ENGL 3301
Technical and Professional Writing (for Computer Science)

Instructor: Blalock
Office: FC 127
Email: glenn.blalock@tamucc.edu
Text/Cell: 361.239.8466
Office Hours: M-R 1:00-1:45 and by appt.
Course Site: See Blackboard

Course Times and Locations:
3301.204 MW 2:00-3:15 CCH 207
3301.203 TR 2:00-3:15 CCH 208

Course Description
Designed specifically for computer science majors, this course focuses on developing students' ability to (1) use writing to communicate effectively with a range of audiences about technology; (2) identify, analyze, and appropriately integrate relevant information in their writing; (3) make informed judgments about their uses of writing based on ACM's and IEEE's code of ethics; and (4) develop their ability to function effectively individually and as members of a team to establish goals, plan tasks, meet deadlines, manage risk, and produce deliverables.

Student Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Use appropriate forms of written communication effectively with a range of audiences and for specific purposes.
  - analyze situations
  - audience, purpose, contexts, etc.
  - choose appropriate form(s) of communication
  - use effective process(s) to produce communication
  - plan, draft, revise
  - find and use appropriate content
  - meet readers' expectations for genre conventions
  - format / design, organization, citation and documentation, vocabulary, usage, punctuation, mechanics

- Apply their profession's code of ethics (ACM and IEEE) to computing-related ethical situations.

- Demonstrate ability to function effectively individually and as members of a team to establish goals, plan tasks, meet deadlines, manage risk, and produce deliverables.

Course Texts and Materials
- Readings will be online, open-source, and free
- Islander account (including email, network logon, other University services)
- Active email account that you check regularly (daily or more often)
- Access to Blackboard
- Office 365 Online (especially OneDrive) (available free through TAMUCC: [https://it.tamucc.edu/Office365/Office365.html](https://it.tamucc.edu/Office365/Office365.html)) OR
- Google account (If you don't have a Google account, you can sign up for free here: [https://accounts.google.com/SignUp?hl=en](https://accounts.google.com/SignUp?hl=en))

### Assignments

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<td>Formal Proposal</td>
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<td>Presentation: Technical Audience</td>
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**Grade Scale:** I use letter grades and assign the following values to each letter grade:
4, 3.7, 3.3, 3, 2.7, 2.3, 2, 1.7, 1.3, 1, 0

**Managing Documents & Submitting Assignments**
You will create, organize, and maintain folders for all your coursework in either Office 365 OneDrive or in Google Drive. You will use the "sharing" tools in OneDrive or Google Drive to share all your folders with me; in addition, you will share some of your folders with the whole class, some with your writing group, and some with whomever you choose. We will create these folders and work on proper sharing arrangements during our first two weeks of class. Ideally, most of your work will be done using word-processing, presentation, or other software for creating digital content. If you do handwrite or draw some of your work, you can take a picture of that and upload it to your course folder(s), too. Unless directed otherwise, please do not send coursework to me via email.

**Course Workshop Environment**
"Interaction" and "Community" will be key concepts for us this semester. Through our various interactions we will be participating in and creating a learning community.

Much of the work you do--formally and informally--will be done in small groups. Many of you may have had negative experiences with "group work," but I can assure you your experiences in this class will be different. You will learn to work effectively in small groups, and you may be part of several different small groups, formed for different purposes. I've been using groups for a number of years now, and I consider them to be an integral part of every course I teach. Participating in group activities will not be optional. Learning to work productively as a community member is one of your goals for this semester. I'm convinced that you will find the group environment to be one of the most useful and meaningful features of this course.

Although I understand that effective group work requires that group members become comfortable with one another, and that a certain amount of sociability is required to maintain positive group dynamics, I also assume that when you work in groups, you are responsible for fulfilling the goals of that particular activity and that behavior in small group settings will be as respectful and professional as it is in our whole class settings.

**Sharing and Responding to Work in Progress**
Because writing and reading are both cognitive process and social practice (processes and actions), because all writing and reading is purposeful, because all writing (and reading!) has an audience, we will share much of our work-in-progress in this course--with group mates, with other classmates, and when appropriate, with public audiences. At times during the semester, I may use student work in progress as a model for a whole class discussion.

Sharing work in progress is most useful when we all participate in the exchange and response process seriously and fully. I expect that we will provide full, focused, useful, honest commentary to one another when we exchange work. I am evaluating your participation in and contributions to this ongoing process. I understand that most of you have not had experience
with this, or you've had negative experiences. I can assure you that we will learn how to share and respond in ways that are effective and positive.

Course Policies: Responsibilities

Respect
In all settings and interactions, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct.

Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

More specifically, in this course, I want our community of learning to be a “Safe Zone”: Professional etiquette and civility are expected. Respect the diversity of the classroom. Personal attacks or hate speech are unacceptable on any grounds, including (but not limited to) race, gender, class, sexual/affectional orientation, religion, age, or disability.

"Presence" (Attendance) and Participation: Engaging with the Course
You'll notice that I have no separate portion of your grade that is assigned to “participation” (which usually includes attendance and other stuff). Instead, your “presence” and “participation”—what I call your “engagement” with the course—contribute to your grades for each of the projects you will submit. Further, rather than my determining your attendance or the ways you engaged with the course, you will be responsible for providing evidence of your engagement in each of the projects.

In each project you will submit multiple kinds of writing and evidence of “process work” (that is evidence of your planning, reading, research, drafting, revising, responding, editing, proofreading, etc.). The writing you submit will earn a % of your portfolio grade, and your process work will earn a %. I think you can see that consistent and serious “presence” and “participation”—engagement—are an expected and necessary part of the course if you intend to earn the grade you want.

Due Dates and Flexibility: Being a Responsible Learner
I understand that all of you have different learning and working styles (and different demands on your time and energy), and all that translates into different processes and paces for completing assignments and activities.

The course schedule is an "ideal" rendering of how this course will proceed, especially the schedule for working on the assignments—planning, research, drafting, sharing and responding,
and revising. However, I recognize that my concept of "ideal" will not necessarily fit anyone else's concept of "ideal."

If you are unable to meet the due dates on our course schedule, if you do not think you can produce the quality of work you want to produce within that schedule, send me an email message and propose a different due date. When I receive your proposal, I'll accept it or propose a different date.

Proposing a different due date will not affect your grade. However, if you do miss a due date without notifying me in advance and arranging for a new date, you will affect your grade. [Please note: If my "flexibility" with due dates has a negative effects on the kind of participatory learning environment that we all deserve, I reserve the right to modify this "policy."]

**Academic Integrity / Plagiarism**
Definition: In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.

This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers. Most current discussions of plagiarism fail to distinguish between:
- Submitting someone else’s text as one’s own or attempting to blur the line between one’s own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source, and
- Carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source.

Such discussions conflate plagiarism with the misuse of sources. Ethical writers make every effort to acknowledge sources fully and appropriately in accordance with the contexts and genres of their writing. (Quoted from "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices" [read online or download PDF])

Plagiarism is a serious violation of departmental and University policies, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes:
- Using the work of another as your own,
- Downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- Using resource materials without correct documentation,
- Using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
- Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on [MLA documentation rules](#) and [APA documentation rules](#) is available
at Purdue University’s OWL: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/), and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

**Writing Center**
The CASA Writing Center at TAMUCC, located in Room 112 of the Glasscock Student Success Center, provides free help for students at any stage of their writing process. Writing Consultants are trained to support writers in planning, outlining, drafting, organizing, and/or revising their writing and are also knowledgeable in citing sources in various documentation styles used in academic writing. It offers both face-to-face and online appointments for both undergraduate and graduate students. The Writing Center works closely with faculty across the TAMUCC campus to understand writing in different disciplines and to help students meet these expectations. The Writing Center encourages students to make a 30-minute appointment; however, if Writing Consultants are available, they do accept walk-in appointments. Appointments are available online as well! Visit casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php to create an account using your @islander.tamucc.edu email address. Once you have an account, you can log-on to make an appointment.

**Notice to Student 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.

**Academic Advising**
The College of Science and Engineering 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 CI 366, and can be reached at 825-3721.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 6th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.
Grade Appeal Process
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Questions?
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this syllabus, please speak with me as soon as possible. You are responsible for understanding and adhering to the policies of this course and the University.
Tentative Course Schedule

- **Week One**
  - Introductions / Introductory Writing

- **Week Two**
  - Engagement and Learning assignment
  - Professional Development assignments
  - Job Search / Workplace Writing Project

- **Week Three**
  - Engagement and Learning assignment
  - Professional Development assignments
  - Job Search / Workplace Writing Project

- **Week Four**
  - Engagement and Learning assignment
  - Professional Development assignments
  - Job Search / Workplace Writing Project

- **Week Five**
  - Engagement and Learning assignment
  - Professional Development assignments
  - Job Search / Workplace Writing Project Due

- **Week Six**
  - Engagement and Learning assignment
  - Professional Development assignments
  - Tutorial / Instructions Project

- **Week Seven**
  - Engagement and Learning Mid-Term Overview
  - Professional Development Mid-Term Overview
  - Tutorial / Instructions Project

- **Week Eight**
  - Engagement and Learning assignments
  - Professional Development assignments
  - Tutorial / Instructions Project

- **Week Nine**
  - Engagement and Learning assignments
  - Professional Development assignments
  - Tutorial / Instructions Project Due

- **Week Ten**
  - Engagement and Learning assignments
  - Professional Development assignments
  - IT Issue Project

- **Week Eleven**
  - Engagement and Learning assignments
  - Professional Development assignments
  - IT Issue Project
• **Week Twelve**
  o Engagement and Learning assignments
  o Professional Development assignments
  o IT Issue Project
• **Week Thirteen**
  o Engagement and Learning assignments
  o Professional Development assignments
  o IT Issue Project
• **Week Fourteen**
  o Engagement and Learning assignments
  o Professional Development assignments
  o IT Issue Project
• **Week Fifteen**
  o Engagement and Learning Final Overview
  o Professional Development Final Overview
  o IT Issue Project: Presentations
• **Final Exam**
  o IT Issue Project Due @ final exam