

UTAH VALLEY STATE COLLEGE

Course Syllabus for ENGL 4310, Advanced Professional and Technical Writing Fall 2003, MWF 12:00-12:50 (LA 027)

Instructor Information

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Department Information

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Prerequisite

ENGL 2010 or 2020.

Required Textbook

Laura Gurak and John Lannon, *A Concise Guide to Technical Communication*. 2nd edition. New York: Longman, 2003. ISBN: 0321146158.

The book is available at the college bookstore. You might want to check Beat the Bookstore and <http://www.bestwebbuys.com/books> for cheaper and/or used copies. Make sure you purchase the second edition!

Course Objectives

This course focuses on writing in technical and professional settings. According to the UVSC catalog, this course is intended for upper-division technology management majors, technical writing emphases and minors, and as elective for other upper-division students.

Much of the work in this course will be collaborative. Because people in business, industry, and government often work in teams, this course provides students the experience of learning how to work effectively and efficiently with other people to produce a 35-50 page information or instruction manual. This manual can be written for an actual client. In conjunction with producing a manual, students also practice delivering an oral presentation and writing proposals, progress reports, outlines, and e-mail messages.

Course Goals

English 4310 is a skills-acquisition course in which students must demonstrate competence in writing a lengthy, accurate, formal and factual procedural or informational manual. In addition, according to departmental course goals, upon completion, students should:

- understand the complexity of workplace writing
- understand "reader-centered" writing
- prepare complex documents with confidence

- use computer technology to produce written communication
- design visually and verbally attractive documents

Attendance

Producing successful and polished documents will be most difficult without attending class. In most cases, the exact nature of assignments will be discussed in class and documents will be generated and revised in class. Attendance is also an important component of participation, which will suffer if you do not attend class regularly. Since students in this class work in groups to complete the class project, missing class not only robs students themselves of valuable learning, but group members also suffer and may not be able to complete work on time. If you do miss class, you are responsible for turning in work on time and for finding out from someone else in class what you missed. You are expected to make up any work you missed. I start class on time, and if you come to class more than ten minutes late, you will be counted absent. Tardiness affects your grade as well.

You may miss three class periods, and each absence after the initial three will result in final grade reduction (a fourth of a grade per absence). Students with more than seven absences cannot pass the course.

Grading

Final grades will be determined based on 35% individual efforts and 65% group efforts.

Individual efforts:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Electronic reading responses, 1 per chapter, 8 total: | 10% |
| • Assignment #3, Progress Report : | 10% |
| • Participation: | 10% |

Group Efforts:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Assignment #1, Outline: | 5% |
| • Assignment #2, Proposal: | 5% |
| • Assignment #4, First Chapter + Back and Front Matter: | 5% |
| • Assignment #5, Complete Manual: | 45% |
| • Final Exam, Group Presentation : | 10% |

All writing assignments (individual as well as group assignments) will undergo a revision process. After I read and comment on a first complete draft of each assignment, you (or your group) are invited to revise it and turn it in again. If you do a thorough job of revising, I will raise your project score by one full letter grade.

Note that even though a draft, by definition, is not a finished product, I would like all drafts to be as complete and as professional looking as you can make them. If a draft is complete, if it has been submitted on time, and if it shows that you have made a serious effort to fulfill the requirement, you will receive adequate credit for your labor. I reserve the right to reject draft submissions that have not been proofread and edited carefully.

Deadlines

Written assignments are generally due at the end of class (see weekly schedule for due dates). Most of the time students may put the finishing touches on an assignment during the class period in which it is due. However, reading responses must be prepared outside of class and be emailed to all class members ahead of time. Late work will not be accepted after a due date. The focus and expectation of each assignment will be discussed in class.

Additional Information

Writing Help

You can meet with me during office hours, after scheduling an appointment or after contacting me regarding specific help. You may email me with questions at any time. To make sure that I can help you when you need help, contact me as soon as you feel like you need assistance or support.

Note on Microsoft Word

In this class, we will be using Microsoft Word to complete all class assignments. The computers in the classroom are equipped with Microsoft Word XP. In order to avoid computer problems, I must insist that all students working on class assignments use only Microsoft Word XP, especially when they work on those assignments outside of class. Using different versions of Word often results in major transferability problems among the different versions. We absolutely have to avoid running into such problems.

English Computerized Classroom Fee

Every student who signs up for ENGL 4310 pays a \$10 fee to support the cost of computer lab supplies and maintenance of machines and available software. The fee also helps cover printer toner and paper, and the cost for photocopies. Students are expected to be computer-literate, and will use the computers regularly in the classroom. Basic familiarity with Microsoft Word would be helpful.

Important note: I insist that during class time students do not surf the Internet, or check and respond to personal email and/or instant messenger services. Also, please turn off cell phone ringers during the entire class period.

Final Exam

Students are required to complete a final exam assignment during the scheduled final exam period, which is the last day of class. More details about the exam will follow in class.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability which may impair your capacity to successfully complete this course, please contact the Accessibility Services Department (BU 145). Academic accommodations are granted for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the Accessibility Services Department.

Plagiarism

A statement regarding plagiarism from the UVSC "Students' Rights and Responsibilities Code" reads: "Each student is expected to maintain academic ethics and avoid dishonesty in all its forms, including but not limited to, cheating and plagiarism, and fabrication as
