

[ENGL 218 M13 – Scientific and Technical Communication]
[Meeting Time and Place: M/W 2:30-3:45 pm, 218A Gardiner Hall]
[Instructor: Meg McGuire]
[Email: mmcguire@nmsu.edu]
[Office Hours: By Appointment]

Course Description:

This class examines what technical communication is, where it is used and what are some of the genres used in technical communication, such as emails, proposals, reports, etc. This course focuses on strategies for understanding and presenting technical information or various purposes to various audiences. As well as prepare you for writing and designing documents for technical and professional communities.

Course Objectives:

- Develop effective rhetorical strategies for creating persuasive, professional, and ethical documents that respond effectively to audience's needs, abilities, and interests.
- Conduct primary and secondary research to develop sound professional materials.
- Engage in effective collaboration with colleagues to manage projects.
- Learn to use design strategies to persuade, inform, and engage.
- Gain experience managing short and long term projects.
- Produce documents that meet the expectations of professional and academic discourse.

State of New Mexico Objectives:

- Analyze and evaluate oral and written communications in terms of situation, audience, purpose, aesthetics, and adverse points of view.
- Express a primary purpose in a compelling statement and order supporting points logically and convincingly.
- Use effective rhetorical strategies to persuade, inform, and engage.
- Employ writing and/or speaking processes such as planning, collaborating, and organizing.
- Composing, revising, and editing to create presentations using correct diction, syntax, grammar.
- Integrate research correctly and ethically from credible sources to support the primary purpose of communication
- Engage in reasoned civic discourse while recognizing the distinctions among opinions, facts, and inferences.

Prerequisite:

Everyone in this class, must have passed ENGL 111 with a "C" or higher.

Required Text and Materials:

- *Technical Communication Strategies for Today* – Richard Johnson-Sheehan
- *Writing Matters* – New Mexico State University Special Edition
- Additional articles I will post on Canvas
- I encourage you to bring your laptops or tablets. We will do many in-class activities where these computers will be helpful.

Course Requirements:

Attendance:

Students are expected to regularly attend all classes for which they are registered. Students making satisfactory progress in their classes will be excused from classes when they are representing NMSU on a university sponsored event (e.g. ASNMSU president representing NMSU at legislative session, student athletes competing in NMSU scheduled athletic events, or students attending educational field trips and conferences). Authorized absences do not relieve the student of their class responsibilities. Prior written notice of the authorized absence will be provided to the instructor by the sponsoring department.

- 2 or fewer absences: 10 points = A for 10% of final grade
- 3 absences: 8 points = B- for 10% of final grade
- 4 absences: 7 points = C- for 10% of final grade
- 5 absences: 6 points = D- for 10% of final grade
- 6 absences: 5 points = F for 10% of final grade
- 7 or more absences = F for class

Tardiness:

Each day, exactly at 2:30 pm, I will call roll. If you are not in class when your name is called, it is your responsibility to let me know you were there for the day. Otherwise you will be marked absent (see the attendance policy above).

Late Work:

All work must be turned in on time and during class. Assignments in this course are designed to build on one another so getting behind with course may impact your ability to successfully complete the class. **I will not accept late work** unless you have made arrangements with me well in advance of the due date. The decision of whether or not I accept late work is solely mine. I will not accept or grade late work that is left on my desk or sent to my email. If you are unable to turn in an assignment for emergency reasons, please inform me as soon as possible so we can work together to help get you caught up.

Cell Phones/Texting:

Don't do it. And if you choose to do so anyway, I reserve the right to ask you to leave.

Individual Conferences:

Talking about writing, whether it be traditional papers or new media texts, only increases the odds for writing to be successful and so there will be in-class tie to

discuss writing with other members of the class. Additionally, students will meet with me at least once this semester to discuss major course projects and the overall class. However, **I encourage students to make an appointment to meet with me to discuss any issues involving the class.**

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism, in any form, will not be tolerated. The *NMSU Student Handbook* includes a statement on academic misconduct. If you have any questions or concerns about this, review the policy statement in the handbook, visit the library's statement on plagiarism (<http://www.lib.nmsu.edu/plagiarism/>) and/or come see me.

Services for Students with Disabilities:

I urge any student with specific needs or concerns in this area to meet with me or to visit the SSD Office. New Mexico State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified NMSU students in accordance with state and federal laws. Students with documented physical, learning, or psychological disabilities should feel free to drop by the SSD office in Room 244 of Corbett Center or call (575) 646-1918.

Course Projects and Assignments

Major assignments will include instructions and explanations of grading expectations for each project.

Miscellaneous Class Activities and Participation – 20%

Homework and in-class work will be included in the final course grade and will often build towards your final projects. Many of these assignments are graded and some are not, but all are mandatory and necessary to contribute to your success in this course.

Additionally, your participation in class discussions will be figured into this grade. If you participate in a discussion every class period, you will be in good shape. If you never talk in class at all, your grade will be affected.

Cover Letter/Resume – 20%

For this assignment you will find an internship in your field and create a resume and cover letter tailored to it. The cover letter should be no more than one (1) page. In addition you will write a three page reflective essay that should discuss audience considerations and justify the decisions you made on why you chose the one job opening you did and in information you chose to include. Some places you may want to look for open positions include newspapers, journals from your field, professional organizations or company websites.

Technology/Media Proposal – 20%

For this assignment, you will write a proposal to persuade someone (a company, a celebrity, a non-profit organization, a teacher, etc.) to adopt a specific media tool, space or philosophy. To make your case, you will utilize research, observation, and theory.

Feasibility Report – 30%

There are several parts to this collaborative project that we will discuss in detail later in the semester. In groups of 3 or 4, you will identify a problem at NMSU and propose a solution that will better educate the audience at hand and present how feasible it would be for the audience to take action. This assignment will not only encompass collaborative writing, but will also see you propose an idea to the class, do research, consider document design, and work with interactive technology.