ENGL 3301.W01 (Summer II 2020)
Technical and Professional Writing

Mr. Tom Murphy

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Catalog Description

English 3301 is an introductory technical writing 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.

Required Materials


Required Technologies

- Basic emailing, web browsing, and word processing skills
- A computer with reliable Internet access and a reliable office software suite. TAMUCC provides students with access to Office 365; visit http://it.tamucc.edu/desktopsandsoftware/office365.html
- Access to Blackboard, TAMU-CC’s Learning Management System (LMS), bb9.tamucc.edu/webapps/login/. Visit iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.html to determine computer requirements for using Blackboard

About the Course

Technical and professional communicators work alone and with others to prepare documents and presentations that communicate information within business, government, industry, and the scientific community—really, any workplace setting. Technical communicators respond to a problem, whether that is in providing instructions to users of a technology, writing a workplace report, making recommendations to improve a process, presenting information on a Web page, or reporting on scientific findings. In some industries and companies, “tech writer” is a particular job title or even an entire department of job titles, while in others such writing is just one part of the work that everyone does. Because of the wide proliferation of writing and publishing technologies in recent decades, nearly every professional is or can be (or has to be) a technical writer.

This online course is designed to help you learn to 1) analyze communication contexts in terms of audiences, purposes, and situations, 2) create professional documents that solve problems and improve situations, 3) analyze and apply the ethical responsibilities involved in professional and technical writing, 4) use methods for audience analysis and participatory design, and 5) write and design multimodal documents that audiences and stakeholders find effective, convincing, and usable.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
1. Create documents (written/visual/multimodal) by using effective and appropriate rhetorical methods and strategies in writing
2. Create documents (written/visual/multimodal) by choosing and using appropriate strategies in a variety of genres
to achieve specific purposes with specific audiences
3. Create documents (written/visual/multimodal) by locating, selecting, assessing, and analyzing information sources, both print and digital, and integrate and document sources appropriately

**Graded Activities**

Complete descriptions, requirements, evaluation criteria, and rubrics are available on Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
<th>Date Due *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussions &amp; Activities</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Quizzes</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafts &amp; Peer Review</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2 times, see course schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Chart</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>July 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Analysis Report (Informal)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>August 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Due dates are tentative.

**Course Schedule**

A detailed weekly schedule is available on Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Major Project *</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>July 6-9</td>
<td>Collect documents for Writing in your Field project</td>
<td>Chapter Readings, Exercises, quizzes. All original work/postings due by 5pm on day due; response due by 11:59 pm on day due. <strong>Assignments (different) will be due on 7/8 and 7/10. All work may be submitted early.</strong></td>
<td>Introduction to technical writing. Establishing memo writing conventions, and research topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>July 4-16</td>
<td><strong>Research Memo</strong> due on Blackboard July 16th by 11:59 pm</td>
<td>Chapter Readings, Exercises, quizzes. All original work/postings due by 5pm on day due; response due by 11:59 pm on day due. <strong>Assignments (different) will be due on 7/14 and 6/7. All work may be submitted early.</strong></td>
<td>Report writing, Introduction to Observation Report Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>July 20-23</td>
<td><strong>Observation Report</strong> due on Blackboard on July 23rd by 11:59 pm</td>
<td>Chapter Readings, Exercises, quizzes. All original work/postings due by 5pm on day due; response due by 11:59 pm on day due. <strong>Assignments (different) will be due on 7/21 and 7/23. All work may be submitted early.</strong></td>
<td>Peer-review. Introduction to Annotated Bibliography Assignments / Technology of Citation Generators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>July 27-30</td>
<td><strong>Annotated Bibliography</strong> due on Blackboard on July 30th by 11:59 pm</td>
<td>Chapter Readings, Exercises, quizzes. All original work/postings due by 5pm on day due; response due by 11:59 pm on day due. <strong>Assignments (different) will be due on 7/28 and 7/30. All work may be submitted early.</strong></td>
<td>Peer-review. Introduction to Chapter Proposal Assignment. Audience / Purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>August 3-7</td>
<td><strong>Chapter Proposal</strong> due on Blackboard on August 7th by 11:59 pm</td>
<td>Chapter Readings, Exercises, quizzes. All original work/postings due by 5pm on day due; response due by 11:59 pm on day due. <strong>Assignments (different) will be due on 8/4 and 8/6. All work may be submitted early.</strong></td>
<td>Peer-review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Due dates are tentative.
Course Conduct

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:

Practice professional communication in email: Email is among the more important professional genres we use today, and I expect you will use your university email account for this course. As the class is a professional writing course, I expect that you will practice what we’re learning. We will explore this further in the course, but professional email includes a subject line and a complete inquiry, and uses language appropriate for the its context.
- Unprofessional emails will result in non-response.
- I will commonly respond to Blackboard or email requests within 24 hours, but you can expect a response within 3 days. I generally do not answer emails over the weekend.

Keep up with the class schedule: In an online class, people inevitably ask me, “What can I do to get ahead?” There are a few parts to this answer:
- ENGL 3301 is a regular college course and not a correspondence course, and isn’t designed for you to complete assignments entirely at your own pace. Part of my reasoning is about you: you’ll learn as much from each other than you will from me, and I try to run a highly interactive course. Part of my reasoning is selfish: I have scheduled coursework in such a way that I have time to read and respond to your work individually, rather than receive a bunch of everything all at once and have to sit and respond to forum posts until my eye sockets burn out.
- On early work: You may post weekly discussions early; some activities will require you to revisit and reply to others’ work. Do not forget to return at the right time and complete these portions of weekly discussions. Quizzes may be completed as early as you like.
- You may begin the two major projects early, but must do so understanding that I’ve ordered our course content and scaffolded our weekly activities so that they will help prepare you to complete and be successful on the two major projects. If you get too far ahead on those, you may end up heading in the wrong direction because you haven’t yet completed a key discussion activity or had a chance to benefit from peer review.

Be aware of late work and revision policies: Post assignments on time. This is a summer course and works at an accelerated pace—it is important that you not get behind on work. Many of us have jobs, children, and volunteer responsibilities, along with Netflix, fishing poles, and other interests. As with most things in life, having a regular schedule for getting things done will be incredibly useful. The nature of learning within the University system requires that at certain points in the semester you are provided with feedback, and an overall assessment of your performance in the class (a grade). To complete this process, I have set up a timeline for coursework projects. Any work submitted late without extension will lose 50%.
- All late work must be submitted by date listed on Class Calendar
- You must inform me via email that you have submitted late work

Extension Policy
If for some reason, you are unable to make the deadline on a major assignment (Document chart, Document Analysis) it is your responsibility to contact me and make other arrangements before the due date. The extension policy does not cover activities, drafts, quizzes, or discussions. We will discuss an alternative completion date. To extend a deadline, you must:
1. Contact me via email as soon as you know about your completion problems; I do not want to know why, just that there are issues.
2. Save your email—you will need it later.
3. Save my response to your email.
4. We will agree on an alternative date;
5. Send me an exact day, date and time that you will be submitting the work.
6. After the initial due date, it’s up to you to work on the project!
7. No additional class time will be taken on the project.
8. My involvement will be on your initiative;
9. Your submission will have copies of all our correspondence included—on the top of the project; this means you must show the time line of the requests, submission without a timeline, will be evaluated as late.

When work with an extension is submitted an email must be sent to Mr. Murphy with the following:
1. Extension submission notification in the subject line
2. Your name, section number, and assignment name in the body of the email
3. I will not review work until I have this email

**Resubmissions**

- Two works can be re-submitted for re-evaluation; HOWEVER, you must submit a work originally to be able to re-submit. These are
  - Document Chart
  - Document Analysis
- You must email me of your intention to do so; both this email and my response must be placed in the resubmission.
- A piece of writing dealing with what has changed in the resubmission and why / how this makes the piece of writing stronger must be included in the resubmission. This is a detailed piece of writing clearly defining / outlining what was changed in the piece of writing. It provides statements for what was changed and how this makes the piece of writing stronger, supporting all statements with **specific examples** of what changes were made and why.
- **The consequences of not following the above procedure: the work will be returned un-evaluated.**
- All resubmission must be in by date of August 7th 5:00 pm.

When **resubmissions** are submitted, an email must be sent to Mr. Murphy with the following:
1. Resubmission notification in the subject line
2. Your name, section number, and assignment name in the body of the email
3. I will not review work until I have this email

**Use the discussion forums:** Interacting with your classmates is just as valuable as interacting with the instructor. See the “Interacting in this Course” section of Blackboard for more details, but in general:

- Class discussions via Blackboard are an important learning tool in the course. **Take advantage of discussions. Add your opinions to/participate in the discussions, but do so respectfully.** See the “Interacting in this Course” document on Blackboard for more details and strategies.
• 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, on resources, or other ideas, please share with the group so we can help each other out.
• Use the “Troubleshooting” forum in Blackboard to ask technical or process questions. The class will become its own community of practice, and you will be amazed at how good of a resource your colleagues can be.
• Don’t use discussion forums to ask or talk about grades. Grade discussions are private and should occur with your instructor only.

Remember that you are responsible for you:
• Check the assignments every week. Don’t wait until the last minute.
• Again, don’t get behind. This is not a “work at your own pace” course and cannot be completed in two weeks at the end of the term. If you get behind in an online course it is harder to get back on track than it is in a traditional course.
• 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. 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.
• Check your email. I will email announcements and information to your islander.tamucc.edu email account. You may set up email forwarding if you wish, but you are responsible for checking email. Missing emails is not an excuse for missed work or announcements.

Course Policies: Responsibilities

"Presence" (Attendance) and Participation: Engaging with the Course
• In class daily (on time)
• Prepared to work on projects on computer

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. 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.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism
The University will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of intellectual or academic dishonesty. Violations of academic honesty will be processed under the Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.


All cases of academic misconduct are recorded in the student’s file. Consequences are
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:

1. 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
2. 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”)

It is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Students sometimes 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, or
- turning in a researched paper without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

Be aware that there are many ways to plagiarize. Information about academic citation is available at our local Writing Center at CASA.

Disabilities Accommodations
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 at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Advising
Because this course is a required part of the COSC degree plan and students’ advising is handled through the College of Science and Engineering, the following statement applies specifically to students in ENGL 3310:

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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.** 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. The drop deadline is July 26th.

**Grade Appeals**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](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 Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

**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.

*If you are concerned about a grade, see me during office hours.*