

**English 341-01W: Technical Writing
Course Syllabus: Spring 2014
Dr. Tabettha Adkins**

Class space: eCollege

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Office: Hall of Languages 229

Office hours: Monday 10-12 & 1:30-3; Tuesday 10-12; Thursday 10-12

Course Information

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks Required:

Readings available in eCollege course shell. There is no textbook for this course.

Course Description:

Technical Communication. Three semester hours. (1, 2) Techniques of objective reporting on scientific and technical material; principles of technical exposition; study of language uses; writing samples and principles of various technical reports, including abstracts, proposals, and manuals. Prerequisite: Eng 1302.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Learners will demonstrate that they have engaged in a writing process that incorporates revision in response to instructor and peer response feedback over the course of the semester. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of the changes in drafts posted for selected writing assignments throughout the semester.
2. Learners will demonstrate that they have learned to identify, evaluate, and use a variety of professional materials online as models and resources for creating their course assignments. The sources they are expected to identify and evaluate are: relevant professional organization sites, relevant professional conference sites, relevant professional blogs, and relevant professional journals or periodicals. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of the ethics post, job materials, and final project.
3. Learners will demonstrate that they can work in groups toward the goal of completing an extensive project. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of the final project and Friday memos required through the process of working on the group project.
4. Learners will demonstrate an understanding of how to plan and schedule an extensive project over the course of a semester. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of the final project and Friday memos required throughout process of working on the group project.

- Learners will demonstrate they can create a polished piece of writing a reader can easily follow and understand. This outcome will be assessed by evaluation of the process piece.

Course Requirements

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

Attendance Policy: This is an online course, so face-to-face attendance is not required. The course is *not* self-paced, and students are expected to participate in the course every week. There is work due almost every week.

Assignments:

Longer descriptions of all these assignments can be found in eCollege.

Getting to know you post: during week one, post a hello to the class on the discussion board set up for week one. Include a photo so we can put a face with your name! Part of participation grade. [one paragraph] Due 1/17 by 10AM

Syllabus quiz: A short, ten-question quiz making sure you read the syllabus. Part of participation grade. Due 1/17 at 10AM

Writing for my career- post on discussion board. [3-5 well-developed, research paragraphs] Due 1/21 by 10 AM. Respond to classmates posts by 1/24 at 5PM.

Process Piece- an essay in which you will demonstrate your ability to present an easy-to-follow, well written set of directions. You may write directions on the following; how to cut a paper snowflake, how to fold a paper crane, how to fold a paper fortune teller, or how to tie a necktie (bow tie or the long kind). [This essay should be as long as it needs to be.] Draft due for peer review by 10AM 1/30. Peer review feedback due by 10AM 2/3. Final draft due by 10AM 2/6.

Process application- You will attempt to follow a peers' directions and write about the process. [1 full-2 pages.] Due 2/13 by 10AM.

Ethics post- a post on the discussion board in which you explore the concept of ethics in your chosen profession. [3-5 well-developed, research paragraphs] Due 2/20 by 10AM.

Job Application- you will find an interesting job ad and compile a resume, cover letter, and any other additional materials that may be required for that job application. [As long as is necessary. Cover letter should not be longer than two single-spaced typed pages (in 12 point font).] Ad due 2/25 by 10AM on discussion board. Draft due 3/3 by 10AM. Peer review feedback due by 10AM 3/7. Final draft due 3/24 at 10AM.

Letter of recommendation- you will write a letter of recommendation for a peer. [1½-2 pages.] Due by 10Am 3/28.

Collaborative Group Project- you and a group of peers (4-5 in each group) will address a problem, come up with a solution for that problem, and create a proposal for solving that

problem that involves explanation of the problem, explanation of your solution for the problem, a budget, maps if necessary, etc. Think big! During this project, you will submit Friday memos (not collaboratively—each group member must write his/her own) letting me know how the process is going. These memos should be fairly short—no more than a full typed page. [Extensive.] Draft due 4/17 at 10AM. Peer review feedback due by 10AM 4/24. Final draft due 10Am 5/2. Friday memos due 4/4 by 10AM, 4/11 by 10AM, 4/18 by 10AM, and 4/25 by 10AM. [Memos should be 2-3 paragraphs.]

Peer Review: You will peer review the following assignments: process piece, job application, and collaborative group project. You will send these drafts for review to me, and I will distribute to your peer. [Thorough answers to all questions provided in guidelines.] Deadlines under individual assignments.

Please note: we review and discuss student work often in this group. Treat each assignment as though it is a public text. Do not share information in your essays you do not want shared with all the students in the class.

Grade weights:

<u>Assignment Name</u>	<u>Percentage of Grade</u>
Participation, including but not limited to: intro to class, syllabus quiz, ethics post, posting on discussion board when required, etc.	10%
writing for my career post	5%
Process Piece: 1.Process description (10%) 2.Process application and reflection (5%)	15%
Job Materials: 1.Ad (5%) 2.application materials (10%) including resume, cover letter, and other appropriate materials 3.recommendation (10%)	25%
Collaborative Project	35%
Peer Reviews throughout semester: Process piece (3%), job materials (4%), collaborative project (3%)	10%

Grading Scale:

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

Technology Requirements

You will need access to the Internet and eCollege.

All assignments must be typed and submitted through eCollege in the designated space.

Communication and Support

The very best way to contact me is to send me an e-mail at Tabetha.Adkins@tamuc.edu

I am also available for meeting face-to-face during my office hours (listed at the beginning of the syllabus) and by appointment. My office is located at HL 229. Appointments scheduled through e-mail are appreciated.

I can be reached via telephone during my office hours, as well. The number is 903.886.5269. There are time when I must step out during my office hours for meetings, so it is best to arrange a discussion via e-mail prior to calling.

Since this is an online class, I am also happy to meet you via Skype or Google Hangout. Contact me to arrange a time.

I check my e-mail and the eCollege space regularly Monday through Friday. Ordinarily, I take the weekends off. If you would like to have an online discussion with me and cannot arrange a time during the week, we can arrange to talk during the weekend.

Course Policies and Procedures

Academic dishonesty/ Plagiarism:

Professors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty

include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University- Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b [1,2,3]).

Plagiarism is not simply the use of another source's words without giving credit to that source. In fact, this issue is far more complicated. For example:

1. If you write an entire paragraph based on information from a source and only cite that source at the end of the paragraph, this practice can be considered a form of plagiarism.
2. If you use an author's idea without crediting the author, this practice can be considered a form of plagiarism.
3. If you turn in an essay you have used in another course, you can be accused of plagiarism. Yes, you can plagiarize yourself!
4. If you buy a paper from an online "paper mill," this is definitely plagiarism.
5. If someone writes your paper for you, this is definitely plagiarism.
6. If you "lift" sentences, phrases, or paragraphs from a source (online, a book, a peer's paper, etc.) without giving credit to the source, that is definitely plagiarism.

My promise to you:

I promise to *never* use turnitin.com or other proprietary tools like it because these programs make money off your work without compensating you. Here's how it works: A university pays turnitin.com for its services (with your tuition dollars). Teachers place student papers in the program's "bank," and the program compares that paper with other papers existing in the bank. At that point, the student's paper becomes part of the bank. Therefore, turnitin.com and other tools are making money from this bank full of papers written by uncompensated students. For more information on this issue, see this article in the Chronicle of Higher Education: <http://chronicle.com/article/Plagiarism-Detection-Tool/29885>.

I also promise, however, that I take academic dishonesty very seriously. *If I catch a student committing plagiarism, that student should expect to fail my course.* Please do not be tempted to lift your answers for course assignments from the Internet or other sources.

Grievance Procedure:

If you have concerns about the class or about me as an instructor, please speak to me about those concerns. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of our conversation, the next person in the chain of command is the Department Head of Literature and Languages, Dr. Hunter Hayes.

Classroom Etiquette

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies, and Procedures, Conduct.)

While online communication lends itself to a feeling of anonymity, you are not anonymous here. I am your professor, your classmates are your colleagues, and you should communicate here as you would in a face-to-face classroom or in a professional setting.

Here are some strategies for respectful, effective, and scholarly online communication:

- I operate under the assumption that everyone in the class is here to learn and will do their best work. You should operate under that assumption, too.
- DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS BECAUSE THIS IS HOW WE INDICATE SCREAMING IN ONLINE SPACES. No one wants to be screamed at—face-to-face or online.
- If someone says something to make you angry, step away from the computer for a few minutes and do not respond until you've calmed down.
- If you leave a snarky comment, delete it, or I will. Snark is not appropriate in an academic setting.
- For examples of how NOT to communicate in our classroom space, see any CNN.com story comments section or the comments on youtube videos. We will not be operating like that.

Please don't make me drop your participation grade for bad online behavior. I want this space to be one in which we are free to try out new ideas, think critically, and learn. Snark, hostility, and sarcasm destroy environments where those positive things can happen.

Other course policies:

1. I do not accept late work. If you anticipate running out of time, request an extension; I always try to say yes to extension requests.
2. You must turn in all assignments in order to pass the course.
3. Disappearing from the class for long periods of time without explanation will result in a failing grade. You have work to do each and every week except during Spring Break.
4. If you're having trouble keeping up, please communicate with me about that. Do not allow yourself to get behind and give up.

University Procedures

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and
Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

Course Calendar

This schedule may be adjusted to accommodate for student learning needs.

Week (date of beginning of week)	To Do:
W1 Jan 13	Getting to know you- post in discussion board by 10AM 1/17 Watch welcome video on front page of course shell. Read syllabus and all materials posted in eCollege course shell. Take syllabus quiz by 10AM 1/17.
W2 Jan 20	Writing for my career- post to discussion board. 3-5 paragraphs. Due Tuesday, 1/21 at 10:00 AM. Respond to at least 3 other posts by Friday at 5:00 PM.
W3 Jan 27	Begin process writing unit: Peer Review Process Piece. Have draft to me (in dropbox) to distribute to your peer by Thursday, 1/30 at 10:00 AM. Feedback to peer due in dropbox Monday, 2/3 at 10:00 AM. I will distribute to your peer.
W4 Feb 3	Process Piece Due Thursday 2/6 at 10:00 AM.
W5 Feb 10	Process application and reflection due Thursday 2/13 at 10:00 AM.
W6 Feb 17	Ethics post due Thursday 2/20 at 10:00 AM.
W7 Feb 24	Begin job application unit: Find a job ad. Post the ad in the discussion board. Write about why this ad appeals to you. Due Tuesday 2/25 at 10:00 AM
W8 March 3	Peer review application materials. Draft due to the dropbox Monday 3/3 at 10:00 AM. I will send you a peer's draft to review by 5PM 3/3. Feedback due to me to the dropbox (I will distribute to your peer) by Friday 3/7 at 10AM. I will send you your peer's feedback by 5PM 3/7.
Spring Break March 10	
W9 March 17	Dr. Adkins out of town for a conference—limited availability. Use this week to revise your application materials.

W10 March 24	Application materials due Monday, 3/24 at 10:00 AM. I will send you a peer's application materials Monday, 3/25 by 5PM to complete the recommendation letter. Recommendation letter due Friday, 3/28 at 10:00 AM.
W11 March 31	Begin collaborative project unit Work with group on deciding roles, assigning tasks, dividing up work, etc. Weekly memo due Friday at 10AM
W12 April 7	Work with group on collaborative project Weekly memo due Friday at 10AM
W13 April 14	Work with group on collaborative project. Submit draft of project to another group (assigned by Dr. Adkins) for peer review by Thursday, April 17 10AM. Dr. Adkins will send drafts out for peer review 4/17 by 5PM. Weekly memo due Friday at 10AM.
W14 April 21	Send your peer feedback to Dr. Adkins to send to the assigned group on their project by 10AM Thursday, 4/24 at 10AM. Dr. Adkins will send your group peer feedback by 5PM 4/24.
W15 April 28	Finalize collaborative project- Due Monday, May 5 at 10:00 AM.

Some other dates students need to know:

January 29- last day to drop and receive a 100% refund.

March 25- last day to drop a course and receive a Q grade.

April 25- last day to withdraw from the university for the semester.