# ENGL 305 W02: Technical Writing
## MWF 11:30 am – 12:20 pm * Colson Hall G18 * CRN 81420

**Instructor:** Dr. Michael Buso
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**Office:** 317 Colson
**Office Hours:** MW 10:30-11:15 am

## REQUIRED TEXT

Anderson, Paul V. *Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach*. 9th Ed. Boston: Wadsworth/Cengage, 2018. ISBN: 9781305667884

*\*\*you should bring your textbook to class every day that a reading is due out of it*

## COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to introduce you to strategies for translating between discipline-specific knowledge and interested outsiders. While this may include topics traditionally understood as "technical," such as those in engineering, architecture, and computer science, technical writing encompasses any topic that must be explained to an involved, but not expert, audience.

This course explores the forms of technical writing that are common in the professions, including memos, proposals, and technical descriptions. Drawing on the expertise developed in your major, you will explore technical writing through topics and issues important to the work you plan to do. Because a primary assumption of this course is that all writing emerges from and responds to a particular problem, audience, and purpose, the course focuses on helping you develop multiple strategies for your writing toolbox.

- That you master the practices and principles of technical communication with particular emphasis on planning, audience analysis, persuasion, clear and effective writing style, organization, graphics and information design.

- That you refine a writing process that will allow you to communicate well, meet deadlines, and work as part of a team.

- That you attend and participate in the classroom discussions and peer review sessions. Class participation will be a significant portion of your grade.

- That you design and execute successful documents, including a resume, technical documents, and a pecha kucha presentation.

- That you produce a significant, professional portfolio of business and technical documents that have been carefully composed and revised.

- That you demonstrate the ability to speak persuasively in a professional setting, including the ability to select and design effective presentation graphics.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

You will be evaluated on a collection of written documents, oral presentations, quizzes, and class participation. You will receive a detailed assignment sheet for each task. Each graded assignment passes through a drafting stage before you turn in your final version of the assignment.

Note that active participation in course activities make-up roughly 15% of your grade.

| *Assignment* | *Possible Points* |
|---|---|
| QUIZZES        (cannot be made up) | 15% |
| PARTICIPATION / SHORT WRITING | 15% |
| CAREER FACT SHEET & RÉSUMÉ | 10% |
| SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL CONTROVERSY | 10% |
| FEASIBILITY STUDY | 10% |
| MECHANISM & PROCESS DESCRIPTION | 10% |
| DOCUMENTATION/INSTRUCTIONS | 10% |
| USABILITY TEST | 10% |
| USABILITY TEST RESULTS PRESENTATION | 10% |

Please keep in mind as you turn in these assignments that I will try to hold you to the professional standards that prevail in your field. For example, your employer will take for granted qualities such as promptness, neat appearance, and correct mechanics (grammar, spelling, and punctuation).

**USB DRIVE & DOCUMENT KEEPING**
Please obtain a USB drive that you will dedicate to collecting the writing, designing, editing, and revising done in this course. Please bring this drive to each class. As you work on your assignments both in and out of class, keep (within reason) progressive versions of all your notes, drafts, outlines, peer reviews, and research materials. Organize and label the documents as you go and it will benefit both of us. As you prepare your rough and final drafts, you will review these materials in order to learn how your discovery, drafting, and research processes have evolved throughout the course.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS & CONDUCT**
In addition to the requirements in this syllabus, you are expected to work until the class period has ended; to complete all reading assignments on time; to help your classmates learn by your responses to their writing; to choose projects that require significant research and analysis; to be courteous and considerate. Please turn all cell phones and pagers (?!) off (as in no ringing & no vibrating) during class time, as they are disruptive to the class. No text messaging, Facebook, Fortnite, insta-snaps, etc., please. All are very detrimental to your class participation grade. Finally, let's please respect the request for no food or drink in the lab. *If at any time course expectations are unclear please do not hesitate to ask.*

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is required for this course. I know that personal situations and required university events sometimes make it impossible for you to be in class. That's why a few absences are allowed but make sure you use them for emergencies.

- Students may miss <u>three days</u> of class without penalty.
- Students who miss more than three days of class will be penalized one letter grade for each additional absence.
- Students who miss <u>six days</u> of class will be assigned a failing grade for the course.

All absences (*including excused absences*) incurred from the date you register for the course will count toward the total number allowed.

It is particularly important for you to attend—and be prepared to participate in—in-class peer reviews on drafts of your documents. The more you have written before peer review sessions, the more you will benefit from them. Although your drafts need not be "polished," in general they should be complete enough for you to receive substantial help from your peers. Under no circumstances will I accept a final version of a document unless I have seen a rough draft. If you show up to class on the day a draft is due without your draft work (or with draft work that is incomplete), you will be given an absence for the day.

**PLAGIARISM POLICY**

West Virginia University defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity; respect other students' dignity, rights and property; and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. For procedures regarding the procedure for handling academic dishonesty cases, please consult the current Student Code of Conduct at <http://www.arc.wvu.edu/rightsa.html>. Talking over your ideas and getting comments on your writing from friends are NOT acts of plagiarism. Taking someone else's published or unpublished words and calling them your own IS plagiarism: a synonym is academic dishonesty. When plagiarism amounts to an attempt to deceive, it has dire consequences, as spelled out in the university's regulations (WVU Academic Integrity/Dishonesty Policy, available at http://www.arc.wvu.edu/admissions/integrity.html).

**SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY**

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see http://diversity.wvu.edu.

**THE EBERLY WRITING STUDIO**

The Eberly Writing Studio is a resource that can support you in all aspects of the writing process. It is located in G02 Colson Hall. For more information about the Eberly Writing Studio visit speakwrite.wvu.edu/writing-studio.

# COURSE SCHEDULE

| Week 1 | **Introductions** |
|---|---|
| 8/15 | Discussion: Introductions to course and each other<br><br>Assigned: Memo |
| 8/17 | **Due: Memo** |
| **Week 2** | **Career Fact Sheet & Résumé** |
| 8/20 | Introduce: Career Fact Sheet & Résumé<br><br>Assigned: Locate 3 job prospects |
| 8/22 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 1 (Communication/Career) |
| 8/24 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 2 (Writing for a Job)<br><br>Discussion: Career Fact Sheet & Résumé<br><br>**Due:** 3 job prospects |
| **Week 3** | **Career Fact Sheet & Résumé** |
| 8/27 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 3 (Defining Goals)<br><br>Discussion: Anderson "Defining Objectives" sheet (p52) |
| 8/29 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 14 (Designing Reader-Centered Pages)<br>Discussion: assigned reading |
| 8/31 | **Due: Rough Draft of Career Fact Sheet & Résumé**<br><br>In-class peer review of Career Fact Sheet & Résumé |
| **Week 4** | **Scientific/Technical Controversy** |
| 9/3 | **LABOR DAY – NO CLASS** |
| 9/5 | **Due: Career Fact Sheet & Résumé**<br><br>Introduce: Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment |
| 9/7 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 9 (Persuading Readers)<br>Discussion: assigned reading |
| **Week 5** | **Scientific/Technical Controversy** |
| 9/10 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 4 (Conducting Research)<br>Discussion: assigned reading |
| 9/12 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 8 (8 Reader-Centered Patterns)<br>Discussion: assigned reading |
| 9/14 | **Due: Rough Draft Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment**<br><br>In-class peer review of Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment |

| Week 6 | **Feasibility Study** |
|--------|------------------------|
| 9/17 | **Due: Scientific/Technical Controversy Assignment** |
|      | Introduce: Feasibility Study |
| 9/19 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 25 (Feasibility) |
|      | Discussion: assigned reading |
| 9/21 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 7 (Reader-Centered Communication) |
|      | Discussion: assigned reading |
| **Week 7** | **Feasibility Study** |
| 9/24 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 6 (Patterns for Organizing) |
|      | Discussion: assigned reading |
| 9/26 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 10 (Professional Style) |
|      | Discussion: assigned reading |
| 9/28 | **Due: Rough Draft Feasibility Study** |
|      | In-class peer review of Feasibility Study |
| **Week 8** | **Mechanism & Process Description** |
| 10/1 | **Due: Feasibility Study** |
|      | Introduce: Mechanism & Process Description Project |
| 10/3 | Discussion: Mechanism & Process Description Project |
| 10/5 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 22 (Social Media Writing) |
|      | Discussion: assigned reading |
| **Week 9** | **Mechanism & Process Description** |
| 10/8 | Discussion: Mechanism & Process Description Project |
| 10/10 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 11 (Front & Back Matter) |
|      | Discussion: assigned reading |
| 10/12 | Discussion: Mechanism & Process Description Project |
| **Week 10** | **Mechanism & Process Description** |
| 10/15 | **Due:  Rough Draft Mechanism & Process Description Project** |
|      | In-class peer review of Mechanism & Process Description Project |
| 10/17 | **Due: Mechanism & Process Description Project** |
|      | Introduce: Documentation/Instructions Project |
| 10/19 | Discussion: Documentation/Instructions Project |

| Week 11 | Documentation/Instructions |
|---|---|
| 10/22 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 27 (Instructions) <br><br> Discussion: assigned reading |
| 10/24 | Discussion: Documentation/Instructions Project |
| 10/26 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 15 (Revising Drafts) <br><br> Discussion: assigned reading |
| Week 12 | Documentation/Instructions |
| 10/29 | **Due: Rough Draft Documentation/Instructions Project** <br><br> In-class peer review of Documentation/Instructions Project |
| 10/31 | **Due: Documentation/Instructions Project** <br><br> Introduce: Usability Testing Project & Presentation |
| 11/2 | Discussion: Usability Testing Project & Presentation |
| Week 13 | Usability Testing |
| 11/5 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 16 (Testing Drafts) <br><br> Discussion: assigned reading |
| 11/7 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 17 (Communicating in Team) <br><br> Discussion: assigned reading |
| 11/9 | Reading Due: Anderson Ch. 18 (Oral Presentations) <br><br> Discussion: assigned reading |
| Week 14 | Usability Testing |
| 11/12 | Discussion: Usability Testing Project & Presentation |
| 11/14 | Reading: Anderson Ch. 12 & 13 (Graphics) <br><br> Discussion: Preparing for Presentations |
| 11/16 | Discussion: Preparing for Presentations <br><br> *No Class 11/19-23 – Thanksgiving Break* |
| Week 15 | Usability Testing Project Presentations |
| 11/26 | Discussion: Preparing for Presentations |
| 11/28 | Presentations |
| 11/30 | Presentations |
| Week 16 | Usability Testing Project Presentations |
| 12/3 | Presentations <br><br> In-Class: Complete SEIs |
| 12/5 | Wrapping Everything Up |