

ENGLISH 210: TECHNICAL WRITING

Instructor: Dr. Daven M. Kari

Office Hours: MF 10:00-10:50 a.m., and by appointment MWF

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Class Meeting Time & Place: MWF 9:00-9:50 a.m.

Text Books:

Woolever, Kristin R. *Writing for the Technical Professions*. 4th ed. New York: Pearson Education, 2008.

Overview of Course:

English 210: Technical Writing is designed to help students learn business writing skills for both general business contexts, and for the more technical professions. Students completing this course will learn a wide range of writing skills that will serve them well for work in management, accounting, computer technology, engineering, real estate, natural sciences, social sciences, and related professions. This course will involve intensive work on writing skills through group work, a wide variety of purposeful exercises, conferences, and rewrites of most writing assignments. At very least, the student should aim for grammatical and technical precision so that the student can achieve a standard of excellence expected in the business world.

Course Goals, Objectives and Content:

ENG 210 is designed as an introduction to the various modes of business and technical writing currently employed by natural and social scientists, and by other specialized professionals. Ideally, the student should have a professional context in mind when completing each of the assignments, especially the report sequence.

To refine the students' technical writing techniques, this course will include such units as technical researching and editing; assessing the roles of the editor, writer, and reader; understanding the roles of ethics and persuasion; and undertaking the writing of letters, memos, resumes, proposals, progress reports, and a final report, including an informative abstract. You will also be asked to make an oral presentation of your final report during the last week of classes. The exact mix of these assignments will be refined in our first class meeting. Quizzes are typically not announced, so be sure to stay current with reading and writing assignments.

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Throughout the semester, exercises of a wide variety will be assigned before class and should be completed before class; other exercises will be given during class and will be completed in class.

The course is scheduled to include the following assignments with the designated weights:

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| Attendance, Reading, & Class Participation (including exercises & quizzes) | 15% |
| Resume & Cover Letter | 10% |
| Informative Brochure or On-line Pages/Sales Letter | 10% |
| Bad News Letter | 10% |
| Proposal | 10% |
| Progress Report | 10% |
| Long Report (including an informative abstract) | 25% |
| Oral Presentation of Long Report | <u>10%</u> |
| Total | 100% |

Grades will be calculated on a 10% scale as follows: A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; F = 59% or below.

Due Dates: All assignments are due no later than the beginning of class time on the date specified. Late papers will not be accepted except in the event of an unanticipated and unavoidable absence, such as your own serious illness or a death in your immediate family. Homework is to be turned in when requested during class as evidence of staying current with reading assignments, so be sure to bring your completed work to class if you wish to receive credit for having finished it.

Attendance: Because English 210 involves considerable in-class work, students are expected to attend all classes. Any absences will affect the student's performance in this course, and may affect his or her grade. If a student misses more than six classes (2 weeks) for any reason, the student's grade will be lowered one letter grade. If the student misses more than eight classes, the student will automatically fail himself or herself in the course. A limited number of make up options may be offered for students facing unanticipated and unavoidable conflicts. Late arrivals and early departures will result in a partial or total loss for class attendance, as will sleeping in class. To receive full credit for attendance, students must bring their books for the days these texts are scheduled to be used. Students who consistently neglect to bring their books to class will lose attendance credit for the course. Furthermore, students are expected to be attentive and respectful in class. Students who spend class time chatting with neighbors, e-mailing friends, surfing the internet for subject matter unrelated to class, wandering around campus, sleeping, or doing homework for other classes will also lose credit for attending ENG 210.

Rewrite

Policy: Revision and editing workshops for each essay are scheduled during regular class time. Furthermore, for the first three units, you are welcome to rewrite your graded paper and try for a higher grade, *provided that you complete peer group evaluations during class and that your first grade is at least a C-*. Your highest grade will stand, so you need not worry about losing points. Do note, however, that rewrites involve more than resolving simple mechanical errors.

To improve your grade you will need to deal with comments about content as well as those about mechanics. Submit the rewrite along with the original graded version. *This revision is due within one week after the graded paper has been returned to you.*

Use of

Papers: Portions of your written assignments may be duplicated for class discussions. The author's name will not be mentioned unless the student gives prior permission.

Conferences: Conferences will be required for one of the early units and for the long report sequence. Should you need additional conferences, you are welcome and encouraged to schedule them. To make the best use of your time and your instructor's, always come with specific questions about how you can improve your writing, and be sure to take notes. When you make special appointments, keep them. If you must cancel, please call as far in advance as possible, preferably 24 hours.

Plagiarism: One of the best signs of maturity is respect for other people's property and rights. Taking other people's ideas, formulas, phrases, or writings without giving proper credit constitutes a theft, commonly known as plagiarism. Students also need to be careful in their use of graphics and illustrations taken from the internet. Furthermore, students are not to use papers completed for other classes, even if it represents the student's own work. Any student found guilty of misusing information will be subject to failure in English 210 and possible further disciplinary action by the Academic Dean's Office.

Your Instructor: Since the value of any course usually depends in part on your instructor, you deserve to know at least a little bit about what I have done and what motivates me to keep achieving. I have had the privilege of teaching writing since 1978 while I completed an M.A. in English at Baylor University, an M.A. in English emphasizing professional writing at Purdue University, a Ph.D. in English, also at Purdue, and an M.Div. and a Ph.D. in Theological Aesthetics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. These graduate degrees were built on my B.A. with four majors in Biblical Studies, English, History, and Music from Fresno Pacific University. Like some of you, I am the only person in my family to complete a four-year college degree. During the past ten years, I have taught at California Baptist University, Washington Bible College (in Lanham, Maryland) where I was the academic dean, and several other schools. As a minister and teacher, I really enjoy working with people; as a writer I doubly enjoy teaching writing. During the past 20+ years, I have authored two monographs, co-edited two more books, and written 60+ articles and poems. One of the books I helped create was *Business Writing Strategies and Samples*, published by Macmillan in 1986. I worked on editing this book for several years, and was then hired by Macmillan to design the illustrations and worksheets for the strategies sections. You will find my name listed in the preface as an assistant editor, a humble title for a big job, but I probably earned more money than the editors listed on the cover. The moral of this story is—when you are a humble graduate student without a large publishing history, any opportunity is welcome.

While I have been hired at Vanguard University for my professional expertise, please keep in mind that I am at all times a human being. I have a wonderful wife and three delightful boys currently aged 13, almost 15, and 17. I know how challenging life can be when you are working your way through college. Lest I forget my own pilgrimage in education, I have spent

much of the past 12 years teaching working adults or non-traditional students, especially in the evening college format. I promise you that I will do everything in my power to keep class lively, purposeful, and meaningful. The writing techniques I will share with you are those I have found really work in daily practice.

Bibliography:

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Booth, Wayne C., G. C. Colomb, and J. M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: U of Chicago P., 1995.

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http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.cfm?doc_id=796

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Strunk, William, and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Longman, 2000.

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Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. 25th Anniversary ed. New York: HarperResource Quill, 2001.

SYLLABUS

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| August | 29 (W) | Introduction to course |
| | 31 (F) | <i>Writing for the Technical Professions</i> (hereafter cited as <i>WTP</i>), Introduction <i>WTP</i> , chapter 1 |
| September | 3 (M) | Labor Day—No Classes |
| | 5 (W) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 9 |
| | 7 (F) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 9 (cont.) |
| | 10 (M) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 18 |
| | 12 (W) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 18 (cont.) |
| | 14 (F) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 18 (cont.) <i>WTP</i> , chapter 2 |
| | 17 (M) | Conferences on Resume & Cover Letter—No class meeting |
| | 19 (W) | Conferences on Resume & Cover Letter—No class meeting <i>WTP</i> , chapter 3 |
| | 21 (F) | Conferences on Resume & Cover Letter—No class meeting |
| | 24 (M) | Peer Evaluation of Resume & Cover Letter <i>WTP</i> , chapter 4 |

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| September | 26 (W) | Resume & Cover Letter Due <i>WTP</i> , chapter 16 |
| | 28 (F) | Discussion of Informative Brochure or Online Pages/Sales Letter <i>WTP</i> , chapter 6 |
| October | 1 (M) | Peer Evaluation of Sales Letter |
| | 3 (W) | Discussion of Informative Brochure or Online Pages/Sales Letter <i>WTP</i> , chapter 15 |
| | 5 (F) | Informative Brochure or Online Pages/Sales Letter Due <i>WTP</i> , chapter 9 (pp. 215-217) |
| | 8 (M) | Discussion of Bad News Letter |
| | 10 (W) | Peer Evaluation of Bad News Letter <i>WTP</i> , chapter 13 |
| | 12 (F) | Bad News Letter Due <i>WTP</i> , chapter 14 |
| | 15 (M) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 14 (cont.) |
| | 17 (W) | Proposal Due <i>WTP</i> , chapter 5 |
| | 19 (F) | Fall Holiday—no classes |
| | 22 (M) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 11, and pp. 143, 145, 287-288, 298, 317-318 |
| | 24 (W) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 12 |
| | 26 (F) | Peer Review of Progress Report |
| | 29 (M) | Progress Report Due |
| | 31 (W) | Discussion of Long Reports |
| November | 2 (F) | For these conferences, students are to bring a rough draft of the Long Report Conferences on Long Report—No regularly scheduled classes |
| | 5 (M) | Conferences on Long Report—No regularly scheduled classes <i>WTP</i> , chapter 10 |

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| | 7 (W) | Conferences on Long Report—No regularly scheduled classes |
| | 9 (F) | Conferences on Long Report—No regularly scheduled classes |
| | 12 (M) | Peer Evaluation of Long Reports |
| | 14 (W) | Thinking Visually <i>WTP</i> , chapter 4 (cont.) |
| | 16 (F) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 8 |
| | 19 (M) | Format & Research Issues <i>WTP</i> , chapter 17 |
| | 21 (W) | Special Assignments (TBA)/Independent Research |
| | 22-23 (W) | Thanksgiving Break—No Classes |
| | 26 (M) | Long Reports Due <i>WTP</i> , chapter 17 (cont.) |
| | 28 (W) | <i>WTP</i> , chapter 7 |
| | 30 (F) | Oral Reports |
| December | 3 (M) | Oral Reports |
| | 5 (W) | Oral Reports |
| | 7 (F) | Oral Reports & Final Matters |
| | 10 (M) | Last Day of Classes Course Evaluations |
| | 11-14 | Final Exams—TBA |

N.B.: This is a tentative schedule and may be adjusted to meet student needs better. Stay alert to adjustments in the content and scheduling of assignments.