

**ENGL-2311**  
**Technical Communication**  
**Fall 2017**

**Instructor:** Rob Knight  
**Office:** Building 3—Reese Room 316H  
**Message:** Use Blackboard Message tool  
**Telephone:** (806) 716-4889  
**Course Info:** Office Hours—TW: 5-6:50 PM  
Class Meeting—T: 7 PM

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**Course Description**

Students will be instructed in the design and preparation of technical writing projects appropriate to the world of work, including resumes, letters, proposals, reports, instructions, brochures, and oral presentations. They will be encouraged to consider the audience of each of their technical communication assignments, paying particular attention to design, style, and tone as they deliver accurate and thorough results that are thoughtfully prepared for their readers.

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**Prerequisites**

Prerequisite: Successful completion of English 1301 and English 1302. This course includes preparation of written reports in scientific and technical fields. Any student who does not have the prerequisites should contact the professor immediately.

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**Instructional Objectives**

By the end of the course, students should be able to do the following:

- To know the requirements of good style and organization in technical communication
- To understand the standards of visual elements in technical communication
- To write various types of technical reports
- To understand the basic types of graphic aids and to incorporate such graphic aids in written and oral reports
- To realize the importance of personal responsibility in preparing documents and meeting deadlines
- To understand and deal with the ethical issues of technical communication

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**Textbook and Supplies**

The following textbook is a requirement for this course. You will need to purchase it immediately and consult it frequently as you complete coursework.

Gurak, Laura and John Lannon. *Strategies for Technical Communication in the Workplace*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Boston: Pearson, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-321-99589-6.

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**Software Requirements**

You are required to have access to the following technologies:

- High-speed Internet connection
- Web browser
- Blackboard account
- **A word processing program and a presentation software program (papers will only be accepted in .doc or .docx format, except for the presentation assignment, which will be submitted as a .ppt or .pptx file)**

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**Communication**

You can reach me in one of three ways: you can message me using the Blackboard Message tool, call my office at 806-716-4889 and leave a message, or make an appointment to meet in-person.

I will always return messages and voicemails within 24 hours.

**We will use the Blackboard Message tool exclusively for this course;** you may access it via the “Message” link within our Blackboard course.

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**Attendance Policy**

An absence is defined as the following:

- Failure to attend a scheduled class
- Missing more than 20 minutes of class
- Leaving a class early without obtaining approval from the instructor
- Three tardies to a class (Tardy is arriving 10 minutes after class starts up to the time for an absence to be counted)

**3 absences are allowed in the class. (This total is equivalent to 9 MWF or 6 TR.)**

In accordance with SPC policy, students may be dropped from classes at the discretion of the professor due to excessive absences. **All absences, excused and unexcused, may be included in this count.** A differentiation is usually not made between “excused” or “unexcused” absences. Whenever possible, students should let the instructor know about expected absences as soon as possible and before the class meeting. **After the allotted number of absences is exceeded, the student could be dropped from the class with an “F” or “X”.**

When an unavoidable reason for class absence arises, such as illness, an official trip authorized by the college or an official activity, the instructor may permit the student to make up work missed. It is the student’s responsibility to complete work missed within a reasonable period of time as determined by the instructor.

**Student Withdrawals:** Students are responsible for dropping themselves if they cannot or no longer wish to participate in the course. If a student does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, that student may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of “X” or “F” as determined by the instructor.

It is the student’s responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through MySPC using his or her student online account. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

**Grading Policy**

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**Be advised – I do not accept late work for any reason.**

Final grades will be assigned based on the following percentages:

<b>Module Assignments</b>	80%
<b>Discussions</b>	20%

**Reading Assignments and Video Lectures**

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Mandatory, assigned reading is required for this course; you may also be required to watch recorded video lectures. Reading and video lecture assignments can be found on the module pages in Blackboard.

**Module Assignments**

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You will be required to submit Module Assignments for this course, the details of which are found in the Course Module folders. Grades for these projects will be averaged together and will make up 80% of your final grade. Some assignments will have two parts: a rough draft (10%) and final draft (90%). Due dates for each are on the course calendar.

**Discussions**

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Collaboration and communication is essential to success in both the academic and professional setting. To practice these skills and further our knowledge of the subjects we cover in this course, each student will be required to participate in weekly discussions.

There will be one or two parts to each module discussion assignment. The first is an **initial post**, which will be due on the first day of each module. The second part may include two **responses** to your peers, which will be due by the last day. A 10 point deduction will be applied to initial posts not posted by the first deadline, and no response posts will be counted for credit after the second deadline. Averaged together, the discussion posts will be worth 20% of your final grade.

**Due Dates**

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Due dates are posted on the course calendar, and are firm. **Most due dates are Monday or Thursday at 11:59 PM.** I do not grant extensions or allow late work for any reason. Work submitted after the due date will not be evaluated and will receive a grade of 0.

**Assignment Submission**

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I will not accept any assignment via email, for any reason. All files must be submitted via the Assignment tool in the Blackboard modules.

## Academic Integrity

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It is the aim of the faculty at South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences and possible suspension. Please refer to the SPC General Catalog regarding consequences for cheating and plagiarism.

**\*\*Do not, under any circumstances, turn in another student's work as your own. Do not, under any circumstances, give your work to anyone else to turn in as their own. Do not copy and paste from the Internet. All of these situations are representative of academic dishonesty and will be treated as such.\*\***

Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant it.

Plagiarism violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Turning in a paper that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student, an online term paper site, or a mail order term paper mill;
2. Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation;
3. Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them; or
4. Giving an in-text citation only at the end of a paragraph.

Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion;
2. Discovering the content of an examination before it is given;
3. Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet) during an examination, quiz, or homework assignment;
4. Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage;
5. Taking an examination for another;
6. Altering grade records; or
7. Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment.

I have zero tolerance for cheaters. If I suspect you of cheating, I will drop you without discussion. Please trust me when I say I have ways of determining whether or not you've cheated that you can't get around, as smart as you are.

## Diversity Statement

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In this course, the teacher will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world, and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should be and can be.

## Special Services

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Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Special Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Special Services Coordinator. For more information, call or visit the Special Services Office in the Student Services Building, 806-894-9611, extension 2529.

## Student Code of Conduct

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Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. **Student conduct which disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.**

## Statement of Nondiscrimination

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It is the policy of this instructor not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status

## Campus Concealed Carry

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Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the SPC policy at [http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human\\_resources/policy\\_procedure/hhc.php](http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/hhc.php) Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

## Classroom Rules

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**BE PREPARED.** Being prepared means that the student has carefully read all required readings and completed any out-of-class writing assignments. **For example, on “Editing” days (as listed on the schedule), any student who does not bring a completed and printed copy of his/her essay to class will be counted absent and will not be able to participate in class that day.**

**BE PROFESSIONAL:** All actions and words should reflect kindness and respect for both the instructor and all other students. I will not tolerate rude, disrespectful, or unprofessional behavior directed at any member of this class. Disruptive behavior is not restricted to behavioral issues alone; it can include interruptions from cell phones, iPods/mp3 players, sidebar conversations, or beeping watches. None of these behaviors is conducive to the environment we hope to promote this semester.

**BE HONEST:** Honesty is an important part of integrity. Academic integrity is non-negotiable in a university environment. Students who plagiarize the work of another, whether through outright copying off of the internet or other sources or having another person produce the student’s work and then claiming the work as the student’s own, will receive a 0/F for that particular assignment and could be dropped from the course with an X or F at the instructor’s discretion. There are no extenuating circumstances for cheating of any kind. My recommendation – for the very first offense – will be for a failing grade for the course at a minimum and, very likely, recommendation for suspension from South Plains College. I have zero tolerance for cheating. If I suspect a student or group of students of cheating, I will drop him/her/all involved without discussion. Please believe me when I say that I have ways of determining whether or not a student has cheated that he/she/they cannot get around.

The SPC General Catalog specifically addresses academic integrity as follows: “It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension” (23). “Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length as well as to final examinations, to daily reports and to term papers” (23). Students must consult the General Catalog for the college’s detailed policies on plagiarism and cheating. Ignorance of the college’s policies and procedures is not a viable defense for plagiarism or cheating.

**BE MENTALLY PRESENT:** The use of any electronic devices (cell phones, iPhones, iPods, Blackberry, or any other device) will not be tolerated. Your cell phone needs to be set to silent, not vibrate and out of sight; texting under the desk/in your lap is NOT out of sight. Any student using a cell phone, iPod, or any other electronic device not previously approved by the instructor will not be dismissed for the day, but will be counted absent; I will not interrupt class to dismiss you. (However, I understand that sometimes emergencies occur. If you need to have your cell phone on during class for an emergency, please discuss it with me before class begins that day.) Laptops will be allowed only with prior approval.

**CONTACT:** I typically check my messages twice a day (Monday-Friday), once in the morning and once again in the afternoon. If you have a question, please feel free to message me through Blackboard; however, please allow at least 24 hours for a response. Additionally, I do not check my messages on weekends until Sunday evening; Students should limit messages to “quick” questions. My office hours or appointments are the best way to address more complex questions and concerns about the course. If the answer to your question can be found in course website or syllabus, please do not email me as I will only refer you to one of these sources. Please note: you will find my response in your SPC BlackBoard messages.

**COMMUNICATION ETIQUETTE:** I expect students to use professional language and tone in all communication with me. “Soooooooooooooooo B4 u snd me a msg. B sure i can read it.” If the student does not follow these guidelines, I will not respond to his/her email. Students must use proper grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Students should never ask that I respond ASAP and should refrain from using ALL CAPS and excessive punctuation in the subject line of the email.

**GRADING TIME FRAMES:** I grade all work as efficiently and quickly as possible. I teach 8 classes, 6 of which are ENGL 1301. When

your assignments are evaluated, you will have them back; please do not inquire as to whether or not your papers are graded.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Any information posted as an announcement on the course website is important and is, accordingly, an extension of course requirements. Students will be held responsible for any information posted in the announcements.

**FINAL COURSE AVERAGES:** At the end of the semester, there is always a temptation for a student to email professors and ask, “Is there anything I can do to make a [insert grade here] in your class?” The quick answer is “No.” The longer answer is this: throughout the semester, you are given numerous opportunities to earn grades in this course. At the end of the semester, it is too late to do anything. I rarely give extra credit or drop grades; however, you have many participation grades, essay-participation grades (most of which are completion grades), and opportunities to “help” you. The most efficient and effective way to achieve a desirable grade in this course is to attend each class and be prepared with all materials and readings and submit all course work in a timely manner. If you do what is required of you, you will be successful. Remember: What you put into this course is what you will get out of it.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:** Students are responsible for completing the critical reading, writing, and grammar assignments as identified in the weekly summaries. As this is a college-level course, students are responsible for their own time and course-management strategies.

**Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify the course syllabus and policies, as well as notify students of any changes, at any point during the semester.**

**\*Continued enrollment by the student in the course indicates that the student agrees and will abide by all policies set-forth in this syllabus by the instructor.\***

## Student Information Sheet

Legal Name \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone-- cell \_\_\_\_\_

Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_

Future Career? \_\_\_\_\_

High School you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

Anything else I need to know regarding your academic pursuits or lack thereof?

Reason for taking this course?

What aspects of technical writing do you think will be helpful to you?