English 273–002: Technical & Scientific Writing  
Spring 2020

Class Time: 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM  
Class Location: Ferg. 378

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

Office Location: LAN 244

Office Hours  
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 10AM – 11AM  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM  
And by appointment if needed

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

Description
ENG 273 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).

Additional Information
In English 273, 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).

**Credit Hours Justification**

“Technical and Scientific Writing” (3 credits) typically meets three times each week in 50-minute segments or twice each week in 75-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2-hour final examination. In addition to weekly readings from the textbook and other relevant sources, students will create a variety of documents including correspondence, job portfolios, feasibility reports, instruction manuals, and visual presentations. Other course requirements
include peer review exercises, online quizzes, topic approval memos, and discussion boards. Students are required to submit at least five major projects, one of which is a collaborative writing project that includes a class presentation. These activities average at a minimum 6 hours of work each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.

**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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Correspondence</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Portfolio</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-Making Report</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction Manual</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Work</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

- Professional Correspondence – Friday, January 31
- Job Portfolio – Friday, February 21
- Decision-Making Report – Friday, March 27
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 decimals based on normal mathematics, so an 89.5 will round to a 90, but an 89.4 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. This includes both print and digital versions (where applicable).

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.

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.

Attendance
Attendance will be checked every class period, via a sign in sheet. It will be passed out at the start of class. If you are late and do not get a chance to sign in, you must come up to me after class and ask to sign in. Do not interrupt class to ask.

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/personal issue. Basically, you must provide some kind of official documentation in order to get an absence excused (as is common practice in the business world. An example of acceptable documentation would be something like a doctor’s note, a letter from your school
sponsor, etc. For the last category, we will attempt to negotiate appropriate documentation. You must turn in the documentation within one week 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. And, late work from in class assignments must be done within one week (7 days) of your return to class.

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.

Any student more than ten minutes late to class (which is 20% of that day’s class time), will be counted tardy. Three tardies equal one unexcused absence. I, highly, recommend thinking of class attendance as similar to attending meetings in a professional environment. Constant absence and/or lateness is detrimental to your success in work and in this class.

**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:**

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.

**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/professional 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/.

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.