

English 235 – Technical Writing

Spring Quarter 2013

Preferred class e-mail: CANVAS e-mail program

Textbook: *Technical Communication* (10th ed)

Author: Mike Markel

Please check with the BC Bookstore for the latest

ISBN# of this book (St. Martin's keeps changing

them)

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Office hours: by e-mail, phone, or right before or after
my on campus meeting times in R230

Is English 235 for You?

English 235 is for students within thirty (30) credits of graduating. The course is designed to teach technical writing skills to professionals or continuing students heading into a four year technical or scientific degree program. All students in this course are expected to have solid reading and writing skills. Thus, students who take this course in their first year of college or who only marginally passed English 101 are unlikely to do well in this course. Also, students with a heavy course load may not be able to complete the work required for this course. Please consider these things as you make your final course load decisions this quarter.

Course Outcomes & How They Will Be Met

By the end of this quarter, you should be able to:

1. Identify technical communication from other types of writing and articulate whether it is effective or ineffective

We will study, read, compare, and contrast different types of communication, so we develop an understanding of how technical communication differs. We will use a set of standards and criteria to determine whether a given piece of technical communication is effective, or not so effective.

2. Know and use the writing process as it relates to technical communications

We will study the writing process and engage in the different activities required for each written assignment listed below.

3. Produce effective (honest, clear, accurate, comprehensive, accessible, concise, professional, correct, and well documented) written, visual, and verbal technical communications

We will learn how to apply the criteria for effective communication to our own documents. We will learn how to produce an effective and polished finished piece of technical communication through practice and application throughout the quarter.

4. Produce and identify various types of technical documents (memos, instructions, proposals, informal reports, and formal reports)

See the written assignments listed below.

5. Communicate effectively with different audiences and understand the importance of considering your audience in all phases of the technical communication process

We will study rhetoric and how it impacts what we write, how we write, and who we write to in the business setting. We will examine documents that do not reflect a rhetorical awareness, to see the significant impact of not understanding one's audience.

6. Understand the importance of scholarly research in technical communications and demonstrate scholarship in your technical communications

We will learn the standards for what is scholarly and what is not.

7. Collaborate effectively on group/team projects

There will be significant and frequent group work in this course. This may not be to your liking, but there is simply no other way to teach this process, except by experience.

8. Effectively use technology to support your technical communications

We will be using computers heavily during the quarter. We will explore a number of useful programs, including MS Word, Excel, and MS PowerPoint.

Grading

Grades will be based upon the large writing assignments and online participation, which is demonstrated through completion of the chapter writing assignments. The break down on points follows.

1. Peer Editing assignments (smooth drafts of your assignments and editing of a peer's draft):

- 10 points for posting a draft on time (no late postings allowed).
- 10 points for posting a critique on time (no late critiques allowed).

2. Group Work Evaluations for Group Projects (if you are assigned to do group work this quarter):

If you fail to complete your assigned portion of group work or do this work poorly, you will receive a lower grade than the team earns on the final product.

How this works is that your team members will be asked to grade your contribution to the group project (as you will be asked to grade theirs). If you are graded as having given B, C, or D level work instead of your full and best A level contribution, then your grade for the group assignment may reflect that reduction in points accordingly, at my discretion. Thus, if three of your group members pick up your slack and produce an "A" level product, you may receive a lower grade based upon their grading your contribution to the end product. So, please give your best, complete, and timely efforts to your group project in whatever task you take responsibility for.

3. Written Assignments:

- Chapter Reading Assignments, E-mail Assignment, Audience Profile Sheet – 50 points
- Peer Editing (for 4 papers) – 60 total points
- Resume / Cover Letter: 50 points
- Proposal: 50 points
- Informal report and Annotated Bibliography: 90 points (Annotated Bibliography is worth 40 of the 90 points and requires you have researched and located a minimum of 6 effective, reliable, and high quality sources.)
- Completion Report: 150 points

- PowerPoint Brochure: 50 points

500 total grade points possible. I reserve the right to change point designations and/or totals any time during the quarter.

GRADES: A = 500-460; A- = 459-450; B+ = 449-435; B = 434-410; B- = 409-385; C+ = 384-362; C = 361-339; C- = 338-316; D+ = 315-293; D = 292-235; D- = 269-247; F = 247- and below

My Grading Habits

I do not grade on a pre-determined curve. A review of my grading would show that grades in the B range (B+, B, B-) predominate. I therefore expect most of my students in this course will have grades above the C range. Some students will probably have grades in the A range. However, others may have grades in the C range. Do not feel discouraged. I consider C and C+ writing as entirely respectable for college students. We grow in our writing ability as we meet the challenges of reading and writing in a wide variety of college level courses.

Late Work & Missing Work

Punctuality is important in our class and in the business world. However, you will have one late "pass" this quarter. Late written work on one major writing assignment (50 points and up) is accepted up to two (2) calendar (not class) days after a due deadline without penalty as long as you contact me in advance with a reason that justifies allowing the work to come in late. The one exception to this policy is to the last major writing assignment for the quarter. Being under a deadline to submit final grades, I must have the last assignment punctually.

If you have problems meeting deadlines outside the grace period for any reason, communicate with me at once.

Failure to communicate with me in advance that you will be unable to meet the due deadlines of the class may result in a failing grade for the course, at my discretion, and will be based upon my judgment that you could have responsibly notified me of your conflict and situation. In other words, if you communicate responsibly, I will be much more amenable to helping you resolve your conflict by using the grade options available to us or by allowing you to make up missed work.

Part of college is learning to be a responsible and competent employee, and therefore responsible interaction with me is an "un-graded" part of this course. I expect all my students to treat the course as both an opportunity for learning and an obligation for performance, and act professionally. Frankly, given that you have paid a lot of money for the course, and you want to learn something that will help you become more employable in the future, not attempting to learn all that you can does not make sense for your future well-being. Failure to meet the obligations for your learning is a choice you are always free to make, as adults, but making this choice will result in a lower grade than you might have otherwise had and, thereby, wasted time and money on your part.

I retain the option of failing any student who does not turn in a major (50 points or higher) written assignment, at my discretion, even if that student has enough points to pass the class. It is important that you complete all the major written assignments for the quarter, as they each are directly related to the outcomes for the class listed above.

Online Assignments and Due Deadlines

Turnitin.com (which is where I ask that you turn your assignments in) is a largely reliable platform. Once you post your assignment there, you have the option to go back and ensure that you got your assignment posted. It is your responsibility to do so.

WARNING: If you wait until the last minute before the due deadline to try to post an assignment to Turnitin.com, you might find that something goes wrong. And you will be unable to post on time. This means you are late.

Class Attendance Requirements and Make-up Work

I do not offer make-up work for missed assignments.

For all online classes, attendance means you are online checking on what is happening in our online class five (5) days a week. It only takes a few minutes to shift from your personal e-mail or Facebook over to our online class and see if there are any new lectures or questions from other students that I have answered.

For hybrid classes, attendance means you do not miss more than 4 in-class sessions and that you regularly (especially on the days we are not in class) check what is happening online.

CANVAS and Turnitin.com both track how much you are online, so I will be periodically reviewing your attendance. Generally speaking, the less you attend the online classroom, the less effective your writing will be.

Rewritten Work

You may choose to rewrite one (1) individually written assignment that received a C- or lower grade. You MUST submit the revision within one week of receiving the graded assignment back. The assignment must have been submitted on time and not in the two day grace period. The scores will be averaged.

The link to the College Grading Policy is located on page 10 of the Course Catalog and also on the web at: http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/3/3000_grading.asp.

Books and Materials Required

Technical Communication (Tenth Edition), by Mike Markel, will be the required text and is available through the BCC Bookstore. You may purchase your textbook online or in person from the bookstore. You can find store information and hours of operation at <http://bcc.collegestoreonline.com/>.

Access to a computer that works with Microsoft programs, Canvas, and Turnitin.com is required. You are given access to such computers on campus as part of your student benefits. The campus computers have these capabilities.

Classroom Learning Atmosphere

Instructor's Expectations

Reading Standards

In general, devote as much time as you can to reading, and pay close attention to the good instructions you get in your textbook. Remember that close reading requires concentration and reflection. You will be accountable, with respect to grades, for producing technical communications that conform to the standards and techniques set out in the readings. You should also read all supplemental material provided by me carefully and follow the instructions exactly.

The Relationship Between In-Class Work and Home Work

Your readings support your writing processes and you will be held responsible for applying those concepts to your writing. We will work with the general concepts discussed in your text in a practical manner as we develop your writings in class. I will be available to address any questions you have concerning the concepts you read about via CANVAS.

For you to succeed in this class, you will need to be self motivated about completing your readings. If you do this and give the assignments the amount of time this class requires (the standard 15 hours per week for a 5 hour class), I guarantee that you will learn how to produce effective technical communications.

Retaining Student Work

CANVAS and Turnitin.com will store your work for as long as you have access to those platforms after the quarter is over. Therefore, I strongly recommend that you keep all your work on your own computer as a back-up.

Student Responsibility

It is your responsibility to verify that all assignments are actually received by me.

It is your responsibility to initiate communication about progress or concerns with the course. I will not inform you that work is overdue, remind you to complete assignments, or call you if you are failing to attend our electronic classroom regularly.

Values Conflicts

Essential to a liberal arts education is an open-minded tolerance for ideas and modes of expression which might conflict with one's personal values. By being exposed to such ideas or expressions, students are not expected to endorse or adopt them but rather to understand that they are part of the free flow of information upon which higher education depends.

To this end, you may find that class requirements may include engaging certain materials, such as books, films, and art work, which may, in whole or in part, offend you. These materials are equivalent to required texts and are essential to the course content. If you decline to engage the required material by not reading, viewing, or performing material you consider offensive, you will still be required to meet class requirements in order to earn credit. This may require responding to the content of the material, and you may not be able to fully participate in required class discussions, exams, or assignments. Consult the syllabus and discuss such issues with the instructor.

Affirmation of Inclusion

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination.

We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators

Instructor: Karrin Peterson

are to treat one another with dignity and respect. <http://bellevuecollege.edu/about/goals/inclusion.asp>

Division Statements

Academic Honesty for Arts and Humanities Students

The principle of academic honesty underlies all that we do and applies to all courses at Bellevue Community College. One kind of academic dishonesty is plagiarism, which may take many forms, including, but not limited to, using a paper written by someone else, using printed sources word-for-word without proper documentation, and paraphrasing or summarizing the ideas of others without acknowledging the source. Plagiarism can also occur when non-written ideas are taken without documentation--using someone else's design or performance idea, for example. In short, plagiarism is passing off someone else's ideas, words, or images as your own; it amounts to intellectual theft--whether or not it was your intention to steal. BCC instructors have access to commercial plagiarism detection software, so please be advised that any work you submit may be tested for plagiarism.

Participating in academic dishonesty in any way, including writing a paper or taking a test for someone else, may result in severe penalties. Dishonestly produced papers automatically receive a grade of "F" without the possibility of make-up. The Dean of Student Services may also be notified of such conduct, and repetition of the behavior may result in progressively more serious disciplinary action (for example, an instructor may recommend that the student fail the course for a second offense or even that a student be expelled for a serious offense, such as stealing an exam).

Grades lowered for plagiarism or other forms of dishonesty may be appealed through the regular channels, and any further disciplinary action taken by the Dean may also be appealed through existing processes.

Students in English 201 or 235 should note that documentation is a major objective of that course, so failure to scrupulously document supporting material in your papers may result in a failing grade for that entire course. Students in all courses requiring research papers should also note that matters of documentation form go beyond editing; they are closely related to the content of the paper. Improper form in research papers is grounds for failing the paper

Information about Bellevue College's copyright guidelines can be found at:
<http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/links/copyright.html>

A good resource for avoiding plagiarism is the Writing Lab at the Academic Success Center (this is also a great place for you to get help with your basic writing issues – grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.):
<http://bellevuecollege.edu/writinglab/Plagiarism.html>

Turnitin.com Similarity Checker – A Valuable Tool to Check for Inadvertent Plagiarism

One valuable tool available to you, to assist you in learning how not to inadvertently plagiarize, is the Similarity tool in Turnitin.com. This tool will show you how similar your paper is to another source. I expect all my students to use this tool to check for plagiarism. You can do this by uploading your paper before the due deadline. You can then re-upload after correcting any plagiarism problems that Turnitin.com flags.

If your paper is more than 10% similar, then you should carefully review what you may have done that needs to be quoted, summarized, or paraphrased.

Student Code

“Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one’s own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early

without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Vice President of Student Services for possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Vice President of Student Services.” The Student Code, Policy 2050, in its entirety is located at:

http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/2/2050_Student_Code.asp

I will use a plagiarism checking source at my discretion.

Important Links

Bellevue College E-mail and access to MyBC

All students registered for classes at Bellevue College are entitled to a network and e-mail account. Your student network account can be used to access your student e-mail, log in to computers in labs and classrooms, connect to the BC wireless network and log in to MyBC. To create your account, go to: <https://bellevuecollege.edu/sam>

BC offers a wide variety of computer and learning labs to enhance learning and student success. Find current campus locations for all student labs by visiting the <http://bellevuecollege.edu/resources/computing/>

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact us as soon as possible.

If you are a person who requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter.

The DRC office is located in B 132 or you can call our reception desk at 425.564.2498. Deaf students can reach us by video phone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Please visit our website for application information into our program and other helpful links at www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc

Public Safety

The Bellevue College (BC) Public Safety Department's well trained and courteous non-commissioned staff provides personal safety, security, crime prevention, preliminary investigations, and other services to the campus community, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Their phone number is 425.564.2400. The Public Safety website is your one-stop resource for campus emergency preparedness information, campus closure announcements and critical information in the event of an emergency. Public Safety is located in K100 and on the web at:

<http://bellevuecollege.edu/publicsafety/>

Final Exam Schedule

Final exams are held the last week of the quarter for all live credit classes. The following link will take you to the webpage where you will find the schedule for final exams: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/courses/exams/>

Academic Calendar(s)

The Bellevue College Academic Calendar is separated into two calendars. They provide information about holidays, closures and important enrollment dates such as the finals schedule.

Enrollment Calendar - <http://bellevuecollege.edu/enrollment/calendar/deadlines/>. On this calendar you will find admissions and registration dates and important dates for withdrawing and receiving tuition refunds.

College Calendar - <http://bellevuecollege.edu/enrollment/calendar/holidays/1213.asp>. This calendar gives you the year at a glance and includes college holidays, scheduled closures, quarter end and start dates, and final exam dates.

The class calendar is located on MYBC.