Course Description

Study of the process of technical writing and written communication. Students review various formats and writing purposes and produce technical and business-related documents.

Course Textbook


Course Learning Objectives

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

1. Demonstrate how to write effective business letters and memorandums.
2. Discuss the elements necessary for the proper organization of information in documents.
3. Explain the purpose of a summary.
4. Demonstrate how to write effective instructions and procedural documents.
5. Compare and contrast the writing forms of analysis and comparison and give examples of when each should be employed.
6. Discuss the role and contents of the resume, cover letter, vitae, and portfolio in an effective job search.
7. Demonstrate familiarity with professional reports.
8. Develop and implement a formal proposal.

Credits

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

Course Structure

1. **Unit Learning Objectives:** Each unit contains Unit Learning Objectives that specify the measurable skills and knowledge students should gain upon completion of the unit.
2. **Written Lessons:** Each unit contains a Written Lesson, which discusses lesson material.
3. **Reading Assignments:** Each unit contains Reading Assignments from one or more chapters from the textbook. Supplemental Readings are provided in Units III-VII to aid students in their course of study.
4. **Learning Activities (Non-Graded):** These non-graded Learning Activities are provided to aid students in their course of study.
5. **Key Terms:** Key Terms are intended to guide students in their course of study. Students should pay particular attention to Key Terms as they represent important concepts within the unit material and reading.
6. **Discussion Boards:** Discussion Boards are a part of all CSU term courses. Information and specifications regarding these assignments are provided in the Academic Policies listed in the Course Menu bar.
7. **Unit Assessments:** This course contains three Unit Assessments, one to be completed at the end of Units IV, V, and VII. Assessments are composed of matching questions and/or written response questions.
8. **Unit Assignments:** Students are required to submit for grading Unit Assignments in Units I, II, III, and VI. Specific information and instructions regarding these assignments are provided below.
9. **Formal Proposal:** Students are required to submit for grading a Formal Proposal in Unit VIII. Specific information and instructions regarding this assignment are provided below.
10. **Ask the Professor:** This communication forum provides you with an opportunity to ask your professor general or course content related questions.

11. **Student Break Room:** This communication forum allows for casual conversation with your classmates.

**Unit Assignments**

**Unit I Assignment**

**E-mail**

Imagine that you are a Human Resources Director at a mid-sized company. Recently, concerns have arisen over some unethical actions within the workplace. Various employees have approached you with their concerns, and it is time for you to address them. Compose a companywide email addressing the six ethical guidelines for work. Make sure you are concise yet informative in your approach.

Some of areas of interest may include:

- Sexual harassment
- Dress code
- Attendance policy
- Vacation policy
- Discrimination
- Compensation
- Alcohol use, drug use, and smoking
- Bullying from supervisors or coworkers

After composing your e-mail, answer the following questions below it in the same document.

1. Is this e-mail technical or academic writing? Why? What is the most important difference between the two?
2. What are the different parts of an audience in a companywide e-mail? How did you approach dealing with each of their concerns?

**Unit II Assignment**

**Letter Revision**

1. Revise the following letter so that it has an objective tone. Your goal is to let Payroll know that your check did not reach you, but in a professional manner.

Dear Pinheads in Payroll,

Has every one of you suffered a stroke? Did lightning strike all your computers at once? Did everyone succumb to the dreaded bite of the tse-tse fly? I ask because something horrible must have happened to delay my paycheck. I know that you all work so hard to get it out every week that only something catastrophic would keep you from living up to that task. And you do work so hard, don’t you? Crunching all those tough little numbers. Maybe you’ve all suffered horrible finger strain.

Ooh, I just can’t wait for your response: “There was a technical error. It’s not our faults.” Blah blah blah. I can do my job every day—why can’t you send a check once a month?

Maybe you’re not aware of it, because you’re all soulless automatons, but some of us have mouths to feed and bills to pay. Here in Sales, it’s not all trashcan basketball and paper football—I don’t work for fun, you know. And I expect my pay on time. Get it to me ASAP, or I’ll make sure you’re all fired.

With the most sincere thanks you can possibly imagine with your tiny little minds,

Bill

2. Revise the following paragraph so that it is no more than 20 words, using the principles of concision mentioned in your textbook. You may rewrite the message to clarify and simplify the content.
Due to unforeseen circumstances, of which we were informed only upon receiving the most recent weather report, the company has been forced by exigent circumstances to postpone the perennial picnic planned since last year. Barring any further problems of a meteorological nature, the festivities and feasting will begin again on the previous Thursday from next week. With any luck, we will enjoy the pleasure of your company then, as always. Though the aforementioned event may not be happening at the previously scheduled time, all attendees are encouraged to bring their assigned dish on the date of the future engagement previously discussed.

3. Revise the following letter, removing sexist language and creating a more professional communication.

Dear Miss Fortin,

As you know, it is the duty of every nurse to clock in at the beginning of her shift. That is so that when a doctor comes into an emergency situation, he can be sure to know which ladies are available. Any nurse incapable of following this simple rule will find herself on report to her supervisor: He will then have cause for dismissal. If a nurse has questions, she may refer to her contract for details. Remember, it is vital that a doctor does not have to trouble himself with small issues like this one.

Sincerely,

Mr. Pratt

4. Revise the following paragraph, changing passive voice to active voice.

A long summer vacation should be taken by every family. Relaxation is needed to stay healthy. Also, families are brought closer together by vacations. An opportunity to experience American culture is provided by them. History is taught and entertainment offered by trips to spots like Colonial Williamsburg. Another boring summer should not be spent in front of the computer. The open road should be hit so that your lives can be reinvigorated.

Unit III Assignment

Letter of Transmittal

Write two different letters of transmittal that can be used in your Formal Proposal in Unit VIII. Pick two separate problems in your community, and imagine that your business is well positioned to provide a solution to that issue.

For example:

The School Board of Smoke River Valley, North Carolina, is concerned that its students are not receiving enough tutoring to ensure their place as a top school in the nation. My tutoring firm will draw from the local University to provide any child that wishes the opportunity a chance for one-on-one instruction with a college tutor.

Researching the issue and addressing specific problems will enhance your work. Be sure to follow the guidelines for a letter of transmittal found in your textbook.

Each letter should be at least one page long and address all the primary concerns issued in the text. Submit both letters in one document.

Unit VI Assignment

Resume

For this assignment, please complete the following:

1. Perform a job search for a position of your choice at a company. Imagine that you are applying for this job. Upload a resume (either fictional or factual) in either chronological or functional formats. Follow the guidelines for formatting listed in your textbook, playing close attention to Figures 10-3 and 10-4. Remember to limit your work to a single page.

2. Using the example of Figure 10-1 of your textbook, write a job letter for the position you chose above. Pay close attention to the material regarding the reader’s needs on pages 207-208.
3. Using the guidelines on page 218 of your textbook, write a follow-up letter for the position mentioned above. Imagine the content of the interview, but be specific.

Submit all of these in one document.

**Formal Proposal**

Students are required to submit for grading a Formal Proposal in Unit VIII. Using the guidelines in your textbook, write a Formal Proposal (minimum of seven pages, including the cover page). The proposal should include:

1. Cover/Title Page
2. Letter/Memo of Transmittal
3. Table of Contents
4. Executive Summary
5. Introduction
6. Discussion Sections
7. Conclusion
8. Appendices (include an APA style Reference Page)

If necessary, include a List of Illustrations. Be sure to include that material in your Table of Contents.

For this proposal, imagine that you own a company that has been asked to provide a proposal to solve a problem in your local community. Research possible topics in local newspapers, and be sure to provide references for any outside sources you use in your proposal. Below is a list of sample topics:

1. Planned construction (roads, shopping centers, etc.)
2. Pensions for public employees
3. Improvements in public education
4. Advertising local businesses

Refer to the sample proposal on pages 174-182 of your textbook for an example of the proper form.

By uploading your assignment through BlackBoard, your university record will automatically be updated to indicate you have submitted your paper and it will be provided to your professor for grading.

**APA Guidelines**

CSU requires that students use the APA style for papers and projects. Therefore, the APA rules for formatting, quoting, paraphrasing, citing, and listing of sources are to be followed. A document titled “APA Guide” is available for you to download from the APA Guide link, found in the Learning Resources area of the myCSU Student Portal. It may also be accessed from the Student Resources link on the Course Menu. This document includes examples and sample papers and provides links to The CSU Success Center and the CSU Online Library staff.

**CSU Grading Rubric for Papers/Projects**

The course papers will be graded based on the CSU Grading Rubric for all types of papers, *unless otherwise specified within assignment instructions*. In addition, all papers will be submitted for electronic evaluation to rule out plagiarism. Course projects will contain project specific grading criteria defined in the project directions. To view the rubric, click the Academic Policies link on the Course Menu, or access it through the CSU Grading Rubric link found in the Learning Resources area of the myCSU Student Portal.

**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.

[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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards (8 @ 2%)</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit IV Assessment</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit V Assessment</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit VII Assessment</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Assignments (4 @ 6%)</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Proposal</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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  
| Learning Activities (Non-Graded): See Study Guide |
| Read: | Chapter 1: Introduction to Technical Communication |
| Discuss: | Discussion Board Response: Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| Submit: | Assignment by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |

## Unit II: Style

| Review: | Unit Study Guide  
| Learning Activities (Non-Graded): See Study Guide |
| Read: | Chapter 3: Visual Design  
| Chapter 11: Style in Technical Writing |
| Discuss: | Discussion Board Response: Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)  
| Discussion Board Comment: Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| Submit: | Assignment by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |

## Unit III: Professional Correspondence

| Review: | Unit Study Guide  
| Learning Activities (Non-Graded): See Study Guide |
| Read: | Chapter 4: Letters, Memos, and Electronic Communication  
| Chapter 7: Reports, pp. 131-132  
| Chapter 8: Proposals, 169-170 and 175  
| Supplemental Reading: See Study Guide |
| Discuss: | Discussion Board Response: Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)  
| Discussion Board Comment: Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| Submit: | Assignment by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |

Notes/Goals:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit IV</th>
<th>Descriptions and Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Review:** | - Unit Study Guide  
- **Learning Activities (Non-Graded):** See Study Guide |
| **Read:** | - Chapter 5: Definitions and Descriptions  
- **Supplemental Reading:** See Study Guide |
| **Discuss:** | - **Discussion Board Response:** Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)  
- **Discussion Board Comment:** Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| **Submit:** | - **Assessment** by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| Notes/Goals: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit V</th>
<th>Process Explanations and Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Review:** | - Unit Study Guide  
- **Learning Activities (Non-Graded):** See Study Guide |
| **Read:** | - Chapter 6: Process Explanations and Instructions  
- **Supplemental Reading:** See Study Guide |
| **Discuss:** | - **Discussion Board Response:** Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)  
- **Discussion Board Comment:** Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| **Submit:** | - **Assessment** by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| Notes/Goals: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit VI</th>
<th>Resumes and Presentations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Review:** | - Unit Study Guide  
- **Learning Activities (Non-Graded):** See Study Guide |
| **Read:** | - Chapter 9: Presentations  
- Chapter 10: The Job Search  
- **Supplemental Reading:** See Study Guide |
| **Discuss:** | - **Discussion Board Response:** Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)  
- **Discussion Board Comment:** Comment on another student's Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| **Submit:** | - **Assignment** by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time) |
| Notes/Goals: |
### Unit VII: Reports

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide
- **Learning Activities (Non-Graded):** See Study Guide

**Read:**
- Chapter 7: Reports
- **Supplemental Reading:** See Study Guide

**Discuss:**
- **Discussion Board Response:** Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)
- **Discussion Board Comment:** Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**
- Assessment by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Notes/Goals:**

### Unit VIII: The Formal Proposal

**Review:**
- Unit Study Guide
- **Learning Activities (Non-Graded):** See Study Guide

**Read:**
- Chapter 8: Proposals

**Discuss:**
- **Discussion Board Response:** Submit your response to the Discussion Board question by Saturday, Midnight (Central Time)
- **Discussion Board Comment:** Comment on another student’s Discussion Board response by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Submit:**
- Formal Proposal by Tuesday, Midnight (Central Time)

**Notes/Goals:**