ENGLISH 271: Technical Communication

Section 01

Fall 2016 / Minnesota State University, Mankato

Instructor Information

Dr. Dawn Armfield
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Office Hours: MW 9:00am-11am, Th 10am-11am, by appointment

Communicating with the Professor

Include ENG 271 on the subject line of all email correspondence about the course as well as a concise topic of the message. I can also be reached by phone or email during office/online hours. Voice mail is recorded and forwarded to email, so please leave a message when you call my office if you want a reply.

General Information

Course Description

Introduction to learning the written and oral communication of technical information. Assignments include writing and presenting proposals, reports, and documentation. Emphasis on use of rhetorical analysis, computer applications, collaborative writing, and usability testing to complete technical communication tasks in the workplace.

Course Outcomes

Students will

- Write workplace documents and appropriately apply features and genres of workplace writing such as memos, proposals, instructions, and reports
- Clearly articulate rhetorical and audience analysis of writing situations, multiple purposes, and potential audiences for written texts (including global audiences)
- Conduct primary and secondary research and evaluate the credibility of sources
- Write and compile a research-based report that addresses a specific problem or research question
- Visually design a document using principles of page design
- Create graphics such as charts and graphs that ethically display information
- Conduct user testing of instructional documents
- Understand ethics and its implications for technical and professional writing
- Revise and edit your work and that of your classmates so that your writing is rhetorically effective, stylistically appropriate, and grammatically correct
- Use a variety of writing technologies such as word processing, presentation software, and discussion forums

- Constructively work with others on a collaborative assignment

Course Readings

There is no official book in this course. However assigned readings will be posted in D2L for certain lessons. Please make sure to log in to D2L several times a week to review your progress and to keep up with readings and assignments. Check announcements and email to stay on top of changes.

Assignments

- Assignments must be typed and are due on the assigned date; **late papers will be penalized for each late day.** For instance, 1 day late, the highest grade you can get is a B, 2 days = C, and so on. **Assignments 5 or more days overdue will not be accepted and will earn a 0 for that assignment.**
- I will not repeat announcements or daily writing exercise instructions for students who are tardy.
- All notes and handouts are posted in D2L.
- Class participation is important. I expect you to participate in discussions, and work cooperatively with others.
- I am happy to make appointments and go over drafts. As a matter of fact, I recommend that you contact me to go over your drafts. However, **I will not review drafts later than 24 hours before the due date.**

Grades

The grading scale is as follows:

A	94 - 100%
A-	90 - 93%
B+	87 - 89%
B	84 -86%
B-	80 - 83%
C+	77 - 79%
C	74 - 76%
C-	70 - 73%
D+	67 - 69%
D	64 - 66%
D-	60 - 63%
F	59% and below

The breakdown of grades in this course is as follows:

Assignment	Points
E-mail	5

Proposal (in memo format)	10
White Paper	10
Usability Report (in memo format)	10
Instructions (in video format) & Memo	15
Analytical Report	20
Remix	10
Drafts	10
Discussions	10
Total	**100**

According to university policy, a "C" is equivalent to average performance, a "B" represents better than average performance, and an "A" represents definitely superior work. You may use MLA, APA, HRS, or IEEE style guides, although instruction on them will not be provided in class. **Academic Honesty**

All work must be original. Plagiarism occurs when a writer, speaker, or designer uses someone else's language, ideas, images, or other material without fully acknowledging its source by quotations marks, in footnotes or endnotes, and in lists of works cited. All documents are to be your own original work (in collaborative contexts, generated 100% by you and your teammates). Any articles, images, music, interviews, websites or other electronic media—any content beyond what you have created—must be documented. **Plagiarism will not be accepted.**

The Academic Honesty Policy for Minnesota State University, Mankato can be found at https://www.mnsu.edu/policies/approved/academichonesty.pdf

Disabilities Accommodation

If you have a disability and require accommodations, please contact me early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met and/or contact the Disability Services Office at (507)-389-2825(V) or 1-800-627-3529(MRS/TTY). You can learn more about how to document your disability with the university athttp://www.mnsu.edu/dso/current/guidelines.html

Schedule

The schedule is a living document and may be subject to change due to weather, illness, etc. The most up-to-date schedule will be posted in D2L.

Assignments due by 11:59pm date indicated

Module	Assignments Due (11:59pm on date indicated)
Module 1: Introduction to Technical communication	Aug 29: Discussion: What is Technical Communication?
	Aug 31: Assignment: E-mail

Module 2: Rhetoric, Communication, and Proposals	Sept 2: Discussion: Rhetoric
	Sept 9: Discussion: Proposal (in memo format) draft
	Sept 12: Discussion: Proposal draft Peer Review
	Sept 19: Assignment: Proposal (in memo format)
Module 3: Visual Rhetoric and White Papers	Sept 23: Discussion: Visual Rhetoric
	Sept 28: Discussion: White Paper draft
	Sept 30: Discussion: White Paper draft Peer Review
	Oct 3: Assignment: White Paper
Module 4: Collaboration, Usability, and Instructions	Oct 7: Discussion: Usability Testing
	Oct 14: Discussion: Instructional video draft
	Oct 17: Discussion: Instructional video draft Peer Review
	Oct 24: Assignment: Usability Test (in memo format)
	Oct 31: Assignment: Instructional video & Memo
Module 5: Research and Analytical Report	Nov 7: Discussion: Analytical Report draft
	Nov 11: Discussion: Analytical Report draft Peer Review
	Nov 18: Assignment: Analytical Report
Module 6: Remixing for a New Audience	Nov 21: Discussion: What is remix and how will you do it?
	Nov 28: Discussion: Remix draft
	Nov 30: Discussion: Remix draft Peer Review
	Dec 2: Assignment: Remix (no late assignments accepted -- this is, essentially, your final exam)

No Final Exam