

Nicole Brown
English 302: Technical Writing
Fall 2010

Syllabus

Eng 302
TR 10 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.
Prof. Nicole Brown
Office hours: W 1 p.m.- 3 p.m. and by appointment

Course Objectives: This writing course provides you with strategies and opportunities for using rhetorical writing strategies and communication technologies to communicate with people about social and/or disciplinary concepts or processes important to sustainability challenges today. In this course you will:

- develop strategies for reading, planning, researching and developing documents that effectively respond to your purpose and audience;
- conduct research and analyses to develop documents that respond to particular audiences expectations or needs;
- gain understandings of the ethical and political implications of a technical writer's choice, as well as the diverse roles that technical writers occupy in organizations and communities;
- understand writing and genres as social action situated within rhetorical contexts;
- develop strategies for recognizing and designing visually effective documents;
- understand the recursive nature of the writing process in terms of researching, drafting, editing and revising;
- use the computer as a versatile writing technology, adapting various technologies to produce persuasive, and professional documents.
- learn and apply strategies for collaborating successfully on small and major projects.

Required Materials: Course materials will come from a variety of sources: journals, web sites, disciplinary texts, brochures, flyers, and a wide-range of other documents. Some of these materials will be made available to you via course reserve and on our course web site. However, you are also responsible for collecting materials based upon your professional interests/goals .

Because course materials are available mostly online, there are going to be times when you will want to print pages to use and file as resources. Given the university's printing quota of 500 pages per quarter and the economic and environmental costs of printing, you will want to minimize the number of times you print documents. To help limit the number of times that you print online documents, you should keep a folder or three ring binder to store resources.

In addition, you will need frequent access to the Internet (including email and WWW) during the quarter. If you have a computer at home and plan on using it to complete course work, you'll be responsible for configuring your system to access course materials. If you do not have a system at

home or cannot get your system configured, you will be able to use any of the standard computer labs on campus.

Course Policies: **Attendance** is required. The course is project-driven and the instruction is hands-on, with my role being similar to that of a project manager or a coach. Over the semester you will work on a number of research and writing tasks, some individual and others in small groups. In each case, I will provide you with guiding concepts and strategies for accomplishing the task and will give you feedback on the work you produce. You do much work for this writing class in the classroom. Thus, it is difficult to make up missed work. Aligned with this, you are allowed **TWO ABSENCES**, excused or unexcused. More than two absences will result in your final grade being lowered by one step for each additional absence. Also, you may not make up missed in-class assignments. More than five absences results in failure of the course.

You should submit your work on time. **Late Work** will only be accepted if you consult with me prior to the class period in which the work is due and if class activities on that day do not require you to have the assignment complete. If you are absent, you are responsible for handing in any assignments due that day via a fellow class member, in person, or via email. Due dates for assignments can be found on the course calendar.

All written work must be carefully **Proofread and Spell-checked** before it is handed in. If I receive work that contains numerous errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, it will be returned to you for correction before it is graded. People who need to improve their proofreading will be asked to make an appointment with me or to sign up for tutorials with the Writing Center.

We will be working with several of the **Computer Resources** available on campus. You are expected to keep back-up copies for all required assignments on hand. Because it is difficult to predict exactly what technologies you will be called upon to use as technical communicators, it is important for you to not only know how to use technologies but to know how to learn and adapt technologies as well. Therefore, you will be expected to spend some time outside of class learning or getting up to speed on computer technologies and applications that are unfamiliar to you. You will not be required to complete assignments using technologies that we do not familiarize ourselves with as a class or small group.

Email will be used regularly to make class announcements and/or disseminate assignments before or during class. You should be certain that you have your campus, Outlook email set-up and that it is working properly. I will not require that you check email outside of class for class. If you do not have email access at home, it should not work against you if you attend class on a regular basis. On occasion you will be asked to turn-in or share assignments/documents electronically via email. It is important that you title the subject header of these emails and the attached files appropriately. Every email that is sent to the class listserv or to an individual class member about the class should have ENGL302 [ENGL 302 - what this message will contain] in the subject header. Any files sent electronically via attachment should contain your last name in the file name [brown.doc]. This is important to ensure that your message is not overlooked and your attachment is not mis-filed.

Required Assignments: You will complete 3 major projects, a final, and a portfolio due for this course as well as a number of homework assignments, workshops, and other activities. The 3 larger projects are as follows:

Project 1: Employment Project (Individual)

Project 2: Instructional Materials (Collaborative)

Project 3: Document Analysis and Revision (Individual)

Final: Final Assignment [Note: this is a take-home assignment; we will not be meeting at our assigned final time]

Fifth Hour Assignment

You must complete each of these to pass the course.

For each project I am interested in observing your writing process and not just its outcome.

For each project, I will provide a document stating the project's components.

Grading: Each of the 3 major projects in the course will be comprised of several components, each of which will be worth a percentage of your final grade.

Project 1: Employment Documents 25%

Project 2: Instructional Materials 25%

Project 3: Document Analysis and Revision 25%

Final: 15%

In Class Writing Assignments, Quizzes, and Participation 10%

All projects and the final will be graded on the standard letter-grade scale:

The grading scale for the course is 100-95 = A, 94-90 = A-, 89-87 = B+, 86-83 = B, 82-80 = B-, 79-77 = C+, 76-73 = C, 72-70 = C-, 69-67 = D+, 66-63 = D, 62-60 = D-

Grading Criteria: Specific criteria for each larger assignment will vary depending on its required components. The three general criteria below, however, will remain consistent.

PURPOSE: How effective is the document? Does it

- accomplish its intended task?
- meet its goals and the demands of its context (both academic and organizational)?
- meet readers needs?
- provide relevant, useful, ethical, and accurate information?

PRODUCT: How well constructed is the document? Does it:

- demonstrate orderly and coherent presentation of material?
- display effective design and formatting?
- use visuals effectively?
- present professional tone and style?
- demonstrate careful proofreading and editing?

PRODUCTION: How effectively was the document produced? Does it:

- exhibit a considered writing process?
- reveal quality of planning, collaboration, research & invention, drafting, editing, proofreading?