Communication Studies (COMS) 363—Lecture 04
Professional and Technical Communication
Winter 2013
Tuesdays and Thursdays: 11:00-12:15

Instructor:	Prof. L. Bryce
Office Location:	Social Sciences 304
Office Phone:	403-708-9201 (cell phone: please use with discretion)
E-Mail:	bryce@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours:	After class and by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to effective communication in the most common genres of professional and technical writing and speech. You will learn the processes involved in planning, composing, and delivering of technical communication for a variety of audiences and rhetorical contexts. Guided practice and peer review will assist you in developing expertise in visual, electronic, print, and face-to-face communication.

Objectives of the Course

At the completion of this course, you will be able to demonstrate strong written and oral communication skills, so people both inside and outside your area of expertise can easily understand the professional and technical information you are conveying. To this end, we will study the principles and techniques of professional and technical writing, focusing on both written and oral communication skills. You will enhance your writing, editing, and speaking skills, in addition to learning to generate effective professional and technical documents. You will also increase your abilities to read and think critically and to do rhetorical analyses of professional and technical documents.

Internet and Electronic Communication Device Information

Laptop computers may be used only to take notes during class. Please do not use your laptop to view non-class related content or do work not for this class. Those who do not adhere to this rule will lose laptop privileges.

There will be no twittering, texting, phone ringing, or any other use of cell phones in our classroom during class time. Please be courteous to your instructor and classmates; it is extremely distracting to others when people are using their phones, including "discreet" texting under the desk. Those who are unable to resist using their phones during class will be asked to leave.

Textbooks and Readings
Our textbook is available in the University of Calgary Bookstore:

Elizabeth Tebeaux and Sam Dragga. *The Essentials of Technical Communication.* New York: Oxford, 2012. ISBN 978-0-19-989078-1

Assignments and Evaluation
Table 1, following, lists the assignments, percents worth, and due dates.

Table 1: Schedule of Assignments and Due Dates

Assignment Name	Percent	Due Date
Writing for Readers	**10**	**January 31**
Authorization for proposal/ report/ presentation topic*	**5**	**February 7**
Citation	**15**	**February 14**
Proposal*	**15**	**February 28**
Final report project presentation*	**20**	**April 4, 9, 11**
Final Report*	**30**	**April 16**
In-class assignments (written and oral). Please note that in-class assignments cannot be "made up" at a later date.	5	on-going

Assignments with asterisks* may be completed in groups of two. If you choose to work in a group, please document carefully each group member's participation. Group assignments will be given group grades, unless one person has done considerably more or less work on the assignment.

Assignments' Brief Descriptions
The detailed specifications for these assignments are posted on Blackboard under "Assignments." Students must complete all the following assignments (except for the in-class assignments) or they may receive an F in the course.

Writing for Readers
Find a short passage from a technical document in your field and rewrite it entirely in your own words. The final document should be between 1.5 and 2 pages, line spacing of one and one half spaces, font size equivalent to Times New Roman 12.

Topic Authorization
You will need to choose an appropriate topic for your research project (the report and presentation). It is essential that you discuss this topic with me before beginning the citation, proposal, and report assignments; the reason we need to discuss your topic beforehand is to ensure that you are not taking on anything that will require more time than one term to complete and that the topic is one that invites analysis. For help in

choosing a topic, please see the Proposal assignment specifications on Blackboard. You are welcome to brainstorm with me if you would like.

The authorization is a ½ to ¾ of a page describing the topic you wish to work on, how you will make it relevant for this course and this audience (our class), and what sources you have found so far. These assignments are given a grade out of 5; if you submit your authorization by the due date to the digital dropbox (midnight on February 7, 2013) and provide sufficient information, you will receive the 5 percent. If some part of your topic needs clarification, I may not give you the entire 5 percent.

Citation Assignment
This assignment requires that you find three scholarly sources that you could use for gathering research for your final report. The first page of this assignment is a References page, in which you format the sources in correct APA style (or IEEE format if you are an engineering or computer science student). The second part is an evaluation of each source, according to the list of criteria specified on the "Citation" assignment on Blackboard. This assignment should be about 4-5 pages in length.

Proposal
Using the topic you have received my approval to do, write a proposal for how you will be getting your report and presentation done successfully . The proposal is like a plan and includes details of work done, work to be done, and the expected outcome. The proposal assignment and checklist are posted on Blackboard. The proposal should be about 5-6 pages long and must include a detailed list of sources you can use to gather information for your report.

Report
The report discusses and analyzes your findings on your topic. It needs to be a professional looking technical document that includes all the required sections as described on the detailed assignment instructions and checklist that you can find on Blackboard. The report should be no shorter than 8 pages (single or space and one half) and preferably no longer than 15 pages. This length includes only the report body from introduction to conclusion.

Presentation
The presentation is a talk you will give to the class on the date you are assigned. This presentation gives a summary of the report's contents. You are evaluated on the professionalism with which you present in addition to the content of the presentation. The presentation should be between 10-15 minutes.

In-class assignments
In each class, you will be doing particular assignments that will help you comprehend the course material that we are covering. Usually, these assignments are done as small group projects. In-class assignments cannot be made up at a later date.

All assignments (excluding the in-class assignments) must be completed or a grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. Please do not throw away returned assignments until you have received your final grade for the course.

Note: Please hand in your assignments directly to your instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

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: http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support

Grading System
The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

Table 2: Grading System

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99

B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

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 (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support) 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.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds

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/ethics/cfreb

Schedule of Lectures and Readings
Each assignment requires specific readings; this information will be included with each specific assignment.