Week 4 (Feb 5 – 11)
Module 3: Audience analysis

What we'll complete	Broader understanding of audience and its needs
What to read	Chs 5
What's due	DBP3 (by Feb 7)
	Respond to DBP3 (by Feb 9)
	Major Document 1, part 1 (MD1PT`1) (by Feb 9)
	Major Document 1, part 2 (MD1PT`2) (by Feb 11)

Week 5 (Feb 12 – 18)
Module 4: Technical writing style

What we'll complete	Becoming comfortable with elements of style
What to read	Ch 10 + video
What's due	nothing

Weeks 6-8 (Feb 19 – March 11)
Module 5: Document design

What we'll complete	Apply knowledge of style and design to document(s)
What to read	Design PowerPoint pdf, Learning about branding and logos readings
What's due	DBP4 (by Feb 21)
	- Respond to DBP4 (by Feb 23)
	Q&A discussion board (post and respond throughout weeks)
	MD2: Style and Design (by March 11)

March 12 – 16: **SPRING BREAK**

Weeks 9-10 (March 19 – April 1)
Module 6: Project proposal

What we'll complete	Clearer understanding of and nailing down ideas for the Formal Project
What to read	Ch. 16, Introducing the formal project, proposal resources
What's due	DBP5 (by March 21)
	- Respond to DBP5 (by March 23)
	Formal project ideas group discussion (as needed throughout the weeks)
	MD3: Proposal (by April 1)

Weeks 11-12 (April 2 - 15)
Module 7: Instructional writing

What we'll complete	Understanding and application of instructional writing
What to read	Ch 20, Background: Instructional writing, Sample instructions
What's due	MD4: Writing effective instructions (by April 15)

Weeks 13-15 (April 16 – May 4)
Formal Project

What we'll complete	Formal project
What to read	review previous chapters/readings as needed
What's due	Formal project (by May 4)

Final project (May 5-10)
Job Portfolio - ***This will be offered as extra credit***

What we'll complete	Job portfolio (resume + LinkedIn account)
What we'll read	Ch 15
What's due	Job portfolio (extra credit) (by May 10)