English 2311-008: Technical & Scientific Writing
Fall 2020

Class Time: Tues. & Thurs. 8:00 AM – 9:15 AM
Class Location: Ferg. 378

Instructor Contact Information
Ms. Jennifer McLaughlin
SFA Email (preferred): mclaughljl@sfasu.edu (through outside email accounts)
D2L Email: mclaughljl@d2l.sfasu.edu (only email through D2L)

Office Location: LAN 244
Office Phone Number: 936-468-2226
Google Voice Number: 936-205-1848
- for emergencies and to use if I’m doing office hours from home

Office Hours
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
And special appointments when possible

Description
ENG 2311 Technical and Scientific Writing: 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 technical writing).

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

Additional Information
In English 2311, you will learn and practice the format of written and oral communication used in science, 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 process 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 them to do without causing undue confusion, conflict, or offense.

**General Education Core Curriculum Objectives**

In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for the English Foundational Component Area in Communication Writing may be assessed. These objectives are:

1. Critical Thinking: Creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills: Effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
3. Teamwork: The ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
4. Personal Responsibility: The ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

**English Learning Program 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**

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

1. 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. (Communication Skills and Teamwork).
2. Write a variety of technical documents, demonstrating their awareness of audience and facility in addressing different audiences and stakeholders in complex rhetorical situations. (Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, and Personal Responsibility).
3. Write technical and workplace documents by applying the appropriate categorical modes for rhetorical composition (descriptive, expositive, scientific, etc.), integrating visuals with text, and presenting information in an oral format. (Thinking, Communication Skills, and Personal Responsibility).
4. Work in groups to produce and critically evaluate documents, integrating different points of view. (Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, and Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility).
5. Use critical-thinking skills and exhibit technical proficiency in the invention of composing processes. (Critical Thinking and Communication Skills).
6. Understand ethical considerations in technical and professional writing, understanding the consequences of communication acts. (Critical Thinking, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility).
7. Tailor communications to social and ethical frameworks, editing them to be effective and responsible in international and intercultural situations. (Thinking, Communication Skills, and Personal Responsibility).
8. Adequately research a topic and use documented evidence to support a paper written in the style applicable to their individual field of study. (Critical thinking, Communication Skills, and Personal Responsibility).

**Required Texts and Materials**


I will post pdfs of all relevant material from the textbook for the first three weeks of the course. In that time, it is your responsibility to obtain a copy of the book.

It doesn’t matter if your copy is new or used, or if it is a printed or electronic copy – just as long as you have the 9th edition. Both major and minor assignments in this course will be based heavily on material from the text, and older editions might not contain the same information.

**Grade Breakdown**

Grading in this class will be done via percentages. Each of the following assignments are worth a certain percentage of your final grade. For a running total and for your grade on each assignment, please see the D2L Gradebook section.

The distribution for each is as such:

- Professional Correspondence _____ 10%
- Job Portfolio ___________________ 15%
- Decision-Making Report _________ 20%
- Instruction Manual _____________ 25%
- Daily Work ______________________ 30%

Total Percentage per Letter Grade

A: 100-90
B: 89-80
C: 79-70
D: 69-60
E: 59 and below

**Major Assignment Due Dates**

A more detailed schedule (including due dates for major assignments and daily work) will be provided on D2L, but here is a list of the due dates for all of our major assignments. Please see below for specific rules and regulations on the submission procedure. Just as a reminder, all assignments, unless otherwise specified, will be due at the start of class on the day listed.

- Professional Correspondence – Thursday, September 17
- Job Portfolio – Thursday, October, 15
- Decision-Making Report – Thursday, November 12
- Instruction Manual – Friday, December 10 (by Noon)
**Note on End of Semester Grading**

In order to be fair to everyone in the class, I do not offer extra assignments or revisions to individual students, especially at the end of the semester.

Also, like many professors, I do not "bump" grades. However, I do round final percentage 9s to 10s, so 89% will automatically be rounded to 90%, but 88% will not. Any assignment can earn above the points possible (if done exceptionally well) and that there are few small extra credit opportunities throughout the course, any student asking for a bump has already had ample opportunity to earn those points.

**Deadlines and Late Work Policies**

Technical writing in the workplace is deadline-oriented. To simulate this atmosphere, you are expected to turn in all assignments on time, and failure to do so will result in a grade deduction on it.

Unless otherwise notified, all assignments are due at the start of class on the date listed. Please be advised that all assignments need to be submitted electronically, to the dropbox, discussion board, or quiz sections of D2L.

Drafts, progress memos, peer critiques, discussions, and quizzes (aka "Daily Work") must be submitted by the due dates in order to receive any credit, and cannot be posted or submitted late unless the student already has a documentable excused absence.

Major assignments can be submitted up to seven days late before they will automatically earn a zero. Please note that a 5% deduction will automatically be applied for each day it is late. This is calculated by the date and time the assignment was originally due. Please be mindful that this does not include the final exam. It, unfortunately, cannot be taken late.

Anytime that you experience extenuating circumstances and are unable to meet a deadline, please contact me immediately, in advance of the deadline, so that arrangements can be made for an extension if the situation warrants it.

**Major Assignments**

Please be advised that all major assignments are due at the beginning of class unless specifically stated otherwise. See the “Major Paper Due Dates” section above for more information.

**Dropbox Submission**

All essays must be submitted to the appropriate Dropbox by the time class starts on the due date. It must be in Microsoft Word, either .doc or .docx. Please be advised that Rich Text, Pages, Pdf, Google Docs, or any submission form other than Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) will not be accepted. I need it in that format in order to open and assess the document on the devices I have.

Any document not submitted in the appropriate format will be deleted and earn an additional 5% deduction of the points possible for the assignment. It will still require appropriate submission and all standard late deductions (see below) will still apply.
**Late Submissions**
Any submission not turned in by the due date (within the first 10 minutes of class) will be classified as “Late.” Students are given up to one full week (7 days) to submit major assignments. A 5% per day deduction will apply though. This starts as soon as it is classified as “Late” on the first day. Please note that this includes weekends and holidays.

Any assignment not submitted within those 7 days will earn an automatic zero.

**Email Submissions**
Every assignment must be turned into the appropriate Dropbox on D2L, and it is the student’s responsibility to do so. “Technical issues” are the student’s responsibility and do not exempt assignments from needing to be turned in on time.

I will only accept emailed submissions as placeholders. This means that it will prove you have the essay done at the due time, but you still have to submit the essay to the Dropbox. The essay will not be graded until it is in the Dropbox. If it is not submitted to the appropriate Dropbox within 24 hours of the original due date, it will be classified as “Late.”

**Attendance**
Attendance will be checked at the beginning of every class period. If you are not in class when I take attendance (such as logging in or coming into the classroom late), talk to me at the end of class and I will correct the attendance log.

While attendance is not part of your weekly grade, the total amount of unexcused absences (explained below) will be calculated and logged at the end of each unit. Any student who earns more than six unexcused absences will automatically fail the course.

There are three types of excused absences: documented illness, school sponsored event, or dramatic family/legal issue. Basically, you must provide some kind of official documentation in order to get an absence excused, such as a doctor’s note, a letter from your school sponsor, etc. For the last category, you and I will attempt to negotiate appropriate documentation. You must turn in the documentation within seven days of returning from your absence.

Excused absences also earn you the right to make up any daily work done during your absence. Please note though that this does not excuse major assignments, since so much time (in and outside of class) are spent working on the assignment throughout the unit.

Please be advised that (no matter the type of absence) it is your responsibility to get with another student and catch up on class content and updates that you missed.

Given the chaos going on outside of class this semester, I will not count tardies. However, if a student is persistently late (or excessively late), I will start counting tardies for that student. Three tardies equal one unexcused absence.
Desire 2 Learn (D2L) Online Classroom and Email Access

D2L will be a vital part of succeeding in it. In order to make things a little easier for both of us, this site will be the primary place for communication and coursework outside of class.

It is your responsibility to access the site regularly. At absolute minimum, I would recommend looking at the newsfeed and your email at least once a day (especially before class).

Other Classroom Policies

Professional Behavior
Since this class is modeling professional/business environments, please realize that you will need to be respectful to those in the course. We will have a lot of in class discussions, group activities, etc. A productive environment cannot be achieved if we are disrespectful to each other.

If I see any student being disrespectful, I will step in and mediate the issue. Depending on the issue, this could result in a warning, actual points taken off your grade, alternative assignments, or (in severe cases) my contacting chair of the department or higher administration. My hope is that this policy is not actually needed this semester but please realize that it will be enforced if needed.

Office Hours Policies
All office hours and special appointments will be done via Zoom. There is a specific Zoom classroom for office hours; see the "Important Course Materials" folder for the link, class number, and password. Please note that, for privacy and FERPA reasons, you will be left in the waiting room until I have finished with the student I am currently working with.

If you cannot access Zoom during my office hours, you can call my Google Voice (basically, phone) number, listed above. Leave me a message with your, name, phone number, the course of mine you're in, and the problem you're having. I will return your call as soon as I can. Please note though, that I will not call you back outside of my office hours/our pre-arranged special appointment time.

If you absolutely can't do either Zoom or phone, then you can come to my office. Please be advised though, that you will not be allowed to actually come in the office. You'll need to stand at the door while we talk. If you have an assignment you want me to look at, you will need to print it out before our meeting (I will not print it for you).

Mask Usage
Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.
As stated above, your mask must cover your nose and mouth, and you must wear it at all times while in class. If I see you wearing your mask improperly or not at all, you will be warned once. If you refuse, you will be told to leave class, thereby earning an unexcused absence (no matter how long you've been in class) and lose the right to earn any points on work done in class that day.

Should this become a reoccurring problem, you will be banned from class, earning an unexcused absence for every day your section meets face-to-face until you start to comply with the mask rule. You are more than welcome to log into the Zoom class on those days, but you will still accrue unexcused absences until you comply with the mask rule.

**Social Distancing and Classroom Sections**

Due to SFA's social distancing policies, there is a maximum number of students allowed in class each day. In order to accommodate that and still provide effective teaching, I have split the class into two sections: A and B. To put it simply, A will come on one day and B on the next. If you are unsure which section you are in, I have listed that information on D2L, under the "Important Course Materials" folder, within the Content tab. If you are unsure which days your section needs to come to class, please see the unit schedule.

As stated on SFA's website, you are not allowed to come to class on the days that your section does not meet in the classroom (also known as "face to face"). Instead, you will be required to attend class via Zoom. See the "Zoom" section below for those policies and practices.

SFA's policy, for when your section does meet face-to-face, is that you need to sit at least three feet apart from any of your other classmates. If you wish, however, you may sit farther away than that.

**Zoom Policies**

As stated above, when your section does not meet face-to-face, you will need to meet via Zoom. The class number and password will be listed on D2L, in the "Important Course Materials" folder.

For this class, your camera will need to be on, but your microphone muted (unless you are asking/responding to a question or have been called on to speak). As someone who has used video conferencing programs a lot over the past few years, I recommend you have your computer in a stable location, such as on a table or desk and have a background that is not distracting (so without people walking around behind it for example). The best backgrounds tend to just be walls, bookcases, or things like that.

You will also need to, for lack of a better phrase, be "properly attired." For this class, that is considered having a shirt and pants/shorts on. Please note that the shirt rule includes *all* students,
not just those who are female-identifying. I'm fine with PJs and bathrobes. However, if you are wearing anything offensive, I will shut your camera off and message you to change before you're allowed back on camera.

If you need to get up and "leave the room" as it were, turn your camera off and put a message in the chat that you need to step out (you don't have to be any more explicit than that). In the past, when I've needed to leave the room, I've just turned the volume up on my computer so I could hear the conversation in the next room. Please DO NOT take your device with you, especially if you are going to the bathroom or similar places.

The reason for these rules is that, as per best practices with livestreaming into a classroom, the Zoom "classroom" interface will be projected onto the overhead so that everyone can interact together. This means that your classmates will see you and the chat. I will also be recording each class's Zoom section so that anyone who misses can stay caught up.

As for the chat, most students tend to use it to ask questions or give responses, but don't be afraid to turn your mic on and ask a question if you need to. I may have you respond to specific questions or tasks on the chat as well. Please be mindful that even private chats can be seen on when the chat is saved, which I will do sporadically throughout the semester (and I will not warn you beforehand). And, as stated above, the Zoom interface will be projected onto the overhead, so the chat will be seen by those outside of the Zoom interface as well.

Finally, please be mindful that all chats must be respectful of others in the class and out. If I see anyone posting offensive language or content in the chat I will shut that person's chat privileges off and, depending on the severity, other consequences could occur.

[see the FAQs for what you should do if you lose your connection and get kicked out of Zoom]

**Zoom Bombing**
This was a popular trend that occurred last semester, when more and more professional meetings started taking place over Zoom. It consisted of unauthorized people coming into the Zoom classroom and posting or saying offensive things. SFA has changed many of its practices and programs to prevent this, but it is still always a possibility.

Should a zoom bomb occur, I will shut the zoom session down and email everyone the information for a new classroom so that you can get back into the classroom without losing too much class time.

After class, I will change the original Zoom classroom information and update D2L accordingly so that we are no longer using the compromised room.

**Post-Thanksgiving Schedule Reminder**
As per SFA policies, this course will shift from being face-to-face/livestream to fully livestream after Thanksgiving break. We will still meet on the same days and time as before, it will just be that both sections will be on Zoom from then out. Office hours and special appointments will be done only via Zoom and Google Voice (phone) as well.
Emergency Shutdown Plan
If the whole school needs to go online only, we will livestream the course (still through Zoom) at the regularly scheduled dates and times. Office hours and special appointments will be done only via Zoom and Google Voice (phone) as well.

Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty:
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

Course Specific Policy on Plagiarism
I take plagiarism and cheating very seriously. Part of completing this or any technical course successfully is the submission/completion of one's own work. Should an issue arise, depending on the severity of the situation, a student found committing one of these offences could suffer points lost off the assignment, a complete zero on it, or (in extreme cases) being reported to the chairs of the English and Creative Writing department and the department of that student's major, which would include paperwork of plagiarism being filed into the student's permanent record.

Withheld Grades - Semester Grades Policy
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, 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. If students register for the same course in future terms 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 Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 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 accommodations.

For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

If you have disability paperwork filed for this course, it is your responsibility to confer with me to determine the best application of your accommodations. Basically, you and I still need to discuss your accommodations, even after you have paperwork filed. I want to make sure that you are getting what you need from me when you really need it.

**Last Notes**

If, at any point in the semester, you feel that you need to talk to me outside of class, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am more than willing to help by reviewing some of the content covered in class, brainstorming topic ideas for your assignments, or anything of that nature. You are welcome to e-mail me if you have any questions or cannot make my hours and/or special appointment.

Many students have almost a fear of contacting the professor, because they find it daunting, do not want to "bug" the professor, or (worse) feel “unworthy.” Please, please do not think anything like this. If you have a question or if you need help, contact me. I’m here for a reason, and I want to help you. It is my job to help prepare you for your future classes and career. I want to help you succeed. I really do hope that you enjoy your time in this class, improve your skills, and learn some things you never knew.

I look forward to working with each one of you this semester.