Online HU 3120: Syllabus
Technical and Professional Communication
Summer A 2014

Instructor: M. Ann Brady, PhD
Director, Scientific and Technical Communication Program
Email: mabrady@mtu.edu
Online Office Hours: 7:30-8:30 am and 5-6:00 pm, EST, MTW
Texts: Practical Strategies for Technical Communication,
Mike Markel, 2013, ISBN 978-1-4576-0940-4,
paperback
Selected readings, posted on Canvas

Course Description
Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) is a study of written, visual, and digital communication in professional settings. It emphasizes audiences, writing processes, genres, collaboration, professional responsibility, and effective expression.

Course Goals & Objectives
TPC seeks to familiarize you with representative communication demands of today’s workplace. Specifically, its objectives are to offer you professional strategies for:

Planning, drafting, and revising, for a purpose and at a distance
Writing for a variety of audiences
Designing visually effective texts
Conducting research for professional goals
Communicating and collaborating at a distance
Reviewing your own work, as well as that of others

Course Policies
Following are basic policies central to this class. Review them carefully.

Canvas
I use our Canvas website to store course materials for your access and to make announcements. Check it daily.

Online Office Hours
I will be on Canvas chat 7:30-8:30 am and 5-6:00 pm, Eastern Standard Time (EST), Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. If you contact me at times other than these, I will get back to you, but not immediately.

Email
I will use MTU’s Google email, not the Canvas internal email/messaging system. Please use your MTU Google account, not the internal Canvas system, when mailing me.

Assigned Writing/Design, and Locating it
I plan four major assignments for this class, which will require both writing and design work. Detailed instructions are available. Go to Canvas, click on a document cycle (1-4). This will take you to the assignments. I reserve the right to modify them.
Assigned reading, and locating it
I expect you to read the texts assigned and to be prepared to answer posted discussion questions about them. The readings are short, and can be found either in the required textbook, in PDFs posted on Canvas, or through web links.

Due dates, times, and late work
All due dates and times are Eastern Standard Time (EST). If you are outside EST, you will need to adjust accordingly. I will not accept late work, which is always due at 11:59 pm.

Replacement work
Keep electronic copies of your work since you are responsible for it should it be misplaced.

Collaborative work
Group members are responsible for working as a team and at a distance. I suggest using Google drive for reviewing drafts and/or progress updates to each other at the end of each day. Workplace teams experience, and manage, crowded schedules and conflicting commitments in electronic environments. I expect you to do the same.

Academic honesty
Unless the assignment calls for a collaborative effort, I expect that the work you submit is yours. If you are referring to, or using, other sources, including your own work for another class or project, remember to acknowledge them, using proper form. Evidence of copied or plagiarized work is cause for serious disciplinary action by the University.

Discrimination and harassment
MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services at MTU, please call Dr. Bonnie Gorman, Dean of Students (7.2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact Dr. Jill Hodges, Director, Office of Institutional Equity (7.3310), your advisor, or your department chair.

Safe Place
I am a member of Safe Place and thus expect people to be respectful of one another in any class I teach.

Here is the mission statement: The GLBT Safe Place Program strives to reduce homophobia and heterosexism on Michigan Tech’s campus. Through education, advocacy, and awareness, the program contributes to an open campus climate that is safe and accepting to all members of the University community.
Reviewing working drafts and grading final drafts

When I review drafts of your assignments, use your MTU Google email to send them to me as Word attachments. I’ll use the “comment” function for my suggestions and then email them back to you.

When you peer review, use Google drive to share your documents. Add me to the view list.

When I grade final drafts, email them to me as Word attachments. I’ll reply via email.

I will not post grades to Canvas, so you should keep track of your grades as I send them to you. If you have questions about your grade at any time, contact me right away.

Your essays and projects, without identification, may be used for assessment.

Grading

Online responses and discussion (weeks 1-2) 25%
Career documents (weeks 2-4) 25%
Specialized subjects & general audiences (weeks 4-5) 25%
Client project (weeks 6-7) 25%

Grading Standards

I do not use points when grading. Instead, I use the rubrics below.

A—truly excellent. A work is an example of highly effective professional writing, speaking, or design. It makes its purposes clear, reflects concern for its audience’s needs and responses, and is detailed, persuasive, effectively organized, exhibits appropriate format and tone, and is grammatically correct.

B—very good. B work is effective and would succeed in most professional communication circumstances. It may lack the polish or effectiveness of an A.

C—satisfactory. C work is effective though it lacks features necessary to succeed completely with a professional audience. Its purpose may not be entirely clear, it may not be effectively organized, it may not exhibit an appropriate tone or format, or it entails grammatical errors that make it difficult to read or understand than necessary.

D—poor. D work does not communicate effectively for several reasons. It may display an inadequate understanding of purpose or audience. It may lack information or be unpersuasive. Its organization may be confusing or misleading, and its tone or format may be inappropriate. It may be difficult to understand or contain serious errors in grammar.

F—unacceptable. F work does not satisfy the requirements of the assignment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>A/AB</th>
<th>B/BC</th>
<th>C/CD</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Meets assignment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Most aspects</td>
<td>Significant gaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>Interestingly and clearly advanced</td>
<td>Clearly advanced</td>
<td>May be good but only implied</td>
<td>Ambiguous or absent, generic or trite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Valid and sufficient support provided</td>
<td>Some gaps or weak support</td>
<td>Some support, but weak or not clearly relevant</td>
<td>Poor support or connections not shown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insight</td>
<td>Original and creative</td>
<td>Demonstrates thought</td>
<td>Conventional or generic</td>
<td>Superficial or incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Establishes and follows a pattern</td>
<td>Follows a pattern</td>
<td>Generally follows a pattern; some gaps</td>
<td>Unapparent pattern or hard to follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical ordering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
<td>Coherent and unified</td>
<td>Usually coherent and unified</td>
<td>Some incoherent or not unified</td>
<td>Incoherent or lacking unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td>Provided as needed</td>
<td>Provided as needed</td>
<td>Sometimes missing</td>
<td>Enough missing to cause confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>Correct and varied, according to meaning</td>
<td>Correct, with some variety</td>
<td>Correct, but elementary</td>
<td>Surface errors, such as comma splices or fragments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>Precise, correct, creative</td>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>Some debatable word choices</td>
<td>Frequent misuse of words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>Very few mistakes</td>
<td>Misspellings confuse meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>