WRT 202.001: Technical Writing

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description:
Technical Writing is a three-credit course that continues the emphasis of Composition I on expository/analytic writing, with a greater focus on critical thinking and writing. In this introduction to technical writing, students will explore the theory and practice of writing in the business, scientific, and industrial fields. Students will examine professional writing samples to gain an understanding of the skills needed to successfully communicate through professionally written e-mails, memos, business letters, and various types of reports and analyses. Students will learn to evaluate and respond to the ideas that they encounter within the selections. The course will aim to develop students’ writing skills, essential for the production of professional documents. A research report is required for this course. The prerequisite in this course is WRT-101: Composition I.

Student Learning Objectives:
As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, you will be able to:
1. Use critical reading skills to summarize various technical documents, understand and evaluate these texts, and explain how technical writing techniques work to create clear, professional documents.
2. Write personal and academic responses to written works using appropriate terminology.
3. Use a process approach to continue the development of your writing style.
4. Justify the validity of your approach to technical assignments and document design.
5. Employ quotations and paraphrases from primary and secondary sources in your writing and document them following MLA style.
6. Revise your documents to achieve accessibility, coherence and usability.
7. Edit and proofread your writing for clarity and correctness.

Course Requirements:
You will be required to do the following:
1. Write at least four multi-paragraph, academic documents of at least 500 words.
   (Meets student learning objectives 1-7)
2. Write at least two in-class documents.
   (Meets student learning objectives 1-4, 7)
3. Complete other writing exercises such as summaries, journals, reading responses, reading comprehension questions, quizzes on reading assignments, letters, etc.
   (Meets student learning objectives 1-4)
4. Read, interpret, and analyze technical works.
   (Meets student learning objectives 1, 4)
5. Comprehend and apply various technical terms to texts assigned by your instructor.
   (Meets student learning objectives 1-3)
6. Conduct independent research and write a 7-10 page research report using CMS style.
   (Meets student learning objectives 1-7)
7. Submit papers that adhere to CMS manuscript requirements and demonstrate effective proofreading and editing.
   (Meets student learning objectives 1-7)
8. Participate in class discussions and other in-class (individual or group) activities necessary to produce quality academic prose.
   (Meets student learning objectives 1-2, 4)

Course Content:
As a student in this course, you can expect to do a great deal reading, writing, and thinking. All three of these tasks should work in tandem and not in isolation from one another. When you read, you should think deeply about the ideas presented in the text you are studying and the ways in which these ideas are organized. Don’t simply see the words on the page. Think about them and the way in which the author put these words together to convey meaning. Write about what you read. This will help you understand the material better. Read what you write and be certain that your words convey the meaning you intend. Don’t think about writing as splashing enough words on a page so that you fill up two or three pages of typewritten text. Take pride in your writing for it represents your unique way of seeing the world.

You can expect to read many technical texts and to write about these texts. Like Composition I, this class will continue to prepare you for the work that you will do in this or any other college, as well as for the professional world. Whether you take a math, economics, or philosophy course, you will have to read and understand the course material. Effective reading skills are essential to success in college. In addition, many college courses require a research paper. Technical Writing will continue to help you develop the skills that you will need to write research papers for this and for other college courses. Please don’t think about this course in isolation; instead, think about how your experience here can help make you a better student.

Course Texts and Other Required Materials

Folder with pockets

Grading Policy:
Evaluation of your performance in WRT-202 is based on:
- The three short documents (12.5 % each)
- The research report (25%)
- Oral/Visual report (12.5%)
- Writing Exercises (15%)
- Participation (which includes attendance and punctuality, in-class discussion, as well as all other required reading and writing activities and preparation for class) (10%)

I will provide you with a detailed handout discussing the evaluation criteria for the documents and revisions before your first document is due.

A = 90-100       C = 70-74
B+ = 85-89       D = 60-69
B = 80-84        F = 0-59
C+ = 75-79

Documents:
All short documents must be typed using CMS standards. Each short document should be between 500-700 words in length. The research report should be 1500-2000 words in length. Any outside material used in your document must be properly documented according to CMS standards. If electronic sources are used, you must submit a printed copy along with the paper. You must submit a printed copy of each of your documents, along with any drafts, outlines and prewriting in a folder with pockets. Documents submitted without a folder will incur a 5 point penalty.

All documents must also be submitted to Turnitin.com to receive credit.

Late Documents:
Late documents WILL NOT be accepted. Note: If your paper is submitted to Turnitin.com on time, you may bring the physical copy to the following class. However, you must submit the Final draft of your document and turn the hard copy in promptly to receive credit. Documents will not be graded unless I receive the physical copy.

Classwork/Homework:
Throughout the course, there will be several in-class assignments and activities designed to improve your writing skills. These will include writing exercises, grammar exercises, peer editing assignments, and class discussion. Your participation in these exercises directly affects the participation segment of your grade. In-class exercises can NOT be made up if you are absent, and work assigned for outside of class will not be accepted late. Failure to participate in Peer Editing exercises will result in a 5 point penalty on the paper.

Attendance Policy
BCC Attendance Policy: “All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.”

Class Attendance Policy: Poor attendance will directly affect your grade. You must be in class regularly to benefit from class lectures, discussion, and other activities. Four or more absences will result in a one point deduction from the participation portion of your grade for each day you have missed. If you miss class, you miss vital information and preparation for course assignments and class work. If you are absent excessively, you can expect to fail the course. Arriving late to class can affect your grade, too. If you arrive to class late twice, I will count that as one absence.

This is the English Department notice about plagiarism; see p. 43 in BCC 2006-07 College Catalog for official policy on cheating and plagiarism.
A STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

In college, we read and critically explore ideas that represent the intellectual property of researchers and scholars. Just as stealing another’s property is wrong in everyday life, so also is the taking of someone’s intellectual property without giving the creator/author credit. Plagiarism is the presentation of others’ language, ideas and thoughts as if they were our own.

The Latin word *plagiarius* means “kidnapper.” Plagiarism is taking another’s intellectual property without the owner’s permission or without acknowledging the source. Whether the plagiarism occurs purposefully or carelessly, the offense is serious and carries severe academic penalties.

How Can Students Prevent Plagiarism?

Students must carefully use citations to credit:

- Ideas that are not common or general knowledge;
- Facts and statistics from published research;
- Graphs, charts, and diagrams from published research;
- The exact words of another in spoken or written form (quotations);
- Material published in books, magazines, encyclopedias or journals;
- Material from electronic on-line sources;
- Material written by other students or individuals;
- Material obtained from paper-writing “services.”

A Matter of Integrity

Personal integrity is at the heart of the issue. A blemish on one’s integrity has serious academic and career repercussions. Plagiarism destroys the essential trust between students and teachers. A plagiarized paper calls into question all the work produced by a student. Just as academic achievement produces respect, plagiarism produces academic disgrace. Students would be wise to preserve the ethical integrity of their character through a conscientious avoidance of plagiarism.

(Prof. Charles Bordogna, Bergen Community College 12/20/2000)

*In this class, the College policy on cheating and plagiarism as stated in the Bergen Community College Catalog will be followed. I take plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism on any essay will result in a ZERO on the essay and a possible ZERO in the course depending on the severity of the case.*

LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTERS
ENGLISH LANGUAGE RESOURCE CENTER (ELRC)
ENDER HALL 126 / 201-612-5292
http://www.bergen.edu/pages/2182.asp
The English Language Resource Center, located in Ender Hall Room 126 provides help to students whose native language is not English. The center assists students to become proficient in English through multimedia computer programs, cassettes, video tapes, and books as well as individual tutoring. The English Language Resource Center also offers ESL conversation groups and specialized language skill workshops.

TUTORING CENTER
L125 / 201-447-7489
http://www.bergen.edu/Tutoring Center/
The Tutoring Center, staffed with peer and professional tutors, offers free individual and group tutoring, supplemental instruction, and online tutoring for subjects offered at BCC. The Tutoring Center provides alternative approach to problem solving and organization skills.

WRITING CENTER
L125 / 201-447-7136
http://www.bergen.edu/pages/1795.asp
The Writing Center is designed to serve the writing needs of the BCC community. Peer tutors, professional tutors, and English Department faculty serve as writing consultants who work with visitors to the Center in individualized sessions. Each session is organized to the address the specific needs of the writer. Areas of support include help with research papers, written class assignments, college application essays, and grammar review.