

TECHNICAL WRITING
RWS 3359 Section 24511 Wintermester 2018
UGLC 300 M-F 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Isabel Baca
Office: Hudspeth 314
Phone: 747-6245
E-mail : ibaca@utep.edu
Office Hours: Before and after class, and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Markel, Mike. *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016.

- *Two 8 ½ x 11" (letter-size) manila folders
- *At least one USB - **You must keep "backups" of all your work!**
- *One three-prong/pocket folder or binder –for notes, handouts, and class exercises
- *Loose-leaf paper
- *Black or blue-ink pens
- *Stapler
- *A UTEP email account and access to Blackboard

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

RWS 3359 is a technical writing workshop. Students will do exercises to prepare for writing, work collaboratively, critique each other's writing, and discuss techniques for improving their writing. They will also meet with me individually and with their teams (you will complete collaborative writing assignments) to discuss writing/communication problems, successes, revisions, and progress. Working collaboratively is an essential component of a technical writer's job. Rarely, if ever, does a technical writer work alone and in isolation.

RWS 3359 will consist of both written and oral communication assignments. Students should view technical communication in two ways: One, it is the process of making and sharing information and ideas on a technical subject and/or in the workplace. Two, technical communication is a set of applications, the technical/workplace documents produced and presentations given in and for the workplace. One of the primary goals of a technical communicator and writer is to create, design, and transmit technical information so that people can understand it easily, locate it quickly, and use it safely, effectively, and efficiently. Thus, students will learn to use technology, rhetoric, and language to convey technical information to diverse audiences. They will practice analytical and critical thinking while engaging in effective communication with a cultural understanding.

Students will be expected to submit all writing assignments on the due dates in a manila folder along with all preliminary work: prewriting, drafts, and peer critiques. All assignments need to be professionally submitted. I may request a second copy of the student's work or an electronic copy for my educational files. Students should keep a hard copy of all assignments for themselves.

In addition, students are responsible for reading the assigned chapters even though we may not cover all the material explicitly. Students should use the textbook as a reference book. Students will show me through our class discussions that they are keeping up with the reading. Students must be prepared each class day. I will give at least two pop quizzes on the reading assignments; if need be, I will give more.

Students are required to have an e-mail account. At times, we may communicate via mail and/or Blackboard. Make sure to check Blackboard and your UTEP email inbox for any urgent messages from me. Do this early in the morning before class.

EVALUATION

To qualify for a passing grade, students must attend class regularly, and **complete satisfactorily all major and minor assignments**. Higher grades will be given on the basis of quality of performance and excellence in work produced. I will try to respond to students' work as their employer would; therefore, in addition to clarity of the message and content, tact, appearance, grammar, and spelling are extremely important. Students will also be graded on collaboration and participation.

Students will receive points for each assignment. The following is a list of tentative assignments and their probable weight in points.

Tentative Assignments	Probable Weight in Points
<i>Individual</i>	
Diagnostic (in-class)	5
Definition Assignment - Memo	10
Impromptu Instructions Presentation	5
Résumé – Final draft and writing process	10
Final Team Performance Evaluation	10
Reading Quizzes (at least two, five points each)	10
Participation and Classwork	10
Collaboration	10
<i>Team</i>	
Team Name, Logo, Motto, Goals, and Introduction	5
Team Project Proposal	10
Final Team Project – Manual -with suggested readings	25
Final Team Presentation	10
<hr/>	
TOTAL =	120

FINAL GRADING SCALE

108-120 = A

96-107 = B

84-95 = C

72-83 = D

71 and below = F

The following is a grading system as it relates to the workplace environment:

- A:** Supervisor would be impressed and remember the work when a promotion is discussed.
- B:** Supervisor would be satisfied with the job but not be necessarily impressed.
- C:** Supervisor would ask employee to revise or rewrite sections before allowing those outside the department or company to see it.
- D:** Supervisor would be troubled by the poor quality of the work and would consider hiring more competent help.
- F:** Supervisor would replace the employee.

Academic Dishonesty. Students are expected to maintain professional ethics by giving credit freely where it is due and acknowledge the inclusion of material from an outside source in their reports/documents. In other words, plagiarism and any other form of cheating will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary actions. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

Students with Disabilities

If you require, because of a disability, special accommodations in this class, please meet with me after class or in the privacy of my office during the first week of class to be sure you are properly accommodated according to your needs. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you must contact the Disabled Student Services Office in the East Union Bldg., Room 106. You may also reach the Disabled Student Services Office by e-mail dss@utep.edu, web <http://www.utep.edu/dsso>, or phone 747-5148 voice or TTY.

CLASS POLICIES

The following sections outline and describe class policies.

Attendance and Punctuality

In the world of business and industry, employees get paid for their presence and productivity. They may be further rewarded for high quality work. When employees are absent, constantly late for work, or do not produce, they are disciplined, sometimes terminated. Similarly, in this class, students will be disciplined for not attending, being late to class, leaving early, and/or not producing. **There are no excused absences.** Students are expected to attend class regularly. Excessive absences (**one or more**) and/or constant tardiness and leaving early will result in a deduction of points from the student's final grade. **This is a wintermester. We only meet for two weeks. Missing one day equals to missing close to two weeks of classes in a regular semester.** Furthermore, if students are absent, they are responsible for contacting me and making up all missed work. Students must stay in contact with their team members as well!

Make-Up and Late Work

No incomplete work will be accepted. No late work will be accepted. Students will not be allowed to make up any of the in-class writing assignments nor the reading pop quizzes. However, students may submit work before the due date. Meeting deadlines is an important part of a professional (technical) writer's life.

Cell Phones

Please turn off all cell phones. Unless you inform me of a specific situation that requires you to have your cell phone on, you are to have it off during class.

CLASS CALENDAR

See the following page. Calendar is subject to change.

TECHNICAL WRITING
RWS 3359 Section 24511 Wintermester 2018
UGLC 300 M-F 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

TENTATIVE CLASS CALENDAR and DEADLINES

	<i>Lesson/Activity/Writing Assignments</i>	<i>Reading Assignment</i>
<u>January</u>		
T 2	Course Introduction Getting to Know Each Other The Writing Process What Is Technical Communication? What is “Good” Writing? What Are the Differences between Academic and Technical Writing? Writing Diagnostic	
W 3	Workplace Correspondence Writing Definitions Wordiness Collaborative Writing and Team Assignments Discuss Team Name, Logo, Motto, and Goals	Ch. 1, 3, 4, 9 and pp. 140-152
TH 4	Writing Proposals Team Time	Ch. 5, 7, 11, and pp. 108-122
F 5	Writing Instructions IMPROMPTU INSTRUCTION PRESENTATIONS DUE: Definition Assignment (Memo) Teams sign up for conferences	Ch. 5, 8, and 14
M 8	TEAM CONFERENCES – Hudspeth 314 DUE: Team Project Proposals	Ch. 2 and 8
T 9	TEAM INTRODUCTIONS DUE: Team name, logo, motto, and goals Job search – Writing Résumés Review Final Team Project Guidelines – The Manual and Presentation	Ch.10, 15, and Appendix A
W 10	Team Day – Work on final project and individual résumés	
TH 11	FINAL TEAM PRESENTATIONS DUE: Team Manual with Suggested Readings and Members’ Résumés Course Evaluations	
F 12	Final Writing Assignment: Final Team Performance Evaluations By <u>NOON</u>, Hudspeth 314	