# Fall 2017 ● CSS 301

Section F: MW 11:00am-1:00pm ♦ Location: UW1-261  
Section D: MW 3:30-5:30pm ♦ Location: UW2-305

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Office: UW1 260S. Office hours: MW 1:15-2:45 p.m. & by appointment (email to schedule and indicate “office hour request” in subject line)

**Writing support (WaCC)**

Tutor Navee Kaur, a 301 veteran and peer tutor, is available to help with writing assignments at the UWB Writing and Communication Center. Her hours are MW 12-3 p.m. and Friday 1-5 p.m.

# Course Structure

Welcome to CSS 301.

This course will likely be very different from your previous writing courses. For starters, as much as possible, the course is organized around workplace principles.

In your future jobs you'll need to take responsibility for your own learning, growth, and development. This means knowing when to ask questions and asking for help from colleagues and supervisors (or in this case, your instructor and campus resources) when you need it. Managers will not come around to see if you have questions or to see if you're doing your work. They will assume that if they don't hear from you, then you're all set and on track with what work is expected of you. If you need anything, take the initiative.

**Course Format and Roles**

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| Classroom Is a *flipped active learning style* | We implement a flipped style of teaching: instead of the traditional lecture format, information will be available in the form of lecture notes you read (as homework) before you come to class; you will then actively apply what you have learned in group activities (worksheets or writing labs). This active learning is supplemented by instructor guidance, feedback, and answers to the questions you ask.  As this implies, preparation before class and a commitment to participation in class are critical to your success. |
| Your role is to take responsibility for your learning | * Reading and other homework from the Canvas resources to prepare for class time. * Use lecture time and in your writing groups to engage with the material, find answers, practice skills etc., and explore the writing concepts discussed each class. * Participate in a team over the course of the quarter. * Ask "Why?", "What?", "Who?", and "How?" questions and discover answers. * Take this work seriously and learning will happen quickly and pay off with an easier time creating the writing assignments and preparing for the exams. * Work hard to create good draft assignments free from plagiarism and other academic misconduct, and then revise based on comments from your writing group members and instructor. Writing is truly revising. * Ask questions and request clarifications if anything in the reading or in class is unclear. |
| My Role is to support you in your learning | * Provide you with structure and assistance to help you succeed: this syllabus, in-class activities, assignments, rubrics, discussions, office hours, and answers to your questions. * Facilitate individual, group, and class discussions discussions * Provide substantial feedback on your writing assignments. * Help you to understand the role of purpose, reader, and context in effectively writing and communicating more generally. |

# Course Purpose

On the job, performance is judged not only on your technical abilities, but also on your ability to communicate your knowledge (in writing and speaking) to colleagues, clients, and even the general public. However, an engineer's natural competence is to be great at communicating with their peers, but typically poor at communicating with audiences of people who are not like them. This is why CSS 301 is a core requirement.

## Objectives

Therefore, to assist you personally in your degree and professionally on the job, CSS301, "Technical Writing for Computing Professionals" is part of your core curriculum.

The course objectives are for students to:

1. Learn about the fundamentals of technical writing, including the following:   
   \* organization of information and analysis  
   \* prewriting process, including outlines  
   \* revision process.
2. Practice the following:  
   \* different patterns of organization  
   \* addressing different audiences  
   \* page layout & design principles to convey your message  
   \* alternative methods of communication (e.g., graphics, tables)
3. Learn to work in groups, including:  
   \* peer review  
   \* discuss ideas, report out

## ****Learning Outcomes****

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to do the following.

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| **Number** | **Outcome** | **When covered in CSS 301** |
| 1 | Demonstrate the ability to write a Compare and Contrast pattern. | Assignment #1, exams |
| 2 | Demonstrate the ability to write a Process pattern. | Assignment #2, exams |
| 3 | Demonstrate the ability to write an Argumentation (persuasive) pattern. | Assignment #3, exams |
| 4 | Demonstrate the ability to write a Cause/Effect or Problem/Solution pattern. | Assignment #4, exams |
| 5 | Demonstrate the ability to create several types of writings, clearly, concisely, and timely without assistance from others. | Assignment #1-4, exams |
| 6 | Recognize when to apply a variety of technical writing patterns. | Assignment #1-4, the pattern's lectures, exams |
| 7 | Apply clear principles of page layout & design to final works. | Robin Williams principles demonstration in Assignment #1-4, exams |
| 8 | Analyze the communications' situation (i.e., audience analysis) fully and deliver writing appropriately targeted. | Assignment #1-4, exams |

# Grading

Students may not request individual extra credit opportunities. I reserve the right to curve a student's final grade point average based on their individual effort.

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| 4 Writing Assignments @ 14% each (including all parts of writing process) | 56% |
| Exams (midterms and final) (20% each) | 40% |
| Class participation (e.g., reading homework, class participation, group work) | 4% |

# Policies

## School of STEM Policies

Find School of STEM policies at <http://www.uwb.edu/getattachment/stem/about/stem-policies/classroom-policies-stem-fc-1-12-17.pdf> on the following topics:

* Academic Integrity
* Access and Accommodations
* Classroom Emergency Preparedness
* For Our Veterans
* Inclement Weather
* Parenting Resources
* Respect for Diversity
* Student Support Services
* Wondering How to Address Faculty?

**Strategies for Success**

CSS301 is a fast-paced course. You need to manage your time (e.g., you will be working simultaneously on multiple papers, reading homework, and doing grammar exercises). You can avoid uncomfortable “pile-ups” by keeping up with the daily and weekly workload.

Most class days, multiple assignments will be due. Several times this quarter, work will be due on non-class days (see Canvas for a list of daily assignments).

**Writing Process**

Even if you did well in your 100-level composition courses, this course will require a significant adjustment to the forms and styles of technical writing. This includes a more realistic process. In order to help you in this transition, the writing process allows peer and instructor feedback throughout the writing. Each of the stages of the major writing assignments is crucial. Accordingly, not completing any of these stages (by the due date) has an impact on your final grade for the assignment, as follows:

* in-class worksheets and other group activities (not participating will incur a 10% deduction)
* pre-writing (20% deduction)
* group draft (50% deduction)
* participation in group critique (20% deduction)
* instructor draft (50% deduction)
* instructor draft with rubric return (20% deduction)

**Major Assignments with Due Dates**

This list of important writing assignment milestones does not include reading or grammar homework (see descriptions below); one or more of these smaller assignments will be due most class days. See Canvas for these daily assignments. Note: Some assignment due dates fall on a non-class day.

| **Assignment Due** | **Date/Day** |
| --- | --- |
| Assignment 1 Pre-writing (C/C table) | 10/4 W |
| Assignment 1 Draft for Group | 10/9 M |
| Assignment 1 Draft for Instructor | 10/11 W |
| Assignment 1 Final | 11/6 M |
| *Assignment 2 Pre-writing (scenario w. outline)* | *10/13 Friday* |
| Assignment 2 Draft for Group | 10/18 W |
| Assignment 2 Draft for Instructor | 10/23 M |
| Assignment 2 Final | 11/20 M |
| Assignment 3 Pre-writing (outline) | 10/25 W |
| Assignment 3 Draft for Group | 10/30 M |
| Assignment 3 Draft for Instructor | 11/1 W |
| Assignment 3 Final | 11/27 M |
| *Assignment 4 Pre-writing (scenario)* | *11/3 Friday* |
| Assignment 4 Draft for Group | 11/6 M |
| Assignment 4 Draft for Instructor | 11/13 M |
| Assignment 4 Final | 12/4 M |
| Midterm Exam | 11/8 W |
| Final Exam | 12/11 M |

# Course Materials & Resources

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| **Required reading** | The bulk of your assigned reading is available on Canvas. |
| **Required text** | Williams, Robin. The Non-Designer's Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice. 3rd or 4th Edition. Peach Pit Press |
| **Optional text** | Hacker, Diana. Rules for Writers (any edition). This text is helpful to any students that need assistance with research strategies, citing sources, or English grammar, and much more reliable and error free than the internet. |
| **Library reserves** | CSS 301 books at UWB library on reserve: <http://goo.gl/HnwUIV> |
| **Canvas** | All students need to use Canvas to post their work and retrieve class information. One-on-one tutoring at Open Learning Lab in UW2-140 or use the relevant UWB Learning pages: <http://www.uwb.edu/learningtech/elearning/canvas/canvas-for-students>. If you have problems with Canvas, use the Open Learning Lab, email [uwcanvas@uw.edu](mailto:uwcanvas@uw.edu), or call the UW IT help at 206-221-1500. |
| **Canvas announcements** | I use the course Canvas announcements to send out updates, reminders, and other information. Other information may be distributed via the class email list, so consult your UW email daily M-Sat. |
| **Word software** | You’ll be using Microsoft Word on Windows for your exams, including applying Williams’ page layout and design principles. If you use a Mac or other Word equivalent, I recommend taking the time to learn Word on Windows, so exams are less stressful. |

**Additional Course Policies**

| **Policy** | **Explanation** |
| --- | --- |
| Attendance | Please arrive on time. If you miss class, you are still responsible for turning in any work due that day on Canvas, catching up on your own time, and learning what we did in class. NOTE: You will not receive credit for missed in-class activities. If you miss class on a day when I return a draft or exam, you will need to make an appointment to collect that work. |
| Participation in in-class activities | Class activities are designed to help you understand the material (including the writing assignments) and practice technical-writing (TW) skills and principles covered in your reading homework. You need to have done the reading homework to gain the most from these in-class activities (see “Reading Homework” below). Students who do not attend class (or arrive once activities are underway) and therefore do not participate fully in the group activities typically do poorly. |
| Reading homework | Reading homework is due before we discuss the topic in class, so I can see that you engaged with the material prior to attending class and where I need to follow up in class. No late work is accepted for reading homework. |
| Grammar homework | Grammar homework is designed to refresh your skills, with an emphasis on TW grammar and punctuation standards. Good, standard, grammar and punctuation is important in your writing assignments (it is therefore also covered on the exams).  Besides the impacts on your writing assignment and exams, you do not receive credit for this homework. In-class grammar discussion is mostly driven by student questions. If you don’t ask questions, I will assume you understand the grammar. |
| Assignments | Assignments are due at the beginning of the class. See Assignment Turn-in instructions on Canvas for specifics on turning-in draft and final assignments. Assignments are not accepted late; however, given special situations and with prior permission, you may negotiate another day/time. |
| Draft assignment grades | Instructor draft grades are replaced by the grade on your final documents. If you are happy with the grade on your instructor draft, you do not have to write the final draft (you do need to turn back the instructor draft and rubric by the final draft due date). |
| Midterm and Final exams | The exams are closed book, applied writing scenarios (not really “memorization” exams). They are based on learning derived from, in this order, reading homework, material covered in class, and grammar homework.  You may bring a 8x11 a notes page (8 ½" x 11" printed double sided) to the exam. This page needs to be created only by you, although you're welcome to study in groups. CAUTION: If you are too reliant on your cheat sheet, i.e., if you have to look up everything, you will likely not complete the exam.  NOTE: Make-up exams are only given in extraordinary cases, such as a certified medical condition. |
| Can't view a Canvas file? | If you get an error in Canvas that you can't see a file/link, then click on the icon with the magnifying class, to preview it in-line on the page. |
| Need to print? | If you need to print, you can do so for "free" at one of the CSS computer labs on the 3rd floor of UW1 (labeled as "CSS Labs, restricted use"). The price to print was included in the student fees you've paid during class registration. Please do not let non-CSS students tailgate you into the room to print. It will only cause your fees to be raised. NOTE: You need your Husky ID to enter the room. |
| Electronic devices | You may type notes in class, but do not use technology to avoid paying attention or distract others from their work.  At the same time, any student can ask any other student to refrain from distracting behavior with technology, not just me. |
| Electronic Back-ups | Maintain electronic back-ups of your work. |
| Food | Snacking is permitted, as long you can fully participate in all activities and do not distract others. |
| Incompletes | University rules state "an incomplete is given only when the student has been in attendance and has done satisfactory work until within two weeks at the end of the quarter and has furnished proof satisfactory to the instructor […] the work cannot be completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control." |