

Texas A&M University – Texarkana  
**English 350: Technical Writing**  
Course Syllabus  
Summer 2019

**Instructor: Dr. Dayna “Joy” Goldstein**

**Location:** Blackboard

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**COURSE NUMBER:** ENG 350.001 (CRN 40258)

**CREDITS:** 3SCH

**COURSE TITLE:** Technical Writing

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course emphasizes the principles of composition, document design, and rhetoric applied to primary genres within scientific, technical, and professional writing.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

*Technical Communication Today*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition by Richard Johnson-Sheehan  
ISBN: 978-0134425733

**RECOMMENDED:**

An APA style manual (6<sup>th</sup> edition)

**E-MAIL ACCOUNT:**

Upon application to Texas A&M University-Texarkana, an individual will be assigned an A&M-Texarkana e-mail account. This e-mail account will be used to deliver official university correspondence. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via the university e-mail account and is expected to check the official A&M-Texarkana e-mail account on a frequent and consistent basis. Faculty and students are required to utilize the university e-mail account when communicating about coursework.

**STUDENT LEARNER OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of ENG 350, students will be able to

1. Understand and demonstrate composing processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation as evidenced in satisfactory completion of all the written, visual, web-based, and oral discourses to be submitted in this course.
2. Analyze audiences and learn how to fulfill a specific rhetorical purpose by adapting writing and document design principles (platform, style, tone, graphics, page design) for particular audiences.

3. Identify and implement appropriate research methods for each communicative task.
4. Create various products most frequently used in scientific and technical communication.
5. Understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of technical communication tasks as evidenced in the satisfactory completion of all written, visual, web-based, and oral discourses to be submitted in this course.
6. Apply the conventions of standard American English in all written, visual, web-based, and oral discourses to be submitted in this course.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Produce technical and professional communication that demonstrates an awareness of audience, genre expectations, rhetorical situation, and edited professional communication through both individual and collaborative writing experiences.
2. Understand and apply concepts in visual rhetoric to the task of document design.
3. Create and integrate graphics appropriately for a rhetorical situation.
4. Practice revising and editing techniques for clarity, conciseness, usability, and correct use of language.

#### **METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

Methods of instruction in this course seek to develop students' analytical and critical thinking skills and to refine their skills in producing effective technical communication. To that end, the course instruction includes reading, discussion, multimedia production, research and production activities.

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION:**

To pass this course, students *must complete major assignments* (items II through VIII) as listed below, including the final exam.

##### **I. Reading Responses (10 @ 15 points each) = 150 points**

Students are required to submit ten reading responses connected to the weekly assigned readings in the textbook. These responses should include *both* a summary of the reading (in the author's own words) and an analysis of the material (how the principles expressed could be applied in different contexts or discussion of the material's value). Responses should be typed, double-spaced, and at least 250 words.

##### **II. Technical Description = 150 points**

Students are required to complete a Technical Description document on a component of their choice (instructor approval required). This report should include the integration of at least one graphic (with explanation).

##### **III. Instructional Analysis & Presentation = 200 points**

Students are required to complete a thorough user analysis of a set of instructions of their choice (within limitations, as discussed in the project prompt to be provided separately) or using one provided by the instructor employing the principles of instructions from the textbook and class discussions. Students will also be required to present their analyses to the rest of the class.

##### **IV. Collaborative Proposal Project = 300 points**

Working in teams of 2-3 students each, students will complete a collaborative proposal project consisting of both a written and oral presentation of the team's proposal. Students will be evaluated in two ways: individual accomplishment and team effort. A separate project prompt will be provided to students detailing the terms of the project.

**V. White Paper = 200 points**

Students are required to write a white paper on an organization, program, product, or related topic of their choice (with instructor approval). The white paper should employ a user-friendly organization and integrate graphics when appropriate.

**VI. Analytical Report & Poster Presentation = 300 points**

Students are required to design a research study, employ it, and write an analytical report detailing the findings of that study. In conjunction, students must also design a poster highlighting the IMRaD components of that study and report.

**VII. Website Design = 200 points**

Students are required to design a website adhering to principles of web design as presented in the text and in class discussions. Additional details on this project will be provided on a separate prompt.

**VIII. Online Final: Principles of Technical Communication = 100 points**

Students are required to submit an expository essay detailing the basic principles of technical communication as they understand them based on classroom lectures, activities, and course readings. Each student is expected to integrate secondary resources into the final product, referencing all evidence using the appropriate documentation style.

**IX. Final Progress Statement = 50 points**

A progress statement (explaining what improvements in personal writing have been made throughout the semester and potential application of the course material/lessons learned) will be due at the conclusion of the course. This statement must range between 500 and 1,000 words in length.

**X. Participation**

Your total participation grade is 440 points. It is approximately a quarter of your total grade for the course. Your participation grade is based on the "zero" grade assignments, activities, and discussions that support the larger assignments. In a physical classroom, they would be done during class time and are meant to prep you for the larger assignments. I strongly encourage you to do all them.

**ASSIGNMENTS & POINTS AVAILABLE**

Reading Responses	150
Description & Specs project	150
Instructional Analysis & presentation	200
Collaborative Proposal project	300
Activity Report	200
Analytical Report & Poster presentation	300

Website	200
Online final essay	100
Final Progress Statement	50
Participation	440
	<hr/>
	2090

**TOTAL POINTS: 2050****Grading Scale:**

1881-2090 points = A

1672-1880 points = B

1463-1671 points = C

1254-1462 points = D

Fewer than 1254 points = F

**COURSE POLICIES & STUDENT RESOURCES****Academic Integrity:**

Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and/or undocumented use of materials from any source, constitute academic dishonesty. **Any submitted assignments discovered to have violated academic integrity will receive a zero (no exceptions) and may be grounds for a grade of "F" in the course and/or further disciplinary actions.** For additional information, see the university catalog.

**Disability Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

**Extra Credit:**

If you utilize the Success Center and receive feedback from a writing tutor on your major projects or papers (items II through VI above) at least 3 days prior to the assignment due date, **and** you include a complete proof sheet with your final project, then you will receive 10 extra credit points toward that assignment. (40 point maximum) You can find information about the student success center at <https://www.tamut.edu/Academics/Student-Support/Success-Center/index.html>

**Drop Policy**

To drop this course after the census date, a student must complete a [Drop/Withdrawal Request Form](#), located on the University Registrar's webpage or obtained in the Registrar's Office. The student must submit the signed and completed form to the instructor of each course indicated on the form to be dropped for his/her signature. The signature is not an "approval" to drop, but rather confirmation that the student has discussed the drop/withdrawal with the faculty member. The form must be submitted to the Registrar's office for processing in person, email

[Registrar@tamut.edu](mailto:Registrar@tamut.edu), mail (7101 University Ave., Texarkana, TX 75503) or fax (903-223-3140).

Drop/withdraw forms missing any of the required information will not be accepted by the Registrar's Office for processing. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the form is completed properly before submission. If a student stops participating in class (attending and submitting assignments) but does not complete and submit the drop/withdrawal form, a final grade based on work completed as outlined in the syllabus will be assigned.

<b>Drop/Withdraw deadlines for the Fall 2019 semester</b>		
<b>Session</b>	<b>Drop without a grade</b>	<b>Last day drop/withdraw</b>
Summer I (5 week)	Monday, June 6	Friday, June 28

### **COURSE CALENDAR, SUMMER I 2019**

*The instructor reserves the right to alter the course calendar in any way deemed appropriate based upon the needs of the course and its students. Students will be notified of any changes to this calendar.*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Self-Introduction Discussion	Tuesday, June 4, 2019
Clarification Questions for Chapter seven	Wednesday, June 5, 2019
Reading Response 1 ( to Chapters 1 &7)	Wednesday, June 5, 2019
What is Technical Writing?	Wednesday, June 5, 2019
Technical Description Topic	Thursday, June 6, 2019
Descriptions and Specifications Reflection	Thursday, June 6, 2019
Descriptions & Specifications Pairs 2	Thursday, June 6, 2019
Descriptions & Specifications Pairs 1	Thursday, June 6, 2019
Descriptions & Specifications Pairs 3	Thursday, June 6, 2019
Reading Response 2 ( to Chapter 8)	Sunday, June 9, 2019
Technical Description Project	Sunday, June 9, 2019
Instructions Activity 1	Sunday, June 9, 2019
Ikea Instruction Discussion	Sunday, June 9, 2019
Instructions Activity 2	Sunday, June 9, 2019
Reading Response 3 (chapter 2,20, and 12)	Tuesday, June 11, 2019
Instructional Analysis Project Drop	Wednesday, June 12, 2019
Instructional Analysis Presentation Drop	Wednesday, June 12, 2019
Audience Analysis Activity	Wednesday, June 12, 2019
Case Study Project Planning Discussion	Wednesday, June 12, 2019

Instructional Analysis Presentation Peer Rating	Wednesday, June 12, 2019
Reading Response 4 (Chapters 3 & 9)Assignment	Saturday, June 13, 2019
Reading Response 5 ( Chapters 13, 15, & 16)	Thursday, June 15, 2019
Collaborative Project Individual Effort Evaluation	Sunday, June 16, 2019
Collaborative Proposal Report Drop	Sunday, June 16, 2019
Collaborative Project Presentation Drop	Sunday, June 16, 2019
APA Errors and Analytical Reports	Tuesday, June 18, 2019
Reading Response 6 (Chapters 11, 14 and Appendix C)	Wednesday, June 19, 2019
Reading Response 7 (Chapters 17&18)Assignment	Thursday, June 20, 2019
Peer Review for Analytical Report and Poster	Sunday, June 23, 2019
Reading Response 8 (Chapters 19,10, & 4)	Monday, June 24, 2019
White Papers Discussion	Monday, June 24, 2019
Topic Proposal for White Paper	Tuesday, June 25, 2019
Analytical Report Drop	Wednesday, June 26, 2019
Analytical Poster Drop	Wednesday, June 26, 2019
Reading Response 9 (Chapter 21)	Thursday, June 27, 2019
Activity Report (White Paper)	Friday, June 28, 2019
Scenario One: Technology Temptations	Sunday, June 30, 2019
Scenario Two: Is anyone listening?	Sunday, June 30, 2019
Scenario Three: Safety – At What Price?	Sunday, June 30, 2019
Reading Response 10 (Chapter 5)	Sunday, June 30, 2019
Website Project	Thursday, July 4, 2019
Final Progress Statement	Thursday, July 4, 2019
Online Final Exam	Friday, July 5, 2019