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# ENGLISH 149 Contract

Spring 2009

Section 02, MWR, 12:10–1:00 in 38-222 and Section 11, TWR, 11:10–12:00 in 14-252

Unintelligible documents are not natural disasters that have to be accepted like summer squalls or sleet storms.

— Karen Shriver, *Dynamics in Document Design*

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## Technical Writing for Engineers (GE A3)

The principles of technical writing.

Discussion and application of rhetorical principles in technical environments. Study of methods, resources and common formats used in corporate or research writing. 4 lectures. **Prerequisite:** Completion of GE Areas A1 and A2. For Engineering students. For further information on GE educational objectives and criteria, go to [www.ge.calpoly.edu](http://www.ge.calpoly.edu)

**Instructor**  
Mary Forte

**Office Hours in 47-22C**  
M 11:10–12:00, T 10:10–11:00 and 12:10  
1:00, R 10:10–11:00, or by appointment

**Email (M-F)**  
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**Required Text**  
*A Concise Guide to Technical  
Communication*, Gurak & Lannon, 2004, 3<sup>rd</sup>  
edition, Pearson Longman

✱ **TECHNICAL WRITING** works for its users. . . . the people who must or want to use the information can

- Find what they need
- Understand what they find
- Use what they understand appropriately.

—Janice C. Redish “What is Information Design?”

## GOALS

In this class you will become familiar with the appropriate forms, techniques, and styles used in professional and technical communication.

You will learn to effectively analyze a rhetorical situation in terms of audience and purpose. You will also learn strategies for communicating clearly, logically, ethically, and appropriately.

## CLASSWORK STANDARDS

Work must look professional. All assignments, including memos of transmittal, will use

- a word processor (unless I say otherwise)
- spell check
- 12 point Times or Times New Roman font. (You may use larger font for headings.)
- memo format (or a memo of transmittal if appropriate) as described in class
- all tech writing standards covered in class or in the reading up to the due date
- no *Microsoft Word* templates
- staples for multiple pages
- the team logo on all group assignments

NOTE: You may use recycled paper to print out assignments except for the final draft of the recommendation report going to your primary reader.

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY.

Assignment requirements usually differ somewhat from the examples in the text. Contact me if you have questions about the directions.

## WEB SITE

My web site includes a copy of the syllabus packet, detailed descriptions of grading standards, sample assignments, and so on. You

will need to print out several of these handouts as indicated in the class schedule and assignment description sheet. The website also contains the overhead transparencies and other class materials that I use each week in class. I strongly recommend that you look at these and consider printing them out before you come to class.

### **GRADING CODES**

You can find a list of grading codes and their translations on my website. Please ask questions if you need clarification.

#### **Grade Breakdown**

Check scores regularly on Blackboard to make sure our records match.

Percentages break down as follows:

A=100-93%  
A-=92-90%  
B+=89-87%  
B=86-83%  
B-=82-80%  
C+=79-77%  
C=76-73%  
C-=72-70%  
D+=69-67%  
D=66-63%  
D-=62-60%

### **EFFICIENCY EXPECTATIONS**

Efficient professionals complete their work on time, follow specifications, and impress their employers and clients. Efficient students also turn in their work on the due dates and follow all of the assignment directions.

However, since the world is still not perfect, you may turn in one assignment (excluding any final draft) late or incorrectly done without affecting your final score — as long as I get a correct version within one week of the due date. After that, late/incorrect assignments will decrease your final class score by 10 points per day until you turn in a correct assignment (50 points per day for the final report, final assembly instructions, or the group evaluations).

NOTE: you may make up one quiz during the quarter for full credit with a doctor's note, half credit without. All quiz make-ups need to take place within one week of the quiz date listed on the class schedule.

**IMPORTANT: You must turn in all assignments to pass the class.**

### **RESUBMITS**

All resubmitted assignments must include the original, all previous rewrites, and my grading checklist for that assignment. Read the assignment descriptions for further information on resubmits.

### **GROUP GRADES**

I will assess the assignment turned in to me on the due date. Each person in the group is responsible for all aspects of the assignment and will receive the same group grade on the assignment—except if group evaluations indicate a lesser contribution from a particular member. Those group members not contributing adequately earn fewer points.

Do remember that simply reporting the poor performance of a group member does not improve the quality or grade of an assignment. Please let me know if you are having trouble with a group member. Group composition may be altered; however, the assignment requirements will remain the same for all students. The time saved in coordinating group work balances out individual writing and research time.

☛ Check your Cal Poly email regularly for extra notes or schedule changes.

### **EMAIL**

Email does not substitute for coming to see me in my office. However, you may have better luck contacting

me through email than by telephoning my office. Make sure to factor in at least two working days for a response. Also remember that some emails evaporate in cyberspace, so always give me important papers in person. **Don't send attachments.** I cannot accept assignments through email; a paper copy must arrive in my hands on or before the due date at the start of class to be counted on time.

### **OFFICE VISITS**

If you want me to look over an assignment before the due date, bring a paper copy to me during my office hours. Always bring specific questions so we can use our time efficiently.

### **NOTES**

Take notes in class and copy the information from the overheads. Quiz questions often come from the notes and the text will not suffice.

### **DRC STUDENTS**

Please let me know at least two weeks in advance if we need to fill out paperwork or make arrangements.

### **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

See Assignment Description handout.

#### **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STATEMENT ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is the act of using the ideas, written work, images, or audio files created by another person or persons as if they were your own without giving proper credit to the source. This is true whether you quote the source's words exactly or use his or her images or audio files, or put the source's ideas in your own words. **You must credit the original author or source by providing citations in the appropriate form as defined by the instructor.**

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The submission of another person's work in any medium, either in part or as a whole, without acknowledgement. (This includes text, formatting, visuals, etc. from another class.)
- Failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that rightfully belong to another person.
- Failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another source whether the quotation is a paragraph, a sentence or a phrase.
- Paraphrasing of another person's writing without acknowledging that person as the author.

According to university policy, as a student at this university, you are responsible for your actions.

Upon discovery of plagiarism, you will be subject to a penalty as determined by the instructor [**required resubmit with a score of CR- only for the plagiarized assignment and for the memo rewrite**]. In addition, a report detailing the incident of plagiarism and the appropriate penalty for that incident will be filed with the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.