ENGL 50C: TECHNICAL WRITING

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Spring 2021
Units:	5
Hours:	5 lecture per week (60 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Demonstrated proficiency in English by placement via multiple measures OR through an equivalent placement process OR completion of ESLL 125 & ESLL 249; not open to students with credit in ENGL 3.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area V: Communication & Analytical Thinking
Transferable:	CSU
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to recognize the characteristics of diverse rhetorical contexts based on audience(s), purpose(s), and workplace conditions/situations.
- Students will be able to design and produce written texts in a variety of workplace genres, demonstrating the principles of clear and concise language and effective visual design.

Description

An introductory course in technical and workplace communication. Focus on the strategic implementation of technical writing process, including assessment of context, purpose, and audience; evaluation and production of effective verbal and visual communication, including sentence clarity, document design, and use of visuals; and production of written texts for business and industry, including correspondence, technical definitions and descriptions, instructions, proposals and applications, reports, and websites.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:
A. Recognize and evaluate the technical writing landscape
B. Determine and implement steps for effective technical writing process
C. Recognize, evaluate and produce the elements of effective verbal and visual communication
D. Recognize, evaluate and produce written texts for business and industry

Course Content

A. Recognize and evaluate the technical writing landscape
1. Common contexts and purposes
2. Ethical and legal considerations
B. Determine and implement steps for effective writing process
1. Assess context and identify purpose
2. Assess audience
a. Needs and expectations
b. Level of technical and subject-matter expertise
c. Writing for multiple audiences
d. Cross-cultural sensitivity
3. Research
a. Academic versus workplace research
b. Secondary research
c. Primary research
d. Synthesize evidence and develop conclusions
e. Cite/attribute sources
4. Idea generation
5. Determine appropriate format
6. Outline and organize
7. Draft and revise
a. Communicating constructive critique
8. Collaborative writing
a. Managing tasks/projects
b. Electronic tools for collaboration
9. Usability testing
C. Evaluate and produce the elements of effective verbal and visual communication
1. Sentence accuracy, clarity, and concision
a. Avoiding common errors
b. Emphasizing new/important information
c. Real subjects and real verbs
d. Parallel structure
e. Effective use of modifiers
f. Avoiding redundancy
g. Level of formality
h. Avoiding jargon and cliches
2. Cross-cultural sensitivity
a. Recognizing and avoiding gender bias
b. Understanding multi-cultural preferences and needs
c. Recognizing and avoiding negative cultural stereotypes and expressions
3. Organization, logic, coherence, and emphasis
a. Conventional organizational patterns
b. Persuasive techniques
1) Selecting evidence
2) Understanding alternative/opposing views
3) Avoiding logical fallacies
c. Coherence and emphasis
1) Titles and headings
2) Lists (paragraph and sentence)
3) Paragraph structure
4. Document design (print and online)
a. Design principles: proximity, alignment, repetition
b. Page layouts
c. Columns
d. Typography/fonts
e. Titles and headings
f. Headers and footers
g. Navigation strategies
h. Placement of visuals
i. Design for accessibility
j. Design for multicultural audiences
5. Visuals
a. Design principles: functional, simple, ethical
1) Use of color
2) Use of symbols

b. Determining appropriate graphics
1) Numerical information: tables, graphs, infographics, charts
2) Logical relationships: diagrams, organizational charts
3) Processes: checklists, flow charts, logic trees, tables
4) Spatial and visual: photographs, screen shots, line drawings, maps
D. Evaluate and produce written texts for business and industry
1. Correspondence (letters, memos, email)
a. Inquiry and response letters
b. Claim letters
c. Netiquette, voice, and tone
2. Technical definitions and descriptions
a. Sentence definitions
b. Extended definitions
c. Placement of definitions
d. Process descriptions
e. Mechanism or object descriptions
3. Instructions and procedures
a. Ethics and safety
b. Clear numbering
c. Appropriate information
d. Imperative mood
e. Steps versus feedback statements
4. Proposals and applications
a. Contexts
1) Internal and external
2) Solicited and unsolicited
b. Research proposals
c. Goods and services proposals
d. Resumes and job applications
5. Reports
a. Informational reports
1) Field reports
2) Progress and status reports
3) Incident reports
4) Meeting minutes
b. Recommendation reports
1) Front matter
a) Letter of transmittal
b) Cover
c) Title page
d) Abstract
e) Executive summary
2) Body
a) Introduction
b) Methods
c) Results
3) Back matter
a) Glossaries
b) References
c) Appendixes
c. Lab reports
1) Purpose, process, structure
6. Websites

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

A. When taught on campus, computers with capacity to run appropriate software.
B. When taught via Foothill Global Access, on-going access to computer with email and basic software capabilities (word processing, presentation, spreadsheet); Email address.

Method(s) of Evaluation

A. Written assignments
B. Class presentations
C. Capstone Portfolios

Method(s) of Instruction

A. Lecture presentation and modeling of criteria, concepts, and techniques for effective technical communication.
B. Instructor-guided evaluation and discussion of the criteria, concepts, and techniques for effective technical communication.
C. Practice and production of texts applying the criteria, concepts, and techniques for effective technical communication.

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Dobrin, Sidney, et al. Technical Communication in the Twenty-first Century. 2nd ed. New York: Pearson, 2010.
Markel, Mike. Technical Communication. 11th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.
Reep, Diana C. Technical Writing: Principles, Strategies, and Readings. 8th ed. New York: Pearson, 2011.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

A. Reading of textbook covering the apparati for effective technical communication
B. Research (web, interviews, surveys) on the application of effective technical communication within a given industry
C. Written analysis and evaluation of technical communication case studies and case documents
D. Revision and editing of technical communication case documents
E. Production (drafting, revising, and editing) of technical communication documents, including a culminating final project

Discipline(s)

English