

California State University, Long Beach. Summer 2015.

Course	: ENGL 317, Technical Communication
Classroom	: LA2-202
Class Period	: Tue/Thur 06:00 P.M. - 09:45 P.M.
Instructor:	: Ilan Mitchell-Smith
Office	: MHB - 506
Office Hours	: Tue/Thur 04:00 P.M. - 05:00 P.M., 10:00 P.M. - 10:30 P.M., and by appointment
Email	: Ilan.MitchellSmith@csulb.edu
Textbook	: Markel, Mike. Practical Strategies for Technical Communication 1st edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013. ISBN : 978-1-4576-0940-4 (paperback)
Other Resources	: Online Dictionary: http://www.dictionary.com Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu

- (I) **Course Description.** The technical writer is one who is aware of the difference between content (the information that an individual or a business is trying to convey) and form (the actual words, layout, formatting, tone, style, etc., that might be chosen to best convey that content).

Technical writing skills are those that allow a writer to translate content concisely and clearly for a specific user or reader. Technical documents range from emails, memos, business letters, brochures, and newsletters, to manuals, proposals, and analytical reports. Documents such as these might explain a problem, describe a product, report on an experiment, or propose a project; additionally, they might need to do so across the discipline-specific jargon of a number of professions.

- (II) • **Grade Distribution.**

Project 1	20%
Project 2	20%
Project 3	20%
Project 4	20%
Participation	10%
Peer critiques, quizzes, and in class-work	10%

- **Grading Scale.**

90%-100%	A
80%-89%	B
70%-79%	C
60%-69%	D
59% and below	F

- (III) **Course Policies.**

- (a) **Participation.** Active participation is crucial in this class. A respectful exchange of ideas in this classroom offers you a greater opportunity to become a better thinker, speaker, writer, and listener. But please keep in mind that, as an active participant, you must come to class every day, on time, with your cell phone turned off (or on vibrate).
- (b) **Attendance and Absences.** Attendance in this course is mandatory. You must attend class meetings regularly and be on time. If you are late, it is your responsibility to speak with me after class to make sure you have been marked present.

If you know in advance that you will be absent or late, please notify me by e-mail before class. Note that if you miss more than 1 class meeting—without prior arrangement—your final grade will be lowered by ten full points (one full letter grade). In other words, you cannot receive an “A” if you miss 3 classes. For every two absences beyond the first, your final grade will be lowered another 10 points. You are responsible for all assignments, whether you are absent or not.

- (c) **Late Work / Make-up Policy.** For each class period that an essay assignment is late, a whole letter grade will be deducted from the assignment’s score, unless you have a valid excuse, as defined by university policy. Writing assignments three days beyond their due date will not be accepted. If for a serious and compelling reason you are unable to meet a deadline, please meet with me in advance so that we can work out some sort of resolution.
- (d) **Withdrawal Policy.** It is your responsibility to withdraw from this course if you are unable to complete its requirements. If you choose not to complete this course or have accumulated excessive absences, you should officially withdraw as soon as possible. For more information and exact dates on the university withdrawal policy, see the My CSULB.
- (IV) **Counseling and Psychological Services.** This is located in Brotman Hall, Room 226, and available by phone all day at (562)985-4001.
- (V) **Student Health Services.** If you wish to visit a doctor on-campus or need a vaccine, the Student Health Services offers such services to registered students. Feel free to contact them at (562)985-4771.
- (VI) **Accommodations.** If you have a verified disability that requires special accommodations, please see me as soon as possible to best meet your needs. Additionally, for information regarding the services available to students with disabilities, you should contact Disabled Student Services in Brotman Hall or call them at (562)985-5401
- (VII) **Academic Integrity.** Cheating or plagiarism will be taken seriously and will result in a course grade of “F”. Depending on the gravity of the offense, the matter may be forwarded to the Office for Judicial Affairs with recommendations of probation, suspension, or expulsion. Plagiarism is defined as the act of using the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were your own without giving credit to the source. Such an act is not plagiarism if it is ascertained that the ideas were arrived at through independent reasoning or logic or where the thought or idea is common knowledge.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following: the submission of a work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts or conclusions which rightfully belong to another; in written work, failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another whether it be a paragraph, a sentence, or even a part thereof; close and lengthy paraphrasing of another's writing or programming. If you are in doubt about the extent of acceptable paraphrasing, then you should consult the instructor. Acknowledgement of an original author or source must be made through appropriate referencing and citations.

Please see the "Academic Action" section of the course catalog:

http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/catalog/current/academic_information/cheating_plagiarism.html

- (VIII) **Educational Use of Student Papers.** Occasionally, I retain copies of student work completed for this course in order to share it with this class or future sections of this course. All selections of student work used in this way will be anonymous. If you absolutely object, please let me know so I may honor your request.
- (IX) **Tentative Schedule.** The following schedule is tentative and is subject to change based on the needs of the class. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to determine what you missed or if the syllabus has changed.

Week One	May 26	Introduction to the course and to Technical Writing. The first
		discussion will be about grammatical correctness. At some
		point during lecture, we shall also discuss about the syllabus.
		Students will review the requirements, guidelines, and expectations for Assignment #1.
	May 28	Chapter 1, "Introduction to Technical Communication"
		Chapter 2, "Understanding Ethical and Legal Considerations"
		Also, because the draft of the memo is due on this day for a
		peer critique, you should read all about how to write a memo is on page 223 of the textbook.
Week Two	June 02	Part 2, "Analyzing Your Audience and Purpose"
		and "Writing for Your Readers." Use these sections to revise
		your memo and to complete the draft of the syllabus, which is due on this day.
	June 04	Part 3 (completely) and be prepared for a quiz. Most
		importantly, your finished and completed Project #1 is
		is due on this day.