

**COURSE SYLLABUS  
ENGL 2311  
TECHNICAL WRITING  
Summer 2011  
Taught online**

**PRINT THIS OUT AND REFER TO IT  
OFTEN. EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW  
ABOUT THE CLASS IS IN HERE!**

**Instructor:** Jimidene Murphey. Contact me through the WebCT email; I check it frequently.

**Textbook:** Lannon, John M. *Technical Communication, 9e*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman. You can get the book from the Clarendon College bookstore.

**Course Description:** A course involving correctness and effectiveness in technical writing for students of agriculture, engineering, business, science, and other technical fields. Principles of exposition are applied to actual problems in these and other subjects.

**General Course Objectives:** Students will understand and be able to demonstrate in writing the knowledge, skill, and appreciation regarding techniques necessary for effective communication in technical fields. See Course Objectives below for specific objectives.

**ON-LINE TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:** It is my firm belief that students who take the responsibility for learning will learn the most. Therefore, in this class I will be acting more as a "facilitator of learning" than a "traditional teacher." What you learn in this course will come primarily from these sources: textbook exercises, lab assignments and email messages from me. If you ever need extra help, remember that I am only a phone call or an email message away.

**INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES:** I will have EVERYTHING you need to do assignments posted in WebCT. I will do the following for instructional procedures:

- Collaborate with students on-line and in class.
- Provide additional materials for class assignments and study when needed.
- Grade and discuss student writing assignments on-line.
- Direct and assist students in library and Internet research.
- Work with students individually whenever possible.

**STUDENT REQUIREMENTS:**

- Regular attendance (for online classes, that means checking email at least every day or two for summer class)
- Complete all written weekly assignments and communication assignments (bulletin board postings)
- Complete unit tests and final exam

**SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

**Knowledge and understanding**

- To become familiar with the requirements of good style in technical writing.
- To become familiar with writing introductions, conclusions, and transitions.
- To understand the standards of good format.
- To become familiar with graphic aids.
- To learn to find and to use published information.

**Skills and abilities**

- To acquire skill in writing business letters.
- To acquire skill in practical communication.
- To master the fundamental types and techniques of exposition pertinent to engineering, business, scientific, and agricultural reports.
- To acquire skill in the production of common types of reports.
- To produce a longer library research report.

#### **Attitudes and appreciations**

- To develop an appreciation for a carefully prepared manuscript.
- To learn to be considerate of the reader.
- To appreciate a scientific approach to everyday problem solving.
- To realize and accept the importance of meeting responsibilities.

**ABOUT ASSIGNMENTS:** Assignments will be uploaded into the Drop Box area of the Web CT server. Click on the “How To...” link on the homepage then “How to Submit Assignments.” This is a little tricky: you **SIMPLY MUST FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS EXACTLY FOR YOUR ASSIGNMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED PROPERLY.** Specific directions will be given with each assignment. I will notify you when I have received the assignments. Assignments are to be turned in on time. You will generally have at least one week to complete assignments. You can certainly turn the assignment in early; however, if the assignment is not turned in on time, you will receive a zero. You will know if it is late because the Dropbox icon will indicate “Not Available.”

It is, of course, possible that someone will have some technological difficulties (computer crashes or our server goes down). If this should happen, I will let you know what to do. You will certainly not have points deducted when something happens beyond your control. **BUT YOU HAVE TO CONTACT ME IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE SUBMITTING YOUR WORK.**

**DROPPING THE COURSE:** If you decide that you cannot continue with the course, you should go through the proper process for dropping a course so that you don't receive an "F" on your transcript. I won't drop you from the class – you must do that yourself. For heaven's sakes, don't just quit coming! If you see you are having serious trouble or something comes up you couldn't foresee, please come talk to me, and we'll see if we can work something out before you drop. See the [College Catalog](#) and refer to sections under Academic Information entitled "Schedule Changes" and "Dropped Course Grades" for specific information.

**HOW I GRADE:** I grade document assignments and exercises as “superior, good, acceptable, or unacceptable.”

**Superior** documents (you'll get a grade of 100)

- meet professional requirements as if you were in a real workplace setting
- have only one or two spelling, grammatical, or mechanical errors
- are organized in a logical and readable style
- are designed appropriate and correctly (memos look like memos are supposed to look, etc.)
- are the **ONLY ONES THAT EMPLOYERS WILL ACCEPT!!**

**Good** documents (you'll get a grade of 85)

- satisfy most of the superior requirements but contain some mechanical and spelling errors that can be easily corrected
- contain no more than three or four spelling, grammatical, or mechanical errors
- are not organized as logically and thoughtfully as superior documents

**Acceptable** documents (you'll get a grade of 70)

- satisfy some of the superior requirements but contain some mechanical and spelling errors that can be easily corrected

- are not organized logically and are confusing to the reader
- need quite a bit of revision to be acceptable

**Unacceptable but completed** documents (you'll get a grade of 50)

- need extensive revision to meet all the requirements or has so many mechanical, rhetorical, or design errors that would distract the reader

**GRADES AND GRADING:** Grades will be calculated as follows

Assignments (documents exercises, and progress reports)	30%
Average of unit evaluations, including final	60%
Periodic progress reports	10%

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = below 59

A report of semester grades will be mailed to you at your designated street address.

**PERIODIC PROGRESS REPORTS:** The purpose of the progress reports is to get you into the habit of writing. In business and industry, you often have to keep a log of your day's tasks, prepare progress reports on projects, give periodic updates, and so on. This will get you into the habit. Progress reports will be due on each Sunday at midnight for the week, submitted through the Dropbox. Tell me how you have progressed during the class, your thoughts/wishes/gripes/frustrations with the class, and how you feel the assignments will help you in your chosen careers. Write at least three or four paragraphs. Since this IS still an English class, I will be looking at spelling, grammar, and mechanics! Play-like you're preparing these for a real-live company. If you submit them professionally with very few errors (less than three), you will receive a grade of 100. If they have more than three errors, you will get a 70. Don't submit your progress reports, and you will get a zero. The Dropbox will indicate the week you should send in.

**PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES:** Because this is an independent study course, you will not be required to "participate" – just doing your assignments and tests will be participation.

**ABOUT TESTS:** You will have two days in which to take the on-line objective tests. You will need to find a proctor to monitor your testing in a controlled environment. Before the first test, you must send me the name, address, phone number, and email of your proctor, then I will send the proctor password information. If some emergency situation occurs that prevents you from taking a test during the allotted time, you must contact me before the last date for that test to receive permission to take a make-up test or you will receive a grade of zero for the test. Being away on college-sponsored events doesn't count, because you will have a whole week in which to take the test. The preferred way to contact me on this issue is by email; however, phone, voice mail, or fax will do.

**ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY:** Clarendon College provides reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Should you have a recognized disability and require special accommodations, you must notify either of the following individuals as soon as possible: Dean of Students or your instructor.

## SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

### Hardware Required:

- Pentium 133 computer or better with minimum 32 mb RAM (To check: My Computer, Control Panel, System, General tab)
- Screen resolution best at 800x600 (To check or re-set: My Computer, Control Panel, Display, Settings tab)

### Software Required:

- Windows 95 or higher

- Microsoft Office 97 (at least Word and PowerPoint) --OR-- higher
- Email address
- Internet Access using one of the following browsers:
- Netscape 3.0 or higher (make sure your browser is Java enabled). To enable Java: Select "Edit," "Preferences," "Advanced." Make sure all checkboxes about Java are activated.
- Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher (make sure your browser is Java enabled). To enable Java: Select "View," "Internet Options," Advanced tab. Make sure all checkboxes about Java are activated.

**Basic Computer Skills Needed:**

Keyboard and mouse usage, starting/closing programs, manipulating windows, using menus, toolbars, dialog boxes, and scroll bars, basic word processing and spreadsheet skills. [Continuing education classes](#) are also offered on campus to help you develop these skills.

Special Skills Required for Taking an On-Line Course:

1. Sending and receiving email
2. Working knowledge of the web
3. Basic knowledge of computer operations

**TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE, SUBJECT TO ADJUSTMENT IF NECESSARY**

(Remember, assignments and tests will be due on Sunday at midnight).

Specific assignments are listed in WebCT under each week's Assignment Sheets.

Week 1:	Chapters 1-4
Week 2:	Chapters 5-6 Test #1, Ch. 1-6
Week 3:	Chapters 12-14
Week 4:	Chapters 15-17 Test #2, Ch. 12-17
Week 5:	Chapters 18-20
Week 6:	Chapters 22-23 (omit 21) Test #3, Ch. 18-23 (counted as Final Exam)