

EN 202: TECHNICAL WRITING
Three Rivers Community College
Spring 2012 Semester

Instructor: Shannon Sousa

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Phone: 860.235.2981 (Only call for emergency reasons or if I'm more than 15 minutes late for class)

Adjunct Faculty Office: D205

Office Hours: Before or after class, or by appointment via email (see above)

Course Section: 10563

Meeting Day/Time: Friday, 2 – 4:45 p.m.

Classroom: E223

***IMPORTANT:** This syllabus and the course schedule to immediately follow are subject to change at any point in the semester. Changes to the schedule will never be pushed up; they will only be set to a later date/time. All changes will be announced in class and electronically via Blackboard Vista. Please make sure that you have the most current copy of this document on file. Check for announcements and contact me in advance if you have any questions about a change.

Course Description

This course is designed to help students develop writing skills needed in the workplace. Students will learn the basics of how to effectively target an audience, and complete an array of assignments: electronic memo to a client, blog message, resume, various business letters, instructions, page design, visual aids, short business proposal, documentation, and long analytical reports. Topics for these assignments will relate to the student's major or future work industry. Students will learn how to incorporate design features and visuals into their writing and advance their formatting, documentation and research skills.

Prerequisite for this course: Completion of ENG* K101.

Required Materials

Textbook: Successful Writing at Work by Philip C. Kolin, concise 3rd edition

ISBN #: 0495901946

Ink Pen and Notebook for class note taking

Binder and/or Folder to store written assignments, tests and handouts

Course Outcomes

Demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills

- Use writing, reading and speaking to inquire, learn and think in a workplace setting
- Adapt writing for different audiences and professions

- Learn to create successful interactions with students of various backgrounds to complete group projects.
- Orally speak and present information in a professional and logical manner

Understand and apply the fundamentals of reasoning and critical thinking

- Analyze, synthesize and evaluate information
- Formulate appropriate questions and brainstorming techniques
- Research, extract and interpret data from various sources
- Identify how to target an audience
- Understand, articulate and apply self-assessment and logical decision-making skills to achieve networking and career development skills needed for employment and promotion.

Demonstrate information literacy

- Demonstrate and ethical and effective use of credible, outside sources for business writing.
- Create a portfolio and electronically store all written assignments and activities to use for developing future work projects
- Learn and employ strategies to avoid plagiarism

Course Objectives

- Recognize the difference between academic writing and writing for business, corporate and technical fields.
- Understand the importance of writing error-free documents in the workplace and hypothetical consequences that can result when you do not.
- Prepare documents with clear and concise words.
- Recognize and target specific audience background and knowledge when creating and completing each workplace document.
- Create and present visuals for documents that are well-integrated into the text.
- Format documents to use certain strategies and follow specific writing requirements.
- Produce one long formal, analytical report using advanced research techniques, and outside sources.

Assignments and Grading

This course demands active involvement in learning exercises (both in and outside of class) that are accompanied by a progression of reading and writing assignments done individually and as a group. The following criteria will be used in evaluating your grade:

- **Class Participation (10 pts):** Students are expected to come to class prepared and on time to actively participate in discussions and group work each week.

- **A list of ways to measure your participation:**
 - >Make an effort to speak clearly and comprehensively to some question or issue from the reading during class or small group discussion at least once a week.
 - >Be ready to think on your own and involve your peers and me, your instructor, in discussion.
 - >Actively listen to students in small group discussions and stay on task.
 - >When called upon, do not forcefully resist and have nothing to say or question.
 - >Complete the reading and annotation and come prepared to class with questions and findings.
 - >Complete all homework or written assignments and draw from them during discussions.
 - >Always have required texts and other necessary materials with you in class.
 - >Be open-minded to the readings and the assignments. Do not resist to what you don't know.
 - >Communicate with other students and/or your instructor if you run into questions or problems about the reading or class assignments.
 - >Be respectful of others and who they are by accepting people's differences and opinions.
 - >Do not allow distractions from technology or side conversations to limit your learning.
- **Individual and Group Homework (20 pts):** All chapter reading will be outlined in the course schedule and must be completed before in-class discussions and meeting in groups. At the beginning of each weekly class students are required to turn in a list of three questions about the readings. Consider questions to clear up any confusion you have about the reading or to expand on something you are especially interested in. ***NOTE: This is an expected area that will allow each student to complete homework and fully engage in class discussion effectively.**

Group Work: This section makes up the hybrid/online portion of the course totaling 1 hour and 30 minutes weekly. A total of 2 to 4 students max are allowed in each group, and can meet online or in person. ***NOTE: I will record group numbers for each set of students and you will be responsible to know your number. Groups must also confirm the day/time they will meet each week, so that I can be available to help with questions or concerns online via email/discussion board.** Group work is designed to prepare students for written assignments. It will include students completing chapter quizzes, written exercises, and responding to weekly discussion board comments posted to Blackboard Vista. These assignments will be due on specified class meetings that will be included on the course schedule below. ***NOTE: A paper copy of the group homework must be submitted at the beginning of class on each due date including the group number and the names of each participant at the top of the first page. See example below.**

***Names of each participant at the top of the first page.**

Group 4

Jane Doe

Sally Jones

Joe Smith

Pete Brown

***NOTE:** I will also ask students to grade individual and group work for each assignment. See the **Group Work Grading Rubric** on Blackboard.

- **Writing Assignments (60 pts):** Each assignment can be done individually or with one other student from the group. Assignment criteria and instructions will be given and discussed during class and electronically on Blackboard Vista prior to the due date. Please see Course Schedule to determine assignment due dates. See a **Written Assignment Grading Rubric** on Blackboard to assess your work.

List of Written Assignments and Possible Points

Electronic Memo/Blog Msg, Ch 3 -----	5 pts
Business Letter, Ch 4 -----	5 pts
Resume, Ch 5 -----	5 pts
Visual Aids, designing, Ch 6 -----	5 pts
Visual Aids, presenting Ch 6-----	5 pts
Page Layout for Website, Ch 6-----	5 pts
Written Instructions, Ch 7-----	5 pts
Short Written Proposal, Ch 8 -----	10 pts
Documentation/Research Outline -----	5 pts
Long Report & Presentation, Ch 9 & 10 -----	10 pts

- **Take-Home Final Exam (10 pts):** This assessment will cover all chapter reading assigned. Questions will include multiple choice, true and false, listing and short answer. This assignment will be completed individually. Please see Course Schedule to determine the due date. The Final Exam will be posted on Blackboard.

Overall Grade Measurement

A -----	90 – 100 pts
B-----	80 – 89 pts
C-----	70 – 79 pts
D-----	60 – 69 pts
F -----	below 60

Due Dates and Choices

Students are expected to meet ALL assignment due dates outlined in the Course Schedule. **LATE assignments will NOT usually be accepted.** This is decided on a case-by-case basis. The penalty assessed is based on the following criteria including: informing me

prior to the due date, length of lateness, and the reason why the assignment is late. If you are experiencing a personal situation that may impact your work in this class, please speak with me privately before the fact. Otherwise, a **ZERO** will be calculated for the student's grade. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with assigned readings and paper due dates. Contact me if you miss a class to get any handouts from the session you did not attend. ***NOTE: If a class is cancelled, expect to do the work that was associated with the cancelled class and what is due for the next class in that week. E-mailed assignments are due dates will NOT be accepted without prior approval from the instructor.** Students are expected to keep "backup copies" of all assignments should a need arise to resubmit work for any reason.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is important for two reasons, 1) I cover information in class not found elsewhere and 2) This is a once a week course covering large amounts of work, and unlike multiple class sessions, it can be unmanageable if missed several times.

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. However, **ONE or TWO missed class sessions will NOT result in any grade penalty. Excessive absences, (more than THREE) will likely impact your work negatively.** If this happens I will give you a verbal and written email warning to set up an appointment to meet with me about your grade standing. If you are absent, you do not need to tell me, email me, or phone me to explain your absence. If you have an extenuating circumstance, such as a severe or chronic illness, family death, car accident, etc. that may prolong your absence from class, please communicate with me ASAP.

Student Expectations

- You should attend, come prepared to and participate in every class. Missing class will affect your ability to learn and it could impact your grade negatively if done in excess. ***Incentive:** Students who attend every class session for the semester will receive the full Class Participation grade.
- Students are required to set up a designated time and day to meet in groups online or in person for the allotted 1 hour and 30 minute session to complete weekly homework assignments.
- Students are required to participate by responding to Discussion Board posts on Blackboard weekly. Use this forum to ask questions and brainstorm ideas.
- I encourage you (or student groups) to email me when you have questions about your assignments, your grade, or any other matter you are concerned with. Set up an appointment to meet with me in person in the Adjunct Faculty Office, Room D205 before or after class.
- You are responsible for reading all chapter assignments and completing individual written assignments for the course.
- This class will consist of lectures, small group work and class discussion. If you have any questions about the material, please feel free to ask me immediately.

Instructor Expectations

- While I expect you to be prepared for class weekly, let me assure you that I will be there to help you. Please feel free to speak with me before or after class. Even if you are not having difficulty with the material, see me anyway. I always have an open ear to listen.
- If you email me, I will respond to your email within 36 hours. So, please plan accordingly.
- It is my job to make sure that you enjoy the learning experience of this course and that you have all the necessary resources, handouts, electronic reminders and proper instruction you need to be successful. However, you need to read the material before class, attend and participate in class, be respectful of others' differences and work with a goal in mind.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is essential to a useful education. Failure to act with such integrity severely limits a person's ability to succeed in the classroom and beyond. Furthermore, academic dishonesty erodes the legitimacy of every degree awarded by Three Rivers Community College. Any violation of this policy will be reported to the administrative authorities for appropriate action (i.e. a notation on the student's permanent record, suspension, or expulsion). In addition, **you must read the TRCC Policy on Academic Honesty in the [Student Handbook](#) or online.**

Plagiarism

It is the intentional use of someone else's words or ideas. It is a serious violation of academic dishonesty that will NOT be tolerated. Whether it is conscious or unconscious, plagiarism is a serious academic offense. **If you do not acknowledge the work or idea of another—peer or published author--through proper forms of written or oral citation, you will receive an automatic failing (F) grade for the given assignment as a first infraction. If you plagiarize a second time, you will receive an automatic failing (F) grade for the course.** In this class and in the course of your academic career, present only your original work, clearly document the sources of material used from others, and act at all times with honor to this policy.

Academic Resources

The Three Rivers Community College Writing Center is located in Room C117 (next to the library). Students can visit the [Web page](#) and register for various resources online, email trwritingcenter@trcc.commnet.edu or call (860) 892-5713 or (860) 892-5769. These services include walk-in and reserved appointments with a tutor, online tutoring through email paper submission, and assistance with course specific writing assignments and class presentations. No pre-registration is required.

Be Advised: I will send you to the Writing Center with your written assignment if you demonstrate consistent problems with either standard college writing expectations of mechanics, grammar and spelling, or with issues of content development and organization.

***Incentive:** Students who attend the Writing Center for ONE of their written assignments during the semester, will receive 5 extra points for that assignment grade.

Fact: Did you know that the average GPA of students who use the Writing Center equals a 3.0? In other words, strong and disciplined readers and writers rely strongly on the disciplinary energy and expertise of the tutors in the Writing Center.

Educational Technology

Blackboard Vista is a resource and communication tool that all students will use often in and out of this class during the semester. [Here is a step-by-step tutorial to login and access MyCommNet and Blackboard Vista.](#)

Disabilities Statement

Students with a disability who need accommodations should call the Disabilities Counseling Services at 860-383-5240 for more information, or to schedule a confidential meeting with one of our disability service providers. To avoid any delay in receiving accommodations, call ASAP. Please note that I cannot provide an accommodation until the Disabilities Counselor has notified me and reliable documentation is given. ***NOTE: If you are experiencing learning difficulties that are not documented, please see me so that I am aware and we may discuss possible next steps together.**

Classroom Policy

A climate of tolerance and respect is essential. Students are also encouraged to place themselves outside their “comfort zone” to fully accept others differences, opinions and perspectives on any given subject or issue in class. The classroom environment is a place to build a cohesive community, including trust, respect and (academic) integrity between students and the instructor.

DO NOT discriminate, harass or deliberately intimidate others in class. No texting, ringing of cell phone (please silence it), listening to music with earbuds, turning on your laptop without prior permission from the instructor, no emailing, use of the internet, or engaging in off-topic side conversations will be tolerated during class time. These instances are not only distracting, inconsiderate and disruptive, but it is extremely disrespectful to the entire class and does not benefit an academic learning environment.

Penalties: If your phone rings in class, if I see you texting, or in any of these other instances, **1 point will be deducted from your overall grade.**

Exceptions: If you have a legitimate emergency that requires you to be contacted during class, you need to notify me prior to the start of class.

Withdrawal Policy

The deadline for students to withdraw is a week before classes end. Before withdrawing from any course please speak with me privately. I encourage you to also speak with financial aid (if you have financial aid) about how this will impact your financial standing.

Cancellation of Class Due To Weather Conditions & Emergencies

If I must cancel class due to illness or an emergency, **I will post an announcement on**

Blackboard Vista and send students an email message. Please regularly check prior to class. [Click here](#) to find information about college cancellations due to inclement weather or call (860) 886-0177. Students are also encouraged to sign up for alerts to their email and phone via text message. Go to [myCommNetAlert](#) to register now.

-----Course Schedule-----

Week One – Cancelled Class – Jan. 20

Week Two – Introductions & Target Audience - Jan. 27

DUE: Buy Textbook and Review Syllabus

Class: Review syllabus, textbook, write class goals and answer questions. Create groups via Speed Date. Discuss chapter highlights and homework. In-class activities.

Homework: Read Chpt. 1 & 2, type a list of three questions for each chapter (see individual homework under grading above.) Complete target audience homework activity posted on BB, bring paper copy to class. Complete advertisement group homework activity, posted on BB. Read Chpt. 3 and bring in a sample business memo, email and blog message from the Internet.

Week Three – Business Messages -- Feb. 3

DUE: Week One Advertisement Group work and Chpt. 1, 2 & 3

Class: Discuss differences between Memos, Business Emails and Blog Msgs in groups. In-class company blog, welcome msg.

Homework: Continue company blog project. Write business memo using sample posted to BB and book guidelines. Read Chpt. 4, see assignment posted on BB.

Week Four – Writing Letters -- Feb. 10

DUE: Week Three Company Blog Group work, Individual Email Response and Chpt. 4

Class: Discuss different types of business letters using book samples, and other personal samples. In-class activity editing a complaint letter. Introduce letter assignment.

Homework: Read Chpt. 5 and write professional complaint letter based on exercise 11, page 146. See assignment posted to BB.

Week Five –Resume Writing & Job Interviewing -- Feb. 17

DUE: Week Four Complaint Letter and Chpt. 5

Class: Discuss resume, cover letter and career search. In-class activity.

Homework: Draft an outline of your resume for an entry level job after graduating college, see assignment posted on BB. Read Chpt. 6.

Week Six – Intro to Visual Aids & Design -- Feb. 24

DUE: Resume and Chpt. 6

Class: Choosing visuals, types and purpose, basics of page layout, in-class activity.

Homework: Design a visual aid and text for a document, see posted assignment on BB.

Week Seven – Presenting Visual Aids -- March 2

DUE: Visual Aid, designing

Class: Citing, introducing and interpreting visuals, in-class activity.

Homework: Prepare a presentation to give in class introducing the design of your visual aid, see posted assignment on BB. Read Chpt. 10.

Week Eight -- Page Layout for Website Homepage -- March 9

DUE: Visual Aid, presenting

Class: Two-minute visual aid presentation. Review writing and designing for the Web, in-class activity.

Homework: Create a website homepage for an invented business using visual and text and Read Chpt. 7.

Week Nine – Instructions -- March 16

***Individual mid-term evaluation**

DUE: Page Layout for Website w/ visuals and Chpt. 7

Class: Discuss writing instructions and procedures for business policy, procedure and/or program. In-class activity.

Homework: Write a one-page instruction guide for the business industry of your choice, see posted assignment on BB. **During break:** Read Chpt. 8 and write a two-paragraph pitch for a business proposal that identifies a problem and a solution.

Week Ten – Spring Break, No Class -- March 23

Week Eleven –Pitch and Written Proposal -- March 30

DUE: Instruction Guide, Proposal Pitch and Chpt. 8

Class: Discuss business proposal guidelines, different industry types, and book checklist. In-class activity outlining business proposal.

Homework: Write short proposal using instructions, visuals and text, see assignment posted on BB. Read Chpt. 9.

Week Twelve – Easter Holiday, No Class – April 6

Week Thirteen – Research & Documentation for Long Report -- April 13

DUE: Short Proposal and Chpt. 9.

Class: Discuss elements of Long Report, research and documentation rules, format, citing sources and collaborating with others. Visit to Library to begin research.

Homework: Begin research and documentation for long report and complete outline, see assignment posted on BB.

Week Fourteen – Long Report Writing Workshop & Critique -- April 20

DUE: Outline and Documented Sources for Long Report

Class: Group work writing and critiquing individual reports, provide feedback and edits.

Homework: Complete Final Long Report, use book checklist and samples, see assignment posted on BB. Read Chpt. 10.

Week Fifteen – Long Report Preparation for Presenting -- April 27

DUE: Final Long Report

Class: Discuss and organize presentation information, slides, visuals, etc. for a condensed time, specific purpose and audience. See book checklist and guidelines. In-class mock runs.

Homework: Prepare a 5-minute presentation for your Long Report, see assignment posted to BB.

Week Sixteen – Presentations -- May 4

DUE: Long Report Presentations

Class: Five-minute presentations. Review questions on the exam.

Homework: Complete Take-Home Final Exam.

Week Seventeen – Last Class - May 11

***Individual final grade evaluation**

DUE: Take-Home Final Exam

Class: Recap and Discuss Goals