

ENGLISH 235—TECHNICAL WRITING OLC (3 credit hours)**Spring 2021****COURSE POLICY AND SYLLABUS****STILLMAN COLLEGE****DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH****I. Course Title:** ENG 235—TECHNICAL WRITING OLC**Location:** OLC**Time:** OLC**II. Course Instructor:**Name and Title: Dr. Kathryn Brewer-Strayer, Professor and QEP DirectorOffice Location: Cordell Wynn Center, 224 AE-Mail: kbrewer@stillman.eduOffice Hours: M-W 12-1; T-TH 9-11 or by appointmentOffice Phone: 205-366-8995

III. Course Description: This course introduces students to the process of planning, writing, and revising technical documents commonly used in business, industry, and government. In addition to emphasizing audience and purpose, effective research skills, clear style, and appropriate tone in producing written documents, the course will give some attention to using presentation software and designing simple web pages. Prerequisites: ENG 131-132 or ENG 133-134.

MODES OF INSTRUCTION:

- Frequent homework and class work based upon the textbook
- Collaborative writing of major project
- Library and internet research assignments
- Instructor commentary on written assignments
- Unit Tests
- Interaction with work sites for major project
- Individual conferences
- On-line discussion board on Canvas

ON-LINE CLASS POLICY

You are still expected to complete assignments on time as indicated in the schedule of readings and due dates. All assignments are to be attached to the assignment in each unit on Canvas. **Make sure you check the announcements on Canvas daily for any changes in the syllabus or for any changes in the due dates.** I will communicate with you by Canvas announcements and by email, so check Canvas daily. It is the only way I will be able to contact you. Also, check for discussion board questions as these will be your class participation assignments. **You are also expected to log on to Canvas and click on the Technical Writing course at least once a week by Thursday for attendance. You will be marked absent if you do not log in. I also take 3 points off per calendar day for late assignments.**

IV. Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate at least 70% Accuracy the ability to do the following:

- The responsibilities and professional environment in which technical writers work.

- Identify the major forms produced by technical writers.
- Identify and be familiar with technical documents and the audience and purpose to which they are directed.
- Follow an explicit process for producing technical documents for individual and collaborative projects.
- Show knowledge of word processing, e-mail, and presentation software.
- Identify basic knowledge of web page design and graphics.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following:

- Demonstrate understanding of the responsibilities of technical writers and the environment in which they work.
- Demonstrate familiarity with the major forms produced by technical writers.
- Produce technical documents appropriate to audience and purpose.
- Follow an explicit process for producing technical documents, both for individual and collaborative projects.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of word processing, e-mail, and presentation software.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of web page design.

V. Course Units:

Unit I—Technical Writing in the College Context (Chapter 1)

The student will be able to perform the following:

- Define technical writing
- Identify principles of teamwork common to technical writing
- Identify common technical documents
- Identify parts of the process followed by technical writers
- Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to use Stillman College e-mail
- Write a proposal for a major project (handout)

Unit II—Technical Writing on the Job

The student will be able to perform the following:

- Identify possible purposes and audiences for technical writing
 - Identify responsibilities of technical writers
 - Identify types, forms, and styles of in-house communication
 - Identify ethical concerns faced by technical writers
 - Identify legal concerns faced by technical writers
- Identify characteristics of high quality products and high quality documentation

Unit III—Collaborative Writing Projects

The student will be able to perform the following:

- Identify parts of the typical process for producing long documents
- Define an object-oriented writing process
- Identify types of preparatory research for technical writing projects
- Identify general guidelines for written questionnaires

- Identify guidelines for interviewing
- Identify characteristics and uses of closed and open survey questions
- Identify standard library reference works for technical writers
- Explain how to evaluate sources
- Identify steps in an internet research procedure
- Identify major principles for documenting sources
- Perform research on the internet
- Write a short set of instructions
- Undertake work toward a major collaborative project

Unit IV—The Rhetoric and Style of Technical Writing

The student will be able to perform the following:

- Identify purposes of various types of technical writing
- Recognize the relationship between global and local purpose
- Identify ways of analyzing audience characteristics
- Identify types of audiences
- Identify tone and its relationship to audience and purpose
- Recognize point of view and its relationship to audience and purpose
- Identify principles governing content
- Identify ways of grouping and ordering material
- Identify ways of revealing organization efficiently to readers
- Identify the categories of persuasive appeal
- Recognize rhetorical differences among cultures
- Identify sentence level issues in creating clear style
- Identify word level issues in creating clear style
- Identify formatting issues in creating clear style

Unit V—Web Pages and Presentations

The student will be able to perform the following:

- Identify general types of tools used for creating web sites
- Identify general principles for use of visuals
- Create a simple web site using HTML
- Create PowerPoint slides on major project
- Give an in-class presentation using PowerPoint slides

VI. Course Evaluation Methods

Final grades can range from A, B, C, D, F.

Assignment Calculations:

Your course grade will be based on the following assignments and percentages, which come to a total of 1000 points:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| • Quizzes | 100 points |
| • Progress Report on major project | 100 points |
| • Letters | 50points |
| • Job Application Letter and Resume | 50 points |
| • *Short set of technical instructions | 50 points |
| • Major project –Instruction Manual | 200 points |

• PowerPoint Presentation over Instruction Manual	50 points
• Proposal	300 points
• PowerPoint Presentation based upon proposal	100 points
• Total	1000 points

See statement about expectations regarding written assignments below. Also, this course will be taught on-line so it is very important that you have access to a working computer and the Internet and that you check Canvas each day for announcements and for the discussion board. There will be no excuses accepted. Also, make sure your email boxes are cleaned out so you can receive email.

The Stillman grading scale will be used in the course:

A=90-100
 B=80-89
 C=70-79
 D=60-69
 F=0-59

All major assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course. A student must have demonstrated writing competence of at least a C (70%) in order to pass the course. ***Each late quiz or assignment will be deducted 3 points per calendar day late from the due date. I will only accept papers in Microsoft Word that are submitted to Canvas. I will not accept emailed assignments.***

Expectations of the Students:

- The student must complete and submit all major assignments at the due date specified to assist in students receiving a passing grade in the course. A grade of C or better is required in all freshman English courses and is a prerequisite for advancement to another English course at Stillman. The Stillman College grading scale will be used for assessing the semester final grade for the class: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=0-59. Because a semester grade of C or better is required in all freshman courses, a grade of NC (No Credit) may be assigned when a student has completed all the major assignments, has attended class regularly and on time, but does not have a C average. Also refer to the English Department's *Standards for Grading*. All other kinds of situations may cause the student to receive a D or F.

Class Attendance Policy:

Preparing for class and attending class regularly are primary components in completing a course successfully. The *Stillman College Catalog* contains the entire class attendance policy. The parts of the policy dealing with unexcused absences, excused absences, and presenting excuses are as follows:

“Except when officially exempted, students and faculty are expected to attend all classes for which they are registered and assigned. Similarly, faculty and students are expected to meet classes at the scheduled time and to participate for the full period. Frequent tardies (3 or more) by students and early departures may lead to the assignment of an unexcused absence. **[In this class they will be so assigned.]** Student may be allowed as many unexcused absences as a course bears credit. Instructors should report excess absences to the Vice President for Student Affairs. Absences from class for any cause are a loss to students and may be harmful to the grades earned for the semester.

Unexcused absences—Unexcused absences exceeding the number of credit hours for a course can automatically suspend a student from a course. Where courses meet in 80-90 minute blocks, two unexcused absences are allowed for a 3-credit course. Double absences may be charged for unexcused absences that occur on the day before or following a holiday. **[In this class they will be so charged.]** When a student is suspended from a class for excessive absences, he/she may be reinstated by the Vice President for Student Affairs after a conference or counseling session with designated college staff.

Excused Absences—Students may obtain an official excuse by presenting the appropriate documentation to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The excuse must be endorsed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs before it becomes official. Officially excused absences are permissible so long as such absences do not destroy the ability of the student to master course requirements.

Presenting Excuses--Official excuses must be presented by the student to the concerned instructor within 7 days of the student's return to class. The presentation of a timely excuse shall entitle the student to an opportunity to perform all class assignments missed. Seven additional days, following the return to class, shall be allowed for student (and instructor) to execute make-up work.

Standards Governing Excused Absences

1. Grounds for Issuing Excuses

- a. Illness of student.
- b. Serious illness or death of a family member of a student.
- c. Authorized representation of college.
- d. Legally required court appearance.

Documentation Required:

- a. Excuses based upon illness require a statement by a physician or the college nurse

which spells out the exact times for which an excused absence is recommended

- b. Excuses based upon the death of a family member will require as verification: a news

account, funeral program, or statement from the funeral director involved. A written

statement from a parent mailed to the Vice President for Student Affairs, may be used

as proof of a family illness.

- c. Excuses based upon authorized representation of the College should be verified by a

published schedule or written statement from the President, Vice President for Student

Affairs, or Vice President for Academic Affairs, depending upon the source of

authorization.

- d. Excuses based upon a legally required court appearance should be verified by a copy of the document requiring such appearance.”

NOTE: In addition to the above stated policy, the following requirement applies: At the time you present an excused absence form from the Vice President's office, present a copy of that form to the instructor for his records.

You are responsible for keeping up with your absences, however accumulated, and are encouraged to check with me regarding your status. If you fail to adjust your tardy record and/or you arrive more than five minutes after class begins, or if you fail to provide proper documentation for legitimate absences and tardies, you assume all responsibilities for the penalties outlined in the **Late Penalties** section.

Expectations Regarding Assignments:

- **Check Canvas once a day and to complete online assignments as directed.**
- **Purchase the text immediately, read all assignments prior to class, and use the official text for documenting your written work.**
- **Submit written assignments at the time and place specified. You may submit one major paper late provided that you have completed the request for late paper form from bboard, that you have discussed your request with me before the due, that we agree on the new date and you meet that deadline. If you have a documented excuse, you must submit daily work at the agreed-upon time and according to College policy. Late daily work will NOT be accepted late unless you have highly unusual (Not merely difficulty locating a printer.) circumstances that you can document.**
- **Unless instructed otherwise, word process all out-of-class writing assignments in complete sentences. Use MLA form for putting your name and other information on your paper and for documentation of sources. Proofread carefully, as I will consider your command of Standard English when I evaluate your work. You may also be required to post assignments in Canvas.**
- **If you are to represent the college on a date that an assignment is due, submit your work early.**

Expectations Regarding Online Behavior:

The Student's Pledge of Honor should guide your online behavior: "As a member of the Stillman College community, I pledge on my honor that I will not lie, cheat, steal, or destroy, nor will I tolerate or condone this in other members of the community. I will do all within my power to uphold the high standards of integrity, honor, and excellence of Stillman."

- **You will not plagiarize. Any paper containing plagiarized material (from a published source, from another's paper, or from any other source) will be given a zero. Copying a classmate's paper is plagiarism. Adding your name to a group project that you did not work on is plagiarism. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, enter "plagiarism" on www.google.com and you can pull up several thousand links.**

VII. REQUIRED TEXT: *Technical Communication, 12th edition.* Mike Markel (PDF on Canvas)

VIII. COURSE READING LIST

Note: The instructor reserves the right to change the due dates or the assignments during the course of the semester. If so, these changes will be noted on blackboard. Also, remember that to complete the course successfully with a C or better, the student must hand in all work and all work must be on time. If the

student is participating in major college sponsored events, the work must be handed in before the student leaves on the trip.

This schedule is a guideline and may be adjusted according to the needs of the class.

Week 1—Jan. 7-8

Introduction to the course-- Read the material under the Course Information Module on Canvas. **Note that your textbook, *Technical Communication*, 12th edition is in a PDF to download in this module.**

Week 2—Jan. 11-15

Unit I—Technical Writing in the College Context (Chapter 1)

The student will be able to

- Define technical writing
- Identify principles of teamwork common to technical writing
- Identify common technical documents
- Identify parts of the process followed by technical writers
- Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to use Stillman College e-mail
- Write a proposal for a major project (handout)

Introduction to the course; goals and standards

Chapter 1, Introduction to Technical Communication

Chapter 2, Understanding Ethical and Legal Considerations

Discussion of major projects due during the semester—brochures, instruction manuals, proposals, progress reports, letters, resumes, portfolios and feasibility studies. We will also discuss due dates for the projects.

Chapter 14, Letter Unit, Corresponding in Print and Online

Orientation Quiz, due Jan 14 by 11:59 PM

Week 3—Jan. 18-22

Unit II—Technical Writing on the Job

The student will be able to

- Identify possible purposes and audiences for technical writing
- Identify responsibilities of technical writers
- Identify types, forms, and styles of in-house communication
- Identify ethical concerns faced by technical writers
- Identify legal concerns faced by technical writers
- Identify characteristics of high quality products and high quality documentation

Chapter 15 Preparing Job-Application Materials

Quiz # 1 over Chapters 1, 2, 14 due Jan 21 by 11:59 PM

Week 4—Jan. 25-29

Chapters 9 & 10, 12 Writing Coherent Documents and Writing Effective Sentences
Discussion of brochures

Quiz # 2 over Letters due by Tuesday, an. 26 by 11:59 PM

4 letters due—Inquiry, Reply to Inquiry, Claim Letter and Adjustment Letter, Jan.28 by 11:59 PM

Unit 3—The Rhetoric and Style of Technical Writing, Weeks5-10

The student will

- Identify purposes of various types of technical writing
- Recognize the relationship between global and local purpose
- Identify ways of analyzing audience characteristics
- Identify types of audiences
- Identify tone and its relationship to audience and purpose
- Recognize point of view and its relationship to audience and purpose
- Identify principles governing content
- Identify ways of grouping and ordering material
- Identify ways of revealing organization efficiently to readers
- Identify the categories of persuasive appeal
- Recognize rhetorical differences among cultures
- Identify sentence level issues in creating clear style
- Identify word level issues in creating clear style
- Identify formatting issues in creating clear style

Chapter 12 Creating Graphics

Chapter 17 Writing Informational Reports

Discussion of Proposals

Discussion of Progress report over proposal

Week 5—Feb 1-5

Do discussion board questions over job interviews you read in Chapter 15.

Job-Application Letter and Resume due, Feb.5 by 11:59 PM

Week 6—Feb. 8-12

Read:

Chapter 20, Writing Instructions

Chapter 16, Writing Proposals

Quiz # 3 over Chapters 9, 10, 12 due Feb. 11 by 11:59 PM

Week 7—Feb. 15-19

Quiz # 4 over Instruction Manuals due Feb 20 by 11:59 PM

Week 8—Feb. 22-26

Mid-term Week

Instruction Manual due, Feb. 25 by 11:59PM

PowerPoint over Instruction Manual due Feb 26 by 11:59 PM.

Week 9—March 1-5

Read Chapter over Progress Reports, Chapter 17

Week 10—March 8-12

Quiz # 5 over Progress Reports

March 15-19—Spring Break

Week 11—March 22-26

Progress Report due March 25 by 11:59 PM

Week 12—March 29-April 2

Read Chapter over Proposals

Quiz # 6 on proposals due April 1 by 11:59 PM.

Week 13—April 5-9

Proposal due, April 8 by 11:59 PM

Power point due—April 9 by 11:59 PM

Week 14—April 12-16

Last day of classes for candidates for graduation

Week 15—April 19-23

Quiz # 7 due over course evaluation

Week 16—April 24-29

Final Exam Week—no final in this course

