Syllabus for
Technical Writing (ENG 133)
Spring 2024

ACTS: This course is listed in the Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS) with the following index number: **ENGL2023**

Class Location: Spencer 251
Class Time: TR 2:00 – 3:15 p.m.

Instructor: Mrs. Mysti Gates
BS, Texas A & M University - Texarkana 2005
MSIS, Texas A & M University - Texarkana 2010
MA TESOL, Arkansas Tech University 2017

Office Location: S252 (right across the hall from the classroom)

Office Hours: MW 10:45 – 11:45, 1:45 – 3:00
TR 10:45 – 11:45, 3:15 – 4:00
F 8:00 – 3:00

Telephone: 479-394-7622, extension 1385

E-mail: mgates@uarichmountain.edu

Prerequisite: ENG113 (Composition I) - Grade of C or better.

Required materials: Alred, Gerald, et al. *Handbook of Technical Writing.* 12th edition.
Presentation Notebook

Course Description: Offered in the spring, this is an intermediate college-level course designed to enhance the communications skills of students seeking a career in technical and scientific fields. It includes principles of researching, organizing, and writing technical documents. This course requires several synthesis projects using multi-media and technology.

Program Outcomes: The knowledge and critical thinking skills acquired in the general education component enable students to analyze problems, to arrive at intelligent conclusions, and to make reasoned choices in their professional and personal lives. Many general education courses are designed to deal primarily with processes rather than simply with facts, to help students to develop individually and as members of a group and to instill in students the desire to develop intellectual and emotional skills through lifelong learning.

The general education curriculum provides the means by which students will increase their:

- reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.
- technological and research skills.

ACTS Expected Student Learning Outcomes:

- Generate technical documents in a variety of formats, including letters, memos, proposals, and reports.
- Use collaborative writing processes.
- Learn to integrate visuals.
- Use technology in the creation of technical documents.

Rationale: Technical Writing students develop communication skills for workplace tasks. Online learners incorporate technology skills as they synthesize writing concepts in a variety of formats.

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of Technical Writing, the student should be able to do the following:

1. Apply creative concepts for presentation, design, and layout in technical writing
2. Create a resumé and cover letter
3. Demonstrate understanding of technical writing terminology and theory
4. Recognize and adhere to the conventions of workplace writing

Tentative Course Outline:
Note: Periodic class assignments and quizzes are not included on the Tentative Course Outline.

Week One Jan. 16-21	Syllabus **Introduction Emails** Technical Reading, What is Technical Writing? Writing Formal Letters **Week 1 Quiz**
Week Two Jan. 22-28	Writing Formal Letters Notetaking **Week 2 Quiz**
Week Three Jan. 29 – Feb. 4	Workplace Research: Annotated Bibliographies and Works Cited Pages The Writing Process Revising and Editing **Week 3 Quiz**
Week Four Feb. 5-11	Workplace Research: Annotated Bibliographies and Works Cited Pages The Writing Process Revising and Editing **Week 4 Quiz**

Week Five Feb. 12-18	General Business Correspondence **Week 5 Quiz**
Week Six Feb. 19-25	Document Design and Graphics **Week 6 Quiz***
Week Seven Feb. 26 – Mar. 3	Writing for the Web Writing for the Public **Week 7 Quiz**
Week Eight Mar. 4-10	Writing for the Web Writing for the Public **Week 8 Quiz**
Week Nine Mar. 11-17	Workplace Research: Abstracts and Summaries **Week 9 Quiz**
Week Ten Mar. 18-24	SPRING BREAK Intro to Portfolios **Week 10 Quiz (online)**
Week Eleven Mar. 25-31	Seeking Employment: Resumés and Cover Letters Resignation Letters **Week 11 Quiz**
Week Twelve Apr. 1-7	Writing Instructions **Week 12 Quiz**
Week Thirteen Apr. 8-14	Lab Reports & Accident/Incident Reports Reports: Evaluations and Recommendations **Week 13 Quiz**
Week Fourteen Apr. 15-21	Types of Proposals Preparing Portfolios **Week 14 Quiz**
Week Fifteen Apr. 22-28	Workplace Ethics Preparing Portfolios **Week 15 Quiz***
Week Sixteen Apr. 29 – May 5	**Portfolios Due**
Finals Week May 6-9	**Portfolio Appointments and Evaluations**

****Subject to change****

Course Conduct:
This course combines classroom lecture and activities with research and online platforms. Students must be self-directed learners and good time managers. Concentrated weekly topics and handbook reference are the foundations for the course, and students will be assessed through quizzes, homework, class projects, writing assignments, and a Final Writing Portfolio* which will serve as the students' final exam score. If students are not attentive to the course materials, including the required handbook, they will NOT pass the course. Students may not use personal communication devices or outside websites during a class, quiz, or exam without expressed consent from the instructor.

Recording a class or reposting, copying, or distributing material found on Blackboard is expressly forbidden unless the instructor has given written permission.

UA RICH MOUNTAIN Credit Hour Calculator: For every course credit hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least three clock hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work, including but not limited to time attending class, as well as out-of-class time spent reading, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/ exams, problem solving, developing and completing projects, and other activities that enhance learning. Thus, for a three-hour course, a typical student should expect to spend at least nine hours per week dedicated to the course.

Credit Hour Definition: A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks.

Course Requirements/Evaluations:

Cumulative grades are reflected by the following:

- Quizzes (approx. 16%)
- Homework & Class Projects (approx. 15%)
- Writing Assignments (approx. 50%)
- Final Writing Portfolio* (approx. 19%)

<u>Quizzes</u>: All quizzes are timed so be prepared for them. Quizzes may be in class or online, depending on the week. Your instructor will notify you of the type and date for each quiz. For classes taken IN CLASS, a student who leaves early, is inexcusably absent, or late to class, **cannot make up the missed quiz**. Online quizzes will close on the posted due date and CANNOT be reopened. Most quizzes will be open notes and due on Fridays. These quizzes cannot be made up in the event the student misses the deadline. If you have an emergency situation (death, emergency, hospitalization, etc.), please email your instructor as soon as possible. Make-up exams are given for very serious reasons only, and the student must file paperwork with the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Make-up exams are in the form of written, essay exams. The student must make an appointment to take makeup exams on one of the UA Rich Mountain campuses. It is the student's responsibility to initiate make-up work.

Homework, Class Activities, and Writing Assignments: Students are to dedicate adequate time in preparing for homework and writing assignments, as well as class activities. Additionally, students are expected to revise, edit, and proofread all writing assignments before submitting them to the instructor. Workplace writing is expected to be free from errors and grammatical mistakes. Presentation is everything. Students may seek help in these areas from Student Support Services.

Final Writing Portfolio: Students will receive feedback on all major writing assignments, which will be used in the Final Writing Portfolio. Students are expected to keep up with returned assignments and relevant feedback. Both will be required for revision for a clean and professional Final Writing Portfolio. Students will meet with their instructor (via appointments) during Finals Week for Portfolio Evaluations. At the end of the meetings, the instructor will return the Portfolios to the students to keep for future use and reference. The Presentation Notebook referenced in the "**Required materials**" section of the syllabus will be used for this purpose.

Late Policy: Homework assignments are due at the **beginning** of class and will be marked late if they are not ready when class begins. **Weekly assignments** may be submitted for grading within **one week** of the assigned due date; however, late penalties (20%) apply, so it is essential to follow due dates. **Acceptance of late work beyond one week is at the discretion of the instructor.** All arrangements for submitting missed work are to be made with the instructor **in advance**. It is the student's responsibility to initiate these arrangements. Other arrangements must be secured through the office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs - ext. 1400.

Additionally, ALL late work will be graded **last**. Work submitted on time takes priority over work submitted late, regardless of the reason. All late work submitted within the guidelines above will be graded; it is not necessary to ask the instructor the grading status of any work submitted beyond the original due date. Students are welcome to confirm the instructor's receipt of the work, but they should refrain from asking about the grading status. To avoid this, simply submit the work on time.

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%
F = Below 60%

Procedures/Student Requirements: Regular attendance, punctuality, and participation are expected. Students who miss a class are expected to return with all readings completed and be prepared to make up any missed quizzes. Keep up with missed assignments in Blackboard. Students are expected to log into Blackboard at least twice a week and check emails at least 3-4 times a week. Keeping up with emails will be vital for each student's success in this course. Students who do not complete the first and/or second week of class will be removed from the course. All assignments must be submitted by the posted due date unless specific arrangements have been made with the instructor.

It is the student's responsibility to initiate those arrangements immediately. Attendance is taken each day and reported to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Missing an excessive number of classes is detrimental to the success of students in this course causing them to fall behind. Three absences in a class that meets two times a week is considered excessive. Students who do not attend class may receive a grade of NF which can negatively affect financial aid.

PUNCTUALITY: The instructor reserves the right to lock out any students who are late to class. Students who are late will not be admitted to class and will not be awarded any participation-based points for the days missed as a result of tardies. Additionally, these points cannot be made up.

All assignments must be submitted by the posted due date unless specific arrangements have been made with the instructor. ***It is the student's responsibility to initiate arrangements immediately.***

Students are to refrain from using profanity in the classroom and treat others with respect. Students are also expected to use class time for tasks related to class, not tasks related to other classes (without instructor's consent) or personal matters. This includes the use of cell phones or the use of campus technology for reasons unrelated to student coursework.

Attendance: Daily attendance is mandatory. In the event a student is quarantined, the student will automatically shift to an online format until he or she is permitted to return to campus. Students are to notify their instructors of any quarantine orders, and a doctor's note is required. In the event the instructor is quarantined, the entire class will shift to online format until the instructor is permitted to return to campus. Students will be notified accordingly. **Any potential absence is to be shared – in advance – with the instructor.** ***Bottom line:*** show up to class – in whatever capacity required – on the specified days.

Technology Concerns: *Students with access concerns are expected to communicate with their instructors. Additionally, students can access the wi-fi from the South parking lot near the Ouachita Center. Students with access issues are encouraged to access course content from the parking lot, if needed. Students would be expected to drive to campus under normal classroom conditions. While it is not ideal, it does ensure reliable access and regular course participation.* Students may use personal cell phones/devices to attend Zoom sessions, if necessary. However, students have the option to check out campus computers from the library (Johnson Learning Commons).

Academic Dishonesty: Honesty is expected, and a zero will be given on any assignment if cheating occurs. Cheating or plagiarizing on a test or assignment is not tolerated. The internet makes it increasingly easy for students to find ways to cheat. This may include the use of readily accessible student papers, homework help sites, paraphrase tools, and/or anti-plagiarism generators. Your instructors are well aware of the resources out there. That said, ***all*** borrowed information must be cited. Plagiarism on papers can result in an "F" for the course.

Some types of plagiarism include:

- Submitting someone else's work as your own (paraphrasing, failure to cite sources)
- Submitting an assignment or essay that is similar or identical to another student's
- Collaborating on class assignments and essays (regardless of physical location)
- Sharing assignments/answers with other students (both students will receive a zero)
- Skimming information from the internet without correctly citing sources

Consequences of plagiarism:

- 1st offense of plagiarism → meeting with the instructor, automatic notation in student file, and adviser, coach, and/or sponsor notification
    - Less than 10% of an assignment plagiarized → proportional grade deduction on assignment
    - 10% or more of an assignment plagiarized → automatic zero on the assignment
- 2nd offense of plagiarism → removal from the course with a W/F
    - *If he/she cannot afford to drop, he/she will be forced to accept the grade earned.*

Artificial Syntax Clause: Artificial syntax is defined as "language or phrasing inconsistent with natural speech patterns." Students who use paraphrase tools and/or anti-plagiarism generators or submit assignments containing artificial syntax will be penalized. Please see the guidelines below:

a. Discussion posts or small class assignments: no credit
b. Larger assignments/essays: point deductions based on percentage of overall submission and number of prior offenses

Copyright Infringement: Copyright infringement has serious consequences in the real world. Recording a class, reposting, copying, or distributing any class materials (in Blackboard or otherwise provided by the instructor) is expressly forbidden unless the instructor has given written permission.

Additionally, disciplinary proceedings according to college policies may be initiated. Consult the College Handbook for more information. *If you ever have any questions about plagiarism, how to document a particular source, or what constitutes copyright infringement, please ask me.*

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools: Students are turning to artificial intelligence (AI) more and more in the world of education. Common tools include Grammarly, ChatGPT, and Bard, to name a few. It is important that students understand the limitations, biases, and inaccuracies that come with using and/or relying on AI tools and platforms. Even if a student were fortunate enough to escape the penalties for plagiarism, using AI tools to produce writings that are inaccurate, biased, and/or limited in scope would still not yield a desirable grade. Ultimately, the student is responsible for ensuring that his/her writing is original, accurate, and complete.

Review and use the guidelines below to help navigate the ethical and appropriate uses of AI tools in this class. Check the syllabus and with the instructor for each course in which you are enrolled. For more information, review the Academic Dishonesty slides posted in Blackboard.

Appropriate uses for AI tools:	**Inappropriate uses for AI platforms:**
• Copying and pasting a description or assignment and asking AI to rephrase or explain the concept to you in a different way • Asking AI to provide an example of a particular aspect of writing (e.g., a thesis statement, an introduction, a conclusion, a body paragraph, etc.) • Copying and pasting your original compositions and soliciting feedback from AI regarding clarity and/or organization • Asking AI to generate a list of common reasons for or against a particular issue • Using AI tools to identify grammatical and mechanical errors for revising • Requesting statistical information for use in research (remember to evaluate the source and cite both the AI tool and the original source in your assignment) • Acknowledging the use of AI tools in your Works Cited pages	• Asking AI to write you an essay on (insert prompt here) • Asking AI to rephrase something written by another person and passing it off your own • Asking AI to provide you with a list of quotes from a text to use in your essay because you didn't read the assigned text • Assuming that AI-generated results are accurate, objective, or complete • Using AI tools to generate source citations that are inappropriate for your discipline • Using AI tools to falsify sources

Any additions to this chart will be communicated to students in writing.

Americans with Disabilities: It is the policy of UA Rich Mountain to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law, and the college's commitment to equal educational opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodations (ex: seating placement, examinations, or access to information on the web) should inform the Vice President

for Student Affairs at the beginning of each semester. To contact the Vice President, students seeking accommodation should call 394-7622, ext. 1400.

Arkansas Clean Air Act: In compliance with the Arkansas Clean Air Act, UA Rich Mountain is a smoke and Tobacco free facility. Students and guests are to refrain from the use of all tobacco products while on campus, including electronic devices.

Student Misconduct: Students committing misconduct are subject to disciplinary sanction(s) and or restrictions. Misconduct or prohibited behavior includes, but is not limited to endangerment, harassment, disruption, sexual misconduct, dishonesty, illegal drugs and/or alcohol, fire or safety issues, gambling property violations, computer violations, or other violations as listed in detail in the UA Rich Mountain catalog.

Student Support Services: The Student Support Services (SSS) is available to help students reach their educational goals through individualized instruction, counseling, and tutoring. There is no fee for these services. The computer lab is available for student in online classes. SSS is located in the Johnson Learning Commons in the Spencer Building.

Tutor.com: Tutor.com is also a free option for our students. If this is something you are interested in taking advantage of, please email bminer@uarichmountain.edu to receive login information.

UA RICH MOUNTAIN Mission: University of Arkansas Rich Mountain exists to provide all citizens of the Ouachita Mountain Region with exemplary educational and enrichment opportunities to improve the quality of life and standard of living.

Title IX Sexual Harassment: If there is an issue of this nature, it should be reported immediately to the Title IX Director, Terry Francis at (479) 394-7622, Ext. 1460.

Campus Security: UA Rich Mountain strives to provide a safe learning environment; therefore, students who know of any security risk are asked to contact a college official. Information regarding crime statistics for UARM is located under Health and Safety at: http://www.uarichmountain.edu/at-a-glance/disclosures.

See Something, Hear Something, Say Something

Any part of this syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.