

English 305-1
Technical and Professional Writing
Course Syllabus

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General Course Information

English 305-1
Technical and Professional Writing

Instructor: Stephan Ross

Office: RWST 423

Office Hours: Wednesdays 6:30 –9:30 pm and by appointment

Phone:

Email:

Course Information:

Meeting Times: MWF 8:30 to 9:20 am

Location: MS202 and RWST 101 Computer Lab

English 305 is designed to introduce you to technical and professional writing. We will split our class between theory and hands-on document production. This course is cross-listed for a variety of majors. Regardless of your particular field, I have a minimum set of expectations for you which are in keeping with what you will be asked to do in the professional community:

- have a high-school equivalency with regards to science.
- have a level of computer literacy befitting a college student.
- have successfully completed English 101 and either 200 or 201.
- are aware of your own learning processes and view yourself as a responsible, self-motivated learner.

Attendance and Tardies

Attendance is mandatory and can impact your grade. Two unexcused absences are free, for any reason. Each absence thereafter will drop you a half letter-grade down. I very much appreciate courtesy phone calls letting me know that you will miss class. It is your responsibility to get missed assignments, handouts, notes, etc., from your peers. I do not like tardies, so please be punctual. If you are more than ten minutes late, you will be considered absent.

Readings and Coursework

I will put two identical packets of readings on reserve at the Merrill library. Please copy and read them as the schedule dictates. We will discuss the readings each week in class: please come with questions. The readings will serve as a basis for weekly quizzes. I will occasionally bring supplemental handouts to class. Later in the course, you will need to purchase a 1” or 2” 3-ring binder, a set of dividers, and a set of sheet protectors for use in the Portfolio. There is one required text for class available at the University Bookstore:

Brusaw, Charles *et al.* The Concise Handbook for Technical Writing St. Martin’s Press, 1996.

Grading, Late Work and Deadlines

Grading is on a straight 100 point scale and is weighted according to Utah State University standards. Your grade will derive from the assignments, quizzes and your participation. There will be *no midterm or final exam* for this class. Also, I do not give make-up or extra credit assignments.

Technical and Professional Writing is designed to mirror the job environment as closely as possible. That is the rationale behind us not having a midterm or final: you would never have such nonsensical things in the job place.

Real jobs, however, have drop-dead deadlines which will either make or break you. Our class does as well; *all late work, for whatever reason, receives zero points and cannot be made up.*

Point Breakdown:

Résumé (cover letter, résumé, and vitae):	10 points.
Memorandums (regarding weekly reading).....	10 points.
Interview a Professional:	10 points.
Business Letters (letters of apology, customer response, and persuasion).....	10 points.
Writing Instructions & Directions (the “how to” assignment)	10 points.
Editing and Proofreading:	10 points.
Proposal:	15 points.
Portfolio:	10 points.
Participation:	5 points.
Conferences (two conferences):	10 points.

TOTAL:100 points.

Incompletes

With the exception of proven medical and health-related excuses, I do not give incompletes. This is college. Do it.

Students with Disabilities

If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (DRC), preferably during the first week of the course. Any requests for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor. In cooperation with the DRC, course materials can be provided in alternative formats—large print, audio, diskette, or Braille.

Course Schedule

Course readings come from the Concise Handbook for Technical Writing (CHTW). Articles are on reserve at the Merrill Library, with additional readings handed out in class.

All readings are listed the week before they are due.

Week 1: Résumés and Memorandums

Assignments:

- Purchase Textbook
- Begin Readings
- Begin Résumé Assignment
- Find a Job Posting

Readings:

- CHTW- Correspondence and Job Application
- McNair, “New Technologies and Your Résumé”
- Hauer, “Writing Technical Documents for the Public”

Week 2: Résumés and Memorandums, Continued

Assignments:

- Memorandum 1 Due
- Résumé Assignment: Cover Letter, Résumé and Vitae Due

Readings:

- CHTW- The Writing Process

Week 3: Interviewing

NOTE: CLASS WILL NOT MEET THIS WEEK!

Assignments:

- Interview a Professional in Your Field

Readings:

- CHTW- Technical Writing Forms and Elements
- Desktop Design, “Type”
- Technical Communications, “Desk Top Type: Tradition and Technology”

Week 4: Business Letters

Assignments:

- Memorandum 2 Due (covers weeks 2 and 3)
- Interview Paper Due
- Business Letters Assignment: Letter of Apology Due

Readings:

- CHTW- Style and Clarity (located under the Research and Documentation Tab)
- Garrett, “Boosting Productivity with Templates”

Week 5: Business Letters, Continued

Assignments:

- Memorandum 3 Due
- Business Letters Assignment: Letters of Customer Response and Persuasion Due

Readings:

- CHTW- Graphics and Design
- Quimby, “Make Text and Graphics Work Together”
- Matis, “The Graphic Design of Text”
- Olsen, “The Wide World of Color”

Week 6: Writing Instructions & Directions

Assignments:

- Memorandum 4 Due
- Instructions & Directions Assignment Due
- Graphics, Data and Text Discussion

Readings:

- CHTW- Research and Documentation (located under the Style and Clarity Tab)

Week 7: Editing and Proofreading

Assignments:

- Memorandum 4 Due
- Editing and Proofreading Assignment Due

Readings:

- Speck, “Writing a Successful Grant Proposal”
- Bush, “What to Teach Technical Editors: Science or Language?”
- Sherwood, “Technical Documents as Information Systems”

Week 8: Proposals

Assignments:

- Begin Proposal Assignment
- Memorandum 5 Due

Readings:

- Distributed in class.

Week 9: Proposals, Continued

Assignments:

- Continue Proposal Assignment

Readings:

- Distributed in class.

Week 10: Portfolio

Assignments:

- Proposal Assignment Due
- Begin Portfolio

Readings:

- Distributed in class.

Week 11: Conclusion

Assignments:

- Portfolio Due