Technical and Business Writing

Course Facilitator Ms. Syeda Maryam Zaidi

Credit Hours 3+0

Course Code 221

# Course Learning Objectives

This course is designed to equip students with written form of Technical and Business Communication Skills helpful in their academic and professional life. They would be able to plan, organize and compose professional messages suitable for wide range of situations. They will get an insight into the theory and application of administrative and managerial communication. Moreover, students will be able to write effective resumés and employment letters. In this course, students will also gain a practical training on writing proposals and reports based on primary and secondary information with documentation.

# Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of the course, the students will be able to:

* Write routine positive, negative, persuasive and employment messages in letter, email and memo format.
* Collect, analyze, document, and report research clearly, concisely, and logically in for of reports and proposals.

# Assessment / Evaluation

Assignments + Class Quizzes + Presentation(s) 20%

Midterm Examination 20%

Final Examination 60%

## Assignments:

As part of continuous assessment, up to three assignment can set during the course. All assignments must be submitted by due date. Late submissions are not acceptable. Plagiarism (copying other’s work) will be severely penalized.

## Class Quizzes

Class quizzes (announced and unannounced) of short duration would be taken in class throughout the semester. At least four quizzes would be taken during the semester. There would be no MAKEUP for these quizzes.

# Recommended Books:

* Business Communication: Process and Product 7th Edition, Mary Ellen Guffey and Dana Loewy
* Technical Writing – Process & Product, 7th Edition, Sharon J. Gerson, S.M. Gerson
* Technical Communication – Principles & practice By M. Raman, and S. Sharma, Oxford University Press.
* Reep, Diana C: Technical Writing Principles Strategies & Reading, 3rd Edition

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| **Week** | **Topic to be Covered** | **Suggested Chapters** | **CLO** | **PLO** |
| 1 | Definition of Technical and Business Communication  Understand the importance of communication skills in relation to career success  Recognize significant trends in today's dynamic workplace and how these trends increase the need for excellent communication skills.  Analyze the process of communication and understand how to use it effectively.  Recognize barriers to interpersonal communication and examine specific strategies for overcoming those barriers.  Understand the internal and external functions of communication in organizations as well as compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of oral and written communication. | Chapter 1  (Revision of basic concepts of Communication) | CLO 1 | PLO-10 |
| 2 | Characteristics/Criteria and features of effective Technical writing  Explain how technical communication differs from other forms of communication  Identify the various purposes of technical communication. Adapt to written and oral communication channels  Explain why being a successful technical communicator is important on the job | Supplementary handout | CLO 1 | PLO-8  PLO-10 |
| 3 | Writing process: planning  Identify four basic principles of business writing, summarize the 3-x-3 writing process, and explain how a writing process helps a writer.  Recognize the components of the first phase of the writing process (prewriting), including analyzing your purpose, anticipating the audience, selecting the best channel, and considering how to adapt your message to the audience.  Effectively apply audience benefits, the “you” view, and conversational but professional language.  Effectively employ positive and courteous tone, bias-free language, simple expression, and vigorous words. | Chapter 4 | CLO 1 | PLO-8  PLO-10 |
| 4 | Writing process: organizing  Apply Phase 2 of the writing process, which begins with researching data and generating ideas.  Explain how to organize data into lists and alphanumeric or decimal outlines.  Compare direct and indirect patterns for organizing ideas.  Compose the first draft of a message, avoiding sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices as well as emphasizing important ideas, avoiding misplaced modifiers, and using active and passive voice effectively.  Compose effective paragraphs using three classic paragraph plans as well as applying techniques for achieving paragraph coherence. | Chapter 5 | CLO 1 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |
| 5 | Writing process: Revising  Complete business messages by revising for conciseness, which includes eliminating flabby expressions, long lead-ins, *there is/are* and *it is/was* fillers, redundancies, and empty words.  Improve clarity in business messages by keeping the ideas simple, dumping trite business phrases, dropping clichés and slang, unburying verbs, and controlling exuberance.  Enhance readability by understanding document design including the use of white space, margins, typefaces, fonts, numbered and bulleted lists, and headings.  Recognize proofreading problem areas and apply effective techniques to proofread both routine and complex documents. | Chapter 6 | CLO 1 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |
| 6 | Writing routine positive and goodwill messages  Apply the 3-x-3 writing process to creating successful positive messages, including e-mails, interoffice memos, and business letters.  Understand the appropriate use of e-mails, interoffice memos, and business letters.  Compose direct messages that make requests and respond to inquiries.  Write messages that clearly explain step-by-step instructions.  Prepare messages that make direct claims.  Create adjustment messages that regain the confidence of customers and promote further business. | Chapter 8 | CLO 1 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |
| 7 | Writing negative messages  Describe the goals and strategies of business communicators in conveying negative news effectively,  Decide whether to use the direct or indirect strategy in conveying negative news.  Analyze the components of effective negative messages, including opening with a buffer, apologizing, conveying empathy, presenting the reasons, cushioning the bad news, and closing pleasantly.  Describe and apply effective techniques for refusing typical requests and handling bad news with customers. | Chapter 9 | CLO 1 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |
| 8 | Writing persuasive messages  Define the concept of persuasion, identify effective and ineffective persuasive techniques, and apply the 3-x-3 writing process to persuasive messages.  Explain the four major elements in successful persuasive messages  Write persuasive messages that request favors and actions, make claims, and deliver complaints.  Write persuasive messages within organizations and sales messages. | Chapter 10 | CLO 1 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |
|  | Mid Term Examinations |  |  |  |
| 9 | Writing for Employment:  Appreciate the need to customize your résumé and know whether to choose a chronological or a functional résumé style.  Organize your qualifications and information into effective résumé segments.  Describe techniques that optimize a résumé for today’s technologies, including preparing a scannable résumé, a plain-text résumé, and an e-portfolio. | Chapter 15 | CLO 2 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |
| 10 | Draft and submit a customized cover message to accompany a print or digital résumé.  Messages requesting internship placement; Solicited and unsolicited job applications; | Chapter 15 | CLO 2 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |

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| 11 | Writing Short Business Reports  Describe basic features of business reports, including functions, strategies (indirect or direct), writing style, and formats.  Apply the 3-x-3 writing process to business reports to create well-organized documents that show a firm grasp of audience and purpose. | Chapter 11 | CLO 1 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |
| 12 | Find, evaluate, and use print and electronic secondary sources.  Understand how to generate and use primary data while avoiding researcher bias.  Comprehend fast-changing communication technology: the Web, electronic databases, and other resources for business writers and researchers.  Recognize the purposes and techniques of documentation in business reports, and avoid plagiarism. | Chapter 11 | CLO 2 | PLO-8  PLO-10  PLO-11  PLO-12 |
| 13 | Tabulate information, use statistical techniques, and create decision matrices to sort and interpret business report data skillfully and accurately.  Draw meaningful conclusions and make practical report recommendations after sound and valid analysis.  Organize report data logically and provide cues to aid comprehension.  Write short informational reports that describe routine tasks.  Compose short analytical reports that solve business problems. | Chapter 12 | CLO 2 | PLO-8  PLO-10 |

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| 14 | Writing Proposals and Reports  Understand the importance, purpose, and components of informal and formal proposals.  Discuss the general uses and basic components of proposals and grasp their audience and purpose.  Discuss formal proposals and how to anticipate a receiver’s reaction to your message. | Chapter 13 | CLO 2 | PLO-8  PLO-10 |
| 15 | Formal / Long reports (structure and organization)  Describe the steps in writing and editing formal business reports.  Convert report data into meaningful visual aids and graphics. | Chapter 13 | CLO 2 | PLO-8  PLO-9  PLO-10 |
| 16 | Describe the components of typical formal reports.  summaries, abstracts, table of contents, footnotes, glossaries, cross referencing glossaries, index, appendices, typesetting systems, creating | Chapter 13 | CLO 2 | PLO-8  PLO-10 |
|  | Final Examinations |  |  |  |