ENGL 3301.B23 Technical and Professional Writing, Fall 2012
Fall 2012 – Blended Course Meets Face-to-Face Tuesdays & Online Thursdays
Tentative Schedule

Susan Garza, PhD, Instructor

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Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 11-12, Tuesday 1-2 & 3:30-5:30

Course Description: A course designed to help students gain practical experience in finding and interpreting information and writing reports and documents for specialized audiences in the professional world. ENGL 3301 will be held in a computer-assisted classroom. Satisfies university computer literacy requirement. Typing ability is a prerequisite for this course. Prerequisites: ENGL 1301 and 1302.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of courses within the technical writing/journalism minors, a student will
• identify a need or problem by describing the factors involved
• explain a viable solution to a need or problem in a department, the larger university, or the community
• create a document that reflects an effective interweaving of purpose and audience.

Graded Activity:
• 10% Weekly Activities - I expect students will practice respect and responsibility as a part of this learning community. For each day that you are present in class (both face-to-face and online), if you participate in coursework and discussions, and complete work assigned, you will receive full credit. Any work not included in the other graded activities will be included in this category.
• 10% Topic Discussion – In order to develop a good understanding of what it means to do technical/workplace writing, we will discuss several topics. You will be required to be a group leader for one discussion, and for the other discussions you will have to respond to the information posted in the discussions.
• 20% Usability Test – In order to prepare to create your own chapter for the document we will produce, you will conduct a usability test on one chapter from the texts we are studying.
• 20% Visual Analysis – Using the information found in the Palmquist text, you will complete three analyses exercises.
• 20% Chapter Proposal – You will present a proposal for a chapter to be included in the document we are developing.
• 20% Chapter – As part of a group you will create one of the chapters chosen from the submitted proposals.
Students will practice respect and responsibility as a part of this learning community. Here are some things you can do to exhibit an attitude of respect and responsibility:

- Post assignments on time. Early is even better.
- Work extra hard to get to know other classmates.
- Reach out through email or Blackboard posts to support each other. If you have good info/tips on what is working for you/resource ideas, please share with the group so we can help each other out.
- Respect other classmates by watching what you say.
- Add your opinions to/participate in the discussions.
- Check the assignments every week. Don’t wait until the last minute.
- Be helpful to other students.
- Don’t get behind. If you get behind in an online course it is harder to get back on track than it is in a traditional course.
- Stay focused and stay connected.
- Keep up with your assignments and your grades. It is not the teacher’s responsibility to tell you what you have or haven’t turned in. Your grades will be available in Blackboard so all you have to do is regularly check to make sure you have grades posted for all work.
- Plagiarism should not be a part of your writing practices. You will be encouraged to rewrite any documents that you need help with. Most often the issue is not that a student is trying to steal another’s work, but rather a lack of experience in how best to incorporate the discussions of others in their own writing. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor if you feel you need extra assistance in this area.

In general terms, students are expected to "demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction and ability to manage their own affairs" and to "conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty." Instances of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi General Academic Policies and Regulations as listed in the current catalog.

**Required Statements:**

- Notice to 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 call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance.

- Reminder to English Majors: As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.
• Academic Advising: The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

• Grade Appeal Process: As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

What Are 21st Century Technical Communication Skills?
A 21st century technical communicator creates documents that communicate effectively, persuasively, and concisely. Specifically, the technical communicator

• solves problems to help achieve an organization’s goals
• addresses a particular user/purpose/task
• acquires, evaluates, and applies core knowledge and designs content
• integrates cultural and ethical considerations
• promotes collaboration
• incorporates appropriate combination(s) of text or graphics
• uses appropriate tools/media technology

Texts/Supplies
• The Essentials of Technical Communication by Elixabeth Tebeaux and Sam Dragga, Oxford University Press, 2011.
• Other assigned readings.
• Thumb Drive to save computer files.
Online Statements

Description of lessons/modules
Lessons/modules will include work in peer review of drafts, group discussions and presentations.

Technical support information/link
The Island Online (IOL) https://iol.tamucc.edu

Technical requirements for course
Computer Requirements
IOL runs on a web based application called Blackboard through a web browser. If your computer can successfully run Microsoft Internet Explorer or any of its alternatives, then you will be able to use IOL. Please note that your web browser must be configured properly to work with IOL by installing Sun Java Runtime Environment, ensuring Javascript, pop-up blockers, and cookies settings are properly configured. To check if your web browser is compatible with IOL you can do a browser check-up by visiting the IOL site at https://iol.tamucc.edu/. You may also check a list of IOL compatible browsers.

Delivery of instructor feedback
Instructor response to online requests usually occurs within a 24 hour period, but you can expect a response within 3 days.

Student login expectations
Students will be required to login a minimum of once per day on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. It is recommended that students check daily for updates.

Specific login instructions
Blackboard Login https://bb9.tamucc.edu/webapps/login/

Faculty availability to support students
Instructor maintains a consistent web presence and is available to meet online in the Blackboard synchronous environment or via phone meetings for students who need more help.
**Types of required interactions**

*Email*
- Always include a subject line
- Remember without facial expressions some comments may be taken the wrong way. Be careful in wording your posts.
- Use standard fonts.
- Do not send large attachments without permission.
- Special formatting such as centering, audio messages, tables, html, etc. should be avoided unless necessary to the message
- Respect the privacy of other class members

*Discussion Groups*
- Review the discussion threads thoroughly before entering the discussion
- Try to maintain threads by using the “Reply” button rather than starting a new topic
- Do not make insulting or inflammatory statements to other members of the discussion group
- Be patient and read the comments of other members thoroughly before adding your remarks
- Be cooperative with group leaders in completing assigned tasks
- Be positive and constructive in group discussions
- Respond in a thoughtful and timely manner

*Blog*
- Introduce yourself to the other learners in the blog session
- Be polite and do not use derogatory statements
- Be concise in responding to others in the blog session
- Be prepared to participate in the blog session at the scheduled time
- Be constructive in your comments and suggestions
**Tentative Course Schedule**

This plan is only for the readings and major projects.

- **Essentials of Technical Communication** – Tebeaux (ETC)
- **Designing Writing** – Palmquist (DW)
- **Articles on BlackBoard** (ABB)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Readings—to be read for class</th>
<th>In Class Day One</th>
<th>Online Class Day Two</th>
<th>Major Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to course View Video on usability</td>
<td>Blog on course expectations, zombies, survival guide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Neilson; Handout on Think aloud (ABB) Sept 1. none</td>
<td>Blog on readings Form usability testing groups Write “script” and questions</td>
<td>Pick groups for chapter reports Perform usability test Begin writing usability report.</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Read Chapter 1 in ETC and Keenan on planning (ABB) Read Chapter 2 in ETC</td>
<td>Blog on readings Chapter presentations Discussion on report format...decide as class Work on usability report</td>
<td>Blog on reading Chapter presentations Work on usability report</td>
<td><strong>Usability Report due with field notes due on BB by 5 pm (scan field notes and submit as .pdf file)</strong></td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Chapter 3 in ETC; Read handout on taking field notes Read Chapter 4 in ETC</td>
<td>Blog on readings Chapter presentations <a href="#">Smarthinking on Observation</a> View Zombie observations clip Discuss chapter content assignment and annotated bibliography</td>
<td>Blog on readings Chapter presentations Work on observations report</td>
<td><strong>Observations report due along with field notes on BB by 5pm</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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| Week 5 | Read Chapter 5 in ETC  
Read Chapter 6 in ETC | Blog on readings  
Chapter presentations  
Work on chapter content ideas and research for annotated bib | Blog on readings  
Chapter presentations  
Work on chapter content ideas and research for annotated bib | **Chapter content proposal due on BB by 5pm** |
|------|------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Week 6 | Research readings | Blog on readings  
Work on annotated bib | Blog on readings  
Work on annotated bib | **Annotated bib due on BB by 5 pm** |
| Week 7 | Read Part one in DW  
Read Part Two in DW | Blog on readings  
Work on Chapter mock-up | Blog on readings  
Work on Chapter mock-up | **Chapter Mock-up due on BB by 5pm** |
| Week 8 | Read Part Three in DW  
Find information on cover letters & resumes to share with class | Blog on reading  
Discuss / vote on chapter mock-ups  
Chose chapter leaders  
Share information on Cover letter and resumes  
Work on Cover letters and resumes | Blog on reading  
Select teams  
Look at MOU  
Work on either cover letters or as a team begin working on MOU | **Cover letters and resumes are due by 5pm on BB** |
| Week 9 | Read Chapter 6 in ETC | Work on MOU  
Begin drafting chapter | Blog on progress  
Work on MOU and chapter draft | **MOU due by 5 pm on BB** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Read Chapter</th>
<th>Blog on progress</th>
<th>Blog on progress</th>
<th>Chapter draft due by 5 pm on BB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>7 in ETC</td>
<td>Progress reports (in class writing-due by end of class hard copy) Work on chapter draft</td>
<td>Progress reports (in class writing-due by end of class hard copy) Work on chapter draft</td>
<td>Chapter draft due by 5 pm on BB</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>8 in ETC</td>
<td>Progress reports (in class writing-due by end of class hard copy) Usability test on chapter drafts Work on 2nd iteration</td>
<td>Progress reports (in class writing-due by end of class hard copy) Usability test on chapter drafts Work on 3rd iteration</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>9 in ETC</td>
<td>Progress reports (in class writing-due by end of class hard copy) Usability test on chapter drafts Work on 4th iteration</td>
<td>Progress reports (in class writing-due by end of class hard copy) Usability test on chapter drafts Work on 5th iteration</td>
<td>Final chapter due on BB by 5pm</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>10 in ETC</td>
<td>Work on chapter presentation to class</td>
<td>Work on chapter presentation to class</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>11 in ETC</td>
<td>Chapter presentations</td>
<td>No class. Turkey Day</td>
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<td>Week</td>
<td>Task 1</td>
<td>Task 2</td>
<td>Task 3</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Read Chapter 12 in ETC</td>
<td>Work on debriefing packet</td>
<td>Work on debriefing packet</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Work on debriefing packet.</td>
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<td>Debriefing Due on BB by 5pm</td>
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<td>Final</td>
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