Course Description

Provides a study of the process of technical writing and written communication. Students review various formats and writing purposes as well as produce technical and business-related documents.

Course Textbook


Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Examine the best strategies for reaching an audience.
2. Organize information to produce clear business correspondence.
3. Create organized and succinct instructions.
4. Write clear, concise, and accurate sentences.
5. Construct reports and proposals consistent with the principles of Technical Writing.
6. Demonstrate best practices for the job search.
7. Present information using effective visual design.

Credits

Upon completion of this course, the students will earn three (3) hours of college credit.

Course Structure

1. **Study Guide**: Each unit contains a Study Guide that provides students with the learning outcomes, unit lesson, required reading assignments, and supplemental resources.
2. **Learning Outcomes**: Each unit contains Learning Outcomes that specify the measurable skills and knowledge students should gain upon completion of the unit.
3. **Unit Lesson**: Each unit contains a Unit Lesson, which discusses lesson material.
4. **Reading Assignments**: Each unit contains Reading Assignments from one or more chapters from the textbook.
5. **Unit Assessments**: This course contains three Unit Assessments, one to be completed at the end of Units II, III, and V. Assessments are composed of multiple-choice questions.
6. **Unit Assignments**: Students are required to submit for grading Unit Assignments in Units I-VIII. Specific information and instructions regarding these assignments are provided below. Grading rubrics are included with each assignment. Specific information about accessing these rubrics is provided below.
7. **Ask the Professor**: This communication forum provides you with an opportunity to ask your professor general or course content related questions.
8. **Student Break Room**: This communication forum allows for casual conversation with your classmates.
CSU Online Library

The CSU Online Library is available to support your courses and programs. The online library includes databases, journals, e-books, and research guides. These resources are always accessible and can be reached through the library webpage. To access the library, log into the myCSU Student Portal, and click on “CSU Online Library.” You can also access the CSU Online Library from the “My Library” button on the course menu for each course in Blackboard.

The CSU Online Library offers several reference services. E-mail (library@columbiasouthern.edu) and telephone (1.877.268.8046) assistance is available Monday – Thursday from 8 am to 5 pm and Friday from 8 am to 3 pm. The library’s chat reference service, Ask a Librarian, is available 24/7; look for the chat box on the online library page.

Librarians can help you develop your research plan or assist you in finding relevant, appropriate, and timely information. Reference requests can include customized keyword search strategies, links to articles, database help, and other services.

LibGuides

Click here for the LibGuide for this course.

Think of a LibGuide (a Library Guide) as a mini-website to help you with your assignments. It has relevant information such as databases, ebooks, and websites specific to your courses. If you have any questions, please reach out to your friendly library staff.

Unit Assignments

Unit I Assignment

Audience Analysis Assignment

Part I: For this assignment, you will create an audience profile document for one of the following:

a. your company’s employees,
b. the parents and students at a local school, or
c. a local organization or union to which you belong.

Your audience profile should be written in standard paragraph format, organizing your content with headings for the different characteristics you consider. In your profile, be sure to answer the following questions:

- Who is your audience?
- What is your audience’s attitudes and expectations?
- How will your audience use your document?

To help identify the members of your audience, consider the audience characteristics discussed on pages 60 and 61 in the textbook. Take some time to consider which of these characteristics will apply to your audience. Then, create your audience profile sheet using the example in Figure 4.1 of your textbook as your guide. However, remember that you will write your profile in paragraph form, and you do not need to follow the formatting of this example. Your audience profile sheet should be one page in length, and it does not need a title page.

Part II: Using the audience profile you just created, write a letter to the audience readers to persuade them to agree with you on a topic of your choice. For instance, you might create an audience profile for the employees at your company for Part I of this assignment, and then in Part II you might write a letter to the employees of the company to persuade them that they should argue in favor of working four 10-hour days instead of five eight-hour days. Use standard block letter format. Remember to plan, draft, revise, edit, and proofread your response.

Your letter should be a minimum of one page. Upload Parts I and II as a single document. References are not required for this assignment, but if you use any information from an outside source, it should be cited according to APA standards.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.
Unit II Assignment

Think of a piece of equipment that you use regularly at work or at home that might be confusing for a first-time user. Maybe you would choose a piece of equipment that you have used in your line of work or the new vacuum cleaner that you just bought.

For the item that you choose, create an original document that includes the following:

1. a definition (in paragraph form) to provide a brief overview of the item and its uses,
2. a description of the equipment and the items/materials you will need to operate this piece of equipment, and
3. a set of process instructions, showing how to use one function of this piece of equipment.

Use headings to distinguish between the three parts of the assignment. To guide you in this assignment, use the examples included in Chapter 14 of the textbook. You do not need to include a title page for this assignment.

This document should be a minimum of two pages and be written in your own words. In other words, no outside sources should be used to help you create your definition or your instructions. Be organized and succinct when writing your definition, description, and instructions. Write clearly, concisely, and accurately.

Graphics are not required for this assignment. However, if you choose to include a graphic to help you convey your meaning, be sure to use APA format to cite its source if you did not take the picture yourself.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

Unit III Assignment

Create a one-page newsletter for your employer, an organization to which you belong, or a city that you know well. To help you organize the layout for your newsletter, examine the page grids on pages 169 and 170 in the textbook. The textbook also contains several "Tech Tips" that will help you create this document in Microsoft Word. Your content can include information about recent events, significant people, or future activities. Your content can be fictional.

Your newsletter should follow these guidelines:

- Adhere to the design principles discussed in Chapter 7.
- Include at least one image.
- Include at least one table/chart/graph that demonstrates numerical information.
- Have a minimum of three different stories.

Your newsletter does not need a title page, and it does not have to be formatted in APA style. It needs to be at least one page in length. References are not required for this assignment.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

Unit IV Assignment

Imagine you are a small business owner trying to grow your business, and use the guidelines and examples from Chapter 9 to create two separate letters to your customers for the following purposes. For each letter, you may choose what type of business you own and what your business is selling.

1. An expensive product you sold but did not manufacture was recently returned to your store because it was defective, and the customer is angry that your store did not catch the defect prior to the sale. To make matters worse, you no longer have this item in stock, and you will not be able to order another.

   Write a “bad-news” letter to explain the situation and apologize to the customer. See figure 9.8 in the textbook for an example of a bad-news letter.

2. A job that your company was hired to complete was finished ahead of schedule and under budget.

   Write a “good-news” letter that would be attached to a final invoice, explaining the situation and thanking the customer for doing business with you. See figure 9.7 in the textbook for an example of a good-news letter.
Each letter should be approximately one page in length. Upload both letters as a single document. Use proper letter format and grammatical conventions to write a good-news and a bad-news letter. Be sure to include the elements of a letter as discussed in the textbook, and write using clear and concise sentences. References are not required for this assignment.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

Unit V Scholarly Activity

Create a short recommendation report to recommend a solution to a company’s problem or a product that you know well. For example, you might create a recommendation report to recommend that your company change a policy or a procedure, or you might make a recommendation for purchasing new equipment. The subject of your report can be fictional.

Your recommendation report should follow these guidelines:

1. Include the following: a title page, an abstract, an introduction, methods, conclusion, and recommendations. You can also choose to add other elements if you feel they are necessary.
2. The report should consist of at least four pages, including the title page.

Outside sources are not required for this assignment. However, if you use information from an outside source, it should be cited correctly using APA format, and a reference page should be added in addition to the four pages that are required for this assignment.

There is an example recommendation report that includes all of the required sections beginning on page 362 of your textbook. As you edit your work, use the “Writer’s Checklist” on page 384 in the textbook to ensure the effectiveness of your report.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

Unit VI Assignment

The company you work for has decided to make a major purchase. This purchase can be software, technology, equipment, training, or anything else needed for the company’s day-to-day operations.

Your supervisor has assigned you the task of creating a research proposal for the company to help guide them in this purchase.

Before you begin writing the proposal, do your research, gathering information from at least four different sources. Two of these sources should be located in the CSU Online Library. The remaining two sources can come from the CSU Online Library, or they can be websites, such as the website for the company that sells what you are purchasing.

In this unit, your goal is to begin the proposal. In the next unit, you will complete the proposal.

For this assignment, submit the first two pages of the proposal, which include the heading information and sections for the purpose and summary. These sections are covered in Chapter 11 of your textbook. You can use the example proposal on page 309 of your textbook to help you with the formatting of this assignment.

This assignment should be at least two pages in length plus a reference page. Be sure to follow all APA guidelines for citing outside sources.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

Unit VII Proposal

Create the introduction, body, and closing for your research proposal that you began in Unit VI. Include research from the sources you located in the last unit to help you build an effective proposal. Organize the body of your proposal clearly so that readers can locate the essential information easily, including at least one visual. Use the sample proposal that begins on page 309 in your textbook as a guide for this assignment.
Submit the entire proposal in this unit, including the first two pages and the reference page you created in the last unit. Remember that your reference page should only include the sources that are cited within your proposal.

Your research proposal should be a minimum of eight pages, including the work that you submitted in the previous unit.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

**Unit VIII Resume**

For this assignment, create a skills resume, a job-application letter, and a letter of appreciation after the interview.

1. **Resume**: Select a job that you wish to obtain after completing your degree at CSU. Then, create a skills resume using keywords to show that you are qualified for the position. Use Figure 10.5 in the textbook as your example.
2. **Job application letter**: Create a letter to showcase your writing abilities and to explain how your qualifications match the job description. Use Figure 10.6 in the textbook as your example.
3. **Letter of appreciation after the interview**: Write a letter to thank the organization’s representative for your interview. Use the example on page 288 to guide you.

All three parts should be a minimum of three pages combined. Submit all three parts in one document.

Information about accessing the Grading Rubric for this assignment is provided below.

**APA Guidelines**

The application of the APA writing style shall be practical, functional, and appropriate to each academic level, with the primary purpose being the documentation (citation) of sources. CSU requires that students use APA style for certain papers and projects. Students should always carefully read and follow assignment directions and review the associated grading rubric when available. Students can find CSU’s Citation Guide by clicking here. This document includes examples and sample papers and provides information on how to contact the CSU Success Center.

**Grading Rubrics**

This course utilizes analytic grading rubrics as tools for your professor in assigning grades for all learning activities. Each rubric serves as a guide that communicates the expectations of the learning activity and describes the criteria for each level of achievement. In addition, a rubric is a reference tool that lists evaluation criteria and can help you organize your efforts to meet the requirements of that learning activity. It is imperative for you to familiarize yourself with these rubrics because these are the primary tools your professor uses for assessing learning activities.

Rubric categories include: (1) Assessment (Written Response) and (2) Assignment. However, it is possible that not all of the listed rubric types will be used in a single course (e.g., some courses may not have Assessments).

The Assessment (Written Response) rubric can be found embedded in a link within the directions for each Unit Assessment. However, these rubrics will only be used when written-response questions appear within the Assessment.

Each Assignment type (e.g., article critique, case study, research paper) will have its own rubric. The Assignment rubrics are built into Blackboard, allowing students to review them prior to beginning the Assignment and again once the Assignment has been scored. This rubric can be accessed via the Assignment link located within the unit where it is to be submitted. Students may also access the rubric through the course menu by selecting “Tools” and then “My Grades.”

**Again, it is vitally important for you to become familiar with these rubrics because their application to your Assessments and Assignments is the method by which your instructor assigns all grades.**

**Communication Forums**

These are non-graded discussion forums that allow you to communicate with your professor and other students. Participation in these discussion forums is encouraged, but not required. You can access these forums with the buttons in the Course Menu. Instructions for subscribing/unsubscribing to these forums are provided below.
Once you have completed Unit VIII, you MUST unsubscribe from the forum; otherwise, you will continue to receive e-mail updates from the forum. You will not be able to unsubscribe after your course end date.

Click here for instructions on how to subscribe/unsubscribe and post to the Communication Forums.

Ask the Professor

This communication forum provides you with an opportunity to ask your professor general or course content questions. Questions may focus on Blackboard locations of online course components, textbook or course content elaboration, additional guidance on assessment requirements, or general advice from other students.

Questions that are specific in nature, such as inquiries regarding assessment/assignment grades or personal accommodation requests, are NOT to be posted on this forum. If you have questions, comments, or concerns of a non-public nature, please feel free to email your professor. Responses to your post will be addressed or emailed by the professor within 48 hours.

Before posting, please ensure that you have read all relevant course documentation, including the syllabus, assessment/assignment instructions, faculty feedback, and other important information.

Student Break Room

This communication forum allows for casual conversation with your classmates. Communication on this forum should always maintain a standard of appropriateness and respect for your fellow classmates. This forum should NOT be used to share assessment answers.

Grading

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assessments (3 @ 4%)</td>
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<td>Assignments (5 @ 10%)</td>
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Course Schedule/Checklist (PLEASE PRINT)

The following pages contain a printable Course Schedule to assist you through this course. By following this schedule, you will be assured that you will complete the course within the time allotted.
By following this schedule, you will be assured that you will complete the course within the time allotted. Please keep this schedule for reference as you progress through your course.

### Unit I  Introduction to Technical Writing

| Review: | Unit Study Guide |
| Read: | Chapter 1: Introduction to Technical Communication, Chapter 2: Understanding Ethical and Legal Obligations, Chapter 4: Analyzing Your Audience and Purpose |
| Submit: | Assignment |

### Unit II  Instructions, Definitions, and Descriptions

| Review: | Unit Study Guide |
| Read: | Chapter 6: Writing for Your Readers, Chapter 14: Writing Definitions, Descriptions, and Instructions |
| Submit: | Assessment, Assignment |

### Unit III  Organizing Your Content

| Review: | Unit Study Guide |
| Read: | Chapter 7: Designing Print and Online Documents, Chapter 8: Creating Graphics |
| Submit: | Assessment, Assignment |

### Unit IV  Formal Letters

| Review: | Unit Study Guide |
| Read: | Chapter 9: Writing Correspondence |
| Submit: | Assignment |

Notes/Goals:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit V</th>
<th>The Formal Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review:</td>
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| Read: | □ Chapter 12: Writing Informational Reports  
□ Chapter 13: Writing Recommendation Reports |
| Submit: | □ Assessment  
□ Scholarly Activity |

Notes/Goals:

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Notes/Goals: