

ENGLISH 3203: TECHNICAL WRITING ONLINE
MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2020

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Office Hours On Campus or over Zoom or phone:

Monday and Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. – noon;

Tuesday and Thursday, noon – 1:00 p.m.

And by appointment

Please note that masks and social distancing will be required for live consultations.

REQUIRED TEXT

It is your responsibility to purchase the textbook and have your textbook no later than the second week of class. Digital copies of the book as well as rentals are available in the bookstore and on the bookstore website.

- Technical Communication (Twelfth Edition) by Mike Markel and Stuart A. Selber, MacMillan Publishers, ISBN: 9781319058616
(You will need the 12th edition of the text not an earlier one.)

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

This class will be delivered using the **D2L Learning Management System (LMS)**. This is a completely online course. In order to take this online course, you must have a reliable Internet connection and a desktop or laptop computer.

If you have a technical problem, resources are available on D2L and through MSU's Distance Education department. However, you are responsible for working with them to troubleshoot any technical problems. Plan ahead and submit work well before each deadline in case you have an Internet outage or technical problem.

Technical difficulties or failure to read instructions are not excuses for late or incomplete work in an online class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 3203 provides a critical introduction to the genres, processes, and ethics of writing in professional settings. This includes strategies for negotiating rhetorical situations, writing as part of a group, and responding effectively to others' work, as well as making basic decisions about style and document design.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. 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 project.
2. Create technical documents that solve problems and improve situations through communication.
 - Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative project.
3. Analyze and apply the ethical responsibilities involved in technical communication.
 - Measurement: Completion of course reading assignments, observation and evaluation of online discussions, and successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative project.
4. Write effective, meaningful technical prose.
 - Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative project.
5. Apply concepts of information design to create convincing, usable, and informative documents.
 - Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative project.
6. Communicate effectively with a diverse audience.
 - Measurement: Observation and evaluation of online discussions and successful completion of individual and collaborative projects.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & POINTS: AN OVERVIEW

Unit One

Personal Introduction Discussion Board Post (DB1)	5 points
Professional Introduction Email	5 points
Quiz #1	5 points

Unit Two

Ethics Discussion Board Post (DB2)	5 points
Collaborative Ethics Memo	10 points
Quiz #2	5 points

Unit Three

Jobs Discussion Board Post (DB3)	5 points
Peer Review Report 1 (PR1)	5 points
Job Materials	10 points
Quiz #4	5 points

Unit Four

Recommendation Discussion Board Post (DB4)	5 points
Peer Review Report 2 (PR2)	5 points
Recommendation Report	15 points
Quiz #4	5 points

Final

Final Reflection	10 points
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Total: **100 points**

The points in this course translate to a letter grade as follows:

- 9-10 (90% - 100%) = A
- 8-8.99 (80% - 89.9%) = B
- 7-7.99 (70% - 79.9%) = C
- 6-6.99 (60% - 69.9%) = D
- 5.99 (59.9%) and below = F

Note: Grades are not rounded up. For instance, a 79.9% is a "C" **not** a "B". This class will not use the plus/minus grading system.

According to MSU's Undergraduate Catalog, "letter grades have the following significance:

- A indicates excellent work
- B indicates good work
- C indicates satisfactory work
- D indicates passing work
- F indicates failing work" (73).

Consequently, work that meets the basic requirements earn a C, not an A or B. If you wish to earn As and Bs, you will have to work harder to produce better than satisfactory, or average, writing.

GRADING SCALE

Students often ask about the grading scale for the course or what a particular grade means. The description below gives you more information about each letter grade. Note that the descriptions highlight general aspects of the quality of the work for each grade. They do NOT include all of the elements of each assignment.

A (90-100): The grade of A is earned through superior achievement in the class. The A grade demonstrates excellence in ability and effort.

B (80-89): The grade of B is earned through above-average achievement in the class. B-level work meets all of the requirements for the course and includes clear and coherent writing that is well considered and organized.

C (70-79): The grade of C is earned through average achievement in the class. A C is a perfectly acceptable grade for the course and reflects work that meets all of the requirements for the class but may still need some further development.

D (60-69): The grade of D is earned through below average achievement in the class. While the D is considered a passing grade, the D work may be incomplete, may not meet all of the requirements of the course, or may be seriously lacking in clarity and/or correctness.

F (59 and below): While there are a number of reasons a student might earn a grade of F, generally the grade reflects work that does not meet the requirements of the course or is incomplete.

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Please read these carefully.

Submission Format & Policy

By enrolling in this class, the student expressly grants MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student’s work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and for educational purposes.

- **Note:** You may not submit any work for a grade in this class that already has been (or will be) submitted for a grade in another course, unless you obtain the explicit written permission of me and the other instructor involved *in advance*.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation at the end and a listing in "Works Cited" or "References")—whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. Penalties for plagiarism in this course can include failure of an assignment, failure of the course, and/or a formal university report of plagiarism. I will use Turnitin on D2L for each writing assignment submitted in the class.

Late Work

Assignments are due on the day and time listed above on the course schedule and in the weekly folders online. Due dates and times are firm. Late work is only accepted when accompanied by a doctor's note or approved documentation. Late work submitted without documentation for any reason will not be accepted. If you know you are going to be away from your computer for any reason in advance, please plan to complete coursework in advance of your absence.

Deadlines

An online course gives you the flexibility to do your coursework when it best fits your schedule, as long as you meet deadlines set by your instructor. Do not let this flexibility be your downfall. Set aside time in your schedule to participate online and to complete your assignments. You will have frequent deadlines to keep you on track. Do not fall behind. Playing catch-up causes stress, and stress reduces learning.

If a serious life issue prevents you from staying current in your coursework, contact your instructor as soon as possible, and explain your circumstances.

Attendance in Online Courses

Taking an online course is a different style of learning for many people. You may think you will be learning on your own, but you will soon discover many opportunities to work as a team with other students and to communicate with the instructor of your online course. You will find the support you need and have a great learning experience.

Because you do not come to campus and sit in a classroom, attendance is determined by your active participation and communication in the course. Make sure that you log in frequently, participate in your course activities and discussions, and check your MSU email regularly. Students who succeed in online classes keep a schedule just as they would if they were attending class on campus, and they communicate with one another and their instructor frequently. Attendance is vital to your success. Good attendance usually leads to good grades.

I can and will check attendance in the course by running a report of login information. Students who do not login and complete assignments each week will be contacted. Students who fail to login and complete assignments for two weeks may be dropped from the class.

- **Please Note:** *Students who have not logged into the class by Friday of the first week of classes may be dropped from the course to make room for students on the waiting list.*

Communicating with the Instructor

You have several ways of communicating with your instructor: phone, email, Zoom, and live consultations.

If you have a personal concern (such as a question about a grade), **email me using your MSU account and include your M number.** If you would like to meet with me on campus or via Zoom, send me an email or leave a message on my office phone. I may be in meetings during the workday, so if you desire a live consultation and cannot come in during my office hours, scheduling an appointment with me is best. Due to the need to determine the exact identity of my students prior to giving out any personal information, **I will only discuss your progress in the course in emails sent from your MSU email account** or through D2L.

Grade Negotiation

Often, students “negotiate” for a higher grade in the final weeks of class. I will not consider requests for grades to be reconsidered, accept late work, offer “extra credit,” or re-evaluate previous work so that a student may earn a higher score in the class. If you need to earn a particular grade for financial aid, academic scholarships, participation in athletic programs, degree requirements, or other reasons, please plan to do the work to earn the necessary grade throughout the course of the semester.

Appropriate online conduct

Appropriate academic conduct includes doing assigned work, meeting deadlines, participating in online discussions, and completing all the required elements of the course. It also means following these basic rules of netiquette:

- Using proper capitalization, spelling, and grammar.
- Signing your name to all email messages and discussion postings.
- Providing descriptive but concise subject lines.

Furthermore, appropriate academic conduct means maintaining a safe learning environment based on mutual respect and civility. All participants in HSU online courses are expected to behave professionally by adhering to these standards of conduct in the online environment:

- Respect other people's privacy as well as your own.
- Never transmit or promote content known to be illegal.
- Forgive other people's mistakes
- Never use harassing, threatening, embarrassing, or otherwise abusive language or actions.

Online communication that fails to meet these standards of conduct will be removed from the course. Repeated misconduct may result in being blocked from online discussions, receiving a grade penalty, or being dismissed from the course.

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 940-397-4140.

Safe Zone Statement

The professor considers this online classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

Contacting Your Instructor

Feel free to contact me either via phone or email. Email is generally a faster way to reach me. Please understand that I will respond on the next business day if you contact me on weekends or after hours.

Writing Center

Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, TASP's Learning Center provides tutoring support in a number of core courses and subject areas. Writing tutors are available Monday through Thursday from 11:00am to 6:00pm and Sunday 2:00pm to 9:00pm. Remember that you don't need an appointment to utilize these services.

For Distance Education students, TASP has partnered with Thinkingstorm, an online tutoring company that provides you with high-quality, 24/7 tutoring support. Located at the top of your D2L course page, select the tutoring tab to book an appointment with a tutor.

Campus Carry Statement

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at <http://mwsu.edu/campus-carry/rules-policies>.

--Syllabus created 8/2020