English 273: Technical Writing
Section 590
Summer II 2020

Instructor: Ms. Laura Osborne

Department: English

Office: Steen Library Room 218A

Office Phone: 936.468.5832

Email: Use Brightspace to send me emails. If Brightspace is unavailable, send email to OSBORNEL@SFASU.EDU with an accurate subject line containing "273".

Class meeting time and place: Online

Online Office Hours

Available to meet via Zoom on Tuesdays from 6:00-7:30 PM.

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.

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 professional 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, possibly including but not limited to job-seeking documents, instructions, reports, memos, and letters. You will analyze typical rhetorical situations, recognize conventional styles of presentation, and learn how to tailor your writing to a variety of audiences.

The professional 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.

As this is an online course, you will be making frequent use of a computer and of Brightspace. You'll be expected to log into the course and check the news announcements and check your Brightspace email once a day on weekdays. You can expect that work will be due in this course every week – all of the due dates are listed on the Course Timeline page in the Getting Started module.

Credit Hour Justification

The following information is a required inclusion on this syllabus; specific assignments and activities within this section of the course may vary from what is listed below:

ENG 273 (aka ENGL 2311) - Technical and Scientific Writing (3 credits; fully online) typically meets online for 8 units over the course of 15 weeks in regular semesters and 5 weeks in summer semesters. For each unit, students are required to work through online course pages and complete readings in the textbook and other relevant sources, and create a variety of documents that may include correspondence, job portfolios, feasibility reports, instruction manuals, and visual presentations. Other course requirements may include peer review exercises, online quizzes, topic approval memos, and discussion boards. To successfully complete this course, in a regular semester, students must spend a minimum 6-8 hours per week working in the course management system and another 5-7 hours in reading field-specific documents. For summer sessions, the workload is condensed and requires a total of about 20 hours per week, including all activities.

Required Course Text and Materials


It doesn’t matter if your copy is new or used, or if it is a printed copy or an electronic copy – just as long as you have the 3rd edition. Quizzes in this course will be based heavily on material from the text, and older editions might not contain the same information.
Official Course Outcomes and Objectives

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes for English 273

Communication EEO 1: To understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.

Communication EEO 2: To understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communication choices.

Communication EEO 3: To understand and appropriately apply modes of expression, i.e., descriptive, expositive, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive, in written, visual, and oral communication.

Communication EEO 4: To participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.

Communication EEO 5: To understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.

Communication EEO 6: To develop the ability to research and write a documented paper and/or give an oral presentation.

Student Learning Outcomes for English 273

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. (This outcome aligns to the Core objectives for 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. (This outcome aligns to the Core objectives for Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, and Personal Responsibility).

3. 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, and Personal Responsibility).

4. 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, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility).

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

6. 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, and Personal Responsibility).

7. 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, 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. (This outcome aligns with the Core objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, and Personal Responsibility).

**General Education Core Curriculum**

**Note:** The following information is a university-required inclusion on this syllabus.

This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. 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.

Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. In the Summer II 2020 semester, however, no assignments from English 273 are being collected for university-wide assessment.

**Deadlines and Late Work Policies**

**This is not a self-paced course.** Technical writing in the workplace is deadline-oriented. To simulate this atmosphere, you are expected to turn in all dropbox assignments on time, and failure to do so will result in a grade deduction on the assignment of 5% per calendar day. **No assignments will be accepted more than 4 days late and no assignments will be accepted after Saturday, August 8th at 11:59 PM.**

Drafts, peer critiques, discussions, and quizzes must be posted/submitted by the due dates in order to receive any credit and will not be accepted late.

Any time that you experience extenuating circumstances affecting your ability to meet a deadline, please contact your instructor immediately, in advance of the deadline, so that arrangements can be made for an extension if the situation warrants it.

**Course Communication**

Course communication will occur primarily through Brightspace email, course news, and discussions. I will check my course email at least once a day, Monday through Friday, and will reply as quickly as possible.

**Attendance**

As this is an online course, there is no standard attendance policy. However, students are expected to log into Brightspace at least once a day, Monday through Friday, to check their course email, to check for any recent news announcements, and to stay on top of upcoming due dates.
Phone messages and email

The fastest, most reliable way to reach me is by email in Brightspace. If you send me an email outside of Brightspace, please include “273” somewhere in the subject line. Otherwise, your message may be easily lost amongst the large volume of email I receive each day.

While you are welcome to call my office phone, you are likely to get my voicemail if you do. I check my voicemail often, but not as frequently as my email.

Technical Difficulties

If at any point during the course you experience technical difficulties in Brightspace, please let me know immediately. Keep in mind that a technical glitch in Brightspace does not excuse you from completing and submitting assignments on time. If you ever find yourself unable to submit an assignment through Brightspace, for example, you should submit it as an email attachment instead. And if email in Brightspace isn't working, then send Ms. Osborne your assignment through regular campus email (at osbornel@sfasu.edu).

Also be aware that you can contact Andra Floyd, the Student Support Specialist for distance education, by email (afloyd@sfasu.edu) or phone (936.468.1919) for technical help. Andra is an expert at helping students solve technical difficulties in Brightspace.

Assignments and Assessments

Unless otherwise specified, all writing assignments must be typed and submitted as a Microsoft Word document (with a .docx extension) online through Brightspace. 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.

Assignments submitted in an incorrect file type will be counted as late (and a grade deduction made accordingly) until an acceptable file type is submitted. After submitting an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to check their dropbox folder to verify that the correct file was submitted.

Be aware that your instructor will be running your course work through Turnitin, a plagiarism detection service. Use of Turnitin is required in the Department of English.

Assignments

There are four assignments in this class, of varying lengths and with varying point values:

- Assignment 1: Complaint and response correspondence
- Assignment 2: Resume and cover letter
- Assignment 3: Research analysis
- Assignment 4: Illustrated instruction set

All assignments will be graded according to rubrics that help to define the various aspects of each assignment (i.e. style, content, grammar, etc.) and you will be familiarized with the rubrics before each assignment is due.
Quizzes and Exams

Each module will contain a 15-point quiz. The quizzes will cover material from the assigned chapters in the textbook as well as material from the course content modules. Due dates for each quiz are listed in the Course Timeline. If you need special accommodations regarding the length of time allowed on quizzes and exams, be sure to contact the Office of Disability Services to complete the necessary paperwork.

Drafts & peer critiques

Assignments 2 and 4 will each require posting a partial draft ahead of the due date, as well as responding thoughtfully to two of your classmates’ drafts.

Grade determination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence (complaint/response letters)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume &amp; cover letter</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research analysis</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction set</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussions</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduce yourself</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research topic post</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions topic post</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drafts &amp; Peer Critiques</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resume &amp; cover letter draft</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume &amp; cover letter peer critiques</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions draft</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions peer critiques</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quizzes</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning agreement</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 module quizzes @ 15 points each</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total possible points                            | 480    |
Minimum points required for an A | 432  
Minimum points required for a B | 384  
Minimum points required for a C | 336  
Minimum points required for a D | 288  

*Any score below 288 points will result in an F for the course; scores will not be curved.*

**Extra credit**

Extra credit opportunities may be made available during the semester; if so, they will be announced to the entire class and made available to everyone equally.

**Using the Steen Library’s Resources**  
**(on-campus and from a distance)**

Whether you live on or off-campus, and regardless of whether you are able to visit the Steen Library in person, there are numerous full-text materials (including articles, e-books, and more) that you can access online. Also, did you know that Interlibrary Loan materials can be mailed to you if you live at a distance?

The research librarian for students in English classes is:

Janie Richardson  
936-468-1896  
richardsjl3@sfasu.edu

(Have research questions involving assignments in your other courses? Find the complete list of research guides for each subject area, including contact information for the librarians, here:  
http://libguides.sfasu.edu.)

**Other Course Policies**

**Acceptable Student Behavior**

A recent policy from the Provost’s Office states, “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, policy D-34.1). 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 that is available to help SFA students succeed.”
**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.

Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated in this course. **Documented proof of cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade (of zero) on the assignment, and usually also a failing grade in the course. Rewrites and second chances are seldom permitted. All assignments you submit will be checked for plagiarism via Turnitin.**

In addition, all work submitted in this course must be 1) written by YOU and 2) written THIS semester, for THIS specific section of this course (not recycled from any other course you've taken, here or elsewhere, and not recycled from any previous time you may have attempted this course). If it is discovered that you have turned in a "recycled" assignment, you will receive an F (zero) for that assignment.

The following is taken from the University Policy and Procedures Manual (online), Section 4.1 of Academic Affairs:

**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.


**Withheld grades**

A grade of WH (for Withheld) will be granted only in rare circumstances. Here is the official SFA policy on withheld grades:

**Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**

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

There may be some material in this course that requires listening to audio files or watching videos in order to complete an assignment. The vast majority of the course material is text based and easily accessible. There are some PDF files included in the course materials. Any students having difficulties accessing or reading those files (or any other materials in the course) should contact Ms. Osborne for assistance.

Here is the official SFA policy regarding 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 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/.

Course timeline and due dates

See the Course Timeline page in the Getting Started module for a schedule of all due dates. Module-by-module reading assignments will be given in the modules themselves.

Last updated on July 6, 2020
English 273 Course Timeline  
Summer II 2020

Subject to small changes and corrections as needed; any changes will be posted to the course news.

*Note: All due times are 11:59 PM unless otherwise specified.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic / Module</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment / Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Getting Started | Tuesday, July 7th | Begin the getting started activities:  
- Read the material in the Getting Started module  
- Buy your textbook  
- Post your introduction on the Introduce Yourself discussion  
- Complete the Learning Agreement quiz with a perfect score (can be taken as many times as needed)  
- Upload a picture to your Brightspace profile |
| and Module 1: Correspondence and Audience | Thursday, July 9th | Deadline for completing all activities in the Getting Started module.  
Start working on Module 1 as soon as you’ve completed the Getting Started module. (*You will not have access to Module 1 until you’ve submitted the Learning Agreement quiz with a perfect score.*) |
| | Sunday, July 12th | Due date for the following:  
- Module 1 quiz. *Note:* This quiz (*ONLY this quiz*) may be taken twice, and only the highest of the two scores will count.  
- Correspondence assignment |
| Module 2: Writing a Resume & Cover Letter | Monday, July 13th | **Start Module 2**  
Begin reading module material and assigned chapters from the textbook. Find (or write) a job advertisement as soon as possible so that you can start planning and drafting your materials for the assignment due this week.  
Module 2 quiz opens. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, July 15th</td>
<td>Draft due (of either the resume or the cover letter) -- posted to the draft discussion board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, July 17th</td>
<td>Peer critiques due -- critiques of two drafts, posted as replies on the draft discussion board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sunday, July 19th       | Due date for the following:  
|                         | • Module 2 quiz  
|                         | • Resume & Cover Letter assignment (don’t forget to include the job ad, too!) |
| Monday, July 20th       | Start Module 3  
|                         | Begin reading module material and assigned chapters from the textbook.  
|                         | Module 3 quiz opens. |
| Wednesday, July 22nd    | Research Topic discussion post is due. |
| Sunday, July 26th       | Due date for the following:  
|                         | • Module 3 quiz  
|                         | • Research Analysis assignment |
| Monday, July 27th       | Start Module 4  
|                         | Begin reading the module material and assigned chapters from the textbook.  
|                         | Module 4 quiz opens. |
| Wednesday, July 29th    | Instruction Set Topic discussion post is due. |
| Sunday, August 2nd      | Due date for the following:  
|                         | • Module 4 quiz  
<p>|                         | • Instruction Set “process analysis” draft (2 pages) due – posted to the draft discussion board. (Note: The draft should offer a written breakdown of the process; don’t add graphics yet.) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Module 5: Instructions Part 2 (graphics &amp; document design)</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, August 3rd</td>
<td>Start Module 5</td>
<td>Begin reading module material and assigned chapters from the textbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 5 quiz opens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, August 4th</td>
<td>Peer critiques are due -- critiques of two process analysis drafts, posted as replies on the draft discussion board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, August 5th</td>
<td>(Optional, for extra credit) Graphics analysis discussion is due.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, August 7th</td>
<td>Due date for the following:</td>
<td>• Module 5 quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Instruction Set assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, August 8th</td>
<td>The absolute cut-off time for submitting the Instruction Set is on this date at 11:59 PM.</td>
<td>No late work will be accepted after this date and time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Last updated on July 6, 2020.