Communications Studies (COMS) 363 - Lecture 05
Professional and Technical Communication
Fall 2011
Tuesday 18:30-21:20

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Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

This course is a study of the principles and techniques of technical communicating. We will be experimenting with the analysis of needs, and with different approaches to meeting them, ranging from the research phase, through outlining and drafting, and up to final layout and formatting principles. Collaboration with class-room colleagues will be crucial, as will regular attendance.

Objectives of the Course

Through analysis of selected technical documentation and directed practice, students will develop competence in the presentation of technical information for a variety of audiences, in a variety of situations, to achieve a variety of typical purposes.

Internet and electronic communication device information

I make no demands upon you in this regard.

Textbooks and Readings:

Markel, Michael H. *Technical Communication*. 9th Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's Press (recommended)

Assignments and Evaluation

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Project Label	Target Date	Proportionate Value
An Instruction Project	27 Sept	10%
A Description Portfolio	18 Oct	15%

A Graphics/Layout Project	1 Nov	15%
A Portfolio of Interim Documents	15 Nov	20%
An Archivable Document	22 Nov	20%
Class Participation and In-Class Assignments		10%
Final In-Class Project	6 Dec	10%

Note: Please hand in your assignments directly to me in class.

Additional Information

Detailed desciptions of and assistance in developing the listed assignments will occur during class. In the meantime, here are a few preliminary comments:

The Instruction Project will require the execution of a collection of procedures, climaxing in a set of instructions attached to a student-chosen task. The completed instruction set should comprise approximately 500 words.

The Description Portfolio will require the student to acquire a collection of documents and then attach an analysis of each document's structure. The number of documents each student chooses to analyse will be flexible, with the final assignment comprising approximately 5 pages of commentary.

In the Graphics Project, the student will choose an original document of approximately 2-10 pages, determine its purpose, and then design a new document, using the same content as the original, but customized to the needs of a different situation. The re-designed document will comprise approximately 2-4 pages of material.

The Interim, and Archivable, document collections will, in essence, allow each student to select appropriate situations, design effective documents which they believe would meet the needs of those situations, and then execute the chosen documents. The specific number and variety of documents to be produced to fulfill this requirement will conform to a development formula to be presented and applied in class. Total page count for each assignment will be approximately 12-15 pages.

Class Participation and In-Class Assignments will be based primarily on short projects assigned and completed in class (and/or between one class and the next), and graded within those parameters.

The Final In-class Project will take place in a computer lab, and will comprise up to three short communication activities. Each activity will be decribed in the project outline, which will be provided to students at the time of the activity. Students may complete the project in groups or individually, and will submit their work electronically. This activity typically occupies between 2 and 3 hours.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence**, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**
 For more information see also http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy**.**

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Grading System

In this class, you will receive grades in the 4-point scale (2.7, 3.0, 3.3) *rather than* percentages. (Actually, your grades will be expressed in letters, as listed below, with an arithmetic conversion scale attached.) Sometimes you may receive grade points between letter grades (though not from me). 3.5 is the mathematical mid-point between a B+ (3.3) and an A- (3.7) and 3.15 is the mid-point between a B (3.0) and a B+ (3.3), etc. (obviously.)

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture: (Revised, effective September 2008)

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see U of C Calendar: Academic Standing)
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	0

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link; http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see
http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see
http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see
http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:
http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:
http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

To be developed in class.