Fall 9-2004

COM 115.01: Technical Writing

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TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE SYLLABUS
Com 115

Instructor: Cathy Corr  243-7903  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 1st 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