Technical Writing

English 2413 (sections 003 and 004) at the University of Texas at San Antonio, Spring 2012.

About your instructor Robert Wilhite
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Course description in the 2010-2012 Undergraduate Catalog
“Techniques of expository writing, particularly adapted to students in technological and scientific subjects.” Exception: these sections are adapted for students interested in business, but it illustrates the fundamentals of technical writing for students in all majors. This course is required for a bachelors degree in English with a concentration in professional writing and for several Communication concentrations. It is an elective for many programs.

About the course
We will develop our ability to write formally, according to style guides. We'll write many types of business documents, each one describing a real or imaginary firm of our choosing. We will work with a variety of applications, including jpegs, Pages/Word, Keynote/PowerPoint, Numbers/Excel, blog software, and video editors including iMovie and Windows Movie Maker. We will study terms and concepts of the financial and marketing worlds, and we'll practice our presentation skills. We will also create a portfolio online so that collaborators, potential employers, and graduate school admissions officers can see our professionalism.

Evaluation
The course grade derives from scores on written assignments, presentations, quizzes, and attendance. Good grades on written assignments result from being on-time, accomplishing assigned tasks and following the rules on style and usage in Formal Usage.ppt and Assignments.ppt.

I accept late papers, but they lose thirty-five points (of 100) if they are turned in after the class submits its papers at the beginning of class on assigned due dates. I provide make-up quizzes, but they also lose thirty-five points (of 100). Papers and make-up quizzes will not be accepted after...

- Fall and Spring semesters: MWF classes: 3 class days. TTh classes: 2 class days
- Summer: 3 class days

Pop quizzes may occur on any day. Pop quizzes cannot be made-up.

Every absence after three takes two points from the course grade.

All English courses at the University of Texas at San Antonio are using the plus/minus scheme as of Fall 2011. This may change. The course scores and their equivalent ASAP grades to be used in this course are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The university’s grade point average equivalents: A+ 4.00 A 4.00 A- 3.67 B+ 3.33 B 3.00 B- 2.67 C+ 2.33 C 2.00 C- 1.67 D+ 1.33 D 1.00 D- 0.67 F 0.00

Students with disabilities
For recognition, contact the university office at MS 2.03.18. (210) 458-4157. See: Utsa.edu/disability/students.htm. In this class, all accommodations will be gladly provided.
**Required materials**


- Other: reliable printer, stapler, flash drive, video capture device (most cell phones work well), and a computer with a browser, an Office-type package, and video editing software.

**Scholastic integrity**

I have a very simple policy regarding academic honesty: I fail dishonest scholars and refer them to Judicial Affairs. The university defines "dishonesty" thus:

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act.

**From our provost John Frederick, PhD**

*Roadrunner Creed*

The University of Texas at San Antonio is a community of scholars, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered. As a Roadrunner, I will:

- Uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity by practicing and expecting fair and ethical conduct;
- Respect and accept individual differences, recognizing the inherent dignity of each person;
- Contribute to campus life and the larger community through my active engagement; and
- Support the fearless exploration of dreams and ideas in the advancement of ingenuity, creativity, and discovery.

Guided by these principles now and forever, I am a Roadrunner!

**The University of Texas at San Antonio Academic Honor Code**

A. **Preamble**

The University of Texas at San Antonio community of past, present and future students, faculty, staff, and administrators share a commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge. We honor the traditions of our university by conducting ourselves with a steadfast duty to honor, courage, and virtue in all matters both public and private. By choosing integrity and responsibility, we promote personal growth, success, and lifelong learning for the advancement of ourselves, our university, and our community.

B. **Honor Pledge**

In support of the ideals of integrity, the students of the University of Texas at San Antonio pledge:

"As a UTSA Roadrunner I live with honor and integrity."

C. **Shared responsibility**

The University of Texas at San Antonio community shares the responsibility and commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge and adheres to the UTSA Honor Code.
Initial Schedule *Note: this will change

**Week 1 from January 16**
W Getting started: the importance of technical communication (and J-S, chapter 1). Syllabus: course overview and policies.
F Introductions. Details of the schedule and a guide to what’s on Blackboard. Our use of J-S.

**Week 2 from January 23**
M Assigned: 1) Business Overview and presentation. What’s a style sheet? How writing is graded. Brief review of English sentence structure.
W What’s a “page element?” Introduction to styles and templates. Editing. *Formal Usage.ppt*.

**Week 3 from January 30**
W In-class: composing the Business Overview. Business Overview presentation rubric.

**Week 4 from February 6**
M Due: Business Overview and presentation. Papers on the screen. Reminders on presenting.
W More Business Overview presentations.
F Last Business Overview presentations. Coaching on presentations.

**Week 5 from February 13**
W Effective business letters, memos, email, voicemail and texts (including J-S chapter 11).
F Probably more from J-S chapter 11. One more look at General Business Terms and then a quiz (bring a Scantron 882E).

**Week 6 from February 20**
W Employment-related letters. Project work and why it’s good (including J-S chapter 3).
F Financial terms from *Business Terms.ppt*. What investors do.

**Week 7 from February 27**
M Target: return of 1) Vision, Mission, and Values; and 2) general terms quiz. Financial terms.
W Brief review of financial terms and then a quiz (bring a Scantron 882E).
F In-class: composing the Funding and Set-up Plans.

**Week 8 from March 5**
M Marketing terms from *Business Terms.ppt*. How do we publicize our enterprises?
W More on marketing terms. Target: return of quiz on financial terms.
**F**  In-class: composing the Marketing Plan and sections. Quiz on marketing terms (Scantron).

**Spring Break from March 12**

**Week 9 from March 19**

M  Due: Funding, Set-up and Marketing Plans. Assigned: Start-up Gantt. Gantt graphics.

W  In-class work on Start-up Gantts.

F  Target: return of financial terms and marketing terms quizzes.

**Week 10 from March 26**


W  Target: return of Funding, Set-up, and Marketing Plans. In-class: spreadsheets.

F  Document design (and J-S chapter 7).

**Week 11 from April 2**


W  In-class: composing the Abbreviated Business Plan.


**Week 12 from April 9**


W & F  Pitches.

**Week 13 from April 16**

M  Assigned: 1) Ad Video Script, 2) Ad Video Presentation, and 3) Ad Video.

W  Target: return of Funding Letter and Abbreviated Business Plan.

F  Ethics (and J-S chapter 4).

**Week 14 from April 23**

M  Due: Ad Video Script.

W  Due: 1) Ad Video Presentation, and 2) Ad Video.

F  More presentations and ads.

**Week 15 from April 30**


W  Last day of class.

**Important dates**

- Last day for automatic withdrawal: Monday, April 30, 5 PM
- Student study days: Thursday and Friday, May 3 and 4
- Final exams:
  - 10 AM class: Wednesday, 9 May, 7:30-10:00 AM
  - 12 PM class: Tuesday, 8 May, 2:30—4:00 PM