**WELCOME TO THIS WRITING COMMUNITY.**

In this setting you, your student peers, and I will write during each class meeting, and we will discuss our writing tasks. You will undertake writing projects that allow you (1) to connect documents and activities to your own academic objectives and your future workplace and (2) to address needs or problems in the community that affect you in some manner.

I do not prescribe all assignments. You will have to think for yourself. For some in-class work and projects beyond the classroom, you will work collaboratively with your classmates to benefit from their competencies. WE MOTIVATE EACH OTHER, and we want everyone to succeed.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course gives you experience in obtaining and interpreting information within university, community, and online settings to write various kinds of documents for specialized audiences to address a specific need. Prerequisites include English 1301 and 1302.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By engaging in the course activities, students will learn to communicate. They will

1. **analyze information**
2. **analyze purpose and audience**
3. **create rhetorically effective professional documents**
These learning outcomes stem from 21st Century Technical Communication Skills:

A 21st century technical communicator creates documents that communicate effectively, persuasively, and concisely. Specifically, the technical communicator

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

TEXTS AND MATERIALS


Flash drives to save your work. Email your own work to yourself. (If you have any problems saving your work, please contact the computer assistance office.) Pay for printing of daily work.

COURSE CONCEPTS

By becoming aware of the writing required to be successful in the workplace and analyzing the different types of writing, you will gain an understanding of the following concepts and be able to apply them in various documents: informational memorandums, proposals, analytical reports, and correspondence:

- Audience - identify and understand specific needs and expectations of audiences
- Role of collaboration in the writing process - peer review, functions of collaborating members
- Revision/editing - importance of drafting, several revisions, and final editing
- Role of teacher in writing process as facilitator
- Effective grammar
- Concise language /precise language: no slang
- Mechanics/punctuation
- Tone/style: removal of any informal and conversational language
- Presentation of information/Formatting to help the reader
- Design elements - white space, paragraphing, grouping information, and visual aids
- Role of research —surveys, interviews, company publications, official websites, data bases
- Decision making
- Role of technology in document creation
- Role of oral communication - in obtaining information and making presentations
- Documentation styles (APA, MLA)
**YOUR AUTHORITY AS A WRITER**

My goal is to focus on your authority as a writer. [You bring certain knowledge and skills to the class.] In this student-centered class you will emerge as an expert. You will not passively receive information from me. You will discover information in our textbook, in our online course website, from on-site observations, interviews, and from online sources.

You will choose the projects, go out into the field, conduct interviews with professionals in your future workplaces, request information from contact persons at the university and within community agencies, study and respond to the ideas of technical writers featured in our textbook, and interact with peers.

You will analyze a need or a problem and generate solutions using written and visual information.

**YOU AS A KEY AGENT IN YOUR LEARNING AND YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS: WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES?**

This is a student-centered course. You are the key agent involved in independent thinking, identifying projects, planning, and making decisions and choices based on the information you gather and interpret within the classroom and in the community.

You are expected to move beyond the traditional student role in which the teacher controls the activities. You will become a self-directed learner, and you will create opportunities for your academic growth and future professional development. You are responsible for your grades.

**INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING: GIVING YOU AN ADVANTAGE**

| Each project will be different for each student. | History major who wishes to work for a museum |
| Tailor three key projects to connect to your major or your future profession or workplace. | CJ major who hopes to work for Texas Parks and Wildlife |
| Modify each assignment to develop new skills or enhance your abilities. | Psychology major wants to evaluate surveys included in an experiment |
| Pre-veterinary major or pre-pharmacy majors- build criteria into activities: statistics, scientific research. | Biology major wants to gain experience in documenting scientific information |
| Reach beyond your usual learning content | English major will benefit from APA styles |

**HOW TO CREATE A PROFESSIONAL WORKPLACE/ENVIRONMENT**
To create a meaningful and professional experience in this class we cannot have interference caused by distractions. We view this class as a professional work setting. Each of us wants to exhibit professional responsibilities and behaviors. What is expected of you at your future place of employment is what we should expect to achieve our goals.
Cell Phones

Turn off all cell phones and put them away in book bags or purses. Do not leave in the middle of class to use your phone. I will have to count the interruption as an absence. If you choose to use your phone instead of doing assigned work, I will not be able to grade your portfolios. Wait until the end of class to use your cell phone and the class computers (for personal and social purposes).

WRITING WORKSHOP

This computer-based class is a hands-on writing workshop environment. During each class meeting you will have an active role as you work on the phases of each project. Also, you will respond to the work of your classmates, and from your classmates you will receive feedback for your work. This class gives you collaborative experiences that are similar to those in a professional workplace.

This class will require regular correspondence between you and me, you and your other classmates, and you and university and community sources needed to gather information.

WE NEED YOU IN CLASS

Because of this workshop approach, you need to be in class. You will work on your assignments during each class meeting. An absence means a 0 for any in-class writing grade.

Having car trouble is not a valid excuse for missed work. Send the assignment with a friend. Please do not email assignments to me. I have found viruses, and some files do not open.
Absences will affect your performance just as absences will affect your performance at the workplace. If a student is absent when a draft of a paper is due, the daily grade will suffer, and that also means that part of the portfolio will be missing. [Missing parts will affect the grade.]

GRADING

- **Twenty-five** percent (25%) of your grade will come from responses to the text readings, quizzes, in-class memos, drafts of work due in class, proposals presented in class, responses to oral presentations, and emails requested by professor. Responses to readings are done at the beginning of class. There is no make-up work if a student is tardy to class.

- **Seventy-five** percent (75%) of your grade will come from 3 portfolio projects. Each stage of a project has to be completed according to due date.

  - **Portfolio 1:** Thirty percent (30%) of your grade comes from this portfolio: 3 parts: Interview Report, Observation Report, Fact Finding Report
  
  - **Portfolio 2:** Fifteen percent (15%) of your grade comes from portfolio (4 parts: chronological resume, functional resume, letter of application, strategy memo)
  
  - **Portfolio 3:** Twenty-five percent (25%) of your grade comes from portfolio (3 parts: reflection, professional report, drafting)

- Five percent (5%) of your grade comes from the oral presentation of Portfolio 3. You must be present for all presentations to receive your grade.

You are the person responsible for your writing improvement and the success of your projects and documents AND your grades.

Your projects are considered public documents, and the readers are professionals; thus, we will work to prepare documents that meet high expectations and standards. You need to understand that I cannot assign an A to a paper that does not meet the criteria for excellence. I take much time to read and respond to your papers. Use my comments to improve your writing.
IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND AN ASSIGNMENT OR IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE

If you do not understand a class assignment, **come to the office immediately or call or email** me.

### POLICIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Attendance/Absences</th>
<th>Plagiarism: Taking What Is not Yours</th>
<th>Late Work</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You will be responsible for your writing improvement and your grade. Thus, you have to attend class on time and be prepared to work.</td>
<td>Academic Integrity and Dishonesty</td>
<td>Late work will not be accepted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each absence is a zero for the daily work.</td>
<td>Students are expected to &quot;demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction and ability to manage their own affairs&quot; and to &quot;conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty.&quot;</td>
<td>Homework and in-class writing cannot be made up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you realize that an emergency will keep you from class for more than one day, be sure to notify the university officials about your emergency. Begin this process with me. Call me first to discuss your emergency.</td>
<td>Please refer to the 2000-2001 Texas A&amp;M University-Corpus Christi Catalog for additional requirements.</td>
<td>Major projects require drafts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and tardiness affect your grade. After 3 missed class meetings, up to 10 points may be deducted from final grade.</td>
<td>DO NOT COPY FROM online sources.</td>
<td>I cannot accept a portfolio that is missing drafts that I read, marked, and returned.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Days off</th>
<th>DO NOT COPY WORK FROM OTHER STUDENTS' PAPERS.</th>
<th>If you miss a quiz because of an emergency, you may take ONE make-up quiz at the end of the semester (date on schedule).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will give specific days off during the semester to minimize absences. Use these days to take care of personal matters.</td>
<td>Plagiarism has severe consequences. Do not jeopardize your academic standing.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
*The reading assignments and the preliminary drafts of portfolio work will be affected by absences. In-class writing activities help us prepare the portfolios. Therefore, if you are absent, you miss the preparation. An absence means a 0 for any in-class writing grade.

**STAY IN TOUCH WITH ME**

**Emergencies**
If you have an emergency and have to miss class, please CALL ME. Also, write a memo explaining the emergency. **KEEP documentation** (funeral home notice, emergency room receipt, courtroom notice).

If you realize that an emergency will keep you from class for more than one day, be sure to notify the university officials about your emergency. Begin this process with me.

**End of the month inventory**
At the end of each month I will ask you for feedback regarding your progress and any factors that may interfere with that progress. Inform me of any obstacles to your achievement.

**RESOURCES**
CASA/Writing Center is a valuable, free service for all students. I encourage all students to take advantage of the feedback from the consultants/tutors who will discuss your drafts.

**SUCCESS IN THE COURSE**
I am very pleased to be working with you. You will have a productive semester. I structure the course so that you can write in class and ask questions in class. However, if you need additional help, you should work with me in my office. I treat each student with respect, and I expect students to treat each other and me with courtesy and respect.

Each one of us should encourage behaviors that help reach excellence.

**MY OFFICE DOOR IS OPEN**
If at any time you have concerns or questions regarding anything connected to the course, your performance in the course, and grades, please come to my office to talk with me privately. In the professional world, matters of a personal nature are discussed in private, not in front of fellow employees.

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF GRADES**
I do not and **CANNOT** discuss grades in class. Wait a day after a grade has been assigned to come to my office.)

**UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS**
**Notice to Students with Disabilities:** Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Disabilities Services, located in CCH.
116, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

**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.

**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.

**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 Rule 13.02.99.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.

**CONTROL OF YOUR GRADE**

*You have the power to improve your writing. You are the key factor in the success of your projects and documents AND your grades.*

**IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE**

If you do not understand a class assignment, *come to the office immediately or call or email me.*