ENGL 3301.201 Principles of Professional and Report Writing
Fall 2015
MW 2:00 – 3:15 p.m.; CH 207

WELCOME to this writing community. In this setting you will be involved in various writing projects that allow you (1) to identify needs related to your academic objectives and your future workplace and respond to those needs and (2) to address concerns or problems in the community that affect you in some manner. The main objective of this class is to help you gain the skills needed to think through these needs/concerns, analyze the audience(s) involved, secure various types of resources, generate solutions, and present these solutions in an effective manner. In class and beyond the classroom, you will work collaboratively with your classmates to benefit from the competencies that each one of you brings to this writing and learning community as we immerse ourselves in each project. (In this classroom context, your teacher will function as an active participant in this community.) You have authority as a writer; your teacher is not the only expert in this class. In fact, in this student-centered course you will emerge as an expert. You will not passively receive information from the teachers. You will conduct interviews with professionals in your future workplaces, request information from contact persons within the community, study and respond to the ideas of other writers, search for many types of other information (both traditional sources and online sources as well), and interact with your peers. YOUR ROLE as a student is to make important decisions and choices based on the information you gather and interpret. You will work as an independent and active learner in a collaborative environment.

Required Texts and Materials

- Some reliable way to electronically save your work
- Computer access/internet access/word processing programs
Course Objectives  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 to multiple writing situations:

- Audience - identify and understand the audience, writing for multiple readers
- Purpose - what do you want your writing to do
- Format - how will you present the information
- Role of collaboration in the writing process - peer review, roles and functions of collaborating members
- Revision/Editing - how each is revision different from editing, how does revision relate to audience and purpose
- Role of Others (including your teacher) in the Writing Process
- Design Elements - white space, paragraphing, headers & footers, document styles, typefaces, and visual aids
- Role of Research - questionnaires & surveys, company publications and in-house documents, computer data bases,

You will understand and use these elements by writing and working with the following types of writing:

- Memos and Short Reports
- Reports and Proposals
- Interviews
- Instructions and Other Forms of Technical Writing
- Correspondence
- Job Search Documents
- Oral Reports
- Numerous Other Formats Based on the Needs of the Audience

Student Learning Outcomes

By engaging in the course activities, students will

(1) identify a need or problem by describing the factors involved

(2) generate a viable solution to the need or problem

(3) create a document that reflects an effective interweaving of purpose and audience.

Writing Workshop  This class is designed as a hands-on writing workshop class. You will have an active role as you work on the phases of each project and respond to the work of your classmates and receive on your work. This class is designed to give you experiences that are similar to those you will experience in the workplace so you will also receive feedback from others outside the class. We will work on your assignments everyday. The work is on-going and hands-on. Writing is an active process and the more you actively participate, the better results you will see in your writing progress.
Peer Review. Professional writing means always having someone (usually a supervisor or co-worker) read, evaluate, and assess your work before it "goes out." As a regular part of the class, you will bring drafts to class of what you have written, and your classmates will review it for you. "Draft" means "as good as you can make it," not a few lines thrown together. If you do not have a draft during a peer review session, that portion of the assignment will be docked a ten percent penalty of your portfolio's final grade.

Grading

80% of your grade will come from 4 portfolio projects, which can be found on Blackboard.

All of your major work will be submitted via Blackboard. Although the class won't be completely paperless, posting your work on line will save paper, will save you money by limiting the amount you need to print, and will also insure your work is readily available to you wherever on the planet you happen to be.

10% will be based on professional responsibility; for every project completed on time, you will earn 2 ½ points. If project are not completed on time, you will not earn these points.

10% will come from your in-class writing and your abstract reflections about reading.

Citations: I prefer that you use MLA format when documenting or citing material; however, if your academic "home discipline" uses another, I will accept that provided you let me know what it is and can "point" me to some style guidelines for that format. (I am familiar enough with APA and Chicago that I don't need a style sheet for either).

Course Policies

Communicating With Me

I need to know if you are doing well, if you are having trouble, and if you have questions. I also like to kibitz (engage in small talk face to face). I can be reached in the following ways:

In Person/F2F: My office is Faculty Center 288. I am in my office during my office hours, and, quite frankly, many more hours than my office hours. If you need to see me outside of office hours, give me a quick holler, just to make sure I’m “in.” If so, come on by.

Email. Grown ups use e-mail. I will communicate with the whole class regularly via e-mail. Checking one’s e-mail is a regular expectation in most professional jobs, so “I don’t check my e-mail” isn’t a good reason for missing something important.

My e-mail is charles.etheridge@tamucc.edu. I am faithful about returning e-mails, and will return every e-mail within 24 hours. On the other hand, I am not glued to my computer and phone 24/7, so don’t email me with a question at 3:30 in the morning and expect an immediate reply. Weekend Exception. If you e-mail me late Friday afternoon or on Saturday or Sunday, you might not receive a reply until Monday morning.

Telephone. My phone number is 825-5755 (or 361-825-5755 if you are calling from outside of
Corpus or have a non-Corpus cell phone number). Call me if you need me. Leave a message if I don’t answer. This is a generational thing, I know—I have noticed many younger students (including my own children) hang up if someone doesn’t answer the phone. If you call and I don’t pick up, leave your name and a message including the number at which I can call you back.

**Facebook:** The class will have a Facebook group. You can use this to ask questions of each other, share interesting ideas, post clips of protest lit you have found, and to otherwise communicate with your classmates and me. You are not required to join this group; but it might enhance your learning experience if you do. All materials and announcements will be made by regular e-mails.

Although Facebook is a way to communicate with me, I do not “friend” current students on Facebook. If you send me a request, please do not be insulted if I do not respond. I maintain both a personal and professional presence on the social media, as should you. Do you really want me to see your pictures of what you did last weekend, esp. if we have a test and you might have studied more?

**Skype.** My Skype ID is TechWriteDrE. I only have my Skype turned on during office hours. **Texting.** Nope. I prefer not.

**Attendance and Tardy Policy** This is a project-driven class. It is about you learning by doing things. Attendance is more critical in this course than it is in any other class you have ever taken. Each class is designed to teach you something specifically about professional and workplace writing. Even more important, it is designed to keep you "on pace" to get all three required portfolios done by the end of the term. If you miss a class day for any reason, you still need to do your best to make sure you do the work for that day anyway. That's not a penalty--it's just that there's so much work to do, if you don't, you'll be sunk. If you miss two classes, for any reason, your final grade will be penalized.

**NOTE:** If you accumulate two absences that are unexcused, you have missed a week of class. I reserve the right to penalize your grade up to and including failure of the course. If you miss four or more classes without reasonable explanation, you run the risk of failing.

**Tardies:** This is an afternoon class. If you oversleep, don't tell me. Please don't be late. If you come after class starts, you will be considered tardy. Two tardies count as an unexcused absence.
Late Assignments  Late assignments must be accompanied by a cover letter that explains why it is late. Keep in mind that in the workplace there would be serious consequences for turning in papers/projects late. Based on your letter, I will determine whether or not points should be deducted your grade. Bear in mind that, if your work is late for any reason, you will not earn the Professional Responsibility points for that project.

Academic Honesty

I will follow the policy that appears in the university catalogue. Plagiarism, which is “the presentation of work of another as one's own work” is only one form of academic dishonesty, which also includes falsification (the intentional alteration of information), fabrication (the intentional invention of information), multiple submission (using the same material for two separate assignments or courses without permission from the instructors), and abuse of academic materials (the intentional destruction of resource materials). Sometimes students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example) because they are unaware of the standards that apply. If you are unsure of how to document or properly use information, please check with me WELL BEFORE THE PAPER IS DUE. Also, know that I have some heavy-duty anti-plagiarism web applications, so you'll probably get caught. If you have questions or doubts about what constitutes a breach of integrity, a violation of policies or a proper citation, it is important that you consult with me. The SMALLEST penalty you will get if you are caught is a zero on the project; you could, potentially fail the course, and, if you have plagiarized in other classes, you may face disciplinary action by the university.

I only feel it fair to notice that this issue is something the university is "Hot and Bothered" about right now, and that, if we suspect something, we are now REQUIRED to notify the administration. This isn't something we can keep "in house" any more.

All of this can be avoided simply by doing your own work to the best of your ability.

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 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

Students with Disabilities
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 Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in CCH, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

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.

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change):

NOTE: Readings should be completed on the day they are listed on the syllabus. For example, Chapter 2 of Anderson is listed for the 9th, so students should come to class having read that chapter.

Schedule of Due Dates

This is a schedule of Due Dates only. The complete daily schedule will be available on the “Daily Agneda” page, which can be accessed at http://falcon.tamucc.edu/wiki/CEtheridge/English3301Fall2014. It can also be accessed via blackboard.

August 26 Intro to Course
August 31 Abstract
Reflection Due
Sept 9  Abstract Reflection Due
Sept 15 Abstract Reflection Due
Sept 17 Portfolio One Due
Sept 22 Abstract Reflection Due
Sept 29 Abstract Reflection Due
Oct 5 Abstract Reflection Due
Oct 12 Abstract Reflection Due
Oct 19 Abstract Reflection Due
Oct 21 Portfolio Two Due
Oct 26 Abstract Reflection Due
Nov  2 Abstract Reflection Due
Nov  9 Abstract Reflection Due
Nov 11 Portfolio Three Due
Nov 16 Abstract Reflection Due
Nov 23 Abstract Reflection Due
Nov 30 Abstract Reflection Due

**Portfolio Four is Due on the Day of the Final.**

**Electronics Policies**

Cell phones and other Portable Research Devices may be used when they are part of the business of the class—doing research, communicating with an agency, etc). While we're on the subject of technology, note that you may not "record" any class, either in an audio or visual format, without the instructor's permission. I'll likely give it, but you do need to ask. We are in a computer environment; your use of the computer should be class related—doing projects or taking notes. E-mail may only be used for class-related business. Although I don't like to make such draconian pronouncements, there is rarely a professional reason in the world to be on a social networking website during class time; if I see that you are doing it, I will not say a word. I will, however, note it in my gradebook and will deduct points from your "Professional Responsibility" grade, which is ten percent of the total.

**In Conclusion**

This should be a worthwhile and even enjoyable class. You can count on me to make class as interesting and as stimulating as possible. Finally, I am here to help you, but I cannot do so unless you let me know when you need help. Communicate.