Instructor: Brooke Carnwath
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Class schedule: Online (sections 801, 802, 803, 804)
Office: Working remotely from home office
Office hours: Online only

Course Description

Writing 221 provides a critical introduction to the genres, processes and ethics of writing in technical and professional settings. This includes strategies for negotiating rhetorical situations, responding effectively to others' work, planning and conducting research as well as making basic decisions about style and document design. We will write individually as well as collaboratively in small groups—as technical writing is often done in teams rather than by individuals.

Learning Outcomes

1. Perform audience analysis (thereby increasing rhetorical awareness) to create documents that effectively communicate to a specific audience.
2. Create documents in a range of genres that effectively address a variety of professional rhetorical situations, including professional letters; memos; proposals; resumes; and web pages.
3. Use appropriate organizational strategies, both visual and written, in professional documents; design and create multi-modal technical documents using appropriate software
4. Work in teams to establish collaborative goals, solve problems, and develop end products.
5. Reflect on and explain particular design and communication decisions.
6. Edit documents for clarity, correctness and audience.

Required Materials

- Laura Gurak and John Lannon, *Strategies for Technical Communication in the Workplace*, 3rd ed. (with or without updated MLA format) or 4th edition REVEL e-book (access card available in MSU bookstore).
- Robin Williams, *The Non-Designer's Design Book*, 4th ed.
- Additional readings on D2L

Assignments and Grading: During the first half of the term, most graded work takes place in the Discussion Board: our technical writing forum where we practice and hone learning outcomes and writing skills. Most weeks you will post the assigned document by Sunday midnight and then respond to a peer's work the following Wednesday; each of these discussions is worth up to three points. Starting in week 6, you will work with group members to create specific technical writing documents and submit them to me for detailed feedback and completion credits; credit is based on meeting the assignment's objectives and achieving an appropriate tone, style and format for your readers. Most of your grade will come from your final two assignments: The Non-Profit Group Project and The Final Portfolio (to be completed individually).

NAMING DOCUMENTS: When saving your documents, please name them "Last Name Assignment Name." For example, for Assignment #1, I would *save as* "Carnwath_Instructions.doc."

All assignments are detailed on specific assignment sheets in D2L; I will also explain them in my Weekly Announcement. The following provides an overview:

Week 2 - 3: Rhetorical Analysis MEMO & Complaint Letter (Worth up to 5 Discussion Points each)
To write an effective letter, you must consider your readers. The rhetorical analysis memo will lay the foundation for composing a successful letter, of which you will write one now and several others this term.

Week 4: Professional Email (Worth up to 5 Discussion Points)
Emails are visual documents that require the thoughtful consideration of readers: time constraints, expectations, biases and needs. Proper tone is imperative and achieved by refined language choice. Such rhetorical considerations will shape our drafts and revisions.

Week 5: Big Lake Letter (Worth up to 5 Discussion Points)
Using full block format, you will draft and then polish a 1-page letter based on Brenda Sims' description of "The Public Relations Problem at Big Lake." Language must be clear, concise and correct.

Week 6: GROUP Flier Resign and Memo (Teacher Draft, worth up to 10 completion credits)
In small groups you will write a professional memo critiquing an ineffective flier; you will then redesign the flier based on specific design principles.

Week 7: Job Application: Resume & Cover Letter (Teacher Draft, worth up to 10 completion credits) You will complete a job application for a specific position and therefore write to a named reader with concrete objectives. I will require a revision of both of these documents in the Final Portfolio.

Weeks 9 – 12: GROUP Non-Profit Project (Assignment worth up to 50 points)
The final third of the term will focus on developing fundraising and outreach content for a local non-profit group. Specific directions will come later in the term; students will work collaboratively in small groups.

Weeks 13 -15: Final Portfolio (Assignment worth up to 100 points, roughly 50% of grade)
At the end of the term, each student will turn in a portfolio of polished written work. The final portfolio will include six polished written documents, including a reflective letter, a cover letter and current resume. Copies of your most recent rough drafts, along with the polished versions, must be included in the portfolio. Grades will be determined holistically, rather than allotting points to specific documents holistically. More specific directions and information about evaluation will be given later in the term.

Class Discussions (Each discussion is worth up to 5 points.) In addition to sharing work and providing feedback, you will discuss specific topics and course readings with the entire class during weeks 1, 2, 8, 13 and 14.

Estimated Total Points: ~210

Final grades will determined by dividing total points earned out of possible points.

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A	93-100%	**C**	73-77%
A-	90-92%	**C-**	70-72%
B+	88-89%	**D+**	67-69%
B	83-87%	**D**	63-66%
B-	80-82%	**D-**	60-62%
C+	78-79%	**F**	59%

Course Policies

- **Participation is required**. As in most professional settings, you will be expected to do a significant amount of collaborative work in this class, including reading and responding to others' drafts. Your active participation and ability to meet deadlines are thus critical to your own success as well as to the learning and success of your peers. For this reason, I will not accept late work for credit except in extreme circumstances (documented illness, family emergency, etc.). If you know that you are going to be unavailable at any point during the term, please let me know <u>ahead of the deadline</u> and plan on submitting assignments in advance. Communication is key.

- **All assignments are due by day and time specified on D2L.** You will be guided in my Weekly Announcement to either submit your work in the specific discussion forum or Assignments. If you are confused, contact me ahead of the deadline for clarification.

- **Your work in this class is always public.** Don't submit writing you can't let us all read.

- **Revision is substantial development of a piece**, not fine-tuning wording, which is editing.

- **You cannot double-dip**. Writing that was or will be submitted for assignments in other courses will not be accepted here. You may work on the same problems but not double-dip the writing itself.

- **Plagiarism:** You are always responsible for acknowledging source material in your writing. Cheating—whether by claiming others' work as your own (fraud) or fabricating material—will result in a course grade of F and a report to the Dean of Students. If you are unsure about what constitutes as plagiarism, please visit the MSU handbook or ask me.

- **ADA:** If because of a documented physical or psychological disability you are unable to meet the requirements outlined in this syllabus, you must tell me immediately. Disabled Student Services (x 2824, 155 SUB) will document your disability and coordinate any resulting accommodations. If you are unfamiliar with Montana State's disability policy, please refer to http://www.montana.edu/wwwres/disability/index.shtml.

- **I reserve final discretion in adjusting grades to account for unanticipated circumstances**.

- **I may use copies of your work,** anonymously, for samples in future classes or for research.

Your continued enrollment in this course
constitutes your acceptance of this syllabus and these policies.