

Sinclair Community College

Technical Composition I

Initial Request Date: 1970

Biennial Review Date: 1999

Course Title: Technical Composition I

Quarter: Winter 2003

Department: ENGLISH

Division: LA&S

Phone: 512-3225

Course Code & Number: ENG 121

Professor: Ms. Christensen

Office: 3143 **Office Hours:** varies

E-mail address: Elizabeth.Christensen@Sinclair.edu **Time/days:** varies **Room:** varies

Credit Hour Total: 3 **Lecture Hours:** 3 **Lab Hours:** 0 **Clinic/Practicum:** 0

Prerequisite(s): Dev 110 or Equivalent

TEXT: Gerson, Sharon J., and Steven M. Gerson. Technical Writing: Process and Product. 4th Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2003.

Supplementary Text and Reference: MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 5th Edition.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

You will focus on the composition skills needed for writing letters, memos, resumes, mechanism descriptions, instructions, and operation manuals.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of English 121 is to develop students' awareness of the importance of composition in technical fields and acquaint them with basic communication modes. Specifically, it develops students' ability to:

1. Practice the accepted theory of technical writing.
2. Write direct requests, good-news/neutral messages, bad-news messages, employment applications, and resumes.
3. Learn and apply the skills of writing mechanism descriptions, instructions, and operation manuals.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Minimum writing assignments and exams:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1 - Letter of Inquiry | 1 - Resume |
| 1 - Good News Message | 1 - Mechanism Description and |
| 1 - Bad-News Message | 1 - Set of Instructions <u>OR</u> |
| 1 - Letter of Application | 1 - Operations Manual |

2 - Exams

COURSE OUTLINE

The following chapters and topics will be studied. The order in which they are covered is up to the instructor.

1. An Introduction to Technical Writing
2. Producing the Product
3. Objectives in Technical Writing
4. Audience Recognition and Involvement
5. Correspondence
6. Letters
7. The Job Search
8. Document Design
9. Graphics
11. Technical Descriptions
12. Instructions and User's Manuals
13. E-Mail, On-line help, and Web Sites
19. Grammar, Punctuation, Mechanics, and Spelling

Classroom Guidelines: You will treat the instructor and other students with respect. Students who are disrespectful and disruptive will be removed from class and withdrawn at the instructor's discretion.

Attendance: **Do not come to class unprepared or more than 10 minutes late or you will be counted as absent.** Three absences will lower your grade one letter and each subsequent absence thereafter will result in points taken off your final grade.. These guidelines do not pertain to any student with a documented illness or emergency!

***NOTE:** If you are going to be absent from class call and leave a message with the English Dept. or send e-mail (it will get to me faster). Don't just disappear from class the show up several weeks later without emergency documentation for your absence. NO excuses! Absence from class does not excuse you from being prepared for the next class. **Don't come unprepared or it will count as an absence!**

***Changes:** Throughout the course we may find that this syllabus needs amending. The instructor reserves the right to make these changes as the need becomes apparent.

Late Assignments: All assignments are due at the beginning of each class session. **No late or incomplete assignments will be accepted. *You are responsible for all material presented in class. If you miss a class, make sure to get the lecture notes from one of your classmates.**

PLAGIARISM: **will result in failure of the course!**

Format for written assignments: ALL writing assignments must be computer generated. They must follow MLA format and have a professional appearance. This will require several revisions so plan on revising each report 2-3 times before the final copy is handed in to me.

NOTE: If you do not know how to use a computer to generate assignments, get a tutor the first week! If you do not have access to a computer, use the computers in the Writing Center, 3221 or one of the other open labs.

Questions: Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the course or assignments during class time or, you may schedule an appointment with me during my office hours. I am always happy to talk with you!

NOTE: This class will require that you spend a minimum of six hours of study time each week (sometimes more depending on the assignment and if there is an exam that week).

Grades:

Distribution	Letter of Inquiry	10%
	Good-News Message	10%
	Bad-News Message	10%
	Letter of Application	10%
	Resume	10%
Mechanism Description & Set of Instructions OR	Operations Manual	10%
	Midterm Exam	20%
	Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
		100

Grading Scale =

A	93-100
B	86-92
C	75-85
D	68-74
F	67-0

COURSE OUTLINE:

WEEK ONE

Go over syllabus and classroom procedures.

Homework: Read Chs. 1, 2, and pages 513-529.

Lecture and handouts (setting up email accounts, LRC, Word, etc.)

Homework: Read Ch. 13.

Lab procedures (logging on/off, etc.) Lecture.

WEEK TWO

Lecture over MLA format and Ethics

Homework: Read Chs. 3, 4, and pages 529-546.

In class group assignment on pages 59 & 60 Lecture over Letter of

Inquiry **Homework: Begin Rough draft** of “Letter of Inquiry”
Use figure 67 on page 138 as a model. Read pps. 136-138.

Topic due for “Letter of Inquiry”
Develop thesis statements.

WEEK THREE

Sinclair closed for Martin Luther King Day.

Rough draft of the “Letter of Inquiry” **due**. Peer editing.
Read Chs. 5 & 6. Use the “Audience Evaluation Form” for each
assignment this quarter on page 93.

Revised draft of the “Letter of Inquiry” due.
Lecture: Audience Awareness. Homework: page 92 “Team
Projects.” Do number one and bring to class on Wednesday.

WEEK FOUR

Final draft of “Letter of Inquiry” due. Lecture: Good News Letter.

In class group assignment on pages 92-94.
Begin rough drafts of your “Good News Letter”
Use figure 6.8 on page 142 as a model for formatting and pages
141-144 for textual information.

Topic and outline of “Good News Letter” due.
Homework: **study** for **EXAM I (covers Chs. 1-6 and lecture
materials).**

WEEK FIVE

Rough draft of “Good News” due. Peer editing.
Lecture over “Bad News” and discussion.

EXAM I over Chapters 1-6.
Homework: Begin rough draft of “Bad News” letter using figure 6.9
on page 147 as a model.

Lab day to work on revised draft of “Good News.”

WEEK SIX

Final draft of **“Good News” due. Workshop:** “Bad News” letter
(internal or external) Rough draft of “Bad News” due. Peer
editing.

In class assignment on page 167 #5.

Audience Awareness: Reactions to bad news.

Lab day: revise draft of “Bad News”

WEEK SEVEN

Revised draft of “Bad News” due. Peer editing.
Homework: Read Ch. 7

Final draft of **“Bad News” due.**
Lecture: Letter of Application, Resume, and the job market.

Class discussion: Letter of Application and Resume

Homework: Begin Rough drafts of your Letter of Application and Resume. Use examples of letter in Ch. 7 as models for your Resume, Letter of Application, and Follow-up letter. Use pages 185-186 for the criteria for effective Letters of Application.

***NOTE: You are required to apply to a current “real” job posting (this must be attached to your Letter of Application and Resume when you turn them in). This should be a job that you could apply for now! You will not be “making up” information for either your Letter of Application or your Resume!**

WEEK EIGHT

Workshop: discussing individual skills, employment, awards, goals, etc. How to use your Sinclair coursework to you best advantage! Rough drafts of **Letter of Application and Resume due. Peer editing.** Homework: Read Ch. 8

Final drafts of Letter of Application and Resume due. Lecture over Descriptions, Instructions, Manuals, and graphics. Begin rough drafts of your Mechanism Descriptions and Instructions, or your Operations Manual. **It is required for this assignment that you include graphics, safety warnings, etc.**

Homework: Do question #5 on page 214 under “Activities.”

Workshop: Descriptions, Instructions, Manuals, and graphics.
Homework: Read Ch. 9

WEEK NINE

Homework due. **“Hands-on” Workshop:** Importing Graphics using MSWord2000. **Mechanism Description/Instructions or** Ch. 11

Operational Manual Ideas and outlines due. Homework: Read

Rough drafts due over Mechanism Description and Instructions, or Operations Manual. Peer editing and discussion.
Homework: Read Ch. 12.

Lecture: Language usage for experts and executives.

WEEK TEN

Lab workshop. Revised drafts due of Mechanism and Instructions or Operations Manual. Peer editing.
Homework: study for **Exam 2** (covers chapters 8,9,11, &12)

EXAM 2 Today!

Discussion and answer period for final project. Peer editing.

WEEK ELEVEN

Final project due and last day of class.