

**FALL 2012 | ENGLISH 305 – TECHNICAL WRITING – SECTION W05
TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS, 2:30PM – 3:45PM | G18 COLSON**

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: David Beach | **Office:** 116 Colson | **Phone:** 304-293-9711

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Office Hours: Mon and Wed, 3pm to 4:30pm or by appointment.

Required Text & Materials:

- Dobrin, Keller & Weisser, *Technical Communication in the Twenty-First Century (TC)*, 2e (2010)
- Other handouts (available in eCampus)
- USB Flash Drive
- Approximately \$5 for portfolio binding (unless you wish to submit a digital portfolio)

COURSE GOALS

English 305 introduces you to strategies for translating between discipline-specific knowledge and interested outsiders. While this may include topics traditionally understood as “technical,” such as those in engineering, architecture and computer science, technical writing encompasses any topic that must be explained to an involved, but not expert, audience.

You will explore the forms of technical writing that are common in the professions, including memos, reports, and technical descriptions. Drawing on the expertise developed in your major, you will explore technical writing through topics and issues important to the work you plan to do. Because a primary assumption of this course is that all writing emerges from and responds to a particular problem, audience, and purpose, the course focuses on helping you develop multiple strategies for accomplishing your communication goals.

Primary Course Objectives

- Master the practices and principles of technical communication with particular emphasis on planning, audience analysis, persuasion, clear and effective writing style, organization, graphics and information design.
- Refine a writing process that will enable you to communicate well, meet deadlines, and work as part of a team.
- Attend and participate in classroom discussions, peer-review sessions and group presentations. Class participation will be a significant portion of your grade.
- Design and execute several forms of technical communication including memos, resumes, instructions and technical descriptions.
- Produce significant (20+ pages), professional work related to your field of study, which has been revised and refined for clarity and effectiveness.
- Demonstrate the ability to speak persuasively in a professional setting, including the ability to select and design effective presentation graphics.

COURSE POLICIES

Social Justice

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. We actively support that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Please make suggestions about how to further such a positive and open environment in this class.

eCampus & Other Communication Tools

We will use eCampus for course materials, assignments, submissions, discussions and collaboration.

eCampus works better with Firefox and Safari, and to a lesser extent with Chrome. **Note:** IE9 is not supported and will not function properly. To access eCampus, follow these directions:

- Open a browser.
- Go to <https://ecampus.wvu.edu/>
- Allow pop-ups to be accepted from this site
- Ensure your Java program is up-to-date
- Click on WVU Main Campus icon (on right side)
- Enter your MyID username and password.
- Click on ENGL-305 (course material will be available on or before Aug 20th)

E-Mail

You should use your WVU e-mail account for class-related correspondence. I will only send material to WVU e-mail accounts to ensure confidentiality. If you use an e-mail account other than the WVU e-mail account, you can have your WVU e-mail forwarded to that account. Your other account should identify you by name, and if possible, you should change the settings on a class-related e-mail to have responses sent to your WVU e-mail account.

Class and Attendance

Because this course depends on your preparation for every class and your involvement during every class meeting, regular and on-time attendance and active participation are critical to your success. On a T-Th schedule, **each student is allowed up to two absences without penalty.** A third absence will result in the loss of *10 participation points*. Each subsequent absence will result in the further loss of *10 participation points*. Thus, it is possible to have a negative participation score, and that will adversely affect the final grade. Arriving late will also impede your success in class. **Four late arrivals will be counted as an absence.**

You are expected to conduct yourself professionally and be an active, dedicated participant and colleague. This means participating in classroom and online discussions, meeting with group members either face-to-face or via a variety of media, attending conferences with me at mutually agreeable times, and posting assignments on time. This also means notifying me of any issues which would impede attendance or completion of work. Things happen in life (loss of job, illness, illness or death of loved ones), and when these things occur, I am empathetic and flexible *if I know about them*. For example, if one has a family emergency, one does not disappear from work without notice; the same thing applies to school (not just this class, but all classes). Maintain contact, and we can work around issues.

Late Assignment Policy

Late assignments will not be accepted. In cases of *documented* illnesses or emergencies, or bona fide technical issues (such as power and server outages, hard drive crashes, etc.), I will handle those on a case-by-case basis. In any of these cases, contact me as soon as possible to let me know of the issue.

Cheating/Plagiarism

The University community assumes your honesty and that you will turn in original work. Failing to do so may result in a failing grade for a paper, a failing grade for the course, or a more serious penalty. WVU's Academic Integrity Policy states:

Faculty, students, and administrators share the responsibility to maintain the University's academic integrity. It is essential that grades measure the achievement of the individual student. Academic dishonesty includes the following: plagiarism; cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and projects; and forgery, misrepresentation, and fraud. Cheating and plagiarism are condemned at all levels of University life. Refer to the official University policy on

cheating and plagiarism available in the University's catalogs, and the Academic Integrity/Dishonesty Policy.

It is your responsibility to be fully familiar with the Student Conduct Code which can be found at http://studentlife.wvu.edu/office_of_student_conduct/student_conduct_code. If you are at all confused about what is or is not plagiarism, ask!

Extra Credit

I am fundamentally opposed to the concept of extra credit since if I offer extra credit to one person, I have to offer it to all.

Computers and Cell Phones

You are welcome to bring laptop computers and other electronic devices that support your educational endeavors into the classroom. If, at any time, these devices become a distraction to me or other members of the class you will be asked to put them away. All mobile phones should be turned off or set to a silent mode. If you must take a phone call because of an emergency, please quietly excuse yourself from the room.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented learning disability, a serious hearing or vision problem, or any other special need that might affect your performance and participation in class, please be sure to inform me. Also, please be aware of the support services available to you through Disability Services in room G30 of the Mountainlair. Its phone number is 304-293-6700, its email is access2@mail.wvu.edu, and its web site is <http://disabilityservices.wvu.edu/>.

Writing Center

The WVU Writing Center is a resource that can support you in all aspects of the writing process. It is located in G02 Colson Hall. For more information about the Writing Center refer to page xix in *JAC*.

University Counseling Services

The Carruth Center provides resources to help manage stress, improve relationships, make healthy lifestyle choices, and face new challenges and transitions. For more information about its hours, services, and location, see its web site at <http://well.wvu.edu/ccpps>.

ENGL305 GRADING POLICY

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Participation: 10% (100 points)

Class participation, peer reviews, conferencing

Assignment	Points
Class Participation: 2 pt * 25 classes	50
Peer Reviews (8)	40
Conference	10
Total Points	100

Informal Writing Assignments: 20%

Quizzes (13, 3 lowest scores omitted), Reflections (6, 1 lowest scores omitted), In-Class Writing (periodic), Technical Writing Topic Group Presentations

Assignment	Points
Quizzes (3 lowest omitted)	50
Reflections (1 lowest omitted)	50
In-Class Writing	50
Technical Writing Topic Presentations (collaborative)	50
Total Points	200

Portfolio: 70%

Title Page, Table of Contents, Reflective Memo, All Required Assignments

Assignment	Mid-Term Portfolio	Final Portfolio
Resume	25	
Cover Letter	25	
Genre Analysis	50	
Resource Guide to the Discipline	50	
Professional Genres in Your Field	50	
Mid-Term Reflective Memo	50	
Total Mid-Term Portfolio	250 (nonbinding)	
Resume		50
Cover Letter		50
Genre Analysis		100
Resource Guide to the Discipline		50
Professional Genres in Your Field		50
Graduate School & Professional Profile Description		75
Instructions		75
Technical Writing Topic Summary (individual)		75
Final Reflective Memo		50
Final Portfolio Format		50
Total Points		700

Grade Descriptors for Informal Writing Assignments and Portfolio

- **A**—Exemplary work that demonstrates originality and initiative. The content is mature, thorough, and well-suited for the audience; the style is clear, accurate, and forceful; the information is well-

organized and formatted so that it is accessible and attractive; genre conventions are effectively used; mechanics and grammar are correct. The portfolio demonstrates a range of well-edited, well-written, well-argued, and well-documented texts that a company could use without further revisions, and might even use as examples when training new employees.

- **B**—Good work. The documents generally succeed in meeting their goals in terms of audience, purpose, and genre without the need for further major revisions. They may need some *minor* improvements in content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics. In the workplace, a company would be able to use the documents without major revisions of any sort.
- **C**—Satisfactory work. Documents are adequate in all respects, but require some substantial revisions of content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics; they may require further work in more than one area. For instance, central ideas may generally be apparent, but may often lack adequate explanations or documentation necessary for different audiences and purposes. In the workplace, the documents would be functional for an immediate deadline, but would require further revisions before being distributed or made part of a permanent record.
- **D**—Documents are unprofessional. They generally require extensive revisions of content, presentation, writing style, and/or mechanics before the documents could be used by a company. The writer has encountered significant problems meeting goals of audience, purpose, and genre. In the workplace, a company would most probably have to reassign the project to another writer for successful completion.
- **F**—Documents do not have enough information, do something other than is appropriate for a given situation, or contain major and pervasive problems in terms of content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics that interfere with meaning. The portfolio may be incomplete, or plagiarism may compromise the portfolio on ethical grounds. A company would most probably dismiss the writer from current projects.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The schedule is subject to slight alteration based on the progress of the class. A schedule of readings in *TC* can be found below.

DATE	DISCUSSION/ACTIVITES	HOMEWORK
AUG 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Course IntroductionExpectationsOverview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i>, Ch. 1-2
AUG 23	Quiz #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Rhetoric & Technical WritingCrafting a resume	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i>, Ch. 3, Ch. 14 pp 396-422 and Appendix ABring 4 copies of resume to class
AUG 28	Quiz #2 Due: Resume <ul style="list-style-type: none">Using Technology for Technical WritingGrammar etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i>, Ch. 9, Bawarshi's "The Genre Function" (in eCampus)Reflection #1
AUG 30	Quiz #3 Due: Reflection #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Crafting a cover letterGenresResearch in technical writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read Ch. 6, 7, 12
SEP 4	Quiz #4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Organizing and DraftingElectronic writing & memos	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bring 4 copies of cover letter draft to class
SEP 6	Due: Cover Letter <ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing a guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bring 4 copies of Genre Analysis (part 1) to class
SEP 11	Due: Genre Analysis (part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Creating a sample genre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 19Reflection #2
SEP 13	Quiz #5 Due: Reflection #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Writing manuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 10
SEP 18	Quiz #6 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Revising, rewriting & editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bring 4 copies of Resource Guide for a Discipline to class
SEP 20	Due: Resource Guide for a Discipline <ul style="list-style-type: none">Exploring documents in a field	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 21
SEP 25	Quiz #7 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Informal Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 22Reflection #3
SEP 27	Quiz #8 Due: Reflection #3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Formal reports, such as the portfolio!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bring 4 copies of reflective memo draft to class
OCT 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Putting it together	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mid-Term Portfolio
OCT 4	DUE: Mid-Term Portfolio which includes Genre Analysis (part 2) and Professional Genres in Your Field <ul style="list-style-type: none">Looking ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 4
OCT 9	Quiz #9 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Writing profilesEthics in technical writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 8Reflection #4

COURSE SCHEDULE (continued)

The schedule is subject to slight alteration based on the progress of the class. A schedule of readings in *TC* can be found below.

OCT 11	Quiz #10 Due: Reflection #4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visual rhetoric and technical communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring 4 copies of Graduate School and Professional Profiles to class
OCT 16	Due: Graduate School and Professional Profiles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writing descriptions, part 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 16
OCT 18	Quiz #11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writing descriptions, part 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post draft of Description for peer review in eCampus ▪ Bring draft of Description to conference
OCT 23	CONFERENCE WEEK - NO CLASS	
OCT 25	CONFERENCE WEEK - NO CLASS	
OCT 30	Due: Description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writing instructions, part 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 18
NOV 1	Quiz #12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writing instructions, part 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read <i>TC</i> Ch. 23 ▪ Reflection #5
NOV 6	ELECTION DAY - UNIVERSITY CLOSED	
NOV 8	Due: Reflection #5 Quiz #13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional presentations 	
NOV 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with presentations groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring 4 copies of Instructions to class
NOV 15	Due: Instructions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with presentation groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflection #6
NOV 20-22	THANKSGIVING BREAK - UNIVERSITY CLOSED	
NOV 27	Due: Reflection #6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be ready for group presentations
NOV 29	Due: Technical Writing Topic Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise final portfolio work and work on reflective memo
DEC 4	Due: Technical Writing Topic Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finish Final Portfolio with Reflective Memo
DEC 6	FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE	
DEC 13	PORTFOLIOS AVAILABLE FOR PICKUP	

FALL 2012: COURSE AGREEMENT

Please sign and return to the instructor

Course # and section: _____

Name (printed legibly): _____

Phone: _____

MIX E-mail address: _____

List any specific personal cognitive or physical challenges you choose to inform the instructor about:

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE SYLLABUS FOR THIS COURSE, AND I AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE POLICIES.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

(* OPTIONAL ***)**

Permission to Copy Student Work

Permission to copy your work is requested for use in academic purposes (e.g., models for other students, examples of genre, samples for classroom activities, inclusion in teaching portfolios, teaching assessment and research, etc.). Your anonymity is assured. All copies of work will have your name and any references to you removed.

I hereby give permission to have my work copied and/or distributed for anonymous, academic use.

Name: _____

Date: _____

MIX Email: _____