***WR 327-002: Technical Report Writing***

***Winter 2017***

Instructor: Jeff Gunderson

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Phone: 503-753-7948

Meeting Place: URBN 304

Meeting Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:00am-11:50am

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:00pm-1:00pm

**Course description**

This course covers the fundamentals of effective technical communications and provides an overview of technical report writing formats. Students draw on personal work experiences and career interests to practice strategies and produce technical reports.

**course goals**

In this course, students will:

* Obtain an understanding of technical communication basics.
* Develop knowledge of technical writing styles.
* Learn the technical communication process including research, page design and using visual aids.
* Gain practice for creating accurate, well-designed and concise technical reports and documents.

**TEXT BOOK**

Riordan, Daniel G. 10th ed. *Technical Report Writing Today*. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. 2014.

**Evaluation**

The following items determine your grade:

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| **Item** | **Percentage** |
| Interview & technical brief | 10% |
| Technical writing analysis | 10% |
| Short informal report | 5% |
| Abstract & PowerPoint presentation | 15% |
| Formal technical report | 20% |
| Formal feasibility report | 30% |
| Participation (discussions/exercises, chapter presentations, class activities) | 10% |

All major assignments will be graded on the standard PSU letter-grade scale: A=100-93%, A-=92.99-90%, B+=89.99-87%, B=86.99-83%, B-=82.99-80%, C+=79.99-77%, C=76.99-73%, C-=72.99-70%, D=69.99-60%, F=59.99% or below.

**Course work**

**Interview & Technical Brief (10%)**

Students will interview a professional who produces technical writing/technical communications in the workplace and will produce a technical brief summarizing their findings.

**Technical Writing Analysis (10%)**

Students will analyze a technical document and produce a technical brief summarizing their findings.

**Brief Informal Report (5%)**

Students will complete a one-page informal report during one class period based on the principles outlined in Chapter 10, Informal Reports and E-mail.

**Abstract & PowerPoint Presentation (15%)**

Working in small groups, students will complete a 350-word abstract and PowerPoint presentation that examines/covers a particular topic. Each group will present the PowerPoint in class.

**Formal Technical Report (20%)**

Students will complete a formal technical report (at least 6-7 pages including title page, table of contents, and references page) based on the principles outlined in Chapter 12, Formal Reports.

**Formal Feasibility Report (30%)**

Students will complete a formal feasibility report (no length requirement) based on the principles outlined in Chapter 13, Recommendation and Feasibility Reports.

**Participation (10%)**

Participation relates to students’ involvement in the weekly discussions/exercises, chapter presentations and class activities. With the class discussions, students are expected to formulate a response to the instructor’s original discussion question and **also comment on at least three other student responses** in each discussion. All student comments are expected to maintain a respectful tone.

**TURNING IN WORK**

Assignment deadlines will be specified. All work should be posted on the course D2L. Do not email me your assignments unless I ask you to do so.Due to the pacing of the syllabus, **late assignments will receive a 20% reduction per day for every day they are late.** For this reason, it is absolutely essential for you to hit your deadlines. Keep in mind that meeting deadlines is critical in the professional writing world. However, if a serious and unavoidable problem arises, you should contact me in writing **prior to the deadline** to determine whether or not an extension for the work will or will not be granted.

Academic integrity

PSU students and their instructors are expected to adhere to guidelines set forth by the Conduct Office. According to PSU, “Academic integrity is critical to maintaining fair, knowledge-based learning at Portland State University. Academic misconduct in any form is a serious violation: it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of our academic community, degrades the value of a degree and puts at risk those who may eventually depend upon our students' knowledge and integrity.”

If you have any questions about this policy, please ask.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities may register with the Disability Resource Center (http://www.drc.pdx.edu/)

If you have a disability that requires me to adapt my pedagogy, please see me as early as possible to discuss how to best support your learning.

**Course Schedule**

*Note: the syllabus and following schedule may be amended to meet the needs of the class.* ***Please complete your reading by Thursday of each respective week to keep pace.***

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| **Week** | **Theme** | **Reading** | **Assignments** |
| Week 1 | Overview of technical communication & understanding your audience | Chapter 1: Definition of Technical Communication; Chapter 2: Profiling Audiences | Introduce Interview & Technical Brief Assignment |
| Week 2 | Developing a framework of the technical communication process | Chapter 3: The Technical Communication Process; Chapter 4: Technical Communication Style; Essay: Outlines Help You Write Better, Faster” | Introduce Technical Writing Analysis Assignment |
| Week 3 | Researching & editing | Chapter 5: Researching; Essay: “Editing: A Critical Process.” | **Interview & Technical Brief Assignment due on Friday, January 27th, 5:00pm** |
| Week 4 | Designing pages and thinking visually | Chapter 6: Designing Pages; Chapter 7: Using Visual Aids | Introduce Group Project  **Technical Writing Analysis Assignment due on Friday, February 3rd, 5:00pm** |
| Week 5 | Describing & informal reports | Chapter 8: Describing; Chapter 10: Informal Reports and E-mail | **Informal Report to be completed during Thursday’s class** |
| Week 6 | Formal technical reports | Chapter 12: Formal Reports; Appendix B: Documenting Sources | Introduce Formal Technical Report  **Group Project Abstracts due on Friday, February 17th, 5:00pm** |
| Week 7 | Group presentations |  |  |
| Week 8 | Websites & structural editing | Chapter 11: Websites; Essay: “Structural-level revisions.” | **Formal Technical Report due on Friday, March 3rd, 5:00pm** |
| Week 9 | Feasibility Reports | Chapter 13: Recommendation and Feasibility Reports | Introduce Final Feasibility Report |
| Week 10 | Work on final projects |  |  |
| Week 11 | No class; **Final Feasibility Report due on Tuesday March 21, 5:00pm)** | | |