Stony Brook University - Fall 2019

CSE 300: Technical Communications

Instructor: Joseph Labriola
Office: Humanities room 2037
Classroom: See Solar Account (campus map)
Office Hours: By appointment (Weds 1pm-4pm)
Make sure to sign-up to meet with the Writing Center for further guidance with your papers!
Mailbox: Humanities room 2005
Email: joseph.labriola@stonybrook.edu

Please note that this syllabus is only a tentative document as it is subject to change based on the specific needs, issues, etc. of our class. Make sure to regularly check on Blackboard under documents for the most recent googledocs copy of this syllabus.

Make sure to review the ENTIRE syllabus for policies, guidelines, etc. Ignorance and or confusion regarding the rules is not an excuse for failing to fulfill all of these requirements! Please contact me if you have any questions. If this still isn't clear enough, then perhaps the great Mr. Wonka can state matters more succinctly for you.

Course Description:

Principles of professional technical communications for Computer Science and Information Systems majors. Topics include writing business communications, user manuals, press releases, literature reviews, and research abstracts. Persuasive oral communications and effective presentation techniques, to address a range of audiences, will also be covered. This course satisfies the upper-division writing requirement for CSE and ISE majors.

Textbook:

Online Technical Writing: Contents - Free Online Textbook for Technical Writing by David McMurrey (Full URL: https://www.prismnet.com/~hcexres/textbook/)

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance and participation is **mandatory** as per the grading breakdown detailed later in the syllabus. Please note the following guidelines regarding our official attendance policy:

- **More** than **three** absences **for any reason** will lower your final letter grade by one half letter grade for the course (for example, an 'A' will become an 'A-' if you have **four** absences, and a 'B+' if you reach **five**)
    - **More** than **six** absences will result in you **not** receiving credit for the course
- Also note that you will be marked as **late** if you arrive to class after we have begun (usually within five minutes). In addition, **two lates count as one absence**.
    - Anyone over 20 minutes late to class will be marked as absent for the day.

Note: you are responsible to keep track of your lates and absences. If you are not sure how many lates and or absences you have, you should check with me, your professor, to ensure that your grade is not penalized and or you do not risk failing the course. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Assignments:

Note about grades: a grade of "C" is considered to be "satisfactory". In order to achieve higher grades of "B" or "A" your writing must not simply accomplish the goal of the assignment but exceed expectations across all these categories.

Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard **before** the class they are due in order to receive full credit. Some further rules and guidelines for homework assignments:
- Homeworks that are more than two classes late for any reason (other than absence) will not be counted for credit. No exceptions.
- *NO EMAILED OR PRINTED COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED*.
- Please adhere to standard MLA formatting rules and include your last name and page number in the top right hand corner of each page in order to receive full credit *for all work.*

Lastly, please make sure to review our course's official policy on sending emails [by clicking here](). I'm more than happy to answer any questions you have, but messages that do not follow this format will go unanswered!

Grading Breakdown:

- Writing Journal: 10%
    - Everyone must bring **one** small notebook with them (only needs to be maybe 20 pages at most) to complete writing activities at the beginning of each class. I don't care what kind of notebook, as long as your responses **are clearly handwritten**

and detailed according to our prompts. I will collect these notebooks on the last day of class in order to help assess the progress of your writing as part of your final letter grade. **Make sure that you do not lose these and do make sure you include your name and the date for each prompt you write.**

- Attendance and Participation: 10%
    - This includes being in class on time and attentive, participating in group discussions and workshops, being undisruptive, coming prepared with all relevant assignments, and not playing games, snapchatting, etc. on your phone or computer during class work. Note that anyone using phones or doing other computer work during class will result in lost participation points for the day.
- Resume & Cover Letter (1-2 pages each): 10%
    - Locate a job listing on Handshake (http://career.stonybrook.edu) and write a cover letter and customized resume for that job. Choose from two types of resumes: skills-based or chronological.
- User Manual (2-4 pages): 10%
    - Write user instructions for a simple procedure.
- Blog Analysis (2-3 pages): 10%
    - Choose a blog managed by any company, business, or other private enterprise and write an analysis detailing its style, form, purpose, and effectiveness.
- Business Proposal (3-4 pages): 10%
    - Research a problem – global, local, or at the University-level – and design a product, service, or program to solve that problem. Then, imagine that the class is a group of potential investors and "pitch" that program, product, or service.
- Literature Review Research Presentation: 10%
    - In addition to your Literature Review paper, each student will share a 5-10 minute presentation to explain and discuss the results of their research during the final few weeks of the semester.
- Literature Review (5-6 pages not including cover page and abstract): 20%
    - Conduct a literature review of an area of computer science, engineering research, or another academic discipline that interests you. Formulate a research question that you seek to answer or at least explore through your review. Expect to read and assess 6-12 papers to yield 5 citations in your review. The quality and the relevance of the citations are important.

Weekly Schedule:

Week One: 08/26, 08/28, 08/30
- Introduction to Technical Writing and Applications

Week Two: 09/02 (no class), 09/04, 09/06
- Further forms of style

Week Three: 09/09, 09/11, 09/13
- Social Media platforms
- **Blog Analysis Due (09/13)**

Week Four: 09/16, 09/18, 09/20
- Business plans & business proposals

Week Five: 09/23, 09/25, 09/27
- Continued workshops and writing techniques
- **Business Proposals Due**

Week Six: 09/30, 10/02, 10/04
- User manuals & workshops

Week Seven: 10/07, 10/09, 10/11
- Introduction to resumes, cover letters, etc.
- **User Manual Due**

Week Eight: 10/14 (no class), 10/16, 10/18
- Professional development workshops

Week Nine: 10/21, 10/23, 10/25
- Further professional communications
- **Resume & Cover Letter Due**

Week Ten: 10/28, 10/30, 11/01
- Press releases & workshops

Week Eleven: 11/04, 11/06, 11/08
- Introduction to research methods
- **Press Release Due**

Week Twelve: 11/11, 11/13, 11/15
- Continued research workshops and presentation methods

Week Thirteen: 11/18, 11/20, 11/22
- Begin Research Presentations

Week Fourteen: 11/25, 11/27(no class), 11/29(no class)
- Research Presentations continued

Week Fifteen: 12/02, 12/04, 12/06
- Research Presentations continued

Week Sixteen: 12/09
- Wrap up reflections and party
- **Literature Review Due**

<u>The Writing Center:</u>

The University Writing Center is located in 2009 Humanities Building. This is a free resource that exists to assist students with a variety of concerns pertaining to their written work. To make an appointment, go to 2009 Humanities, call the front desk at 631-632-7405, or visit the center's website at www.stonybrook.edu/writingcenter.

Disability Support Services (DDS) Statement:

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room 128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

[In addition, this statement on emergency evacuation is often included, but not required: Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities]

Academic Integrity Statement:

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/

Critical Incident Management:

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.