Technical Writing

ENGL 3203-201 (MW 11:00-12:20) Spring 2019

Syllabus

Instructor	Dr. Sally Henschel Office: Bea Wood 211 940.397.4731 sally.henschel@msutexas.edu
Office hours	Mon. and Wed. 12:30 – 4:30 Tues. and Thur. 11:00 – noon Other hours by appointment
Prerequisites	Communication core
Course description	The purposes and practice of expository writing in the professions, with particular emphasis on writing related to each student's major. Topics include audience analysis, communication ethics, collaboration, information design, technical editing, and professional writing genres (letters, e-mails, memos, procedures, proposals, reports, and presentations).
Course materials	Johnson-Sheehan. *Technical Communication Today*. Pearson, sixth edition
Course outcomes	Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze communication contexts rhetorically by understanding subject, readers (audiences), and purpose. Measurement: Completion of course reading assignments, and successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Analyze and apply the ethical responsibilities involved in technical communication. Measurement: Completion of course reading assignments, observation and evaluation of face-to-face and online discussions, and successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Write effective, meaningful technical prose. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Apply concepts of information design to create convincing, usable, and informative documents. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Create technical documents that solve problems and improve situations through communication. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Communicate effectively with a diverse audience. Measurement: Observation and evaluation of face-to-face and online asynchronous discussions, completion of proposal presentation, and successful completion of individual and collaborative projects.

Graded course assignments	**Individual assignments:**	
	• Resume	5 points
	• Cover letter	5 points
	• Writing procedure	10 points
	• Progress report	20 points
	• Editing quizzes (5)	10 points
	Team assignments:	
	• Project pitch	5 points
	• Proosal	10 points
	• Final report	20 points
	• PM site w/style guide	5 points
	• Final presentation	5 points
	Team member evaluation	5 points
	Total points:	**100 points**

Grading system	A = 100—90% B = 89—80% C = 79—70 D = 69—60% F = <60%

Late assignment policy	All assignments will be due on dates assigned. **No late work will be accepted.** Students falling two assignments behind are subject to administrative withdrawal from the course by the instructor.

Attendance policy	After 5 absences, a student is subject to being dropped from the course with a grade of "F."
	Two tardies are counted as one absence. A "tardy" is when one arrives late to class or leaves early (i.e., 5-14 minutes)
	Arriving 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes before class ends counts as an absence.

Academic dishonesty	All students are expected to adhere to the Midwestern State University Student Honor Creed when completing any work for this course. When using the content or ideas of others, both published and unpublished sources, students must use accepted documentation conventions (e.g., APA or MLA). See the *MSU Student Handbook* (attached to course website) to read the Student Honor Creed and the university's policy on academic dishonesty.

Professionalism	Members of this class are expected to treat one another with courtesy, professionalism, and respect. Repeated unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior can result in 50-100 points being deducted from a student's final grade for the course per instance of such behavior.

Cell phone use	Unless a cell phone is being used for a class activity, **the cell phone needs to be put away during the class session** (e.g., in a pocket, purse, or backpack). If you receive a

call or text to which you need to read or respond, please leave the room to do so. If you are using an e-text, please access the e-text on the class computer. **Earbuds are not allowed in class** unless you have obtained permitted use through Disability Services and provided the instructor the necessary documentation.

Research & creative opportunities at MSU	Enhancing Undergraduate Research Endeavors and Creative Activities (EURECA) is a program that provides opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in high-quality research and creative activities with faculty. EURECA provides incentives and funding through a system that supports faculty and students in a cooperative research process. For more information, contact the Office of Undergraduate Research, (940) 397-6274 or eureca@msutexas.edu. Information and resources are available on the EURECA website.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Midwestern State University is committed to providing equal access for qualified students with disabilities to all university courses and programs, and by law, all students with disabilities are guaranteed a learning environment that provides reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. This guarantee is provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA reads: "No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subject to discrimination by any such entity."

To obtain disability support services, students must
- be accepted for admission to Midwestern State University,
- complete a request for services form available through the Office of Disability Services, and
- provide current documentation from a qualified professional (such as a licensed physician, psychologist, audiologist, etc.) diagnosing the disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

If the instructor does not have proper notification, she will expect the same performance from each student enrolled in the course.

For information see the Disability Services website.

Assignment Schedule

Mon./Wed.	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Week One Jan. 14, 16	Introduction to Technical Communication Starting Your Career	Reading: Chapters 1, 5 Assign: Resume
Week Two Jan. 23	Profiling Your Readers Writing E-mails, Letters, and Memos	Reading: Chapter 2, 6 **Due: Resume Jan. 24** Assign: Application Letter/Personal Statement
Week Three Jan. 28, 30	Organizing and Drafting	Reading: Chapter 15, Appendix A Grammar & Punctuation (For all quizzes) **Due: Application Letter/job ad Jan. 31** **Q1 Sentence errors**
Week Four Feb. 4, 6	Working in Teams Writing Descriptions and Specifications Writing Technical Definitions (in-class assign.)	Reading: Chapters 3, 7 Assign: Team development/topic selection
Week Five Feb. 11, 13	Writing Instructions and Documentation Using Plain and Persuasive Style	Reading: Chapter 8, 16, Assign: team project pitch **Q2 Comma usage**
Week Six Feb. 18, 20	Managing Ethical Challenges Thinking Like an Entrepreneur	**Due: Writing a procedure (individual), Feb. 19** Reading: Chapters 4, 12
Week Seven Feb. 25, 27	Designing Documents and Interfaces Writing a Proposal	**Due: Project pitch (team) Feb. 26** Reading: Chapter 17, 9 **Q3 Subject/verb agreement**
Week Eight Mar. 4, 6	Researching in Technical Workplaces	Reading: Chapters 14 **Due: Project Proposal (team) Mar. 7** Assign: Progress Report (individual)
Week Nine Mar. 11, 13	Writing a Progress Report Creating and Using Graphics	Reading: Chapter 18 Workshop progress report **Q4 Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement/Reference**
Week Ten Mar. 18-22	Spring Break!	
Monday Mar. 25	Last day to withdraw from a course, 4:00 p.m. Drops after this date = "F"	
Week Eleven Mar. 25, 27	Writing a Formal Report	**Due: Progress Report (individual), Mar. 28** Reading: Chapter 11 Assigned: Formal Report **Q5 Pronoun Case**

Mon./Wed.	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Week Twelve Apr. 1, 3	**Team meetings scheduled: no formal classes this week.**	
Week Thirteen Apr. 8, 10	Revising and Editing for Usability	Reading: Chapter 19 Assign: Poster Presentation **Q6 Apostrophe**
Week Fourteen Apr. 15, 17	Preparing and Giving Presentations Persuading Others April 18, holiday, no class.	Reading: Chapter 13, 20 **Q7 Semicolon and colon**
Week Fifteen Apr. 22, 24	Workshop * April 25: Attend Celebration of Scholarship 9-5	**Due: Formal Report (team), April 23 Q8 Parallelism**
Week Sixteen Apr. 29, May 1	Presentation Workshop	**Due: Team PM site w/style guide (team), May 2**
Finals Week	Monday May 6, 10:30-12:30	Upload final presentation, Sunday May 5 by midnight. **Due: Final team presentation Due: Team Evaluations**