

ENG 2413: TECHNICAL WRITING
SUMMER 2012
COURSE SYLLABUS

ENG 2413: TECHNICAL WRITING

“This Syllabus is provided for informational purposes for the anticipated course content and schedule of this course. It is based upon the most recent information available and is as accurate and complete as possible. I reserve the right to make any changes I deem necessary and/or appropriate. I will make my best efforts to communicate any changes in the syllabus in a timely manner. Students are responsible for being aware of these changes.”

COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor Information

Robin English-Bircher, Lecturer II

Office: NPB 1.110D

Office Hours: MW 12:30pm-1pm

TR 8:30am-9am & by appointment

Email: robin.bircher@utsa.edu

Phone: 458-5348

Prerequisites

Students must have completed the Freshmen Composition sequence (WRC 1013 & 1023) or a university recognized substitute.

Course Description

Technical Writing introduces students to the basics of writing done outside the academic sphere. It emphasizes the writing process and considers all aspects of the rhetorical situation but concentrates on writing for professional audiences. Students will practice and hone their ability to communicate effectively. The course’s goal is to sharpen the skills needed for writing (planning, designing, writing, revising, and editing) to achieve success during and after college.

Technical Writing is writing designed for students in all fields of study; therefore, a technical background is not needed. However, students will need to use the basic tools of modern communication, such as Office Suite, internet browsers, and Blackboard.

The class is made up of various forms of practice and assessment. Reading quizzes and discussions (in class and online) will track students’ engagement and learning. Writing practices and homework will hone and develop skills. Projects and a presentation, will demonstrate the students’ mastery.

Textbooks

REQ: Tebeaux, Elizabeth and Sam Dragga. *Essentials of Technical Communication*. 2nd edition. Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN: 9780195384222; COST: \$52.95 (NEW), \$39.75 (USED), \$28.15-23.40 (RENT)

Required Materials

- Computer and Internet Access, especially Blackboard Access
- Flash/Jump Drive
- Small binder (½ - 1 inch) or portfolio with “dividers”

Disability Services

Any student requiring additional assistance must register with [Disability Service](http://utsa.edu/disability) at <http://utsa.edu/disability>.

COURSE POLICIES

Technical writing is designed for students to communicate in a professional setting; therefore, policies will reflect those found in the workplace. To mirror that experience, an Employee (Student) Handbook will be provided. All students will be required to read and follow the handbook. A confirmation page must be submitted, affirming that each student has read and understood the syllabus, calendar, and handbook by Thursday, June 7.

COURSE COMPOSITION

Technical Writing is a course that mixes traditional lecture, discussion, and workshop as students learn, practice, develop, and master skills related to writing in a professional environment. Students are expected to participate as they would in a professional setting.

Scholastic Dishonesty

“Scholastic dishonesty” is any form of cheating or plagiarism that violates the Student Code of Conduct. Scholastic Dishonesty or academic 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. In any suspected case, university procedures will be followed.

For more information, see <http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html>.

Course Work

Students will be required to complete the following work to be eligible for a successful grade in this course:

Tasks 20% (items averaged)	Seven Projects (each cost ranges) 60%
Individual Presentation 10%	Portfolio 10%

- **Tasks (20%):** This will consist of any work that is not a project. This will include practice materials for projects, additional writing practices, and reading quizzes (completed via Blackboard). Some of these are listed on the calendar – especially quizzes – but most are not. They will be announced in class and then posted on Blackboard in the Homework Folder. Each of these will be graded on two primary components, completion and correctness.
- **Individual Presentation:** Students will be required to present one of their individual projects – projects 3-6 – on July 5 & 6. This presentation will be between five to seven minutes in length for a specified audience and will include visual aids (a PowerPoint slide show and “take-aways”/handouts).

Course Work (continued)

- Projects: Projects will demonstrate student mastery of material. As such, this work must be the students' best efforts, including the final presentation. Each project will be graded based on its requirements (stated in the assignment) using a rubric.
 - Project 1 (5%) – Basic, general 1-page resume
 - Project 2 (10%) – Targeted resume and application letter for application for a job at Roadrunner, Inc., supplying all required documents.
 - Project 3 (10%): Employee instructions for Roadrunner, Inc.
 - Project 4 (10%): Correspondence written to various parties to deal with a situation at Roadrunner, Inc.
 - Project 5 (10%): Brief, informative Informal Report on an assigned charity.
 - Project 6 (10%): Researched Proposal on a given topic and scenario.
 - Project 7(5%): Progress Report about portfolio progress.
- Portfolio (10%): Students will compile some of the class projects (some required and others specific projects) into a portfolio. The exact assignment will be supplied no later than week four. The work is to be revised and edited for professional presentation.

Grading

The work done will determine how an item is graded:

- Tasks: The assignment will define the grading. Most often, it will be about being correct and complete, with points lost for incomplete work or incorrect actions taken.
- Projects: These will be graded on the +/- scale. Project requirements will be made clear on the assignment as well as the rubric provided.

As of Fall 2011, UTSA has adopted the use of the plus/minus grading system. Below is the letter to GPA equivalents, as well as the number score used in this class:

Letter	GPA score	# score
A+	4.0	97-100
A	4.0	94-96
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.0	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.0	74-76

Letter	GPA score	# score
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.0	64-66
D-	.67	60-63
F	0	59 & below

COURSE CALENDAR

* All items are due on the date listed at the beginning of or before class.*

* This calendar is subject to change. Students will be notified of any changes. *

All readings come from *The Essentials of Technical Communications* unless otherwise noted.

DATE	READING	ASSIGNMENTS
June 4	Orientation – Introduction to ENG 2413	
June 5	Resumes (Ch 12): 308-316 Designing Documents (Ch 5): 71-89 Blackboard: Resume samples	
June 6	Correspondence of the Job Search (Ch 12): 303-308 Blackboard: Korkki “A Cover Letter...” Blackboard: Cover Letter samples	Project 1 due
June 7	Writing for your Readers (Ch 2) Blackboard: Trunk, “Write & Ready”	Cover Letter Draft
June 8	Characteristics of Writing at Work (Ch 1) Appendix A	Project 2 due
June 11	Instructions, Procedures, and Policies (Ch 10) Appendix A continued	<i>Grammar Pre-Test</i>
June 12	Achieving a Readable Style (Ch 4) Appendix A continued	<i>Chapter 10 quiz</i>
June 13	Designing a Document (Ch 5)	Instruction Draft
June 14	Emails, Texts, Memos, and Letters Blackboard: Correspondence Format	Project 3 due
June 15	Informal Technical Reports (Ch8): 153-167	
June 18	Writing Ethically (Ch 3) Appendix B	Project 4 due
June 19	Designing Illustrations (Ch 6)	<i>Chapter 8 (informal) quiz</i>
June 20	Reports TBA	Report Draft
June 21	Proposal Reports (Ch 9): 197-218	
June 22	Body of a Formal Report (Ch 8): 173-182 Blackboard: Writing Formal Reports	Project 5 due

COURSE CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

DATE	READING	ASSIGNMENT
June 25	Elements of Formal Reports (Ch 8): 168-182 Blackboard: Report Elements	
June 26	TBA	Full Proposal Draft
June 27	Progress Reports (Ch 9): 219-235	<i>Chapter 8 (elements) quiz</i>
June 28	Portfolio	
June 29	Oral Reports (Ch 11): 254-272	Project 6 due
July 2	Oral Reports (Ch 11): 284-291 Blackboard: Developing & Giving Presentations Folder	
July 3	Oral Reports (Ch 11): 272-284 Blackboard: Presentation Visuals Folder	<i>Chapter 11 quiz</i> Presentation Outline
July 4	Fourth of July – NO CLASS	
July 5	Presentations *Last Day to Withdraw with a W	Presentations
July 6	Presentations	Presentations
July 9	Portfolio Assignment	Project 7 due
July 10	10:30am (exact time TBA) Final Exam for Section 2f	Portfolio due
July 11	7:30am (exact time TBA) Final Exam for Section 1F	Portfolio due

Final Exam

- Exact times for the final are yet to be finalized; they will take place during the designated final, but they will not take the entire scheduled block.
- All students must attend one final where they will submit their final portfolio and complete an exit review.
- Students may attend either final time.
 - Sect. 01F (9:15am-10:45): Wed, July 11 @ 7:30am
 - Sect. 02F: (11am-12:30pm): Tues, July 10 @ 10:30am

**Withdrawing from the class*

- Students may choose to withdraw at any time but must do so by July 5.
- Per State law, students at state funded universities and community colleges are allotted six withdraws during their bachelor degree. After six withdraws, students will be charged out of state tuition rates.



Roadrunner, Inc.

Employee (Student) Handbook

Summer 2012

Dear Roadrunner Team Member:

Welcome to Roadrunner, Inc. We are glad to have you as a part of our team. This semester, we are eager to grow as a group and achieve great success. We hope you are just as excited about this opportunity as we are.

In order to expand and succeed, we all must work as an efficient, well-oiled machine. Each of us has a part to play and responsibilities to uphold. To help you to do that, this Employee (Student) Handbook details the rules and regulations for Roadrunner, Inc. If you follow the policies in place, we are sure you will have few problems and have great success alongside the group.

Roadrunner, Inc. is happy to comply with university, city, state, and federal regulations, as well as the policies provided. As such, we expect every employee to do the same. If you have any questions regarding the policies, feel free to contact Ms. English-Bircher, about your concerns. If you wish to challenge any ruling, feel free to do so, but be prepared to provide ample official documentation and/or other proof. Without these items, your issues cannot be dealt with in a fair and unbiased manner.

Finally, we ask that you closely read over this document and complete the confirmation page in back. This page must be on record or you cannot get paid (i.e. get grades). Employees are expected to submit this form no later than one week from the end of orientation – Thursday, June 7. After that time, any work completed by the employee will not be graded until the employee submits the required form.

Thank you and welcome to Roadrunner, Inc.

Robin M. English-Bircher
President
NPB 1.110D
(210) 458-5348
robin.bircher@utsa.edu



PART ONE: UNIVERSITY POLICIES

As a member of the greater corporation, the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), we must adhere to the policies put forth by our parent group. Below are the two primary policies all employees must follow.

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.

PART TWO: GENERAL EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

In order for Roadrunner, Inc. to function efficiently, all employees must follow some basic rules of conduct. The rules apply to all employees. There will be no exceptions except those defined by UTSA, city, state, or federal policies. Roadrunner, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer and wishes to treat all employees fairly.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and prompt attendance is mandatory for all employees.

- Employees must attend all scheduled work days. There are NO excused absences except those defined as such by the UTSA, city, state, and federal policy.
 - Each employee is allotted 5 days – of vacation or sick leave per five week period (i.e. summer semester). Employees may use these at any time and for any reason, no excuse is required.
 - Any employee needing to miss work for UTSA, city, state, or federal reasons MUST follow the legal proceedings for an excuse. Please refer to the appropriate source for requirements.
 - Employees who miss more than the allotted time off will be put on probation. (Probation constitutes a loss of two points from the final grade for every missed absence after five.)
 - If any employee misses more than fifteen work days, then he/she will be fired. (This constitutes an automatic F.)
- Employees must arrive to work on time and be prepared to work the entire scheduled shift.
 - Being late will not be tolerated. Any employee more than 5 minutes late to his/her shift will be docked pay (This constitutes a loss of points from the next task equal to the amount of time an employee is late).
 - The same rules for being late apply to leaving work early.
 - Habitual lateness (even if less than 5 minutes) will not be tolerated, as it is disruptive to the rest of the team. Any employee that is habitually late will be docked pay (This constitutes a loss of points on the current project equal to the number of times the employee has been late).
- Employees must be prepared and ready to work when they arrive.
 - Employees must complete all assigned work by the deadlines given.
 - Any tasks not completed on time will not be accepted late (i.e. if it is due at the beginning of work, then submitting it at the end of work constitutes being late). Another employee will be assigned the task (in other words, no late work is accepted).
 - Any work assigned during the work day must be completed by the end of the day or by the assigned deadline. Any employee who does not wish to complete the tasks will be asked to leave and be counted off on a vacation/sick day. The work will then be reassigned (in other words, if you don't participate, you will be asked to leave and you will be given a zero for the task).
- Employees must keep up with their work on their own.
 - Employees must do the assigned reading – the material listed for the day must be read before attending work. In addition, employees must ALWAYS come with their needed materials (textbook, flash drive, pen/pencil, paper, etc.).
 - Employees must check Blackboard every M-F between 8am and 3:30pm for updates – announcements, emails, etc. Not checking is not an excuse for missing an assignment or other material.
 - Employee must keep all documents (i.e. graded work) and track their own progress. If an employee wishes to be evaluated (check their grade, etc.), then the employee must meet with Ms. English-Bircher during her open office hours.

MEETING GUIDELINES & RESPECT

When attending a meeting (class), all employees will be expected to be courteous and respectful to all attendees. We ask that you follow the guidelines below.

- Employees are expected to be respectful of others.
 - Don't leave and re-enter the room while someone (anyone) is speaking.
 - Do not speak when someone is talking; do not carry on private conversations.
 - Food and drink will be permitted, but the employee must not disrupt anyone else and must take responsibility for clean-up.
- Employees must limit and control the use of electronic devices during work.
 - The equipment provided to you is for work purposes only. Any use other than for work will not be tolerated. You will lose the privilege of said equipment if it is used for non-work related pursuits.
 - If any personal electronic device disrupts any employee, the employee using the device will first be asked to turn it off. If the employee refuses, the employee will be sent home for the day and docked vacation/sick leave.
 - Cell phones, Ipods, and similar devices should be silenced or turned off. DO NOT leave on vibrate.
 - Sending and receiving texts during work is rude and unprofessional. Doing so during any work will automatically be deemed cheating (students caught will be given an F and asked to leave).
- Employees are encouraged to participate and take the initiative while at work.
 - If employees are expected to be involved and are not, supervisors may choose to provide additional tasks (i.e. pop quizzes or writing assignments will be given).
 - Employees must be considerate and respectful of others' views and concerns. In particular, do not attack a person or his/her opinion.
 - Be aware of sending inappropriate messages with body language, tone, etc. Employees must be thoughtful of all their actions and word choice.
 - Employees are encouraged to be active, but they should not dominate the work place.

COMMUNICATING AND ASSISTANCE

Office hours are MW 12:30pm-1, TR 8:30am-9, & by appointment in NPB 1.110D

- Students are encouraged to communicate with their supervisors and other employees via email and Blackboard.
 - Emails can be sent via Blackboard or to your supervisors' campus account (robin.bircher@utsa.edu). I recommend this over calling; do not call unless you know the supervisor will be in the office.
 - All emails should be courteous and professional. That means revise/edit them and be respectful.
 - Emails received M-F between 8 am and 3pm will generally get a response on that day. If not, the response will always be within 24 hours of receipt.
 - Emails sent over the weekend or holidays will be answered on the first work day after the mail was sent, unless notated otherwise.
 - The following items will not be discussed via email due to time constraints and/or security/privacy: grades, projects, extensive discussions, discussions about turned in/graded work. These items can be discussed in the office.
- Employees in need of assistance and who qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) must make arrangements through Disability Services – <http://utsa.edu/disability/> or MS 2.03.18. After documentation has been provided, I will meet any accommodations requested by Disability Services.
- Roadrunner, Inc. understands that employees may need help with their work; therefore, employees are encouraged to use the resources provided by the Writing Center (see <http://www.utsa.edu/twc> for more info).
- Employees are encouraged to seek help during office hours.
 - Your supervisor often will not have much time before or after meetings, so please do not expect to discuss material with at those times; make plans to come to my office.
 - If an employee cannot make office hours, appointments may be possible. Do not expect that the appointment can be made, and give at least 24 hours advance notice.
 - Do not come at the end of office hours expecting me to be seen. Make sure to arrive by the last 10 minutes of the session.
 - Your supervisor will be happy to discuss work, grades, company related points, etc. during office hours. However, to discuss work, employees must bring it with them.
 - Your supervisor will be happy to discuss your performance (grades); however, she will not discuss a recently graded project. To do so, a student must arrange to come to office hours at least 24 hours after the grade was received.
- Employees in need of help with their projects are encouraged to meet with their supervisor.
 - Supervisors do not have time to read an entire project and give detailed feedback; therefore, they will only skim it and notate the main problems and areas.
 - Any employee with specific questions will have the situation explored and discussed in detail.
 - Supervisors will not edit projects; they will notate the most glaring issues and provide help in learning how to correct them.
 - Supervisors I will not offer any major help on the day the project is due. Any help provided will be limited to things that can be fixed in one hour or less

PART THREE: WORK (TASK AND PROJECT) GUIDELINES

All employees will be expected to complete all tasks and projects given to them. In order to make sure the work goes smoothly, as well as accomplishes the requirements given in a manner that provides the great possible benefit for all parties involved, we ask that employees apply the following guidelines to all work (this is in addition to any guidelines set forth by the specific task or project).

Scholastic Dishonesty

- “Scholastic dishonesty” is any form of cheating or plagiarism that violates the Student Code of Conduct.
 - Scholastic Dishonesty or academic 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.
- In any suspected case, UTSA procedures will be followed.
- For more information, see <http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html>.

GETTING ASSISTANCE

At any time, employee may get assistance with their tasks – except quizzes – and projects.

- Employees can seek help from Ms. English-Bircher during office hours or by appointment. Some, but little aid will be available via email.
- Employees can seek help from fellow employees through any means, including the company discussion board.
- Employees can seek help from the Writing Center, JPL 2.01.12 D.

TASK GUIDELINES (SEE SYLLABUS FOR MORE INFORMATION)

- *Readings* must be completed before meetings; the calendar states what must be read by a meeting on a specific day.
- Any tasks assigned – essays, quizzes, participation based homework – is due at the beginning of a meeting; there are NO exceptions. No work will be accepted late (including later in the day).
 - Any task may be submitted by email if an employee is missing the meeting; however, the employee’s supervisor MUST receive the task by the start of the meeting.
 - All tasks must be neat, clean, and legible. Project drafts must always be typed and double spaced.
 - All tasks must have the employee’s name and the date at the top of the page. All pages of a task must be numbered. All work of multiple pages must be stapled.
- *Quizzes* must be completed online by the scheduled meeting time the day they are due.
 - Quizzes will all be done via Blackboard.
 - They are due before the meeting on the date assigned – there are no late quizzes or make-ups.
 - Quizzes will be posted between one week and one meeting before they are due.
- Employees must be prepared to work every day. Any tasks assigned during the work day or for “homework” must be completed by the deadline. Tasks CANNOT be made up.

PROJECT GUIDELINES

- All projects will be graded using objectives described on the assignment and during accompanying class lectures and will be clarified on the project rubric (available in advance via Blackboard).
- Final grades on projects will not be discussed online. Supervisors will discuss performance during office hours, but only after 24 hours have elapsed since the grade was given. Also the employee must have the project with him/her during the meeting.
- Employees MUST follow the guidelines below when turning in a project. If the guidelines are not met, supervisors cannot make use of the project, so it will not be accepted (leading to an automatic F).
 - **Submission:** All projects must be collated and turned in by hand with all items at the beginning of a meeting. Projects will not be accepted if they are not collated.
 - *If an employee cannot make class but the project is complete*, the employee is first encouraged to drop it off during office hours.
 - If dropping off during hours cannot be arranged, an employee may send it via email; however, VERY specific rules MUST be met: (1) the project must be emailed by the start of the meeting, otherwise it is late; (2) the hard copy with all items must be submitted – without any additional editing and revision – by the next meeting.
 - **Format:** All projects must follow the format rules required (in general, MLA or APA format will be a foundation for most projects). If a project does not meet these requirements, it will either lose points or not be accepted (depending on how the problem affects reading the paper).
 - In general, papers must be typed and use a 12-point Times New Roman (spacing, in professional settings, is usually single).
 - The paper must have a correct heading, page numbers, margins, and other form items.
 - **Research:** Many projects will require the use of multiple sources and research.
 - All researched projects must have a correct Works Cited/Reference page. A project with research will not be accepted without these items.
 - **Drafts:** Most projects will require drafts. These drafts must meet project guidelines, even if submitted and reviewed online. Check the calendar for dates. More drafts may be required, which will be announced in class.
 - The draft and accompanying peer comments will have a strict due date and must be completed by that time. This will be part of an employee's tasks.
 - If an employee is absent, a draft may be submitted via email, but it will not be counted until the employee has obtained a peer evaluation (which will be verified when the project is turned in). Any incomplete, late, or missing drafts and comments will result in a zero for that assignment.
 - Incomplete drafts will have points deducted from them – half of a draft equals half of a grade (i.e. 50).
 - **Proofreading:** Final projects must be readable and have all errors corrected.
 - If a supervisor cannot read a project for any reason, it cannot be used; this means the project will not be graded (including poor printing, poor formatting and design, etc.).
 - If your supervisor has to do extensive grammar and mechanical correction while grading, the project will be considered unusable and will receive an automatic F. In addition, the supervisor will stop reading so other projects can be seen to.
 - **Late papers:** Employees are allotted one extension on any project except Project 7.
 - The project must be turned in within two days of its original due date (if it is due Friday, the late project MUST be submitted on the following Monday).
 - The project must still follow all other paper guidelines.
 - The project grade will be reduced by 10 points.

- If an employee does not submit any late papers, the employee will qualify for a bonus (an additional five points will be added the grade of the lowest project).

Employee Confirmation

This confirmation page must be signed and submitted by all employees no later than Thursday, June 7.

If an employee fails to submit this page by the deadline, he/she will not receive any grades for work turned in (after the June 7 deadline) until the page is submitted.

I, _____, confirm that I have read and understand the syllabus, calendar, and Employee Handbook for Roadrunner, Inc. (ENG 2413). I promise to adhere to the rules prescribed therein. If I have any problems, I will see Ms. English-Bircher as soon as possible to get help sorting through any issues preventing me from fulfilling my responsibilities. If I do not do what is expected of me or seek help, I am aware that I run a good chance of earning an F in ENG 2413.

Signed: _____

Date: _____