

TRINE

UNIVERSITY

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE: TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

TERM & YEAR: Spring 2017

COURSE & SECTION NUMBER: ENG 133
ENG 133.04
ENG 133.05

TIME & PLACE: L-17 Taylor Hall
M/W/F 12:00-12:50
M/W/F 1:00-1:50

NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS: 3-0-3

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Alison Witte

OFFICE LOCATION/HOURS: 213 Taylor Hall
M/W/F 9:00-11:00
M/W 2:00-3:00
T/R 9:30-11:00
By Appointment

OFFICE PHONE: (260) 665-4774

EMAIL: wittea@trine.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Emphasizes written and oral communication in professional situations for technical fields. Concentrates on project-oriented instruction and assessment, which includes creating technical documents (email, reports, proposals, instructions, et. al.) and adapting them to specific audiences and tasks.

PREREQUISITES: "C" or better in ENG 103 English Composition I or ENG 104 Intensive English Composition I

REQUIRED TEXT: Markel, *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*, 2nd edition, 2016. Bedford St. Martins ISBN-10: 1319003362; ISBN-13: 9781319003364

REFERENCES: None

OTHER MATERIALS: Access to Moodle

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Communicate effectively (clearly, precisely, concisely, and ethically) in a professional environment, specifically:
 - a. Analyzing writing tasks and determining what the audience expects.
 - b. Selecting methods and genres (e.g. instructions, proposals, lab reports, professional correspondence, and presentations) appropriate to the task at hand.
 - c. Collaborating effectively.
 - d. Applying research to tasks and using credible sources in a manner that avoids plagiarism and conforms to a system of documentation.
 - e. Choosing appropriate graphics for a task and clearly and effectively integrating these graphics with a text.

HABITS OF THE MIND

As you progress in your academic and professional careers, you will be expected to do more writing on your own and to write about topics and information that more original and unique than simply reporting or regurgitating other people's information. To be successful as a writer, you'll need to develop more than your knowledge of paragraphs and vocabulary. You need to develop habits that will help you accomplish all sorts of writing tasks.

In this class, we will focus on:

- **Intellectual Curiosity:** Successful writers ask questions and actively seek answers.
- **Problem-Solving:** Successful writers see things that aren't working and seek out solutions.
- **Collaboration:** Successful writers work with others to develop their ideas, to write documents, and to rework and polish documents they've written.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

QUIZZES: Quizzes are over the material covered in our textbooks. Quizzes must be completed on Moodle prior to the beginning of class on the day they are due—the quiz will close at that time. Quizzes cannot be completed late for any reason, including illness.

EXAMINATIONS: The midterm exam is a traditional objective test, while the final exam requires you to write a review of your performance over the semester and present your research to a panel of evaluators. Attendance at BOTH the final exam and the midterm are mandatory. Failure to attend either exam will result in a failing grade for the course.

INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS:

Communicating by Email: A series of emails that demonstrate your ability to communicate with different people about the same situation

Oral Progress Report: Each member of your group will need to speak about the progress your group is making on the proposal project; per the instructions on the memo. You will need to be the primary speaker in one of the progress reports.

Proposal Performance Review: A reflection of your and your group's performance on the Proposal Project. The grade for this assignment will be determined by averaging the grades your group members assign you based on your work on the project.

Advice to Future Students Memo: A brief memo that advises future students on how to be successful in this course

Though I cannot stop you from discussing these projects with your classmates, the work you turn in must be your own. Work that is suspiciously similar to that of another student or students will result in a failing grade for all parties. Do what you need to do to make sure that this doesn't happen.

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| You must get a 60% or better in your "individual grades" category to pass the course. |
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GROUP PROJECTS:

Group Charter: The "rules" and policies by which your group will operate during the semester

Dots Project: A set of instructions for constructing a structure you design

Problem Search Project: An exploratory project to help you locate a reasonable problem for your proposal project and make an initial determination of feasibility

Definitions Project: A series of definitions related to a problem on campus that you will use for the Proposal Project

Pitch Project & Handout: A brief presentation of 2 potential solutions that address a problem on campus to a panel of professors accompanied by a handout with graphics

Proposal Project: A proposal for a solution that will improve some aspect of health and wellness on campus

Proposal Presentation: A presentation of your proposed solution to an audience of Trine faculty and staff

Proposal Debrief & Debrief Letter: A written explanation of what you have improved and left unchanged in your proposal and a group discussion

Group projects require that you work effectively as part of a group. **Group work is a required part of this course. You are expected to meet outside of class as well as in class. If you are consistently failing to meet your responsibilities in the group, your group mates will use your Group Charter to determine if you will remain in the group or how your grade will be affected.**

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:

As in the workplace, regular, punctual attendance for this course is mandatory. You can expect the class to begin on time. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. It is your responsibility to be punctual. If you are not, you may be counted as absent even if you did attend class. Every absence after the third, regardless of the reason (university-sponsored field trips and athletic events are excused), may result in a final grade reduction of 20 points. Please notify me in advance of absences and make arrangements to turn work in on time.

WORK DAYS: I give you work days so that you have time to meet the demands of the class and to make myself available to answer your questions about the work in the course. To be considered in attendance, you must stay for the entire course meeting time and make use of the time. On work days, attendance will be taken at the end of class and you must be present

GRADING/EVALUATION:

For this course, your grade is based on the total number of points that you earn:

Projects marked * must be completed for a passing grade in the course.

| INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS | POINTS |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Quizzes (10x10 points) | 100 |
| *Midterm | 100 |
| *Communicating by Email | 25 |
| *Oral Progress Report | 50 |
| *Proposal Performance Review | 50 |
| *Advice to Future Students Memo | 50 |
| TOTAL | 375 |

NOTE: You must receive at least a 60% (225 points) in your Individual Projects category in order to pass this course.

| MINOR GROUP PROJECTS | POINTS |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| *Group Charter | 25 |
| *Dots Project (Instructions) | 50 |
| *Problem Search Project (Feasibility) | 25 |
| *Definitions Project | 50 |
| TOTAL | 150 |

| MAJOR PROPOSAL PROJECT | POINTS |
|---|------------|
| *Pitch Project | 75 |
| *Rough Draft #1 | 20 |
| *Rough Draft #2 | 30 |
| *Proposal Draft for Presentation (Draft #3) | 50 |
| *Proposal Presentation | 100 |
| *Proposal Project Final Revision | 150 |
| *Proposal Project Final Reflection Letter | 25 |
| *Proposal Project Oral Debrief | 25 |
| TOTAL | 475 |

FINAL GRADES

| GRADE | TOTAL COURSE POINTS |
|-------|---------------------|
| A | 900-1000 |
| B+ | 870-899 |
| B | 800-869 |
| C+ | 770-799 |
| C | 700-769 |
| D+ | 670-699 |
| D | 600-669 |
| F | Less than 600 |

OTHER POLICIES:

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University prohibits all forms of academic misconduct. Academic misconduct refers to dishonesty in examinations (cheating), presenting the ideas or the writing of someone else as one's own (plagiarism) or knowingly furnishing false information to the University by forgery, alteration, or misuse of University documents, records, or identification. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: permitting another student to plagiarize or cheat from one's own work, submitting an academic exercise (written work, printing, design, computer program) that has been prepared totally or in part by another, acquiring improper knowledge of the contents of an exam, using unauthorized material during an exam, submitting the same paper in two different courses without knowledge and consent of professors, or submitting a forged grade change slip or computer tampering. The faculty member has the authority to grant a failing grade in cases of academic misconduct as well as referring the case to Student Life.

PLAGIARISM

You are expected to submit your own work and to identify any portion of work that has been borrowed from others in any form. An ignorant act of plagiarism on final versions and minor projects, such as attributing or citing inadequately, will be considered a failure to master an essential course skill and will result in an F for that assignment. A deliberate act of plagiarism, such as having someone else do your work, or submitting someone else's work as your own (e.g., from the Internet, fraternity file, etc., including homework and in-class exercises), will at least result in an F for that assignment and could result in an F for the course.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Use of electronic devices including smart watches and cell phones is prohibited during exams or quizzes unless directly allowed by the instructor.

Here's the deal the rest of the time, ...you are in control of your own learning, so you are in control of your devices (computers, tablets, phones, etc.)—that means you choose whether or not to bring them to class and whether or not to turn them off. You can decide whether they will distract, hinder, or help you.

But you are also a member of this class and need to be respectful of your classmates, so if you bring your devices to class, please keep them on vibrate or silent.

LATE DRAFTS, HOMEWORK, ETC.

Missed work is covered in the sections of course requirements. A summary:

- Quizzes: must be completed on Moodle before the beginning of class on the day they're due. I will not reopen them if you miss them, so don't ask.
- Presentations: cannot be missed
- Examinations: cannot be missed
- Major Assignments: can be turned in up to 3 days late with a 10% penalty per day. If you are not going to be in class, you are still expected to submit your work to Moodle by the due date and time.

PRINTING

Assignments must be printed *before* coming to class. Assignments printed just before or during class in the classroom will not be accepted.

PRESENTATIONS

During all presentations, you are to represent yourself professionally, which includes dressing professionally.

EMAIL

E-mail is a formal communication between you and me. You are expected to send professional e-mails to professors, including me. This means including a subject and a greeting and using complete sentences and formal spelling.

I check my email regularly during business hours (7am-8pm). I will respond to your email as quickly and thoroughly as possible during these times. However, keep in mind that I teach other classes during the day besides yours, so I may not respond to you immediately. After 8pm, I'm on my own time. I may check my email, but I may not. So if you have questions or concerns after that time, feel free to email me knowing you may not hear from me until the following day. So plan your email communications accordingly.

OFFICE HOURS

I will make every attempt to be available to meet with you during my office hours on campus. Because I am also the director of the Writing Center I will have some of my office hours there, as indicated on the first page of the syllabus.

If you make an appointment to meet with me, please be respectful of my time and that of your classmates by arriving on time and prepared for your appointment. If you must cancel, please let me know ASAP so that I don't wait for you and that I can give that time to someone else.

COURSE CALENDAR/SCHEDULE:

| Date | Class Topic | Reading Due | Quiz/Midterm Due | Assignment Due |
|---------------|---|---------------------------|--|--|
| Week 1 | | | | |
| M. 1/16 | MLK Day – No Class | MLK Day – No Class | MLK Day – No Class | MLK Day – No Class |
| W. 1/18 | Introduction to the Course | Review Ch. 1 in class | | |
| F. 1/20 | Audience & Professional Correspondence | Ch. 4 & Ch. 9 | Audience & Professional Correspondence | |
| Week 2 | | | | |
| M. 1/23 | Ethical Considerations | Ch. 2 | Ethical & Legal Considerations | Strategy & Course Policies Memo |
| W. 1/25 | Ethical Considerations | | | |
| F. 1/27 | What's the problem? Brainstorming & meeting people | Ch. 3 | Writing Collaboratively | Professional Correspondence project |
| Week 3 | | | | |
| M. 1/30 | Group Dynamics Group Charter | | | |
| W. 2/1 | Choosing Groups Writing the Group Charter | | | |
| F. 2/3 | Problem Search Project | | | Group Charter due |
| Week 4 | | | | |
| M. 2/6 | Problem Search Project | | | |
| W. 2/8 | Writing instructions | Ch. 14: 402-423 | Instructions | |
| F. 2/10 | Work Day: Dots project building and drafting | | | Problem Search Project due |
| Week 5 | | | | |
| M. 2/13 | Usability Evaluations | | | 4 hard copies of text instructions (no images) |
| W. 2/15 | Writing Definitions | Ch. 14: 387-394 | Definitions | |
| F. 2/17 | Effective Document Design Creating Graphics | Ch. 7 | Effective Document Design | |
| Week 6 | | | | |
| M. 2/20 | Creating Surveys & Interview Questions | Ch. 8 | Creating Effective Graphics | Final Draft of Instructions (Dots) Project due |
| W. 2/22 | Work day: drafting your problem definition & plan of research | Ch. 5 | Primary & Secondary Research | OPR1 (groups 1&2) |
| F. 2/24 | How to do your pitch presentations | Ch. 15 | Making oral presentations | OPR 1 (groups 3 &4) Problem Definition & Plan of Research due |

Commented [AW1]: Need to write instructions/check for Sarah's instructions

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| Week 7 | | | | |
| M. 2/27 | Work Day: Graphics Project & Pitch Presentations | | | |
| W. 3/1 | Work Day: Graphics Project & Pitch Presentations | | | |
| F. 3/3 | Pitch Presentations | | | Pitch proposal handout/graphics project due |
| Week 8 | | | | |
| M. 3/6 | Writing Proposals & the Trine Experience Project | Ch. 11 | Writing Proposals | OPR #2 (groups 3&4) |
| W. 3/8 | Reviewing Sample Proposals & Drafting Each Section | | | OPR #2 (groups 1 & 2) |
| F. 3/10 | Work Day: Writing Draft #1 | | | Midterm team evaluations due Midterm exam will be open from 8am Thursday 3/9 until 8am Friday 3/10 |
| Week 9 | | | | |
| M. 3/13 | Spring Break | Spring Break | Spring Break | Spring Break |
| W. 3/15 | Spring Break | Spring Break | Spring Break | Spring Break |
| F. 3/17 | Spring Break | Spring Break | Spring Break | Spring Break |
| Week 10 | | | | |
| M. 3/20 | Work Day Writing Draft #1 | | | OPR #3 (groups 1&2) |
| W. 3/22 | Work Day: Writing Draft #1 | | | OPR #3 (groups 3&4) |
| F. 3/24 | Work Day: Revision | | | Proposal Draft #1 |
| Week 11 | | | | |
| M. 3/27 | Work Day: Revision | | | |
| W. 3/29 | Giving Effective Presentations | | | |
| F. 3/31 | Work day: Presentations | | | |
| Week 12 | | | | |
| M. 4/3 | Work day: Revision/Presentations | | | OPR #4 (groups 3&4) |
| W. 4/5 | Work day: Revision/Presentations | | | OPR #4 (groups 1&2) |
| F. 4/7 | Work Day: Peer Review | | | Proposal Draft #2 |
| Week 13 | | | | |
| M. 4/10 | Work Day: Revision | | | OPR #5 (groups 1&2) |
| W. 4/12 | Work Day: Revision | | | OPR #5 (groups 3&4) |
| F. 4/14 | Good Friday | Good Friday | | Good Friday |
| Week 14 | | | | |
| M. 4/17 | Work Day: Revision | | | |
| W. 4/19 | Formal Presentation 1 | | | Proposal Draft for Presentation |
| F. 4/21 | Formal Presentation 2 | | | |
| Week 15 | | | | |
| M. 4/24 | Formal presentation 3 | | | |
| W. 4/26 | Formal presentation 4 | | | |
| F. 4/28 | How to write your final reflection | | | |

Commented [AW2]: Need to look at assignment sheet

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| Week 16 | | | | |
| M. 5/1 | Work day: Revision/reflection | | | |
| W. 5/3 | Work day: Revision/reflection | | | |
| F. 5/5 | Work day: Revision/reflection | | | |
| Week 17 | Final Exam Week | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENG 133.04: Tuesday from 2-4pm. Final Proposal and Reflection letter due Monday during your debrief time. • ENG 133.05: Monday from 8-10am: Final Proposal and Reflection letter due Wednesday during your debrief time. • Due for EVERYONE Monday at noon: Advice to Future Tech. Comm. Students, Final Peer Evaluation Memo | | | | |

Commented [AW3]: Need to write instructions & Rubric

Commented [AW4]: Need to write instructions & rubric

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

WRITING CENTER:

The Trine Writing Center supports student writing by working on specific essays in any stage of completion and by improving the writing skills of students. Students work with peer consultants during any stage of writing, whether it is coming up with ideas, organizing those thoughts, or putting the final touches on an essay. Any Trine student may stop by and utilize these services on the first floor of the LINK during posted hours of operation. **It is highly suggested that you make an appointment for a session with a Writing Center tutor.** While drop-in appointments are sometimes available, they are not guaranteed.