ENGLISH 360: Technical Writing
Course Syllabus, Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Leslie Bruce
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Course: Engl 360 (15639)

Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 11:30-12:30
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Course Description:
Earning a "C" (2.0) or higher grade in English 360, a writing-intensive course, will satisfy the university's undergraduate, upper-division writing requirement for certain majors. Please check with an adviser to determine whether ENGL 360 will satisfy this requirement for your major.

This course will build upon the critical reading, thinking, and writing experience you gained in English 101 to foster your ability to write for professional audiences. Writing in a variety of genres, we will cultivate your writing process (your pre-writing, drafting, and revision techniques) and style as we improve your ability to read, think, and write toward a specific purpose. To familiarize ourselves with the rhetoric of technical communication, we'll take into consideration its audiences, methods of argumentation, conventions, and values. You'll practice some of the many technical genres (e.g., definitions, proposals, instructions, and infographics) intended to serve varied purposes (e.g., to persuade, inform, or instruct). Moreover, each of you will gain competence with the rhetorical strategies of invention, arrangement, style, and research as you write collaboratively and individually, producing documents conforming to the conventions of your field of study. At semester's end, you'll submit an outcomes portfolio documenting your proficiency as a technical writer. Most of our class time will be spent writing, reading, talking, and thinking together as a class and in peer groups, though I will also give short lectures to explain new concepts and techniques. **Prerequisite**: English 101

Learning Outcomes:
1. **Rhetorical Focus**: Write formally and informally, in-class and out-of-class, for a variety of audiences and purposes.

2. **Ethical Research**: Using a contextually appropriate citation style, ethically cite and communicate information from a variety of discipline-appropriate sources.

3. **Persuasive Arguments**: Compare, evaluate, synthesize, and communicate carefully, objectively, and persuasively the relative merits of alternative or opposing arguments, assumptions, and cultural values. Integrate this evaluative work into one's own persuasive arguments.

4. **Organization and Focus**: Organize, focus, and communicate one's thoughts clearly and coherently to address a rhetorical situation.

5. **Academic Language and Design**: Recognize, evaluate, and employ the features and contexts of language and design that express and influence meaning and that demonstrate sensitivity to gender and cultural differences.

6. **Collaboration**: Improve one's own and others' writing skills through the assessment and critique of written works.

Required Texts (available at the Little Professor Bookstore on Placentia)
- o Markel, Mike. *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*, 2nd edition (print or online version OK; 1st edition will do in a pinch).
- o Our class Titanium site. If you do not have a personal computer, be sure to visit the computer lab in CSUF's University Learning Center to access your CSUF email account and our Titanium site. I use Titanium to post grades and instructions, to make announcements, and to communicate with students. You will use Titanium to collaborate with other students on a group writing tasks and presentations.

Course Requirements and Grading
You will receive a detailed response from me for each major assignment: these responses will tell you what you've done well, and where you should focus your energies in future tasks. The assignments are described briefly below. I will distribute more detailed assignment sheets in class and post them on our Titanium site well before the due date. The assignments and requirements carry the following weights:

Assignment/Requirement	Weight	Due Date(s)
1) Extended Definition	10%	Sept. 30
2) Conference with instructor	5%	Week 15
3) iFixit.com Fast Fix project	20%	Oct. 23
4) Infographic	15%	Nov. 13
5) Outcomes Portfolio	25%	Dec. 12
6) Writer's Notebook	15%	3x/semester TBA
7) Daily Work & Participation	10%	Daily

This course will be graded on a +/- scale. Grades will be assigned according to the following rough scale: A = 100-90%; B = 89-80%; C = 79-70%; D = 69-60%; F = 59% and below.

> **Please Note: Detailed prompts for all of the major assignments listed below will be posted on Titanium.**

1) Extended Definition **(10%)**
Defining a technical term requires more than familiarity with the term. It also demands a writer to analyze his or her audience, purpose, and context before selecting appropriate strategies for defining. Choosing a word that is central to your field of study, you will compose an illustrated four- to five- page definition for a general audience.

2) Conference with Instructor **(5%)**
Teams of students will meet with me to evaluate their progress on their portfolios (week 15). Each team member will be required to complete a conference preparation sheet before attending the conference.

3) iFixit Fast Fix Project **(20%)**
Your iFixit team will write and illustrate instructions for a simple repair or hack for an object from one of your homes. Your instructions, along with a group charter, proposal, peer review of another

team's Fast Fix, self- and team-evaluation sheet, and email correspondence with iFixit, constitute your project.

4) Infographic **(15%)**
During our iFixit unit, you'll read about the reasons repair makes a better world. Choosing one of these reasons, you'll create an infographic to share with the class. We'll have a special day to enjoy each other's work.

5) Outcomes Portfolio **(25%)**
You'll submit an outcomes portfolio that will allow you to reflect upon, assess, and polish a few pieces of your work into a collection you think best reflects your competence as a technical communicator. This portfolio will contain work selected by you as representing both your "best works" and your achievement of the "outcomes" listed on page one of this syllabus. My portfolio instructions specify some minimum requirements, including, for example, a revision of at least one major, eligible assignment and a cover letter (see the prompt on Titanium for details). Your 350-500-word cover letter will explain how each inclusion satisfies one or more of our course's Learning Outcomes (see page 1, above).

6) Writer's Notebook **(15%)**
Keeping an electronic writer's notebook containing all of your reflective, analytical, and process writing throughout the semester will help you record, guide, and improve your writing and learning in this class. You'll submit your Writer's Notebook twice during the semester (the dates will be announced in class and on Titanium), and I will conduct an in-class spot check during the semester for a total of three checks. **Because these notebooks are time/learning sensitive, no late notebooks will be accepted.**

7) Daily Work **(10%)**
This category includes work we do in class, such as peer reviews, and online reading quizzes. **There are no make ups for small group assignments done in class.**

Important Course Policies

Participation and Attendance
- In classes that meet twice each week, I allow three "freebie" absences (no excuse necessary).
- Each additional unexcused absence up to eight (in a twice/week class) will reduce your semester grade by 1% (e.g., if you have an 82% at semester's end, but you've missed six days of class, your grade will drop 3% to a 79%--your B- will become a C+).
- If you miss more than 30% (nine or more classes in a twice weekly class; 4.5 or more in a once weekly class) of the class, I reserve the right to fail you.
- If you arrive significantly late or leave significantly early, you will be marked absent for half of the class meeting.
- If you are absent, visit our Titanium site, where I will upload major assignments and lesson plans. It is your responsibility to read these documents.
- Your daily work grade will be based upon the individual and group work (including peer reviews) we do in class. There are no make-ups for this type of work—no exceptions.

Assignment Format

All assignments must follow the format dictated by that assignment's context, which will be articulated on each prompt. **You must also provide a Works Cited or Bibliography list with every assignment that uses sources.**

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: Academic dishonesty involves plagiarism (using someone else's work as your own or without acknowledgement) and cheating; we will discuss both in class. Depending upon the severity of the incident, the student will receive a failing grade on the assignment or for the entire course; the incident will be recorded on the student's CSUF records. According to CSUF's "Student Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism," plagiarism is:

- The submission of material authored by another person but represented as the student's own work, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.
- The submission of material subjected to editorial revision by another person that results in substantive changes in content or major alteration of writing style and
- Improper acknowledgment of sources in essays, papers, or presentations.

You can read more about plagiarism and writing a research paper at: http://fdc.fullerton.edu/learning/Academic%20Integrity/student_guide_to_avoiding_plagia.htm

Late Work
Only assignments worth 10% or more may be submitted late. Late work will be penalized. If you know you will be absent, turn in your assignment before the due date. Papers lose one grade level per day, including weekends (A, A-, B+, B, etc.). You may submit your work to me in class or drop it in the locked box just outside of the English Department's door. The staff will date stamp your work and put it in my mailbox.

Extra Credit
If an extra credit assignment is distributed, the student can choose to complete or not complete the assignment. If the assignment is distributed or conducted during the class period, students must be present to take advantage it.

Administrative Policies
- *Withdrawals and Incompletes*: be certain to check CSUF's guidelines and deadlines for withdrawals. Incompletes can only be given to students who arrange a timeline to complete their coursework with the instructor BEFORE the grading period is over.
- *Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*: I am happy to discuss accommodations you need to succeed in this class. Please make requests for such accommodations during the first three weeks of the semester so arrangements can be made.

Emergency Policies: All students should be aware of what needs to be done in the case of an emergency, such as an earthquake, a fire, or other disasters, natural or otherwise. Be sure to look at the CSUF Emergency Preparedness website for critical information about your safety. Also refer to http://fdc.fullerton.edu/teaching/syllabus.php to learn what to do when such an emergency forces the University to close.

Extra Help
1. **Email Me**
   Email is the best method for contacting me. You can ask me questions or set up office hour meetings with email, but **do not send me papers or rough drafts via email**. All papers are submitted via Titanium. Although I typically respond to emails within 24 hours, please allow 48 hours for a reply.

2. **Office Hours**
   Take advantage of office hours to talk to me about ideas for your papers or assignments.
3. **The Writing Center**
   The Writing Center provides tutoring and workshops for students. If you feel you need help with your writing, make an appointment with them—they're there to help you! Writing Center appointments can be made at http://fullerton.mywconline.com

Recommended Online Resources
- **www.ifixit.com:** iFixit is run by a group of young, super-talented engineers and writers who want to keep gadgets out of landfills. Their free, online instruction manuals teach you how to fix your stuff and serve as excellent models for the manuals you'll write in class.
- **http://www.dozuki.com/tech_writing: iFixit's free, online technical writing handbook is especially handy when you're writing instructions.**
- *Oxford English Dictionary* **online** (OED): On CSUF's homepage, log on to the "portal" with your password, click on Library, then A-Z Databases, then scroll down to *Oxford English Dictionary*. This is the authoritative source for definitions, etymologies, and spellings.
- Mike Markel's **TechComm Web** (bedfordstmartins.com/techcomm), which includes additional models and exercises.
- **www.APAstyle.com, www.mla.org,** and other relevant editorial style websites. Ask professors in your major what editorial style is most commonly used in your field and then find athe corresponding website. The APA and MLA sites both include detailed advice about citations and style.
- **Purdue's OWL (Online Writing Lab**). Resources for general and technical writing, as well as exercises for writing more effective sentences. http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/
- **www.**chompchomp.com. Includes a diagnostic quiz to help you identify weak areas in your writing and exercises to address those weaknesses. A must visit.