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Fall 9-2004

### COM 115.01: Technical Writing

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#### Recommended Citation

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## TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE SYLLABUS

Com 115

**Instructor:** Cathy Corr

243-7903

[cathy.corr@mso.umt.edu](mailto:cathy.corr@mso.umt.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment in the Health and Business Building

### Required Materials:

*Professional and Technical Writing Strategies*

by Judith VanAlstyne, Sixth Edition

*Little, Brown Compact Handbook*

by Jane E. Aaron, Sixth Edition

*Supplemental Packet*

by C. Corr, First Edition

### Course Objectives:

1. Constructed text that accurately communicates technical information using appropriate: technical writing constructs, document design, and graphic placement within technical formats.
2. Constructed text that is logical and orderly.
3. Demonstrated mastery of a writing process that includes revising and editing.
4. Constructed text that is free of appropriate technical errors. All students will construct appropriate sentences and paragraphs on all major course-related writing assignments.
5. Demonstrated working knowledge of *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook* for use as a tool in other writing classes.

**Grading:** There are two longer papers in this class. Both must have a rough draft and be submitted to other students during revision day. Revision day requires mandatory attendance and participation in the revision process and carries 10% of your grade.

The other assignments are shorter and carry various points with them as the lists below show. There is a comprehensive final worth 200 points. Because all classes are different, the Instructor may adjust assignments.

There will be no opportunity to “make-up” tests, quizzes or in-class assignments that are not turned-in during the designated class period. This make-up policy is applied at the discretion of the Instructor.

Sentence Type Quiz – 10

Comma Quiz -- 18

Word Usage Exam - 49

Instructions with Analysis--125

Mechanism Description – 100

In-class Projects -- varies

Summaries – 10-50

Incident Report-- 75

Progress Report--50

Instructor's Choice Report -- 75

Bad News Letter – 50

Comprehensive Final -- 200

**Grading Scale:** A grade of A is 90-100% and is work of superior quality. A grade of B is 80-89% and is work that is better than average. A grade of C is 70-79% and is average work. A grade of D is 69 and 68%, but it is considered below average work. 67% is failing.

**Re-writes:** Rewrites of the description and the instructions are accepted. Students receive half the points gained in the rewrite. Rewrites must be substantial and not just a fixing of editing issues. Students must give their paper more depth and detail to earn rewrite points.

**Attendance:** Attendance is an expectation. Students who do not attend class do not perform as well as students who do attend class.

**Format of Writing Assignments:** Format of all works produced will depend upon the specific assignment. All final drafts must be word processed. Do not put writing assignments in folders or binders; staple them in the upper, left hand corner. Save everything to disc for your own protection.

Plagiarism of any sort will result in a course grade of F. The U of M's student Conduct Code defines plagiarism as "representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own."

Students may be asked for their research or sources at any time.

**Disability Services:** I am willing to provide accommodations for students with disabilities with the proper verification. Come see me.

## **Course Outline:**

### Pre-skill review:

Sentence Structure

Introduction to *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook*

1. Introduction to Professional and Technical Communication
  - definition
  - ethical considerations
2. Executing the Writing Process
  - basic communication theories
  - writing process
  - specifics of technical writing
3. Graphics
  - general conventions
4. Document Design
7. Preparing Manuals
  - definitions
  - technical description
  - instructions
  - analysis
8. Definitions
  - formal sentence definition
9. Mechanism Description
10. Instructions
11. Process Analysis
12. Correspondence
14. Brief Reports
15. Longer Reports discussion

## **September:**

30-3

intro of class—

Chap 1; page 20, #1—

group discussion: What is good technical writing

6-10

Labor Day Holiday 6

Chapter 2 1<sup>st</sup> half

Chapter 2 nd half; Supplemental packet, page 45 and 31

Review rough drafts

13-17

Chapter 3

Chapter 4 and Chapter 7

Examination of technical writing

20-24

Supplemental Packet, page 1—discussion of points 1-4

Supplemental Packet pages 2-14

LBCH pages 159-60; 167-168

27-1

Quiz on sentence types

Chapter 8

## **October:**

4-8

Chapter 9 first paper

Supplemental Packet, page 29 review of concreteness; pages 46-52

11-15

Rough draft due during Revision Day

Supplemental Packet, pages 15-19

LBCH, pages 227-234

18-22

Paper due

Chapter 10 and Chapter 11

Supplemental Packet, pages 53-4 and page 30 and 32-3

LBCH, pages 277-9 and pages 135-137.

25-29

Supplemental Packet, pages 20-27

LBCH, pages 243-254

**November:**

1-5

Election Day Holiday 2

Comma Quiz

Instruction rough draft due

8-12

Instructions due

Supplemental Packet, pages 34-38

Veteran's Day Holiday 11

Summary and journal article

15-19

Chapter 12

Supplemental Packet, pages 38-43 and 55-58

22-26

Travel Day for Students 24

Thanksgiving Vacation 25-26

Work days

29-3

Chapter 14

Supplemental Packet, page 59

**December:**

6-10

Chapter 15

Re-writes due

13-17

Practice for final: Supplemental Packet, pages 60-65