The Biology section of ENGL 2311 uses content specifically tailored to Biology majors and personalizes assignments to Biology-related concentrations. In this course we learn and practice how to write technical and scientific information for various readers. We begin by surveying the work of technical and scientific writing – basic project management design, how to navigate work environments, how to work with standards and templates, and other basic knowledge expectations for technical and scientific writers. We will then practice writing several genres of technical writing including instructions, proposals, data visualizations, usability tests, and reports.

Throughout the course we will explore how to shift our writing to accommodate the needs of our readers and the stakeholders in our work. This rhetorical point of view is the essential starting point for good technical and scientific writing in many fields. Between class, online work, and preparation, 9 hours per week of dedication is expected.

**GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION AND UNIT OF CREDIT**

“The study of the rhetorical principles involved in technical and scientific workplace writing with an emphasis on the production of professional documents, such as analytical reports. Will not satisfy literature requirement; will not count toward an English major or minor (except for a minor in writing).”

**Prerequisite Course(s):** ENGL 1301, ENGL 1302; ENGL 1303

“The unit of credit is the semester hour, defined as one class meeting per week (or its equivalent) for one semester of 15 weeks. Most courses meet three hours per week and have a credit value of three semester hours. For each hour in class, at least two hours of preparation are expected on the part of the student. Many students
should spend more than this amount of time in study.” – See full explanation in the Undergraduate Bulletin Registration page.

**GENERAL EDUCATION CORE CURRICULUM**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: 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.

By enrolling in ENGL 2311 you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the Communication Skills requirement.

The chart below indicates: (a) The core objectives that are required to be taught in this course per the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), (b) How the required core objectives will be addressed.

**Core Curriculum Objective Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>How the Core Objective Will be Addressed (see below for codes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking Skills</strong></td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication Skills</strong></td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</strong></td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the completion of this course, students will 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 of rhetorical composition (descriptive, expositive, scientific, etc.), integrating visuals with text, and presenting information in an oral format. (Critical 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, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility)

5. Use critical-thinking skills and exhibit technical proficiency in the invention and 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. (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. (Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, and Personal Responsibility)

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Access to SFA websites and applications including Brightspace LMS, the library, email, SFA 360, etc.

Students must maintain access to readings posted on Brightspace through a personal laptop or handheld device or by printing out texts.

**Required Textbook**

Practical Strategies for Technical Communication
Third Edition by Mike Markel and Stuart A. Selber.
ISBN: 978-1-319-26102-3
(used rentals run ~$40, ebook PDF version can be found for ~$20)

**ACCOMMODATION INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Stephen F. Austin provides students reasonable accessibility accommodation to participate in educational programs, activities or services. Students requiring accommodation to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should 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 Dr. Parks and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided.

The full policy is available at:

http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/

SFA values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**

**SFA Counseling Services** [www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices) Rusk Building, 3rd Floor 936.468.2401

**SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic** [www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp) Human Services, Room 202 936.468.1041

**Crisis Resources:**

Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

**BRIGHTSPACE COURSE WEBSITE**

SFA uses Brightspace as its virtual course management system. You can locate our course website through your MySFA login.

Class handouts, reading links, assignment sheets, and important documents such as this syllabus will be posted on Brightspace in the **content** tab.

We will use the **discussion board** and other Brightspace features.

Assignments will be submitted electronically. Look in the **assessments** tab for submission folders.

Locate the site's **gradebook**. You are in charge of checking the gradebook for errors throughout the semester.
Dr. Parks will **email** you from both the Brightspace (for class listserv emails) and the regular Jacks email. So plan to regularly check both!

### SCHEDULING AND LATE WORK

Technical and Scientific Writing is an attention-intensive class. If you skip Brightspace webpages, readings, class meetings, and assignments you will miss important information, group work, and practice tasks. If you get off schedule it is difficult to catch back up.

Dr. Parks assigns due dates to keep you on track in the class and to keep herself on schedule in grading. Due dates may be renegotiated. However, do not expect timely grading and feedback on renegotiated submissions.

The second unit of our class is a team unit. That grade is partially dependent on your communication and diligent contact with your team. Do not plan to miss class meetings during the team unit.

This course requires that we meet regularly in the classroom. During a global pandemic some flexibility may be required as we possibly move from regular in-person, to mask-to-mask, to online Zoom synchronous meetings and back again. We will expect disruptions.

Face-to-face meetings can be socially distanced meetings; our classroom has adequate space. You may choose to wear a mask or may choose not to, depending on our situation and university procedures. If you are sick but awake, you may Zoom in to class. Please do not push yourself to attend class in person if you are feeling at all unwell. The Zoom link will be posted in our D2L Brightspace.

Please contact Dr. Parks in advance or as soon as possible after you have an extraordinary circumstance occur that affects your performance in this class.

There are no extra penalties for getting off schedule beyond the natural consequences of missing instruction and assignments. However, these natural consequences add up quickly.

### ONLINE AVAILABILITY

Dr. Parks’ office hours are held during the day – which means some students may not be able to attend office hours. If this is the case, you may request to meet outside of these hours. Dr. Parks will send you a Zoom link if you request this.
Dr. Parks strives to maintain a 24-hour response time for email if you have a relatively simple question. Feel free to email her at any time at Sara.Parks@sfasu.edu.

**GRADES**

Introduction to technical and scientific writing courses use a set of program standards to ensure students across all the sections are held to similar standards to earn at least a C in the course. Please consult the technical and scientific writing program standards checklist (included at the end of this syllabus) to track your progress towards a C in this class.

Below is a list of deliverables you will prepare and submit for this course. Each section of the class is listed in bold with the weight of grades in that portion of the course indicated.

**Contexts for Writing – 15%**
- Scheduling preparation
- Database preparation
- Practice note-taking
- Speech community report

**Talking about Writing – 10%**
- Team charter
- Correspondence & Work documents project
- Team proofreading/editing practice

**Writing in Public – 25%**
- Public expert data design analysis
- Public expert writing analysis

**Writing for Information – 25%**
- Short Proposal
- Research analysis notes and perfect works cited
- Infographic

**Testing our Writing – 25%**
- Usability progress/decision-making report
- Usability testing report
- Completed standards-based grading rubric (P/F)

As you can see, the grades in this class are weighted heavier later in the class, with teamwork weighing the least. This means you have a bit of a safety net at the
beginning of the course to settle into a schedule that works for you. Also, if your team fails that failure won’t sink your grade in the course. The “Talking about Writing” unit is the only unit you will complete in a team.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Work for any course should be newly generated by you or your assigned team for each assignment.

Plagiarism involves using another’s work, words, or ideas without correctly giving credit to the author. It is just as serious to plagiarize the work of another student as it is to plagiarize the work of a published author.

Use a standard documentation style to credit your source. If you have questions about correct documentation, please ask!

In a collaborative class such as this, you may not always fully understand what is and is not plagiarism or what type of collaboration outside of class is and is not allowed. If you have questions, please ask!

**General Policy**

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](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)
**WITHHELD GRADES**

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.

**OTHER UNIVERSITY POLICIES APPLY**

See these links for some other university-wide policies and explanations:

- Student athletes and representatives in sponsored events.
- What University letter grades mean.
- What University credit hours mean.
- How to appeal a grade.
- How to request a medical withdrawal.
- What happens when you don’t follow the SFA rules.
- Your professor is a mandatory reporter for Title IX.

**PROGRAM STANDARDS**

**STANDARDS-BASED GRADING OUTLINE**

Each of these standards must be met to pass with at least a C in Introduction to Technical & Scientific Writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Standards</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have identified the parts of a scholarly research article (IMRAD).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have demonstrated understanding of the importance of audience on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical &amp; scientific writing 3 times.</td>
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<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have accurately paraphrased an expert source in language a non-expert can understand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have created a visualization that accurately displays quantitative data.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have evaluated a text for its usability (ease of understanding, ease of access, reader relevance).</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have created a perfect works cited or references page.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I have proofread and corrected errors in my writing 3 times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have demonstrated awareness of a stakeholder other than the main intended reader for a document.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have practiced writing in at least 3 different rhetorical modes of writing. (ex. narration, exposition, description, definition, argumentation, synthesis, analysis, summary, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Standards</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have earned at least a 70% or C in the course gradebook.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Will I pass?**

All of these boxes must be checked.

Evidence must be recorded (understandable to the instructor – usually the name of an assignment) for each box.

“Double dipping,” using the same assignment as evidence for multiple standards, is allowed for program standards.

Notes allow unique situations and exceptions to be addressed.

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**GENERAL SCHEDULE**

This course generally follows a f2f Tuesday lab, Thursday lecture/discussion schedule.

**Contexts for Writing Unit**

**Tuesday, Aug. 24**
Weekly Reading:
Textbook Chapter 1
Brightspace units and pages - Contexts for Writing Page
Project Management Sub-Unit

- Includes reading, practice activity, discussion, quiz

Content & Design Sub-Unit

- Includes reading, practice activity, discussion, scheduling assignment

**Thursday, Aug. 26** – last day to register/change schedule

**Aug. 31**
Weekly Reading:
Textbook Chapter 7
Textbook “Note Taking” reference section
Design & Databases Sub-Unit

- Includes reading, database assignment, quiz

Taking Notes Sub-Unit

- Includes reading, practice note-taking assignment
Sept. 2

Sept. 7
Weekly Reading:
Speech Communities Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, speech community report assignment

Sept. 9

Talking about Writing Unit
Sept. 14
Weekly Reading:
Textbook Chapter 3
Talking about Writing Page
Getting to Know our Team Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, team worksheets, team charter assignment, quiz

Sept. 16

Sept. 21
Weekly Reading:
Chapters 9 & 10
Correspondence and Work Documents Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, team project, quizzes

Sept. 23

Sept. 28
Editing and Proofreading Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, team project, practice assignment

Sept. 30

Writing in Public Unit
Oct. 5
Weekly Reading:
Writing in Public Page
Textbook Chapter 8
Public Expertise and Data Design Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, quiz, short paper

Oct. 7
Guest speaker?

Oct. 12
Weekly Reading:
Public Expertise and Writing Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, discussion board, short paper

Oct. 14

Oct. 19
Workshop, Revision, and Reflection week
No Brightspace assignments beyond revision and reflection submissions

Oct. 21

Writing for Information Unit
Oct. 26
Weekly Reading:
Writing for Information Page
Textbook Chapters 4 & 11
Short Proposal Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, proposal assignment, peer double-check assignment

Oct. 28

Nov. 2
Weekly Reading:
Textbook Chapter 2
Research Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, notes and works cited assignment

Nov. 4

Nov. 9
Weekly Reading:
Textbook Chapter 14
Infographic Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, quiz, and infographic assignment

Nov. 11

Testing our Writing Unit
Nov. 16
Weekly Reading:
Textbook Chapter 12
Testing our Writing page
What is Usability Testing Sub-Unit
- Includes reading, note-taking, decision progress report
Nov. 18
In class we will review decision-making progress reports and test drafts so that you can complete testing over Thanksgiving Break.

Nov. 23 & 25 – Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 30
Weekly Reading:
Textbook Chapters 12 & 13
Usability Report Sub-Unit
  - Includes reading, quiz, usability test report

Dec. 2

Dec. 6-10 – Exam Week
Final Rubric Sub-Unit (will be completed during finals time)
  - Includes reading, self-assessment