

English 3373, Section 005

Fall 2009

Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.

Ransom Hall, Room 316

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Office hours: MW: 11-12; TR: 11:30-12:30; or by appointment.

Texts

Markel, Mike. *Technical Communication*. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2010.

(NOTE: An electronic version of this text is available from www.coursesmart.com.)

Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. 9th ed. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2007.

Course Description and Goals

Although English 3373 is formally titled “Technical Writing,” the writing you will do in this course may be more accurately described as “workplace writing.” Some of it will be technical; indeed, it may be highly technical. But much of it will require non-technical descriptions and explanations of technical information and processes. Thus, as a technical writer, you often become, in effect, a translator capable of revising technical material into information that readers with little or no technical background can understand and use. Every assignment you write in this course will require you to analyze the audience for your text and to adapt your writing to meet that audience’s requirements. At times you will be writing for an audience with as much technical knowledge as you have. Most of the time, however, you will be writing for an audience with far less technical knowledge than you have. Your success in this course will depend in large part on how well you adapt your writing to meet the needs of your various audiences. Workplace writing also requires teamwork, so a major assignment for this course is a group project.

Course Methodology

Because this course focuses on workplace writing, you will need to treat the classroom as your workplace, assignments as job-related tasks, and your classmates as co-workers. You should arrive at class *on time* each day prepared to work. You must complete assignments on time to receive full credit for them. Missed deadlines are not acceptable in the workplace; thus, they are not acceptable in his class. *All writing for this class must be done on a computer and most of it will be submitted electronically.*

Evaluation/Grading

Your grade in this course will be determined primarily by your writing. There are no tests, per se, but there may be quizzes and there are exercises from *Style*. Your grade will be determined as follows: Analytical report 30% (broken into multiple components); short writing assignments, *Style* exercises, and quizzes 30%; group project 25% (broken into multiple components); and résumé and letter of application 15%. **You must complete all assignments to pass the course.** You should keep all your writing, formal and informal, until you receive your final grade from the university. You cannot challenge a grade without evidence.

Late work

You must turn assignments in on time to receive full credit for them. If a major assignment is less than a week late, the grade will be reduced by a letter grade. Once the assignment is a week late, the grade becomes an F, but the assignment still must be completed. Late in-class or informal writing assignments and *Style* exercises will receive a zero. If you are absent or tardy and miss a quiz or in-class writing, you will receive a zero.

Attendance

You cannot keep a job if you do not show up to work, and you cannot pass this course if you do not show up to class. I make no distinction between “excused” absences and “unexcused” absences. If you are not in class, you are absent, no matter the circumstances. You are allowed three absences without penalty. If you are absent four times, your final grade will be lowered one letter grade. If you are absent six times, you will fail the class unless you drop.

Tardiness

You not only need to attend class regularly, but you also need to arrive on time and stay until the end of class. Students who arrive late or leave early disrupt class and show disrespect for their classmates and instructor. Workers who are chronically late or leave work early frequently find themselves unemployed. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late for class, or miss more than 15 minutes of any class period, you will be counted absent. If you arrive late and/or leave early but miss fewer than 15 minutes of class, you will be considered tardy. Being tardy twice is the equivalent of one absence.

Classroom policies

Please do not bring food into the classroom. You may bring bottled water or other beverages in bottles or in cups with lids. If you have a cell phone or a pager, you must turn it off before you enter the classroom. If your cell phone rings during class, you will be banished from the classroom for the remainder of the class period and counted absent for that day. Always treat your classmates (co-workers) and their ideas with respect, no matter how much you may disagree with those ideas.

Academic Dishonesty

It is the policy of the University of Texas at Arlington to uphold and support standards of personal honesty and integrity for all students consistent with the goals of a community of scholars and students seeking knowledge and truth. Furthermore, it is the policy of the University to enforce these standards through fair and objective procedures governing instances of alleged dishonesty, cheating, and other academic/non-academic misconduct. UTA defines three types of academic dishonest: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating includes copying another's test or assignment; communication with another during an exam or assignment (written, oral or otherwise); giving or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor; possessing or using unauthorized materials during a test; or buying, using, stealing, transporting, or soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key. Plagiarism consists of using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgment or making slight variations in the language of another's work and then failing to give credit to the source. Collusion is collaborating with another when preparing an assignment, without authorization. If you are unsure about the need to document or how to document a source or sources, please see me *before* you submit your paper. If you are caught cheating on any assignment, you will receive an “F” for that assignment.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability, or you may visit the Office for Students with Disabilities in E. H. Hereford University Center or call the office at (817) 272-3364.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, offers tutoring for any writing you are assigned while a student at UT-Arlington. During Fall 2009, Writing Center hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday; and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. You may schedule appointments online by following directions available at www.uta.edu/owl/appointments, by calling 817 272-2601, or by visiting the Writing Center. If you come to the Writing Center without an appointment, you will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis as tutors become available. Writing Center tutors are carefully chosen and trained, and they can assist you with any aspect of your writing, from understanding an assignment to revising an early draft to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; tutors will not correct your grammar or rewrite your assignment for you, but they will help you become a better editor of your own writing. I encourage each of you to use the Writing Center.

Schedule of assignments

(Note: The assignment schedule below is subject to change as needed. Minor adjustments may be made on a day-to-day basis. It is your responsibility to be aware of changes. Major changes will be announced in class and posted online.)

Tuesday, Aug. 25 Course introduction.	Thursday, Aug. 27 Read "Introduction for Writers" and Chapter 1 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Self-evaluation due before class begins.
Tuesday, Sept. 1 Read Chapter 2 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Read "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices." Write a 250- to 300-word analysis comparing the WPA Statement with Markel's "Ethics Note" on page 28 of <i>Technical Communication</i> . Email the analysis to me before 8 a.m., Tuesday.	Thursday, Sept. 3 Read Chapter 3 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Complete the assignment on page 56 and email it to me before class.
Tuesday, Sept. 8 Read Chapter 15 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Find a job on Monster.com, Careerbuilder.com, or other source for which you would like to apply. Bring ad to class.	Thursday, Sept. 10 Work on résumé and letter of application.

Tuesday, Sept. 15 Read the Preface and Chapters 1 and 2 in <i>Style</i> . Work on résumé and letter of application. First draft of résumé and letter of application due no later than 5 p.m.	Thursday, Sept. 17 Reviews and revision of résumés and letters of application.
Tuesday, Sept. 22 Read Chapter 3 in <i>Style</i> . Read Chapter 4 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Work on revision of résumé and letter of application. Final draft of résumé and letter of application due no later than 5 p.m.	Thursday, Sept. 24 Read Chapter 4 in <i>Style</i> . <i>Style</i> exercises for Chapter 3 due before class begins. Read Chapters 5 and 17 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Meet in groups to brainstorm topics for group projects.
Tuesday, Sept. 29 Read Chapter 5 in <i>Style</i> . <i>Style</i> exercises for Chapter 4 due before class begins. Read Chapter 6 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Meet in groups to choose topics for group projects	Thursday, Oct. 1 Read Chapter 7 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Group proposals due at the end of class.
Tuesday, Oct. 6 Read Chapter 6 in <i>Style</i> . Chapter 5 <i>Style</i> exercises due before class begins. Work on group projects.	Thursday, Oct. 8 Read Chapters 9 and 11 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Work on group projects. Group progress reports due by 5 p.m., Friday.
Tuesday, Oct. 13 Read Chapter 7 in <i>Style</i> . Chapter 6 <i>Style</i> exercises due before class begins. Read Chapters 12 and 13 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Work on group projects.	Thursday, Oct. 15 Chapter 7 <i>Style</i> exercises due before class begins. Work on group projects. First draft of group project due by 5 p.m., Friday.
Tuesday, Oct. 20 Read Chapter 21 in <i>Technical Communication</i> . Work on revision of group projects and oral reports.	Thursday, Oct. 22 Oral reports on group projects.
Tuesday, Oct. 27 Read Chapter 8 in <i>Style</i> . Work on group projects. Final draft of group project and evaluations due no later than 5 p.m., Wednesday.	Thursday, Oct. 29 Read Chapter 9 in <i>Style</i> . Chapter 8 <i>Style</i> exercises due before class begins. Read Chapter 19 in <i>Technical Communication</i> .
Tuesday, Nov. 3 Read Chapter 10 in <i>Style</i> . Chapter 9 <i>Style</i> exercises due before class begins. Work on proposals for recommendation reports. Proposals due no later than 5 p.m., Wednesday.	Thursday, Nov. 5 Read Chapter 11 in <i>Style</i> . Work on recommendation reports.
Tuesday, Nov. 10 Read Chapter 12 in <i>Style</i> . Work on recommendation reports.	Thursday, Nov. 12 Read Chapter 20 in <i>Technical Communications</i> . Work on recommendation reports.
Tuesday, Nov. 17 Instruction assignment due before class begins. Work on recommendation reports.	Thursday, Nov. 19 Work on recommendation reports.
Tuesday, Nov. 24 Work on recommendation reports. First draft of recommendation reports due by 5 p.m.	Thursday, Nov. 26 Thanksgiving break. No class.
Tuesday, Dec. 1 Work on revision of recommendation reports.	Thursday, Dec. 3 Work on revision of recommendation reports.
	Thursday, Dec. 10 Final draft of recommendation reports due no later than 10:30 a.m.