

English 2700.042: Introduction to Technical Writing

Tu – Th 9:30 – 10:50 am

Aud. Bldg. 301 and 306, Technical Writing Lab

Instructor: Dr. Gail Lippincott

Office: Aud. Bldg. 316

Phone: 940-565-4386

Email: gail@unt.edu (Please start your email subject line with 2700 so that I will be sure to read your messages ASAP.)

Office Hours: Tu & Th 9–9:30 and 11–11:30 am; W 5–6:30 pm, and by appointment

Course Materials

You will need the following required items:

- Sims, Brenda R. *Technical Communication for Readers and Writers*. 2nd ed. 2003.
- an email account

Course Goals

Technical Writing is not a grammar class but an applied writing course in which you will learn to

- write clearly, concisely, and accurately for intended readers
- apply good writing skills to technical documents
- write various technical documents common in business and industry
- write as a member of a team
- use word processing, electronic mail, and graphics software applications on a personal computer

Projects and Value

Your final course grade will come from the following components:

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| ▪ Homework and quizzes | 10% |
| ▪ Proposal for individual report | 15% |
| ▪ Progress report for individual report | 5% |
| ▪ Individual report | 25% |
| ▪ Resume and cover letter | 15% |
| ▪ Brochure (team) | 10% |
| ▪ Instructions (team) | 10% |
| ▪ Feasibility report (team) | 10% |

Grading Scale

I use the following grading scale:

90–100	A	excellent (reserved for real excellence)
80–90	B	good (an honors grade)
70–80	C	fair (signifies average competence)
60–70	D	passing
Below 60	F	failing

Class Policies

The following class policies will help you understand what I expect of you.

Attendance

- Attend class regularly. You cannot perform well in this course unless you attend class. If you miss class for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered and all assignments made.
- Contact me if you must miss class or will be coming late. **Communication is extremely important!**
- If you exceed five unexcused absences, you will receive an F in the course.
- If you consistently arrive late or leave early, I will count you absent.
- If you will be absent because of a religious holiday, you must notify me in writing by September 5. You are responsible for turning in all assigned projects before the excused absence occurs.

Assignments

- Submit all assignments on time. I do not accept late papers. **If you are having trouble completing an assignment, talk with me several days before the assignment is due.**
- I will accept an excuse for a delayed paper only when a technical writing lab staff member verifies the computer-related problem.
- Prepare all outside class assignments (except some daily exercises) using word-processing software.
- Use the Technical Writing Lab software when you write your assignments in the lab.
- Print all documents on a laser printer to ensure that your documents are neat and visually appealing. I expect your work to have a professional appearance.
- Prepare all assignments specifically according to instructions for format, organization, or style. *Assignments not prepared according to instructions may receive a grade of F.*
- Make copies of your individual project and any other documents that you would like to keep. I must keep your individual project and other documents on file for one year.

Technical Writing Lab

- As a technical writing student, you may use the Technical Writing Lab in room 307 of the Auditorium Building. Be sure you understand and follow the lab policies.
I will fail any student caught damaging lab equipment, changing computer settings, downloading software, or sending broadcast messages.
- In addition to class meetings, you should be prepared to put in several hours per week in the Technical Writing Lab learning programs and working on your projects.
- The Technical Writing Lab is a teaching lab, not a general access lab. Weekly handouts tell you when the lab is open.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Plagiarism, according to the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, means “to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one’s own” or to “use another’s production without crediting the source” (www.m-w.com/). *Students guilty of plagiarism will receive an F in this course.*

If you have any question about how to cite published material, please discuss it with me.

Disability Accommodation

In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will cooperate with UNT’s Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

If you have a disability and have not registered with the ODA, I encourage you to register.

Please present me with your written request for accommodation no later than the fourth day of class.

Essential Competencies

Essential competencies for this course include the ability to

- Read and analyze technical documents
- Write clear, concise, and visually appropriate technical prose for the intended readers in response to various types of assignments
- Discuss, in class and in small groups, technical documents
- Use a personal computer with various word processing, electronic mail, and graphics software applications

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to slight revision, with advance notice.

August 26	What we'll do in class:	Introduction to the course
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Nothing!

August 28	What we'll do in class:	Understanding the Writing Process and Writing for Your Readers Introduction to the computer lab (Meet in Auditorium Bldg 307)
	What to read:	Chapters 1-2
	What's due:	Exercise 1, p. 33

September 2	What we'll do in class:	Writing Sentences and Paragraphs
	What to read:	Chapter 7
	What's due:	Exercises 1-5, 6 (complete only d), pp. 190-192

September 4	What we'll do in class:	Writing Sentences and Paragraphs
	What to read:	Chapter 7
	What's due:	Nothing!

September 9	What we'll do in class:	Using Reader-Oriented Language
	What to read:	Chapter 8
	What's due:	Exercises 1-11, pp. 216-218

September 11	What we'll do in class:	Using Reader-Oriented Language
	What to read:	Chapter 8
	What's due:	Nothing!

September 16	What we'll do in class:	Style Quiz
	What to read:	Review Chapters 7-8
	What's due:	Quiz by end of class
September 18	What we'll do in class:	Organizing Information, Using Headings, and Writing Previews
	What to read:	Chapter 6
	What's due:	Case Study, p. 173
September 23	What we'll do in class:	Graphics Orientation / Brochure
	What to read:	Chapter 9
	What's due:	Exercise 3, p. 250 by email
September 25	What we'll do in class:	Designing Documents and Visual Aids
	What to read:	Chapter 9
	What's due:	Draft of style sheet or edited text
September 30	What we'll do in class:	Team Project: Design Brochure
	What to read:	Chapter 9
	What's due:	Brochure due at end of class
October 2	What we'll do in class:	Introduce Individual Project Assignment Letters, Memos, and E-Mail
	What to read:	Chapter 18
	What's due:	Exercise 1, p. 586

October 7	What we'll do in class:	Proposals
	What to read:	Chapter 12
	What's due:	Exercise 1, p. 384
October 9	What we'll do in class:	Workshop: Proposals
	What to read:	Chapter 12
	What's due:	Draft of proposal due at the end of class
October 14	What we'll do in class:	Individual conferences to discuss proposal rough drafts
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Bring draft of proposal to conference
October 16	What we'll do in class:	Individual conferences to discuss proposal rough drafts
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Bring draft of proposal to conference
October 21	What we'll do in class:	Instructions
	What to read:	Chapter 15
	What's due:	Proposal for individual project
October 23	What we'll do in class:	Advanced Manual Orientation Workshop: Team Instructions
	What to read:	Chapter 15
	What's due:	Nothing!

October 28	What we'll do in class:	Workshop: Team Instructions
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Draft of Team Instructions
October 30	What we'll do in class:	Preparing Front and End Matter Workshop: Team Instructions
	What to read:	Chapter 11
	What's due:	Nothing for class, keep working on your individual project
November 4	What we'll do in class:	Workshop: Team Instructions
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Team Instructions due at end of class
November 6	What we'll do in class:	Informal Reports
	What to read:	Chapter 13
	What's due:	Progress Report due at end of class
November 11	What we'll do in class:	Writing Reader-Oriented Formal Reports Workshop: Team Feasibility Study
	What to read:	Chapter 14
	What's due:	Team topic due at end of class
November 13	What we'll do in class:	Workshop: Team Feasibility Study Individual Conferences to review Formal Project rough drafts
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Draft of your individual project

November 18	What we'll do in class:	Workshop: Team Feasibility Study
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Team Feasibility Study at end of class
November 20	What we'll do in class:	Resume and Cover Letter
	What to read:	Chapter 19
	What's due:	Your individual project
November 25	What we'll do in class:	Workshop: Resume and Cover Letter
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Nothing!
November 27	NO CLASS	ENJOY THANKSGIVING!
December 2	What we'll do in class:	Peer Edit: Resume and Cover Letter
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Draft of resume and cover letter
December 4	What we'll do in class:	Review of Individual Projects
	What to read:	Nothing!
	What's due:	Resume and cover letter

We will not have a final exam in this class!