

ENGLISH 3351 - TECHNICAL WRITING

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Office hours:

M/W/F 8:30 am – 10 am

T/TH 11 am - 12:15 pm

And by appointment

CLASS POLICIES

Required Text

Richard Johnson-Sheehan *Technical Communication Strategies for Today* 6th ed.

Each student must have his/her own copy of this text. I will not grant any assignment extensions for failure to purchase or rent the text.

Course Description

Introduction to the patterns of writing used in reports and letters for business, industry, and technology.

It is essential that you follow the course schedule very carefully as well as regularly check the Blackboard site for our course and your ASU e-mail. All assignments, including tests, are due by class time on the due date listed on the course schedule.

Goals of the course

Students in this class will:

1. Analyze the communication situation fully and accurately: needs, audiences, uses, and constraints.
2. Gather, interpret, and document information logically, efficiently, and ethically
3. Develop professional work and teamwork habits
4. Design usable, clear, persuasive, accessible documents
5. Select the appropriate media for presenting information
6. Organize information using reader-based principles
7. Use graphics effectively
8. Develop an effective, clear writing style

I will assume that each student enrolling in this class is already reasonably proficient in basic writing skills, including punctuation, grammar, and sentence-construction. Elements of effective business writing style will be taught; basic composition will not. If you lack these skills, you may seek assistance at the Writing Center, located in the library, 3rd floor.

I will also assume that you are computer literate; assignments will require you to use a broad array of computer skills. Please note that I cannot troubleshoot your technology problems for you, nor do I guarantee that I will accommodate them. Part of the requirements for this course is that you have reliable computer access and a word processing program that will allow you to save documents in Microsoft Word format. If you routinely cannot turn in assignments or complete tests as directed online for any reason, please drop the course and register for the face to face version.

Requirements and Grading

Homework Activities – There are very few homework activities. However, these activities will be completed on your own and turned in on Blackboard by the due date indicated on the course schedule. Each activity will be graded, so do use all of the time provided to do a thorough job.

Major Assignments - Except as otherwise specified, all assignments must be typed with one-inch margins on top, right, and bottom, and they must be cited using MLA or APA format. ***Please use Times Roman or Times New Roman 12 point font and single-spaced or 1.0 spaced text (not 1.15 or double spaced) using block paragraphs with no indentions. All text, except for headings must be left-justified. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in the loss of points.***

- **Format** – Turn in only ONE file with the assignment components listed in the order stated on the assignment page. Failure to submit the components as one file or submitting a file with the components out of order will result in a 10 point deduction.
- **APS** - All major assignments also must include a typed Audience Profile Sheet (or APS). These are located under “course information” on Blackboard. Failure to include an APS with your assignment will result in a deduction of 10 points.
- **Safe Assign** - In addition, **all major assignments (but not homework) as well as the final exam** will be checked by Safe Assign automatically. If you have questions about your Safe Assign report, please come see me during office hours and I will be glad to help you.

- **Late Penalties** – Assignments (both major assignments and homework assignments) will be assessed a penalty of 10 points if turned in after class time on the due date and 10 more points for each additional day late. This includes weekends and holidays.
- **Grading** - Grades on all written work depend on all elements of writing, which include but are not limited to: content; form; accuracy in grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.; logic; and neatness. In addition to grading for content and development, I grade for errors in grammar, spelling, and formatting. **These errors will seriously impact your grade**, so I strongly suggest that you go over your assignments thoroughly to ensure that they are as perfect as possible.

Blackboard works on a weighted system, and the approximate item weights are as follows:

Weight	Unit	Deliverable
10%	Unit 1: Communicating with Employers	Traditional job letter & resume
10%	Unit 2: Preparing for Graduate School	CV and statement of purpose
10%	Unit 3: Writing for Other Cultures	Pamphlet
10%	Unit 4: Documenting Procedures	Set of instructions
5%	Unit 5: Explaining Concepts	Technical description
5%		Technical definition
25%	Unit 6: Proposing Actions to Decision-Makers	Formal proposal
5%	Homework Activities	
20%	Tests	

Tests – Tests will cover your reading in the text and the class lecture. You are responsible for knowing the material, whether it was covered in class lecture or is only in the book. No notes, books, or computers slides or web sites may be used during a test unless you are directed otherwise. Tests must be completed individually - no talking will be permitted during a test. If any outside resources are used or if you are caught talking during a test, you will automatically earn a zero on the test.

If you miss a test you must have a documented emergency or a university-approved absence to be permitted to make up the test. I will decide what constitutes an emergency on an individual basis. If I permit you to make up a test, you must make it up within 1 week of the test or you will receive a zero.

Classroom Decorum

We will conduct this class as though it were a typical workplace. Please speak, attend, and behave accordingly. Please do not come to class unprepared; if you do, I reserve the right to ask you to leave and to charge you with an absence. Also, any student who falls asleep will be awakened and asked to leave the class. If these actions would embarrass you, please come to class prepared and alert. Also, chewing gum, eating, drinking, talking disruptively, habitually forgetting the textbook, and doing coursework for other classes are prohibited. Turn off all electronic communications equipment; if it makes noise, turn it off before coming to class.

Food and drink are NOT allowed in the lab. If you bring food or drink I will ask you to put it away or throw it out. That means *do not* set your drink on the tables or desks, and *do not* bring it out to drink while at your computer station. Finally, following University tobacco-use policy, no tobacco products of any kind, including chew or dip, are to be used in the classroom.

Attendance Policy

Come to class. You benefit by attending regularly and developing professional work habits. You will only be considered present if you sign the attendance sheet. It is your responsibility to sign the sheet every day at the beginning of class. If you do not sign the attendance sheet, you will be counted as absent whether you attended class or not.

Because of the nature of the course material and the fast-paced nature of the course, missing classes can cause you to fall behind in your work. For this reason, I strongly recommend that you only miss class when it is unavoidable, as in the case of an emergency.

If you miss class, please follow these steps:

1. If you must miss class, you should first consult the syllabus to see what you have missed. Do not e-mail me and ask – this is what the syllabus is for.
2. Review the assigned chapters and the associated PowerPoint notes.
3. Complete the activities on your own.
4. If you still have questions at that point, feel free to email me.

Policy on leaving early. You are not permitted to leave early unless you have received permission from me personally. If you leave early without permission, I will charge you with an absence, no matter how much of the class you have attended that day.

You are allowed 3 unexcused absences. After this number, you will be docked 1 percentage point from your final grade for each additional absence. After 6 unexcused absences, you will automatically receive a grade of F. Please note that these deductions do not show up on Blackboard; however, they will be counted into your final grade.

You are responsible for keeping track of your own absences - it is not my responsibility to remind you that you are losing points. Documentation will be required in order to excuse an absence and whether an absence will be counted as excused or not is solely up to my discretion as an instructor (unless it is a university excused absence).

Arrive on time. Any student who misses class or arrives more than 20 minutes after the beginning of class will be considered absent. I reserve the right to dock points from those who are habitually late as ½ point for each instance after you receive a warning in writing or via e- mail.

Workshop/critique days. Your attendance is required on a workshop or critique day. Failure to come on that day or coming with an incomplete draft will result not only in an absence (you will be asked to leave if you come unprepared) but will also result in a 10 point deduction from that assignment. As always, documentation will be required to excuse an absence and it is up to me whether to accept that documentation (unless it is a University-approved absence).

Academic Honesty

I will be checking each paper for plagiarism and for the appropriate use of sources using Safe Assign. Make sure that you are citing all sources appropriately and correctly. Failure to do so will result in a loss in points or disciplinary action. I will not grade an assignment until you have submitted a draft to turnitin.com and I will consider that assignment late until you have turned it in online, even if you gave me a paper hardcopy in class.

Keep in mind that plagiarism also consists of recycling old papers or materials completed for another class or for a previous section of 3351 (i.e. self-plagiarism) as well as taking a file begun by another person and revising it. These documents should be yours alone and completed for *this* course during *this* semester.

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is available on the web at <http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf>. Students in this class who are determined to have violated the policies explained in the code will face a disciplinary process that, at minimum, will result in failing the assignment, and may also include receiving a failing grade in the course, as well as being referred to the English Department Chair for possible further action.

Students with Disabilities or Special Needs

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

The Office of Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student's responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting:

Dallas Swafford
Director of Student Disability Services
Office of Student Affairs
325-942-2047
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu
University Center, Room 112

Title IX

The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to

report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance.

Students are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU's Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator at:

Michelle Boone, J.D.

Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator

Mayer Administration Building, Room 210

325-942-2022

michelle.boone@angelo.edu

You may also file a report online 24/7 at www.angelo.edu/incident-form.

If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the *University Health Clinic and Counseling Center at 325-942-2173* or the *ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345*.

For more information about Title IX in general you may visit www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

Religious Holy Day

“Religious holy day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code §11.20. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

This schedule may be subject to change.

All assignments, including tests, will be due by class time on the assigned due date.

Week 1 – Tuesday, January 18

1. Introductions and course policies
2. Read course policies under “Course Information” on Blackboard.
3. Lecture - Chapter 1: Technical Communication in the Entrepreneurial Workplace.
4. Read Chapters 1 and 5.

Thursday, January 20

1. Lecture - Communicating in the Technical Workplace.
2. Introduce Job Materials Assignment
3. Read Chapter 2

Week 2 – Tuesday, January 25

1. Lecture – Profiling Your Readers.
2. View Audience Profile Sheet (APS) under “Course information” on Blackboard.
3. **Homework** - Work on Job Materials Assignment.
4. **Homework** - Read Chapter 6.

Thursday, January 27

1. Lecture - E-Mails, Letters, and Memos.
2. **Job materials assignment workshop**
3. **Homework** - Study for test 1 over chapters 1, 2, 5, and 6.
4. **Homework** – Finish Job Materials Assignment.

Week 3 – Tuesday, February 1

1. **Job Materials Assignment due**
2. **Test 1**

Thursday, February 3

1. Lecture - the C.V and Statement of Intent.
2. Introduce the C.V and Statement of Intent Assignment
3. **Homework** - Complete the “Graduate School Assignment” memo listed under “Assignments” on Blackboard.
4. **Homework** - Work on C.V. and Statement of Purpose Assignment

Week 4 - Tuesday, February 8

1. **Graduate school homework memo due on Blackboard before class.**
2. Work on CV in class

Thursday, February 10

1. **CV draft workshop assignment**
2. **Homework** – Finish CV and Statement of Purpose Assignment.

Week 5 – Tuesday, February 15

1. **CV and statement of Purpose Assignment due**
2. Lecture – Intercultural Technical Writing.
3. Introduce Writing for Other Cultures Assignment.

Thursday, February 17

1. Finish discussion of Hall and Hofstede dimensions.
2. **Activity** – Work on culture research memo and APS.
3. **Homework** – Finish draft of research memo for Writing for Other Cultures Assignment and APS.

Week 6 - Tuesday, February 22

No class

Thursday, February 24

No class

Week 7 - Tuesday, March 1

1. **Research memo and APS for culture assignment due**
2. **Activity** – Work on Culture Guides

Thursday, March 3

1. **Culture guide draft workshop**
2. **Homework** – Finish culture guides
3. **Homework** – Read Chapter 4

Week 8 - Tuesday, March 8

4. **Writing for Other Cultures Assignment due.**
5. Lecture - Chapter 4: Ethics in the Technical Workplace.
6. Activity – Ethics
7. Read Chapter 8.

Thursday, March 10

1. Lecture - Chapter 8: Instructions and Documentation.
2. Introduce Instructions Assignment under “Assignments” on Blackboard.
3. **Homework** – Work on Instructions Assignment.

Week 9 – Tuesday, March 22

1. Lecture - Usability.
2. Work on Instructions Assignment in class.
3. **Homework** - Read Chapter 17

Thursday, March 24

1. Lecture - Chapters 17: Designing and Using Documents and Interfaces
2. **Instructions draft workshop**
3. **Homework** – Read Chapter 18.
4. **Homework** – Revise instruction draft and complete final draft.

Week 10 – Tuesday, April 5

1. **Instructions Assignment due.**
2. **Lecture** - Chapter 18: Creating and Using Graphics.
3. Microsoft Paint Workshop
4. **Homework** – Study for Test 2 over Chapters 4, 8, 17, 18, and the lectures on Culture and Usability.

Thursday, April 7

1. **Test 2**
2. **Homework** - Read Chapter 7.

Week 11 – Tuesday, April 12

1. Lecture - Chapter 7: Technical Descriptions and Specifications.
2. Introduce Technical Definition Assignment under “Assignments” on Blackboard.
3. **Homework** - Work on Technical Definition Assignment.

Thursday, April 14

1. **Technical Definition Assignment due.**
2. Read Technical Description Assignment under “Assignments” on Blackboard.
3. Work on Technical Descriptions in class.
4. **Homework** - Work on Technical Description Assignment.
5. **Homework** - Read Chapter 9.

Week 12 – Tuesday, April 19

1. **Technical Description Assignment due.**
2. Lecture - Chapter 9: Proposals
3. Introduce Proposal assignment under “Assignments” on Blackboard..
4. **Homework** – Read Chapter 12.

Thursday, April 21

1. Lecture - Chapter 12: Researching in the Technical Workplace.
2. Work on Proposal in class.

Week 13 – Tuesday, April 26

1. Lecture - Chapter 10: Brief Reports and Chapter 11 Formal Reports
2. Work on proposals in class
3. **Homework** – Read Chapters 10 and 11.
4. **Homework** – Study for Test 3 over Chapters 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12.

Thursday, April 28

Test 3

Week 15 – Tuesday, May 4
Proposal draft workshop

Thursday, May 6 – class optional for last minute proposal questions
Proposals due

Final Exam

The proposal counts as your final exam. We will not meet during the final exam period.

