

English 305: Technical Writing (Section W05, 81391)	
Fall 2013- Tuesday-Thursday, 14:30-15:45, in Colson Hall, G18	
Instructor: Dibyadyuti Roy	
Email: droy2@mix.wvu.edu	Phone: 304-293-3107 (Messages Only)
Office: Room 308, Colson Hall/CLC,G20 Colson Hall	Office Hours: Friday (11:00-13:00) and by appointment

Required Texts and Materials:

- *Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach*, 7th Edition, by Paul Anderson (ISBN:978-1-4282-6393-2)
- Any supplemental readings available on eCampus, the web, or the WVU Libraries website
- USB Flash Drive

Course Description

Welcome to English 305. This course introduces you to strategies for translating between discipline-specific knowledge and interested outsiders in a professional setting. 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.

Also, since this is a professional writing course, what you learn here is aimed at helping you in a professional workplace and you will be held to professional standards in the course. Just think, if you didn't show up to work several times, should you expect to keep your job? Since the answer here is no, you can assume the same for your grade.

Primary Course Objectives

- That you 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.
- That you refine a writing process that will enable you to communicate well, meet deadlines, and work as part of a team.
- That you attend and participate in classroom discussions and peer-review sessions. Class participation will be a significant portion of your grade.
- That you design and execute several forms of technical communication including a memo, résumé, literature review technical description, and feasibility report.
- That you produce a significant (20+ pages), professional portfolio related to your field of study based on the career path you choose to follow. By the end of the semester, this portfolio will have been revised and refined for clarity and effectiveness

- That you demonstrate the ability to speak persuasively in a professional setting, including the ability to select and design effective presentation graphics.

Course Requirements, Assignments and Grading

You will be evaluated on written documents, oral presentations, class participation, several quizzes and your final writing project. You will receive detailed instructions for each assignment. Assignments that will be graded on content, technique and style will pass through a drafting stage before you turn in your “final” version.

Final Grade Breakdown: The final grade in English 305 evaluates formal writing, informal writing, several short quizzes and participation. Each graded assignment passes through a drafting stage before you turn in your **final for now (FFN)** version of the assignment. You will have the opportunity to revisit your documents one last time as you make selections for your final portfolio. The following will show the way that I will break down your grade.

Final Portfolio	60%
Informal Writing (Short Writes)	15%
Participation	15%
Quizzes (Unscheduled)	10%

There will be a great deal of writing and reading for this course so it is important that you not get behind since late assignments will receive penalties unless negotiations have been made with the instructor prior to the due date, but even then exceptions are rare.

Course Communication

Email netiquette is a critical part of today’s communication in both professional and social contexts. Observe these guidelines with your first and every email to me and make them part of all of your correspondence:

- Write in the subject line the class/section you are in (English 305) and a descriptive purpose phrase such as "quiz question." This information is critical because it allows me to filter all messages from students so that you don't get "lost."
- In the body, include a salutation. Although it is not necessary to write ‘Dear,’ in emails, do use appropriate formality when addressing someone, such as "Mr. Roy" or "Professor Roy."
- State in the body of the message the purpose of your email and whether you have attached a document.
- Include a closing and “sign” (type) your email with your name. Don't just stop after finishing your message.
- Use short paragraphs to make it easy to read.
- Use standard English, including correct spelling. Avoid chat room style expressions such as C U L8er, unnecessary acronyms, or fragmented speech. Even though e-mails are informal, they should be correct.

USB Drive & Portfolio Keeping

A substantial of the work you do for this class will be either online or on the computer so it’s important that you have a consistent way to save and share your work. One simple way to do this is by obtaining a USB drive that you will dedicate to collecting the writing, designing, editing and

revising done in this course. If you choose to use a USB drive, please bring this drive to each class. Part of the moral of the story here is that failure to provide the correct documents for days like peer review days will result in a reduction of your grade.

As you work on your assignments both in and out of class, keep (within reason) progressive versions of all your notes, drafts, outlines, peer reviews, and research materials. Organize and label the documents as you go and it will benefit both of us. As you prepare your final portfolio and write your final paper, you will review these materials in order to learn how your discovery, drafting, and research processes have evolved throughout the course.

Tip for naming digital documents: It's useful to use a consistent naming format for your documents since you will be writing multiple drafts and will want to see your progress (as well as not lose original work that you may need to come back to later). For instance, I might name my drafts like so (note my initials):

First draft – BadNewsLetterJH1.doc.

Second draft – BadNewsLetterJH2.doc

Peer-reviewed draft – BadNewsLetterJH2edits.doc

Final draft – BadNewsLetterJH.doc

Also, back up your files in a second location (another USB drive, a CD, your home computer, an external hard drive, etc.) regularly. USB drives have been known to get lost or corrupted!

Attendance

You are expected to attend class every day and bring your USB drive and reading materials. If you amass more than **two** unexcused absences, your grade for the course will be lowered one full letter grade. For each unexcused absence after two, I reserve the right to lower your final grade by an additional letter grade.

It's particularly important for you to attend—and be prepared for—in-class peer reviews on drafts of your documents. The more you have written before peer-review sessions, the more you will benefit from them. Although your drafts need not be “polished,” they should be complete enough for you to receive substantial help from your peers. Under no circumstances will I accept a “final” version of a document without its peer-reviewed rough draft.

NOTE: An absence on the day a draft is due counts as two absences. If you show up to class on the day a draft is due without your draft work (or with draft work that is incomplete), you will be given two absences for the day.

Grade Descriptors: Students sometimes ask why they receive one grade or the other, particularly on their portfolio. I'm including grade descriptors to help clarify what earns certain grades on different kinds of writing. The following descriptors relate specifically to the portfolio, but you'll find similar ideas linked to both participation and informal writing assignments and will often receive language from me similar to what you see below in the feedback for your work. If you have questions, please ask.

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.

NOTE: The more writers write, reflect and revise, the better their writing becomes. For this reason, you will receive full credit, partial credit or no credit for all draft and “minor” writing assignments, depending on how well the work you turn in meets the criteria set forth for that assignment. More important, you will also receive extensive comments (from me and your peers) that will help you in the revision process.

Professional Expectations & Conduct:

In addition to the requirements in this syllabus, you are expected to work until the class period has ended, to complete all reading assignments on time, to help your classmates learn by your responses to their writing, to choose projects that require significant research and analysis, to spend at least six hours per week out of class for writing and class preparation, and to be courteous and considerate. Please turn all cell phones and pagers off (no ringing, vibrating or text messaging) during class unless instructed otherwise. Our classroom computers are for class use only – no Facebook, etc, please. All distractions are very detrimental to your class participation grade. Finally, please respect the request for no food or drink in the lab.

Computers and Cell Phones:

We will be using technology to enhance our class activities, but I need to rely on your responsible use of that technology. Similarly, the discussion of readings, peer reviews of papers, and other workshop activities require your full attention, so please turn off your cell phones, put them out of sight, and refrain from texting in class. Please be sure you are using the computers only as instructed for that day’s class session (and not for Facebook or to check e-mail, etc.) It’s good professional behavior that also shows your respect for each other and the work we’re trying to do. If you are ever using technology in a way that is distracting or unrelated to the work of the class, you will be asked to put away the device or log off the computer. **If you have to be asked more than once, you will be counted as absent for that day, and you may even be asked to leave.** If there is an

unusual circumstance where you must leave your phone on, please just speak to me privately *before* class.

Accommodation:

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 let me know. Also, please be aware of the support services available to you through Disability Services in room G30 of the Mountainlair. Their phone number is: (304)-293-6700, and their email is: access2@mail.wvu.edu.

Writing Center:

The WVU Writing Center is another resource that can not only help you to brush up on your basic skills, but also help support you in all aspects of the writing process. It is located in G02 Colson Hall (the lower level). This is a free resource for students! You can meet with a tutor to go over the goals of any assignment or just to get help brainstorming the best topic. Call 304-293-5788 to schedule an appointment or stop by to see if a tutor is available. Check online at: http://english.wvu.edu/centers_and_projects/wcenter.

University Counseling Services: If things seem tough for you, or if you'd just like someone to talk to (about being homesick, or feeling depressed, or getting overwhelmed by all the obligations in your life, etc.), be sure to check out the Carruth Center for Counseling and Psychological Services on the third floor of the Student Services Building, right next door to the Mountainlair. Their hours are Monday-Friday: 8:15AM-4:45PM. Or you can call their emergency hotline after hours at (304)-293-4431. Their website is: <http://wvu.edu/ccpps>.

Office Hours: Office hours are a vital component of this course, because they provide me with an opportunity to talk to you one-on-one. My office hours are on the top of this syllabus. Please drop in to see me at the listed times, or make an appointment with me to talk at other times. I can confer with you via email, too. I will try to respond to you (in email or in class) within 48 hours, Monday through Friday.

Communication: Occasionally, I will need to contact the class or individual students via e-mail, so keep your MIX account active.

Cheating/Plagiarism: The English 305 community assumes your honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with the sections on Academic Honesty in the **University Student Conduct Code, Policy Bulletin 31**, which is online at: <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html>. If you have any questions about when and how to document sources, or any other question that will help you avoid unintentional plagiarism, please come and talk to me. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offences. Clear cases will result in an "F" for the course and appropriate academic discipline.

Schedule of Work**

(** This schedule is open to significant revision and you'll need to be in class to make sure you're up to date on any changes. Also, check your email frequently for updates and changes to the syllabus)

August		
Tuesday		Thursday
20 (Late Registration Fee in Effect after Aug 19) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to Course and Colleagues ▪ Expectations ▪ Overview of Syllabus Homework: Read Anderson Ch.1	W E E K 1	22 (Last day to register and add new courses is 8/23) Assigned: SW#1-Introduction Memo Discuss: Rhetorical Situation Homework: Read Anderson Ch.2 and Ch. 22 http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/02/
27 Class Activities: Résumé Writing Workshop Discuss: Job Prospects Due Today: SW#1-Introduction Memo Homework: SW#2- 3 Job Prospects Read Anderson: Ch. 3	W E E K 2	29 Class Activities: Audience and Voice Exercise Discussion: Career fact Sheets Due Today: SW#2-3 Job Prospects Homework: Draft Résumé and Career fact Sheet

September		
Tuesday		Thursday
3 Assigned : Interview/Definitions Assignment Class Activities: In-class peer review of Résumé & Career Fact Sheet Due Today: Peer Review Draft- Résumé and Career Fact Sheet Homework: Read Anderson Ch.10	W E E K 3	5 Class Activities: Ethics and Technical Writing Activity Homework: FFN-Résumé and Career facts Sheet Read Anderson Ch.5-7

<p>10</p> <p>Class Activities: Mock Interview</p> <p>Due Today: FFN-Résumé and Career Fact Sheet</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Read :</p> <p>Miller, Carolyn. (1979). "A humanistic rationale for technical writing." http://www4.ncsu.edu/~crmiller/Publications/Humanistic79.pdf and "Can Ethics Be Technologized?" online</p> <p>Write: SW#3: 3 discussion questions based on the readings</p>	<p>W</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>K</p> <p>4</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Class Activities:</p> <p>Discussion on Ethics</p> <p>Due Today: SW#3: 3 discussion questions based on the readings</p> <p>Homework: Peer Review Draft- Interview/Definitions Assignment</p>
<p>17</p> <p>Class Activities:</p> <p>In-class peer review of Interview/Definitions Assignment</p> <p>Due Today: Peer Review Draft- Interview/Definitions Assignment</p> <p>Homework: FFN: Interview Assignment</p>	<p>W</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>K</p> <p>5</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Assigned : Resource Guide Assignment</p> <p>Class Activities: Writing an Effective Abstract</p> <p>Due Today: FFN: Interview/Definitions Assignment</p> <p>Homework: Read Anderson Ch.8 & 9</p> <p>Write: SW#4 : Find 3 examples of resource guides (online/print)</p> <p>Check: http://www.ipl.org/div/special/</p>
<p>24</p> <p>Class Activities: Discussion on Resource Guides</p> <p>Due Today: SW#4 3 examples of Resource Guides</p> <p>Homework: Presentation on Resource Guide</p> <p>Read Anderson Ch. 10 & 11</p>	<p>W</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>K</p> <p>6</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Class Activities: Presentations on Resource Guide</p> <p>Homework: Peer Review Draft- Resource Guide</p>

October		
Tuesday		Thursday
<p>1</p> <p>Class Activities: In-class peer review of Resource Guide Discussion of Midterm Portfolio and Midterm Reflection</p> <p>Due Today: Peer Review Draft- Resource Guide</p> <p>Homework: FFN- Resource Guide+ Midterm Portfolio</p>	<p>W E E K</p> <p>7</p>	<p>3 (Mid-Semester is Oct 4)</p> <p>Due Today: MIDTERM PORTFOLIO which includes FFN- Resource Guide and Midterm Reflection</p> <p>Homework: Read Anderson Ch.16</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Assigned: Project Synopsis+Literature Review (connected to Final Project) Class Activities: Brain-storm & outline of topics</p> <p>Homework: SW#5: Three Potential Topics for Final Project</p>	<p>W E E K</p> <p>8</p>	<p>10 (Mid-Semester Grades are Due)</p> <p>LIBRARY RESEARCH DAY</p>
<p>15 – NO CLASS: Fall Break</p>	<p>W E E K</p> <p>9</p>	<p>17</p> <p>CLASS CANCELLED –STUDENT CONFERENCES</p> <p>BRING SW#5: Three Potential Topics for Final Project to discuss.</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Class Activities: Mock Peer Review</p> <p>Homework: Peer Review Draft- Project Synopsis+Literature Review Assignment</p>	<p>W E E K</p> <p>10</p>	<p>24 (October 25 is the Last Day to Drop)</p> <p>Class Activities: In-class peer review of Project Synopsis+ Literature Review Assignment</p> <p>Due Today: Peer Review Draft- Project Synopsis+Literature Review Assignment</p>

October/November		
Tuesday		Thursday
Oct 29 Assigned: Final Project (Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment) Class Activities: “Debating the Undebatable” Due Today: FFN- Project Synopsis+ Literature Review Assignment Homework: : Read Anderson Ch.17	W E E K 11	Oct 31 Class Activities: Discussion on Presentation Techniques
5 Class Activities: Citation Workshop	W E E K 12	7 Class Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with presentations groups
12 Class Activities: In-class peer review of Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment +Individual Reflections (SW #6) Due Today: Peer Review Draft- Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment Homework: FFN- Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment+Individual Reflections (SW #6)	W E E K 13	14 Class Activities: Due Today: FFN- Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment+Individual Reflections Homework: GROUP PRESENTATIONS
19 GROUP PRESENTATIONS	W E E K 14	21 GROUP PRESENTATIONS
26 NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break!		28 NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break!

December		
3 Assigned: Final reflective memo and Final portfolio REVISIONS	W E E K 15	5 (Dec 9 is the Last Day to Withdraw from the University) REVISIONS
10 (Dec 10 is Last Day of Classes for Fall semester) Class Activities: <u>Due Today: FINAL PORTFOLIO</u> Have a wonderful break!	W E E K 16	

***Portfolios Returned By Final Exam Time Slot**