

ENGL 3601 ■ Introduction to Technical & Professional Communication**Spring 2017 ■ January 17 – Apr 26 ■ Dr. Loel Kim ■****Description from Course Catalog**

Introduction to rhetoric and style of documents written by scientists, engineers, technical writers, and other professionals; extensive practice in writing reports, proposals, manuals, and correspondence.

Extended Course Description

Introduction to Technical & Professional Communication is designed to equip you with the analytical tools you will need when facing a variety of writing situations in your professional life, transferable across documents, organizations, and settings. You will learn principles of rhetorical analysis for both oral and written technical communication, plus an understanding of readers and audience that inform document design. Finally, you will have the opportunity to learn about and apply collaborative writing and project management knowledge and skills.

Additionally, the course will expose you to a variety of common business, organizational, and career genres and familiarize you with the general demands of each.

The course is designed for all undergraduates and is a required course for Professional Writing majors. You are entering a workplace that has changed dramatically since the late 20th century and into the 21st: Changes are generally attributed to two interrelated factors in particular—rapidly advancing technology and global economic shifts. With this in mind, emerging professionals headed for jobs as managers, technical experts, and consultants need to develop an understanding of basic communicative principles and rhetorical strategies that will enable them to navigate successfully through a changing work culture.

Because writing in the workplace often entails collaboration, in this course I will push you to expand your view of writing to include the interactions through which you accomplish project and writing goals *with* other people—for example, producing a formal report that represents your group's work often means you need to agree upon tone, content, or format as a group. You will apply this kind of book-learned awareness to real writing projects in order to gain experience in another area of collaborative work, revising and editing your work and the work of others in order to meet professional standards.

As much as possible, this course provides opportunities for you to shape the assignments according to knowledge, interests, and examples from your own area of engineering study.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Analyze a variety of workplace scenarios and audiences to make appropriate rhetorical choices in producing effective written, visual, and oral communications.
- Develop a wide range of workplace documents and technical communication materials.
- Conduct appropriate types of research to collect data.
- Collaborate effectively on writing and project teams.
- Design visually effective documents and presentations.
- Use appropriate technology tools.
- Use professional skills for job application and other career efforts.
- Prepare and deliver effective oral presentations.
- Recognize and strive towards professional levels of quality.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER RESOURCES

You are responsible for the following textbook and other course readings and resources as assigned.

Markel, Mike. (2010). *Technical Communication 11th Ed.* New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martin's. ISBN-10-1319088082.

You will be asked to post a weekly Reading Response (see ecourseware for detailed explanation) for textbook readings and other resources (e.g., PowerPoint lectures) up to the semester break.

For online course sections: Responses should be posted by 11:59 p.m. on the last day of the week.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

You must access your campus e-mail account daily. I use e-mail to send comments on rough drafts, to make announcements, or to clarify assignments and lessons. If you usually use another e-mail account, you need to go to <http://iam.memphis.edu> to make sure that mail sent to your U of M account is automatically forwarded.

When you send me email, you should use the course number, 3601, in the subject line.

Subject: 3601: The dog ate my thumb drive

Because of the amount of spam being generated these days and the threat of viruses, I do not open email I don't recognize. This flag will identify you, even if you are sending me email on a non-Memphis account.

You must be able to use ecourseware to access course materials, submit assignments, take quizzes/exams, and to back up your assignments.

STUDENTS with DISABILITIES

Any student who may need class or test accommodations based on the impact of a disability is encouraged to speak with me privately to discuss your specific needs. Students with disabilities should also contact Student Disability Services (SDS) at 110 Wilder Tower, 678-2880. SDS coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

GRADING POLICY

The course grade will be determined as follows:

FIVE MAIN GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

1	Quizzes, Exams	20
2	Professional Sampler: Informational Report, Technical Memo Revis., Letter	20
3	Oral Presentations (informal and formal): Briefing, Project Presentation	10
4	Job Application	20
5	Instruction Project	20

CLASS PARTICIPATION

quality and quantity of participation in class discussions, in-class work,
preparedness, homework 10 POINTS

TOTAL POINTS 100 POINTS

Letter grades will be assigned according to university range of values (plus/minus grades if applicable):

A+ 96.67	B+ 86.67	C+ 76.67	D+ 66.67	F below 60
A 93.34	B 83.34	C 73.34	D 63.34	
A- 90.0	B- 80	C- 70	D- 60	

Grade Ranges	Description of Quality
90-100	The assignment is superior. It exceeds all the objectives and is executed consistently very well. The content is ethical, shows a nuanced grasp of language and visual aspects of the project, exhibits thoughtful insights, and is ideally suited for the audience. The writing 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 close to flawless.
80-89	The assignment is very good. It meets the objectives of the assignment, but may require some restrategizing or minor improvements in organization, style, visual design, grammar, or mechanics.
70-79	The assignment is adequate. It omits useful information or requires significant improvement in organization, style, visual design, grammar, or mechanics. It may be formally correct but superficial in its discussion, or misguided in its rhetorical strategy.
60-69	The assignment is below expectations. It meets some of the objectives of the assignment but ignores others; the content is inadequately developed, may omit important information, or display numerous or major errors in organization, style, visual design, grammar, or mechanics.
50-59	The assignment 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.

Quizzes, homework, exercises, peer reviews, briefings

Quizzes on readings and other resources up will be given up to the Mid-term Exam (approximately midway in the semester). Quizzes will be available on ecourseware, the times available based either

on whether the course is online or on class meeting time.

The Mid-term Exam will be cumulative. Approximately one-third to one-half of the exam will be pulled from prior quizzes, and the rest will be new items.

APPOINTMENTS, CONFERENCES, AND COMMUNICATION

Because I can't anticipate all of the questions that may arise, I urge you to make sure I'm aware of your concerns, interests, and problems. You may certainly raise such issues in class discussions and email, and you can also arrange to meet with me in person, either individually or in small groups. I will be glad to meet you either during scheduled office hours or at another prearranged time. I'm also available to answer questions on the phone.

You can reach me in several ways:

- come to office hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., or make an appointment
- send me e-mail: loelkim@memphis.edu
- leave a note at my office PT 421

If you need to reach me on days when I'm not in the office, during the evening, or on a weekend, your best bet is to send me e-mail and set up an appointment. I usually check my e-mail several times a day on weekdays (usually in the morning and late afternoon), and once or twice a day over weekends—especially right before assignments are due. I'm pretty flexible about meeting times, but keep in mind things get more hectic for me at peak times during the semester and giving me as much lead time as possible improves your chances of a meeting.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

The interactions and responsibilities of this course echo work situations in which you are expected to participate as an effective, responsible member. The following descriptions cover different factors contributing to this dimension of your course grade.

Class Participation

This category contributes 10% towards your final course grade. The participation grade is determined at both a discrete level (small homework, exercises, or preparatory assignments), as well as at a holistic level (you're generally prepared, generally engaged in the course, generally engaged in class discussions, etc.). Examples of activities contributing to your participation grade:

- regularly participating in in-class exercises and doing homework
assessed by: quality of work, amount of effort
- participating in class discussions on the reading assignment, lecture topics
assessed by: amount and quality of contribution, level of preparation, energy, insight
- engages substantively in peer reviewing and other collaborative writing and project activities
assessed by: quality of work, amount of effort put into both primary and supporting roles, ability to manage group process, project/time management skills

As in the workplace, the effort and quality of contribution you make to this course's classroom dynamics will be noticed and will be counted as part of your evaluation for the course. Your general

level of engagement in the course can be measured by answering the following questions:

- Were you an active presence in class over the semester?
- Did you turn in your work on time?
- Were you prepared for class discussions and other in-class activities?
- Did you support and cooperate with your peers?
- Was your attitude positive and thoughtful (both intellectually and socially)?

General Guidelines on Submitting Assignments

NOTE: You are responsible for keeping backups of your assignments. Losing your drafts or turning in late drafts because you didn't back up your files is NOT an acceptable excuse.

- ✓ all major written assignments should include notes, research materials (links or scanned copies), drafts, and peer reviews related to the finished product. *This material is considered part of the assignment*, so failure to submit it will lower your grade.
- ✓ Both the file names and your work should display your name. Use the following file-naming formats:
YourLastName_AssignmentName_D1_dd-mm-yyyy.doc(x)
YourLastName_AssignmentName_D2_dd-mm-yyyy.doc(x)
YourLastName_AssignmentName_final.doc(x)
- ✓ The final draft (the one you want me to grade) should be clearly marked.
- ✓ Documents longer than one page should include page numbers; first page is not numbered (this is one way I deviate from MLA style).
- ✓ All documents must go through at least one peer review before turning them in to me for grading.
- ✓ All final drafts should be carefully edited and proofread to eliminate problems in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Spellchecking alone is not sufficient.

Documents that do not meet these and other assignment-specific requirements will not be graded.

Meeting Deadlines

Meeting deadlines is a professional responsibility. Therefore, all written assignments must be submitted on the due date. You can receive an extension only if you meet two conditions:

1. contact me before the date on which the assignment is due to explain why you need an extension.
2. Submit the assignment within one week after the scheduled due date.

Using these procedures, you may submit one late paper during the semester without affecting your grade. The second late paper will be marked down one grade. A third late paper will result in your grade for the course being marked down one grade.

Attendance

Attendance is taken each class meeting. If you miss over 20% of the class meetings you will fail the class. Being more than 20 minutes late counts as half an absence. Being more than ½ hour late counts as an absence. But you are still better showing up half an hour late and at least benefiting from

content covered in the class than missing it entirely. If you miss a class, it is up to you to find out what you missed from another classmate. I strongly suggest you have a few class buddies to keep each other up to date.

If the class is an online section, then “attendance” is measured by your consistent “presence” on ecourseware, through Reading Responses and Discussions and Student Reports generated by the software.

- *Your consistent presence is necessary to the quality of the class.* Aside from your individual work, you are responsible for community participation—giving feedback to other students, sharing experiences or insights into the readings, engaging in class discussion. Much of your evaluation comes from these activities.
- *This is a writing-intensive course; therefore, a significant portion of class assignments consists of responding to each other and me, and reviewing each other's working drafts.*

Accountability and Plagiarism

In your academic and professional career, you will often draw on and incorporate work done by others. You are expected to do so, but you are always required to give due credit to the person whose words, thoughts, ideas, or phrases you are using. We will discuss the ethics and mechanics of doing this, but keep in mind the general, but very strict rule, that presenting someone else's work as your own is never acceptable.

Any assignment including non-documented material from another source will receive a failing grade. A second instance will mean failure in the course and may result in further disciplinary action.

COURSE CALENDAR (TBA)

Wk	Wk of:	Class topic	Readings/Assignments Due
1	01/14	Introductions, administivia	Review syllabus and course
2	01/18	Writing in Your Career Writing Process Rhetorical Strategies	Chapter 1 & 2, Markel [RR] “Writing as a Tool” [PPT] QUIZ 1: Syllabus and Markel, Chaps. 1 & 2
3	01/25	Professional Sampler <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting research • Interviews • Writing Informational Reports Workshop: Peer Reviews	Professional Assignment Sampler Overview Chapter 5, “Planning the Document” [RR] Chapter 6, “Researching Your Subject,” especially pp 136-143 on Interviewing [RR] Chapter 8, “Communicating Persuasively” [RR] PS 1. Reporting on Writing in the Workplace Assignment Chapter 17, “Writing Informational Reports” [RR] QUIZ 2: Markel, Chaps. 5, 6 & 8

4	02/01	Organizing information Styles Lab – Styles, style sheets MS Word	Chapter 7, “Understanding Three Principles for Organizing Technical Information” [RR] “You Lost me in the Third Paragraph” [PPT] DUE midnight on Friday, 02/05: PS1. Interview Report (Reports in the Workplace) QUIZ 3: Markel, Chap. 7, 17, You Lost Me PPT
5	02/8	Styles Lab, cont’d. Common Organizational Writing Genres	Chapter 9, “Writing Coherent Paragraphs,” pp. 214-216 Word styles/templates for first informal reports PS 2: Technical Memo Report Revisions Assignment Chapter 14, “Writing Letters, Memos, and E-mails” [RR] QUIZ 4: Markel, Chap. 9, 14
6	02/15	Document Design Document Design Graphics	Chapter 11, “Designing Documents and Web Sites” [RR] PS 3. Intercultural Letter Assignment (work in pairs) Review: Chapter 5, pp. 90-98, Chapter 14, pp. 382-384 Homework: Exercise on pp. 100-101 “Interactive Sample Document” Chapter 12, “Creating Graphics” [RR] PowerPoint lecture, “Displaying Complex Information” [PPT] Online tutorial, “Preparing Effective Charts and Graphs” [W] QUIZ 5: Markel, Chap. 11, 12
7	02/22	International Letter	DUE midnight on Friday, 02/26: PS2. Technical Memo Report Revision
8	03/01	Workshop (group) Job Application	DUE midnight on Friday, 03/05: PS3. International Response Letter & Rationale Memo Chapter 15, “Preparing Job Application Materials” [RR] Begin researching materials for job Review Career Services Center resources, Optimal Resume and Letters, located under the Division of Student Affairs http://saweb.memphis.edu/ces/ DUE: obtain my approval via email over Spring Break QUIZ 6: Markel, Chap. 15, Optimal Resume & Letters Web resources
Spring Break Mon, Mar 8 - Sun, Mar 14			
9	03/15	Exam Workshop	Midterm Exam Job application research and materials
10	03/22	Workshop	Submit drafts of your resume and letter of application to the “Optimal Resume” feature on the Career Services website and revise from feedback DUE midnight on Friday, 03/26: Revised resume and letter of

application submitted to me for final comments before final drafts due.

		Workshop	Optimal Behavioral Interview [O] DUE midnight on Friday, 03/26: Draft responses to behavioral questions for Optimal Interview Session, revise and turn in audio file w/ rest of Job App Assign.
11	03/29	Writing Definitions, Descriptions, Instructions Review Reports Writing Proposals	Chapter 20, "Writing Definitions, Descriptions, and Instructions" DUE midnight on Friday 04/02: Job Application Assignment Chapter 16, "The Logistics of the Proposal"
12	04/05	Workshop Usability Testing	Group conferences w/ me on "Chat" for final approval of project DUE midnight on Friday 04/09: Instructions Project Scope of Project/Proposal Chapter 13, "Reviewing, Evaluating, and Testing Documents and Web Sites"
13	04/12	Workshop	I am available for feedback this week (must set appointment)
14	04/19	Oral Presentations	Chapter 21, "Preparing a Presentation" Making Presentation Slides Tutorial (online) http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/techcomm8e/tutorials/presentationSlides/index.html [W] Work on and "rehearse" final presentation
15	04/28	Final Day of Class	DUE by midnight: Instruction Project, Usability Report, Formal Oral Presentation PowerPoint [O]

[RR] Reading Response required; RR's not necessary after mid-term

[PPT] PowerPoint Lecture

[W] Available online

[O] part of oral communication grade. Note: All reading responses, chats, and final PowerPoint formal presentation contribute to oral component of grade.