

Course Contact Info

English 3351, Technical Writing

Instructor: Dr. Kevin Garrison

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Office hours: M/W – 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

T/H – 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

*Fridays and other times not listed by appointment if necessary with sufficient notice.

Section: 3351.010 – MWF 10:00-10:50, Room 205A

Section: 3351.020 – MWF 11:00-11:50, Room 205A

Course Description

Study and practice in document development for majors in agriculture, engineering, mathematics, nursing, and other technical fields. The course includes intensive use of computer skills, especially word processing and graphics.

Prerequisite: Sophomore literature; 60 semester credit hours

Course Objectives and Outcomes

- Objective #1: Develop skills in expressing yourself orally and in writing, as it concerns technical information.
- Objective #2: Learn fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories of technical writing.
- Objective #3: Develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by technical writers.

When you finish ENG 3351, you should be able to:

1. Analyze the communication situation fully and accurately: needs, audiences, uses, and constraints
2. Gather, interpret, and document information logically, efficiently, and ethically
3. Develop professional work and teamwork habits
4. Design usable, clear, persuasive, accessible documents
5. Select the appropriate media for presenting information
6. Organize information using reader-based principles
7. Use graphics effectively
8. Develop an effective, clear writing style
9. Communicate through oral presentations

CONNECT! Campus and Community Objective and Outcomes

This course contains a service-learning project, meaning that all students will complete a project for a community member while also receiving assignment credit. In addition to the above objectives and outcomes, you will also:

- Objective #4: Develop skills as a socially responsible citizen.

When you finish the assignment in ENG 3351, you should be able to:

10. Respond to a community need
11. Reflect on the relevance of engaging with another cultural group and articulate the relevance of a service-learning project for your life.

Course Assignments

| Weight | Unit | Deliverable |
|-------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 15% | Unit 1: Writing for Other Cultures | Flyer |
| 10% | Unit 2: Preparing for Graduate School | Resume/CV and Statement of Purpose |
| 10% | Unit 3: Documenting Procedures | Set of Instructions |
| 10% | Unit 4: Explaining Concepts | Technical Definition and Description |
| 20% | Unit 5: Proposing Actions to Decision-Makers | Research Proposal |
| 10% | Unit 6: Presenting Findings | Presentation |
| 10% | Quizzes | |
| 5% | Workshops | |
| 10% | Final Exam | |
| 100% | Total Percent | |

Materials for this Class

- Dobrin, Keller, & Weisser *Technical Communication in the Twenty-First Century* (2010).
- Access to a computer which has an Internet connection, MS Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and email access.
- A way to store files

Classroom Behaviors

- You will adhere to the standards set in the ASU Student Handbook, found here: http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student_Handbook.pdf
- Adhere to standards of common courtesy (i.e. turn off cell phones, no reading newspapers in class, no studying for tests during class time). If your actions are disruptive or disrespectful, then I will ask you to stop and/or leave.
- As I will demonstrate and discuss on the first day of class, I have a high-frequency hearing impairment. While this should not detract from your learning experience, it means that you will engage with audience awareness.
 - Get my attention if you want to speak - I will not know who is talking unless I have a visual cue alerting me to who is speaking.
 - Speak at a volume that everyone in the class can hear - if you mumble or speak quietly, you will have to repeat yourself a number of times.
 - Look at the person you are addressing - I read lips, so don't cover your mouth or look at your shoelaces or chew on your pen.

Email Policy

I will only check my emails during regular business hours, so if you email me over the weekend, do not expect a reply until the following Monday. To insure that I reply quickly to student emails, I expect the following:

- A clear subject line, including the course number "3351"
- A clear message
- Proper salutation, including my name and your name

Grading Policy

Grades on assignments will be determined according to the following criteria:

- **A (90-99%)** The document is superior. It exceeds all the objectives of the assignment. The information is ethical, sophisticated, thorough, and ideally suited for the audience. The style is clear and appropriate to the subject, purpose, and audience. The organization and design of the document make the information understandable, accessible, and usable. The mechanics and grammar are correct.
- **B (80-89%)** The document is good. It meets the objectives of the assignment, but requires minor improvements or reveals easily correctable errors in organization, style, design, grammar, or mechanics.

- **C (70-79%)** The document is adequate. It omits useful information or requires significant improvement in organization, style, design, grammar, or mechanics. It may be formally correct but superficial in its discussion.
- **D (60-69%)** The document is disappointing. It meets some of the objectives of the assignment but ignores others; the discussion is inadequately developed, omits important information, or displays numerous or major errors in organization, style, design, grammar, or mechanics.
- **F (0-59%)** The document is unsatisfactory. It omits critical information, does something other than the assignment required, or displays major or excessive errors in organization, style, design, grammar, or mechanics.

Clarifications – If students would like clarification about assignment grades, I always enjoy discussing my comments and your work. Such serves as a learning experience for both of us - me to see your perspective, you to see mine. If you want to talk about my comments, then you can stop by anytime during my normal office hours. If you want to discuss the grade, I do expect a few basic things: 1) re-read the grading policy, 2) schedule a time to meet in my office, 3) be prepared to discuss my comments (and if possible come with detailed notes and a clear understanding of what I stated), 4) be ready to enter into a dialogic exchange where you attempt to understand my perspective and I attempt to understand your perspective. I will not discuss your grades via email since this would violate the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Late Penalties – Assignments (both major assignments and homework assignments) will be assessed a penalty of 10% if turned in after the submission time and 10% more for each additional day late. This includes weekends and holidays.

Proofreading – I will deduct points for each first occurrence of an error as follows:

Spelling.....5% each
 Grammar.....5% each
 Punctuation.....5% each

The *exceptions* to this list are your resume/CV and your statement of purpose assignment, which should be error-free. Because of the severe consequences for errors on these documents, each first time error is worth 10%.

Incompletes – I will not give a grade of “I” (an incomplete) in this course.

Use – I reserve the right to use any of your assignments as samples for future courses.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is using someone else's words, ideas, or images and not giving them credit through the use of an accepted citation style. In essence, it is the academic form of "shoplifting." The way to avoid plagiarism is to cite the information properly, using a citation style such as MLA or APA. Because this class will ask for students to turn in non-traditional assignments, it is likely that the rules for citation will be blurred. See me if you have even the slightest doubt about what

is correct and appropriate. If you are unfamiliar with how to cite sources on traditional assignments, then you have a number of options:

- See <http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf>
- Contact me
- Visit the [ASU Writing Center](#) for Instruction
- Purchase an [MLA](#) or [APA](#) Handbook
- Use online resources such as Purdue's Website on [MLA Guidelines](#)
- Read a detailed explanation of [Plagiarism](#)

What happens if you are caught plagiarizing? You will receive an automatic "0" on the assignment with an opportunity to revise for half-credit. We will sit down in my office, discuss the rules of citation, and make sure that it won't happen again.

If you are caught plagiarizing a second time, you will fail the course, and I will inform the academic integrity office to insure that the violation is placed on your permanent academic record.

Attendance Policy

There are two types of absences:

- Unexcused - you may miss three classes this semester, with no questions asked.
- Excused - after those three unexcused absences, the only absences that will be accepted are 1) notes from your doctor, 2) documentation proving a death in the family, 3) observance of a religious holiday, or 4) a university sanctioned event.

After you miss three classes, you will lose 3% of your overall grade for each day missed. Once you miss 10 total classes, you will receive an "F" for the course.

A few minutes after class begins, I will take attendance either by passing around a sheet to sign. If you are not there when attendance is taken, you may be counted absent.

If you miss class, work should be made up by contacting peers to find out what was missed.

Accommodations

Any student with a disability who may require special arrangements to meet course requirements must present to me the appropriate documentation as soon as possible. There is no requirement that accommodations be made prior to completion of this standard university procedure. Contact Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center for more information.

Any student who misses class due to observance of a religious holiday should consult with me prior to the missed class period.

Tentative Schedule

| Week | Day | Section | Topics |
|------|--------|--------------|---|
| 1 | 26-Aug | INTRODUCTION | Introducing the Course |
| | 28-Aug | SECTION 1 | Defining Technical Writing; Overview of Assignments |
| | 30-Aug | | The Process of Technical Writing: Content and Design (How vs. What) |
| 2 | 2-Sep | | HOLIDAY - NO CLASS |
| | 4-Sep | | Principles of Design |
| | 6-Sep | | Workshop on MS Word and Publisher |
| 3 | 9-Sep | | Plagiarism in the Information Age |
| | 11-Sep | | Developing Content; Single-Sourcing; Awareness of Multicultural Audiences |
| | 13-Sep | | Workshop on Flyer |
| 4 | 16-Sep | SECTION 2 | Graduate Degrees vs. Undergraduate Degrees |
| | 18-Sep | | Conventions of Resumes and CVs |
| | 20-Sep | | Workshop on MS Word: Resumes and CVs |
| 5 | 23-Sep | | Conventions of a Statement of Purpose |
| | 25-Sep | | Examining other Statement of Purpose documents |
| | 27-Sep | | Workshop on the Statement of Purpose |
| 6 | 30-Sep | SECTION 3 | Instructions: The Age of eHow.com |
| | 2-Oct | | Conventions of Instructions |
| | 4-Oct | | Workshop on Developing Instructions |
| 7 | 7-Oct | | Usability Testing |
| | 9-Oct | | Practice Usability Test: Eye Tracker and Morae Usability |
| | 11-Oct | | Workshop: Usability Test of Instructions |
| 8 | 14-Oct | SECTION 4 | Technical Writers: The New Educators |
| | 16-Oct | | Conventions of Technical Definitions |
| | 18-Oct | | Workshop on Identifying a Term and Creating Text |
| 9 | 21-Oct | | Conventions of Technical Descriptions |
| | 23-Oct | | Practice: Describing Items |
| | 25-Oct | | Workshop on Creating an Original Graphic |
| 10 | 28-Oct | SECTION 5 | Proposal Conventions and Types |
| | 30-Oct | | Analyzing Proposals |
| | 1-Nov | | Workshop on MS Word: Proposals |
| 11 | 4-Nov | | Principles of Research and Literature Reviews |
| | 6-Nov | | Workshop on Library Research |
| | 8-Nov | | Methodology |
| 12 | 11-Nov | | Using Graphics in a Proposal |
| | 13-Nov | | Using MLA and APA Style Guides |
| | 15-Nov | | Workshop on Citations |
| 13 | 18-Nov | SECTION 6 | Conventions of Presentations |
| | 20-Nov | | Workshop on MS PowerPoint |
| | 22-Nov | | Presentations |
| 14 | 25-Nov | | Presentations |

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|----|--------|---|
| | 27-Nov | Presentations |
| | 29-Nov | HOLIDAY - NO CLASS |
| 15 | 2-Dec | Presentations |
| | 4-Dec | Presentations |
| | 6-Dec | Final Exam Information and Course Evaluations |
| 16 | 9-Dec | Final Exam for 010 @ 10:30-12:30 |
| | 11-Dec | Final Exam for 020 @ 10:30-12:30 |