

BELLEVUE COLLEGE  
Engl& 235 – Technical Writing  
Winter Quarter 2015

Donna Cowan

**Office Location: R230K**

**Email: [dcowan@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:dcowan@bellevuecollege.edu)**

**Textbook:** Technical Communication OR e-book version, by Mike Markel, 10th ed. MLA/APA updated, ©2013

Any other writing handbook (recommended – on reserve in the library)

- Access to CANVAS/Internet & printer
- Course Reserves in the library – *I'll address this in class*
- Dictionary – optional, but strongly recommended
- Floppy or USB flash drive (anything to save your work)
- Folder to save your work and handouts
- BC student email address

**Course Description:**

- English 235 is designed to help you report technical information clearly, completely, and persuasively. Technical writing shares many of the same concerns of other kinds of writing, such as attention to Purpose, Readability, and most significantly, Audience. It is characterized by:
  - a practical, no-nonsense approach to the Writing Process
  - the forms through which it is conveyed (e.g. memoranda, instructions, proposals, informal and formal reports)
  - its arrangement and division for selective reading
  - its use of typographical page design elements (or document design)
  - its use of graphics to convey information visually

**Requirements and Grading Policy:**

To receive full credit for this course, you are expected to:

- ✓ attend each class meeting **on time**
- ✓ read all assigned readings
- ✓ participate in all class discussions and collaboration projects
- ✓ Complete and submit all assignments
- ✓ **NO LATE ARRIVALS ARE ALLOWED; NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE ACCEPTED**
- ✓ **LAPTOP USE:** You may **NOT** use a laptop unless cleared with me (or DRC) first, or you have purchased the e-version of the text.

**Attendance Grid:**

0-3=A; 4=B; 5 =C; 6=D; 8-9 = D-; 10 = F (And you will fail)

**NOTE:** This course is an “exit” course, intended for students who are within thirty (30) credits of graduating. It is an introductory course in technical writing for students in BC's professional/technical programs and those who will enter technical careers after completing their four-year degrees. As an upper 200-level course, it is demanding in the amount of work and time

required to complete it. **Students enrolling in English 235 should have completed at least three quarters of work at BC (or equivalent) and have strong college-level reading and writing skills.**

**Assignments:** There will be some in-class work, exercises, and homework that will figure into your final grade. All assignments are due at the beginning of class – the day listed on the schedule. Consult your schedule for these due dates. Although I typically do not accept late work, if you do turn a major report or assignment in late, your grade will be dropped the equivalent of one-half letter grade.

**Reading:** **Let's be clear: You need to purchase the book (or e-version) and you need to read if you want to complete the assignments and pass this class.** Please have all assigned reading completed on the dates noted on the schedule, and have it read before the class meets. Okay, to ensure that you are reading the assigned chapters/materials, there will be a pop reading quiz. This is a closed book, closed notes quiz. If you've done your reading, you should be able to pass the quiz. There will no trick questions. You cannot make this up. Along with this, class discussions will be based primarily on technical communication principles you are learning, so be prepared to participate by understanding the information in the assigned reading. Through discussion, we will learn and strengthen technical writing strategies and their practical applications.

**Collaboration:** You will be expected to work in groups either in discussions or on in-class activities. As professionals, you will be frequently working in collaboration with your peers/colleagues. Remember, group work is vital not only for your grade, but to your peers as well.

**I will ask you to leave the class if:** 1) you're fidgeting with any electronic gadget. Please take out iPod earphones and silence your phone BEFORE class, 2) you are surfing the web or being off task in class, 3) you are sleeping, 4) you are disruptive or disrespectful to me and/or the class, and finally, 5) you are unprepared for class.

**Participation:** You will receive points at the end of the quarter for your participation; therefore, speak up, come to class with all of your materials, and have your homework or reading done. Don't lose points by rudely yawning, goofing off, chatting with our friend, text messaging, listening to your iPod, or refusing to be on task. It is important for you to be present on the days of peer critique because your classmates are counting on your input. You will not receive points on assignments that day if you are not present.

**Plagiarism:** **Just don't do it.** If you have any questions about correct citation methods, or how to safely cite from various sources, it is imperative you ask me for help. Don't cheat, plagiarize, or perform any other misconduct or serious consequences may follow, including receiving a "0/F" for the assignment or an "F" final grade. Also, there may be a report of the incident filed in the Dean of Students' Office.

**Respect:** any comments, jokes, or remarks that belittle the worth of an individual's (or group's) physical attributes, race, creed, sexual preference, religion, gender, and/or ethnicity are inappropriate and will not be tolerated. If our behavior inhibits the class's learning and education, you will be asked to leave, and may be directed/reported to the Associate Dean of students and/or Campus Security.

**Expectations:** I expect common courtesy from you: saying please and thank you, no talking back, no chatting during lectures/discussion, no text messaging, no falling asleep in class, no yawning loudly, or no acting like a spoiled child. You will work and earn your grade. Finally, please silence your cell phones or beepers as they are distracting, disruptive, and annoying. **Be warned: I will ask you to leave the class or report you to the proper authorities should disruptive situations arise.**

**Office Hours** – If you have questions or concerns about your assignments, readings, or grade in the class, please see me during office hours or make an appointment with me so I can set specific time aside for you. If you need to chat about your topic, please come and see me! My office is located in R230K

### Need more assistance?

1. Special Accommodations – If you need course accommodations because of a disability, please refer to the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at B132, or by calling (425) 564-2498, or TTY (425) 564-4110.
2. Library Media Center – D building.
3. Reading/Writing Lab – D204-D.

### Course Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, you should be able to:

1. Understand the purpose and process of communication in business and industry
2. Recognize and be able to analyze effective and ineffective technical communication
3. Understand and execute the written, visual, and verbal processes of technical communication
4. Communicate technical information in a complete, accurate, and honest form
5. Prepare various types of technical documents that are appropriate and effective for diverse and various audiences (e.g. multicultural)
6. Balance verbal and visual elements of communication in technical documents
7. Use clear, focused, specific, and grammatically correct language in technical documents
8. Use effective strategies for collaborative work in group exercises and preparation of documents
9. Communicate technical information clearly and effectively in all class discussions, small group work, and course assignments
10. Understand the importance of target dates and deadlines in a professional environment
11. Follow directions carefully!

## ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments, unless otherwise noted, must be typed in BLACK ink. Use a standard 12-point font (Courier, Times, Ariel). Each assignment will have a specific format that will be discussed in class. **The standard format is MLA Guidelines.** Follow the directions as stated on the assignment sheets.

<b>Although I assign points for each individual assignment, this is a rough calculation:</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percentage (approx.)</b>
<b>INFORMAL DOCUMENTS</b>	10%
Email Introduction	
Report 1: Memorandum	
<b>FEASIBILITY PROJECT</b>	50%
Report 2: Project Proposal	
Report 3: Progress Report	
Report 4: Project Data Report	
Report 5: Final Project Report	
<b>COLLABORATIVE PROJECT</b>	20%
Report 6: Instructions	
Presentation (to be graded by peer groups)	
<b>ROUGH DRAFTS/PEER CRITIQUES</b>	
<b>POP READING QUIZ</b>	
<b>PARTICIPATION</b>	20%

## GRADING SYSTEM:

Remember, attendance, punctuality, participation affect your overall grade.

<b>A</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
100-95%	94-90	89-87%	86-85%	84-80%	79-77%	76-75%	74-70%	69-67%	66-60%	59% or fewer

**Participation Rubric:**

	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> <b>“A” level (40-50 pts)</b>	<b>STRONG</b> <b>“B” level (30-40 pts)</b>	<b>ADEQUATE</b> <b>“C” level (20-30 points)</b>	<b>POOR</b> <b>“D” &amp; “F” level (less than 20)</b>
<b>PREPARATION FOR CLASS</b>	You bring all your materials. You're ready to work once the class starts.	You usually bring all materials. You are ready to work once class starts.	You frequently “forget” to bring required materials to class; haven't bought the book; often not ready to begin when class starts.	You frequently ask to borrow materials from classmates. You are rarely ready to start when class starts. Maybe you walk in late?
<b>FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION</b>	Your hand is almost always raised during class discussions.	Your hand is often raises during class discussions.	Your hand is seldom raised.	You do not volunteer to contribute to class discussions.
<b>QUALITY OF PARTICIPATION</b>	Students who fall into this category offer thoughtful and critical commentary and analysis.  You raise questions, explore difficult concepts, theories, and refer back to the text.	Students who fall into this category participate but as a whole, responses tend to be general, may go off topic, and may not engage/connect/refer back to or with the text.	Students who fall into this category tend to come to class and pay attention, but they rarely participate.  When you do, it is more likely than not to simply echo someone else's opinion and/or “easy” questions.	Students who fall into this category either don't come to class, don't contribute at all to the discussion, fall asleep, are caught texting, tweeting, and/or completing assignments for other classes.  You also appear

	<i>You also do not pose as a disruption/distraction to the class (unnecessary, inappropriate comments)</i>	<i>Your comments may be unnecessary, inappropriate.  (#8 on the syllabus policies)</i>	<i>Your comments are unnecessary, inappropriate.  #8 on the syllabus)</i>	unengaged in class discussion.  <i>Your comments are inappropriate and may be asked to leave the class. (#8 on the syllabus)</i>
<b>GROUP WORK</b>	You are always on task and a leading and/or equal partner during pair and group activities. Your peers would likely describe you as enthusiastic, helpful, critical, and an actively engaged team member.	You complete group activities and pair activities. You are an equal partner for the most part but are less helpful and/or actively engaged than someone in the “Outstanding” category.	You sometimes need to be reminded to stay on task during group or pair activities OR you carelessly rush through activities.	You give very little effort during pair and group activities and are often off task. You appear disinterested, disengaged and you bring down the morale of your group. (Sitting like a lump)
<b>LISTENING</b>	You actively listen when the instructor and your fellow students speak during class.	You listen when the instructor and your fellow students speak in class but you may appear distracted at times.	You sometimes listen when the instructor and your fellow students speak in class. At times, you may be seen texting, tweeting, completing assignments for other courses, talking to your friends during	You “tune” out and sit like a lump when the instructor and fellow students begin speaking in class. Rather than listen, you are openly disengaged and can almost always be found texting, sleeping, completing

			class discussions.	homework for other classes, etc.
--	--	--	--------------------	----------------------------------

**HOMEWORK / IN-CLASS WRITING / ASSIGNMENTS RUBRIC:**

POINTS	CRITERIA
5	Well done! You obviously took the time to complete this assignment. You've done an exceptional job with the thinking, writing, and completion. Thorough and obvious effort and reflection. Oh, you also followed the directions and requirements.
4	Good, but not quite exceptional. May not have followed a slight part of the directions, or lacked the insight, depth, or thoroughness of a "well done."
3	Didn't follow most of the directions and or/answers were incorrect, vague, incomplete, or lacked critical thinking and/or depth of thought. Yeah, you did put some effort, but it seemed to be last minute effort just to get it done. Did you complete it right before class or during class?
2	Clearly didn't read the assignment directions and/or it's obvious that the homework was done quickly and without thought. The assignment is incomplete, incorrect, late, or of unacceptable quality.
1	Okay, this point is completely out of pity. Very little to no effort. Didn't follow the assignment whatsoever and didn't answer the directions on the assignment sheet or given in class.
0	You didn't do the assignment at all. Ouch. Did you even come and talk to me about what happened for you not to turn it in?

**If the assignment is worth 10 points, double the scale above. You get the idea.**