Technical Writing
(RWS-3359-3 CRN:33637)

COURSE ONLINE INTERFACE
This course will use Blackboard as the primary online interface. In addition to postings and course communication, Blackboard will also serve as a private and secure space for students to access up-to-date grades. This course works within weekly modules. Each week you will have a module that needs to be completed. If you need help working with Blackboard, please contact me or seek help at one of the University’s computer labs. Additionally, this is a compressed 4-week course. As such, there is a large amount of work required of you each week. It is your responsibility to keep up with and manage your workload.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces you to the principles and methods of technical writing and provides you with the skills to improve your ability to communicate through a variety of technical documents and media. Together, we will examine (analyze) a number of writing and design principles and practice (produce) a variety of technical genres. Successful completion of this course will improve your ability to:

- Analyze the rhetorical situation and define the users and/or audience as well as tasks that the information must support;
- Apply rhetorical principles to plan and design effective technical documents for diverse media;
- Direct, manage, and monitor the publication cycle of small- and large-scale texts, such as articles, manuals, and websites, etc.;
- Compose content appropriate for the users and genres, revise and edit written work for accuracy, clarity, coherence, and appropriateness, and document resources as defined by a specific field;
- Apply technological and visual rhetorical skills (e.g., document design, graphics, computer documentation, electronic editing, and content management applications) in the composing process and publish, deliver, and archive as required; and
- Work critically and collaboratively to complete projects.

ATTENDANCE
Logging in regularly is a must for an online course. I recommend logging in at least once per day, as there may be updates. Missing more than one (1) week’s worth of posting
will result in automatic failure of the course, regardless of your progress on major assignments. **I do not drop students; if you wish to withdraw, you must do this yourself.**

**REQUIRED TEXT**
This course will use Mike Markel’s Technical Communication (11th Edition) as the guiding textbook. The textbook will be required for in-class activities and should be brought to class with you each day. **You will need a copy of the textbook by Monday, May 2020.**

Below is the textbook for this course:

[Link to text on Amazon.com](#)

**ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS**
Assignment sheets will be posted to Blackboard the week in which the assignment is introduced and usually much earlier. All assignments are to be submitted via the Blackboard in the related course module by 11:59:00 PM of the due dates (see course calendar). All assignments are required to be submitted in PDF format (unless otherwise noted). No other file types will be accepted or graded.

**This course assignments and their associated point value is as follows:**
- Chapter Reading Synthesis 200
- Professional Biostatement 200
- Instruction Project 300
- Final Project Proposal 100
- Final Project 200
This course works on a 1,000 points scale and final grades will be determined using the scale below. Grades will be posted to Blackboard. Please see me during my office hours if you wish to discuss your grades.

A=900-1,000 points  
B=800-899 points  
C=700-799 points  
D=600-699 points  
F=599 or below

**COMPOSITIONS**

Your written work is a reflection of your capabilities and efforts and comprises the majority of your final grade. You are therefore expected to produce high-quality, sophisticated documents. A part of that quality is the appearance of your work. Neatness, visual appeal, and mechanical and grammatical correctness are important, although they do not, alone, guarantee a well-made text (or a good grade). Your written documents should have appropriate margins, spacing, pagination, and formatting. Your productions in electronic and other media should be well-designed. In short: **take pride in your writing and aim to produce high quality documents.**

**LATE WORK/MISSED ASSIGNMENTS**

Late work is not accepted. Additionally, I will not grade any assignments submitted via email. You must submit all assignments via Blackboard. Emailing an assignment is never an option.

**NETIQUETTE**


We will be talking about audience a lot in this course, and I want you to keep in mind that you’re speaking to a professional audience. Additionally, this is a professional writing course and you should take this into account in all writing you do for this course (postings, responses, assignments, and even emails). When you email me, this is how it should be written:

Dear Mrs. Saru:

Write the content of your email here. Make sure you have proofread for proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Do not use IM language (“2” for “to,” “u” for “you,” etc.).

Sincerely,  
Your Name  
Your Course & CRN  
If your email does not follow this format, I will not respond. **I do not check email on Sundays.**
COURSE POLICIES
Please refer to the following policies for this course. If you have any questions, please see me during my office hours or send me an email and I'll be happy to help.

- UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER (UWC): I encourage you to make use of the UWC during the planning, drafting, and/or revising phases of writing any assignment in this class. The trained writing consultants can help give you a fresh perspective on ideas and help you with things like correctness, formatting, etc. The UWC is located on the main floor of the library, to the right of the elevators and computer lab.

- RESOLVING ISSUES: It is your responsibility to manage your workload, complete all assignments and stay on top of your grades. It is also your responsibility to arrange an office meeting with me to discuss questions/concerns. The earlier you contact me with questions/concerns, the better we can deal with them.

- PLAGIARISM is an issue I take very seriously. An act of plagiarism (or other form of academic dishonesty) will result in an ‘F’ for the course, and may include other University disciplinary action, such as suspension or expulsion. You should become familiar with the ethical guidelines for conduct spelled out in the Student Affairs section of the Handbook for Operating Procedures. Additionally, please be aware that you may not submit work for this class that was produced for another class. You must produce your own original work in this class and appropriately identify and portion of your work which is collaborative with others, borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts. Always cite your information. If you have doubts as to whether or not you are using your own or others' work legally and ethically, ask me or stop by the UTEP Writing Center. Follow this primary principle: Be upfront and honest.

- ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need accommodation, please contact The Center for Accommodations & Support Services (CASS) at (915)747-5148 or at cass@utep.edu. The CASS office is located in Room 106, Union East. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor with any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.
COURSE CALENDAR
A tentative reading and assignment schedule follows, but it may be adjusted as needed. Complete all reading and assignments by the Sunday of the assigned week. If there are conflicts between this schedule and the information posted within the Weekly Modules on Blackboard, please follow the information found within the Weekly Modules on Blackboard.

Week 1: Monday, July 6 – Saturday, July 11
- Introduction to course
  - Chapter 1: Introduction to Technical Communication
  - Chapter 3: Writing Technical
  - Chapter 5: Analyzing Your Audience and Purpose
  - Chapter 8: Communicating Persuasively
- Instruction Project Example
- Reading and Responses Due, July 8 (Weekly Assignment)
- Professional Biostatement Due, July 11 (Major Assignment)

Week 2: Monday, July 13 – Saturday, July 18
- Reading and Responses
  - Chapter 16: Writing Proposal
  - Chapter 20: Writing Definitions, Descriptions, and Instructions
  - Chapter 13: Reviewing, Evaluating, and Testing Documents and Websites
- Reading and Responses Due, July 15 (Weekly Assignment)
- Final Project proposal due, July 18 (Major Assignment)

Week 3: Monday, July 20 – Saturday, July 25
- Reading and Responses
- Introduction to Final Project
  - Chapter 17: Writing Informational Report
  - Chapter 18: Writing Recommendation Report
  - Chapter 19: Writing Lab Report
- Reading and Responses Due, July 22 (Weekly Assignment)
- Instruction Project Due, July 25 (Major Assignment)

Week 4: Sunday, July 27 - Saturday, July 31
- Reading and Responses
  - Chapter 6: Researching Your Subject
  - Chapter 7: Organizing Your Information
  - Chapter 9: Emphasizing Important Information
  - Appendix B: Documenting Your Sources
- Reading and Responses Due, July 29 (Weekly Assignment)
- Final Project Due, August 1 (Major Assignment)