ENG 273-092: Technical and Scientific Writing Syllabus
Department of English, SFASU
Spring 2016
TR 12:30-1:45 p.m.
F184

Professor: Dr. Jessie Sams
Office: LAN 229
Office hours: MW 1:00-2:45 p.m.
R 3:15-4:45 p.m.
 Finals week office hours: MT 1:00-2:30 p.m.
Email: samsj@sfasu.edu
Tumblr: http://jessiesams.tumblr.com

Textbook: Any required readings will be posted on D2L. I strongly recommend access to a writing handout/style guide (such as the one you used in ENG 131 or ENG 132).

Course description
The study of the rhetorical principles involved in technical and scientific workplace writing, with an emphasis on the production of professional documents, such as analytical reports. Will not satisfy literature requirement; will not count toward an English major or minor (except for a minor in technical writing). Prerequisite: Six hours from ENG 131, ENG 132, or ENG 133.

In ENG 273, you will learn and practice the forms of written and oral communication used in science, business, engineering, and the workplace in general. You will analyze typical rhetorical situations, recognize conventional styles of presentation, and learn how to tailor your writing to a variety of audiences. You will study and practice the processes of written composition and the general principles of good communication, with the aim of becoming an efficient and effective writer and editor.

General education core curriculum objectives
In any given semester, one or more of the following core curriculum objectives for the English Foundational Component Area in Communication Writing may be assessed. These objectives are:

1. Critical thinking: Creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
2. Communication skills: Effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
3. Teamwork: Ability to consider different points of view and work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
4. Personal responsibility: Ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

English program learning outcomes
This is a general education core curriculum, and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course.
Student learning outcomes for ENG 273
By the end of this course, students should be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student learning outcomes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the recursive writing and social editing process and be able to write a variety of technical documents in an acceptable level of Standard American English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a variety of technical documents, demonstrating awareness of audience and facility in addressing different audiences and stakeholders in complex rhetorical situations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write technical and workplace documents by applying the appropriate categorical modes of rhetorical composition (descriptive, expositive, scientific, etc.), integrating visuals with text, and presenting information in an oral format.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work in groups to produce and critically evaluate documents, integrating different points of view.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use critical-thinking skills and exhibit technical proficiency in the invention and composing processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand ethical considerations in technical and professional writing, understanding the consequences of communication acts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tailor communications to social and ethical frameworks, editing them to be effective and responsible in international and intercultural situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequately research a topic and use documented evidence to support a paper written in the style applicable to their individual field of study.</td>
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</table>

Core objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>DMR</td>
<td>March 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>DMR</td>
<td>March 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td>DMR</td>
<td>March 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>DMR</td>
<td>March 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LiveText
Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L through LiveText, the assessment management system selected by SFA to collect student work for core assessment. LiveText accounts are provided to all students enrolled in core courses through the university technology fee. You will be required to register your LiveText account, and you will be notified how to register your account through your SFA email account. If you forward your SFA email to another account and do not receive an email concerning LiveText registration, please be sure to check your junk mail folder and spam filter for these emails. If you have questions about LiveText, call extension 1267 or email SFALiveText@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be collected for assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in LiveText this semester.
Course Policies and Requirements

The two overarching principles for the course are that adults make arrangements and that poor preparation on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part. These two principles are reflected in all the following policies:

1. If you have a quick question, email me; if you have a complex question or need a concept explained further, utilize my office hours.
2. I only answer specific questions via email; vague questions will be answered with something along the lines of “What exactly are you asking?”
3. My scheduled office hours are posted on the syllabus and outside my office door; when you come to my office hours, show up prepared so we can get right to work.
4. I expect you to attend every class and to keep up with the course schedule. If you are absent, you need to find out from fellow classmates what you missed during class, and you will need to get any handouts you missed from a fellow classmate. If you miss class on a day I hand back graded work, you will need to come to my office hours to pick up your work.
5. I also expect you to participate during the course; participation includes joining in class discussions, working in groups during in-class activities, and showing up to class prepared for the day’s lesson.
6. The due dates provided on the course schedule are the final due dates. I will accept late work as long as I am still grading your classmates’ work for that same assignment; once I am finished grading an assignment, I will not accept any more submissions for that assignment. Any work handed in late must be handed in directly to me during office hours.
7. Exams and quizzes are given in class ONLY on the dates provided in the course schedule.
8. You need to keep track of your own grades; if you have a question about your grades, you have to speak with me in person in my office hours.
9. Like the movies, classes can be disturbed by noisy phones and constant texting. So be considerate to your neighbors and turn off your cell phone’s ringer when you come to class and have the courtesy to wait until after class to text and/or update your Facebook about the amazing lecture you just witnessed.
10. As in any relationship, the student/professor relationship is strengthened by communication. If I send something out, pay attention to it. If you have a question/concern/emergency, communicate that to me immediately.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance available to help SFA students succeed.

Attendance

Attendance is—by and large—linked to grades; very few students who miss a high number of classes make an above-passing grade in this course. I allow one week’s worth of absences before it affects final grades; after that, each day’s absence results in a deduction from the final grade. Any absence above three weeks’ worth of classes results in a failing grade.
The following policies apply to attendance:

- I take attendance at the beginning of class and only count the students who are there as being present; a tardy counts as an absence.
- I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.
- I begin taking attendance on the first day of classes.
- If you have to miss class, make sure that you ask a classmate what you missed and that you understand the material covered. You must get any missed information (lecture notes, handouts, etc.) from a classmate.
- Any disruptions, unacceptable behavior toward other students, and/or lack of active participation will result in a recorded absence.

Furthermore, the university policy on class attendance can be found here:  

Assignments
This semester, you will be graded on five areas (specific guidelines for each assignment will be provided in class during the semester):

**Individual assignments:** At the beginning of the semester, you will have three individual assignments, including a formatting assignment, business letter, and résumé.

**Memos:** Throughout the semester, you will work in groups and write 10 memos, each of which is worth 3 points. The memos will be graded on formatting, content, and communication of content (i.e., grammar/style).

**Audience and purpose:** In groups, you will receive a text that you will edit and format for four specified audiences and purposes (these will be provided in class).

**Decision-making report (DMR):** In groups, you will complete a decision-making report that identifies a problem, defines that problem, outlines reasonable solutions to the problem, and suggests the best solution out of those listed. The written DMR is worth 15 points, and each group will also present their DMR in a class presentation, which is worth 10 points.

**Instruction manual (IM):** In groups, you will create a game and write an instruction manual that incorporates both written and visual content. During the final exam time, another group will play the game your group created, using only the instruction manual that your group wrote as a guide for playing the game. The group will then evaluate your group’s manual in a memo.

Grading
I grade semesters on a 100-point scale, which makes it easier to keep track of your grade:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 pts.</td>
<td>3 individual assignments (x 5 pts. each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 pts.</td>
<td>10 memos (x 3 pts. each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 pts.</td>
<td>Audience and purpose (2.5 pts. per 4 texts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 pts.</td>
<td>Decision-making report (15 pts. for written work and 10 pts. for presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 pts.</td>
<td>Instruction manual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A 90-100  Earning an A indicates that you mastered all of the necessary concepts for the course and exceeded all (or nearly all) expectations provided for assignments.

B 80-89.9  Earning a B indicates that you did well with all of the necessary concepts and mastered some of them and exceeded several expectations provided for assignments.

C 70-79.9  Earning a C indicates that you did well with some of the concepts and not as well with other concepts and that you met the expectations for assignments. In other words, a C is the average grade.

D 60-69.9  Earning a D indicates that you did not do well with a majority of the concepts and/or did not meet all the expectations provided for assignments.

F 0-59.9  Earning an F indicates that you did not do the required work and/or did not meet the majority of the expectations provided for assignments.

Final grades are final. I do not offer extra credit, and I do not bump up grades at the end of a semester. Grades do not reflect my personal feelings about students, so I do not change grades just because I like a student or feel badly about a student’s situation. Instead, grades solely reflect students’ mastery of the concepts introduced in class. Mastery and hard work do not necessarily mean the same thing; I appreciate (and expect) hard work, but do not attempt to get a higher grade by outlining all the struggles you’ve had during the semester and how you’ve overcome them.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism.

- Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

- Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

- Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**Any problems with plagiarism or cheating in our course will result in a grade of negative 10 points on the assignment/exam/quiz in question.** This policy applies to verbatim plagiarism, mosaic plagiarism, improper citations, missing quotation marks, and auto-plagiarism (using your own past work and turning it in for this course). All work must be original and written specifically for this course. A grade of negative 10 means that not only do you lose all points for the work in question but also lose an additional 10 points from your overall grade.

Furthermore, use of excessive direct quotations (higher than 40% of your work) will result in a grade of zero on that assignment.
Withheld Grades: Semester Grades Policy

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Course Schedule: January 18-May 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (1/18-1/22)</td>
<td>Formatting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 (1/25-1/29)</td>
<td>Business letters</td>
<td>T: IND: Formatting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 (2/1-2/5)</td>
<td>Résumés</td>
<td>T: IND: Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 (2/8-2/12)</td>
<td>Evaluation and memos</td>
<td>T: IND: Résumé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 (2/15-2/19)</td>
<td>Audience/Purpose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 (2/22-2/26)</td>
<td>Audience/Purpose</td>
<td>T: Audience/Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 (2/29-3/4)</td>
<td>Decision-making reports</td>
<td>R: Memo: Group contract 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 (3/7-3/11)</td>
<td>DMR</td>
<td>R: Memo: DMR progress update 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10 (3/28-4/1)</td>
<td>DMR</td>
<td>R: DMR (written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11 (4/4-4/8)</td>
<td>DMR presentations</td>
<td>T: DMR presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12 (4/11-4/15)</td>
<td>Instruction manuals</td>
<td>R: DMR presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13 (4/18-4/22)</td>
<td>IM</td>
<td>T: Memo: Group contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 14 (4/25-4/29)</td>
<td>IM</td>
<td>R: Memo: IM progress update 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15 (5/2-5/6)</td>
<td>IM</td>
<td>R: Memo: IM progress update 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals week (5/9-5/13)</td>
<td>Thursday, May 12, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>IM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students with disabilities
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.