Instructor: Ms. Jillian DeFore

Department: English and Creative Writing
Office: Virtual Classroom in D2L
Phone: 468-2101 (Eng. Dept.)
Email: Use the email tool in D2L. If that doesn’t work, email me at deforejilli@sfasu.edu
Class meeting time and location: Virtual classroom in BrightSpace by D2L

Office hours (ALL online):

Monday
7:00 – 9:00 PM

Thursday
7:00 – 9:00 PM

To contact me for synchronous communication, use the chat tool in D2L.

Course Texts

Strongly recommended (but not required): Any writing handbook, such as the one you may have been required to buy in English 131 and 132.

Course Overview
The general objective of this course is to learn, improve, and demonstrate effective, appropriate use of written Standard English in the context of the workplace. This course introduces you to the essential elements of technical writing in a practical and progressive structure designed to emulate the "real world." This course is both writing and reading intensive. You will produce a wide range of documents commonly found in the workplace, including but not limited to instructions, reports, proposals, memos, and letters.
As this is an online course, you will be making frequent use of a computer and of D2L. You’ll be expected to use email and to conduct online research. The syllabus indicates clearly the progress expected—no surprises, so you can prepare well ahead if you feel inclined to excel.

Our focus will be on clear, concise, complete written communication. This level of communication requires a well-defined concept of “audience” and a carefully thought-out message.

**Prerequisite**
Students must have earned a grade of C or higher in English 131 and English 132 (or their equivalents).

**Official Course Description**
This is the course description that appears in the official SFA course catalog:
Study of the rhetorical principles involved in technical and scientific workplace writing. Emphasis on the production of professional documents, such as analytical reports, in both traditional and online formats. Will not satisfy literature requirement; will not count toward an English major or minor (except for a minor in writing). Prerequisite: six hours of freshman English.

**More specific course description:**
In English 273 you will learn and practice the forms of written and oral communication used in sciences, business, engineering, and the workplace in general. You will analyze typical rhetorical situations, recognize conventional styles of presentation, and learn how to tailor your writing to a variety of audiences. You will study and practice the processes of written composition and the general principles of good communication, with the aim of becoming an efficient and effective writer and editor.

The business world is plagued by inefficient, incorrect, and sometimes unethical writing. By the time you finish this course, you’ll be part of the solution, not part of the problem. You’ll be able to write things that do what you need to do without causing undue confusion, conflict, or offense.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:
- Analyze audience and rhetorical situation in realistic settings, and tailor writing style and form to match them.
- Write acceptably clear, concise, and precise standard English prose suitable for business and scientific purposes, relatively free from stigmatized errors.
- Understand the role of standard form in business and scientific communication, and demonstrate your ability to write in a conventional form that’s given to you.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the role of visual presentation layout in technical communication, and tailor documents to meet context of use.
- Work together in small groups to plan, create, and edit documents.
- Carry out a variety of research, including library work, surveys, and interviews.
- Plan, design, and deliver oral presentations of a topic you’ve researched.
General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes for English 273

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

This semester (Fall 2018), the Communication Skills-Written & Visual requirement objective will be assessed. Students should see a separate course listed in their D2L account, titled “Core Assessment Fall 2018”. Assignment guidelines will be provided by the instructor, but students are responsible for submitting the assignment to the assessment course.

English Program Learning Outcomes

This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course.

Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 273:

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the recursive writing and social editing process and be able to write a variety of technical documents in an acceptable level of Standard American English. (This outcome aligns to the Core objectives for Communication Skills and Teamwork).

- Write a variety of technical documents, demonstrating their awareness of audience and facility in addressing different audiences and stakeholders in complex rhetorical situations. (This outcome aligns to the Core objectives for Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility).

- Write technical and workplace documents by applying the appropriate categorical modes of rhetorical composition (descriptive, expositive, scientific, etc.), integrating visuals with text, and presenting information in an oral format. (This outcome aligns to the Core objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, and Personal Responsibility).

- Work in groups to produce and critically evaluate documents, integrating different points of view. (This outcome aligns with the Core objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility).

- Use critical-thinking skills and exhibit technical proficiency in the invention and composing processes. (This outcome aligns with the Core objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, and Empirical and Quantitative Skills).

- Understand ethical considerations in technical and professional writing, understanding the consequences of communication acts. (This outcome aligns with the Core objectives of Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility).

- Tailor communications to social and ethical frameworks, editing them to be effective and responsible in international and intercultural situations. (This
outcome aligns with the Core objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility).

- Adequately research a topic and use documented evidence to support a paper written in the style applicable to their individual field of study. (This outcome aligns with the Core objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility).

**Course Policies:**

**Navigating the Course** You are expected to be able to navigate the online course. This means reading through the modules, submitting assignments in the proper locations, taking part in any assigned discussions, using the email function to communicate with your peers and your instructor, and so on. This course is an online course, so all work will be completed and submitted online via D2L (not printed and handed in or emailed).

**Attendance** Just as in face-to-face courses, attendance in online courses is required of all students. Before the twelfth class day, students will have several opportunities to participate in online class activities (introductions, postings to discussion boards, quizzes, etc.). Failure to complete at least two of these assignments on time will result in students being reported as “non-attending” with no possibility for reinstatement.

Online courses are alternatives to face-to-face courses and offer flexibility in regards to location and scheduling, but they are not meant to be “easier”. If you are taking a 3 credit hour course, for example, that would typically require 2 ½ hours of face-to-face class time and roughly 9 hours of study time. That’s 11 ½ hours of course devotion per week. You are expected to apply the same standards in an online course.

**Technical Difficulties** If you are having technical difficulties that prevent you from completing a task in D2L, please find a way to let me know ASAP (email my SFA address, if necessary).

**Assignment Difficulties** If you do not understand an assignment or you’re having difficulties accessing an assignment/file, the right time to notify your instructor and to ask questions is 24 hours before the assignment is due.

**Course Communication** Correspondence relating to this course must be directed through the email function on D2L. Since this is a writing class, if you’re emailing me, try to write decently and to concisely tell me the things I need to know. If this communication takes place outside of my scheduled office hours, please allow me 24 workday hours to respond. SFASU email, announcements, chats, and specially assigned discussion boards are other methods of course communication.

**Late Work** The only type of work I will accept late is a major assignment. These assignments will be due on the assigned due date. Submitting an assignment after the due date will reduce your grade by 10 points per day. I will not accept any assignments more than one week late, nor will I accept any assignments after deadweek (the final week of classes: the week before final exams).
**Requesting an Extension** You may request an extension for a major assignment IF you have a sound excuse to do so. If you have reason to request an extension, you must put that reason in writing and provide me with a specific day on which you will turn in your assignment (within one week of the original due date). You should submit this *previous* to the assignment due date.

**Assignment Submissions** Assignment instructions will come with submission instructions. All assignments are due on the assigned due dates. Submit posts to discussion boards, complete quizzes, and submit assignments to Dropboxes as assigned.

**Acceptable File Types** To ensure D2L/TurnItIn will accept your files, you will need to use specific file types in this course – *Microsoft Word* files (with a .doc or .docx extension), Rich Text files (with an .rtf extension) or PDF files.

**Correct Files** You are responsible for making sure you submit the correct file for any assignment.

**Revision Policy** The guidelines for revisions are as follows:

- You will be allowed to revise your *Job Portfolio* or *Instruction Manual* after you receive your final grade on that each. This is not meant to be a final draft and the final draft a rough draft, so please do not treat the final draft as if it were not important.
- You can earn up to 10 extra points.
- If you choose to revise, you must include a reflective essay of at least one page. This should discuss where you were lacking in your paper and what you did to improve.
- “Revisions” of small problems (such as typos, grammatical mishaps, etc.) will only give you a minimal higher grade (at best). Please remember the difference between editing and revision.
- Revisions of major problems (thesis, support, adding in transitions, reorganizing your essay structure, elaboration of analysis, etc.) will garner you a maximum higher grade.

Revisions will be due no later than dead week.

**Communication**
Course communication will be in *D2L Mail*, Discussions, and Chats. I will check my *D2L* email at least once a day, Monday through Friday. Lecture material will be delivered in the Learning Modules. Please remember that this is a web based course, and as such, **ALL** communication will be conducted via the course in *D2L*. We will not have any face-to-face meetings.

**Assignments**
All writing assignments must be typed and submitted through the *Drop Box* links in *D2L*. All assignments will be graded for proper format, soundness of content, attention to rhetorical context, resourcefulness, grammar, mechanics, and (when specified by the
assignment) document design. All assignments, excluding the resume, MUST BE COMPLETELY ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS created for this class.

All assignments must be completed in the order in which they are given, and you must complete all the major assignments in order to pass this course. No assignments will be accepted more than 7 days late, nor will any assignments be accepted after Saturday, May 9th.

- All three core assignments must be completed to pass the course.
- Minor assignments (including drafts and peer critiques) must be completed by the due dates in order to receive credit.
- If you are running into delays completing any assignments (major or minor) and want to avoid grade penalties, CONTACT ME AHEAD OF THE DUE DATE to explain the problem and ask for a short extension (which, under many circumstances, will be granted).

Major assignments
There will be four major assignments in this class, of varying lengths and with varying point values. The three core assignments are the Job Portfolio, the Instruction Manual, and the Decision-Making Report. Failure to complete any of the three core assignments will result in a grade of F for the course. (While the Annotated Bibliography is a major assignment, it is not one of your three core assignments.) Here are all of the major assignments:

- Project 1: Job Portfolio
- Project 2: Instruction Manual
- Project 3: Annotated Bibliography (research for the Report)
- Project 4: Decision-Making Report

Drafts & Peer Critiques
In your Freshman English courses you learned that writing is a recursive process - in other words, that drafting is an important part of the writing process. In English 273, we will continue the process of drafting major assignments and providing peer feedback on drafts. You will be able to post drafts and leave feedback for one another.

Grade Determination
Weekly Assignments and Discussions ......................................................... 35%
Quizzes .............................................................................................................. 10%
Job Portfolio ................................................................................................. 10%
Instruction Manual ....................................................................................... 15%
Annotated Bibliography ............................................................................... 10%
Decision-Making Report ............................................................................ 20%

Statement on Plagiarism and Cheating:

Any student caught plagiarizing will receive an automatic "0" on the corresponding assignment and he/she will be reported to the academic dean. Cases I believe were completely unintentional will be granted some leniency. However, at this point in your
education, the possibility of “unintentional” plagiarism should be unlikely. This will be determined by me on a case by case basis.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy:**
The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2016), “Course Grades”:

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities:**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of the Disability Services (ODS) in room 325 of the Human Services Building or by phone at 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodation. For additional information, visit [Disability Services](https://www.sfasu.edu/student-life/odsp).  

**FERPA Waivers** (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
According to the SFASU website:

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

For more information, visit the [SFA website](https://www.sfasu.edu/).  

I require a 24-hour weekday notice before meeting with anyone representing a student. This meeting must be scheduled via email, and a FERPA waiver must be processed before I will schedule an appointment. Furthermore, I will check identification to make sure any party involved is who he/she claims to be. If questions concerning a student’s grades or behavior are posed via email instead of face-to-face, I may take up to 48-hours to check the status of a FERPA waiver, to consult the student in question, and then to respond to the email.

**Acceptable Student Behavior:**
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the [Student Conduct Code](https://www.sfasu.edu/student-life/student-conduct), 2018). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance available to help SFA students succeed.
**Course Calendar**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lessons</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td>Introduction to Instructor</td>
<td>Introduction post</td>
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<td>(Aug 27- Sept 3)</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
<td>“What is tech writing?” post</td>
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<td>Syllabus &amp; Calendar Overview</td>
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<td>Course Navigation</td>
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<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Style Exercise</td>
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<td>(Sept 3- Sept 10)</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Ethics Assignment</td>
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<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>Letter of Complaint</td>
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<td>(Sept 10- Sept 17)</td>
<td>Emails</td>
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<td>Memos</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4</strong></td>
<td>Introduction to Job Portfolio (JP)</td>
<td>Job Ad Analysis</td>
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<td>(Sept 17- Sept 24)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
<td>Resume Design</td>
<td>Partial Draft of Job Portfolio</td>
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<td>(Sept 24- Oct 1)</td>
<td>Reference Sheets</td>
<td>Peer Review Confirmation Quiz</td>
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| Week 6  (Oct 1 - Oct 8) | Cover Letter  
Follow-up Letter  
JP Rubric Review | Final draft of Job Portfolio |
|---|---|---|
| Week 7  (Oct 8 - Oct 15) | Introduction to Instruction Manual  
Selecting a Topic  
Using Graphics | Topic Discussion Post  
Graphics Assignment |
| Week 8  (Oct 15 - Oct 22) | Designing Pages  
Writing Clear Steps | Draft of IM Steps  
Instructions Analysis |
| Week 9  (Oct 22 - Oct 29) | IM Full Length Review  
IM Peer Review  
IM Rubric Review | Rough Draft of IM (midweek)  
Final draft of IM  
Peer Review Confirmation Quiz |
| Week 10  (Oct 29 - Nov 5) | Introduction to DMR  
Review of Sequence of Assignments  
Topics | Topic post |
| Week 11  (Nov 5 - Nov 12) | Proposal for DMR  
Annotated Bibliography Overview  
Research Introduction | DMR Proposal |
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<tr>
<th>Week 12  (Nov 12- Nov 16)</th>
<th>Research Continued AB Rubric Review</th>
<th>Annotated Bibliography</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13  (Nov 19- Nov 26)</td>
<td>Thanksgiving break.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14  (Nov 26- Dec 3)</td>
<td>General Business Documents Overview</td>
<td>Research Analysis</td>
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<td>Review DMR Assignment</td>
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<td>Structure and Design of DMR</td>
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<td>Week 15  (Dec 3- Dec 10)</td>
<td>Establishing Criteria</td>
<td>Rough Draft of DMR</td>
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<td>Rating Systems</td>
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<td>Week 16  (Dec 10- Dec 14)</td>
<td>DMR Peer Review</td>
<td>Final Draft of DMR</td>
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<td>DMR Rubric Review</td>
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*subject to change with notification*