



## Technical Writing and Technical Communication: How to be a Better Communicator

WR 227

Winter 2015

Instructor: Eric Dickey

CRN# 30279

Times: 1600-1720, TR

Location: NSH 107

Office: SSH 208

Office Hours: before and after class

1530-1600 and 1720-1800 TR

or by appointment

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WELCOME TO WR227!

Technical communications happen all the time in the workplace and in the world. As writers, we transcribe, produce, translate, and interpret information. This class will give you experience in researching topics and communicating ideas precisely, clearly, and efficiently, an essential skill in technical communication. To view the objectives and outcomes of WR227:

<https://www.linnbenton.edu/55D763BC-248B-11E3-B3570050568208D5>.

The products you will produce for this class will be directly relevant to your career pursuits. The goal of this class is to help you become better communicators.

Diversity statement: LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, veteran status, age, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. Our differences are a source of strength and are an important part of education.

### Required Texts

Technical Communication: Thirteenth Edition. John M. Lannon and Laura J. Gurak.

ISBN 13: 987-0-321-89997-2 or ISBN 10: 0-321-89997-0.

Available at LBCC's Bookstore, Main Campus, phone (541) 917-4950.

NOTE: This REQUIRED textbook is an essential part of our class and must be in your possession by the first week. See me, if you need assistance. The book discusses writing strategies for technical writing and provides helpful models for all writing assignments. Lannon has developed online resources (including study guides for each chapter and online chapter quizzes). Check these out at: <http://www.ablongman.com/lannonweb>. Another great resource is Exercise Central, an online interactive editing resource, at [www.ablongman.com/exercisecentral](http://www.ablongman.com/exercisecentral).

A grammar handbook will be useful this term. You can bring your own or check one out from the library. **A literature review of your grammar handbook is required.** Although using online grammar resources is commonplace, most sites are not comprehensive. While I encourage you to use a handbook, I will entertain the idea of your reviewing an online resource if you clear it with me ahead of time.

In addition to in-class exercises and participation, assessments, and the reading, four major products will determine your grade.

**The four major products are**

- 3 literature reviews (chapter, grammar book, interest)
- cover letter and résumé
- a presentation
- a proposal complete with cover page, summary, budget and more

An approximate weekly schedule is listed below, and is subject to change. Weekly handouts will be distributed every first class of the week and will offer more details for the week. Weekly handouts will also forecast upcoming assignments.

**Your grades will be based on**

- 20% participation (10 weeks of class, each class worth 1%)
- 15% literature reviews (three reviews, worth 5% each)
- 10% cover letter and résumé (worth 5% each)
- 20% presentation (three slides, graded on content and quality)
- 35% proposal (cover letter, résumé, presentation, budget, budget justification, project narrative, letters of support, can be submitted individually, or as a group project)

Criteria for the literature reviews:

Chapter – Include your name, the chapter number and title, and a short paragraph summarizing the chapter in three to five sentences, something in the chapter you liked and why, and something you didn't like and why, and identify one of the exercises at the end of the chapter in the Projects section to bring to the class. Be prepared to talk about it to the class.

Interest – Include your name and the citation of the source of interest, a paragraph about why you think the source will be of use to you, what you like/don't like and why, and your recommendation.

Grammar book – Include your name and a citation of the book or resource, a paragraph about how the book is structured, what you like/don't like and why, and your recommendation.

The grading scale follows the traditional 90% = A, 80% = B, 70% = C, etc. Assignments will earn points based on:

- quality and organization
- clarity and conciseness
- usefulness of design and graphics
- timeliness of the assignment

Student Decorum Statement: Because college coursework and professional correspondence require focused study and open exchange of ideas, the Department expects the classroom to be a place of courteous interaction, a forum for demonstrating mutual respect between teachers and students. Professional communication requires all of us to listen carefully to each other (whether we agree or not) and to state our positions with clarity and our disagreements with tact.

Standards for academic courtesy apply to group work, on-line interaction, and student-teacher conferences as well.

### **Skills Needed to Be Successful in this Class**

Technical skills: Word processing, e-mail, and the internet.

Communicating skills: This class is designed to improve your writing and communication skills. do you like to learn from reading and writing?

Emailing the instructor: In your email, put your name, WR227, and the topic of the message in the subject line of the email. This information will also help me identify the nature of your request and reply more quickly. Please allow 24 hours during business days (Monday through Friday) for a response.

Assignment Submission: Please see the Weekly Schedule for these instructions. Bring rough drafts to class on the day they are due, and email final assignments to directly to your instructor a

All assignments must be compatible with Word. All report drafts must follow work-place conventions and standards of professionalism. All incomplete or late first versions will result in a letter grade being deducted from the final report. Please keep a copy of every paper you submit.

Attendance: I will take attendance daily. If you attend regularly, contribute to class discussion, and don't distract from the learning environment, you will receive full attendance and participation credit. If you are absent due to illness or a verifiable emergency, you must contact me within 24 hours to make further arrangements. You may or may not be able to make up the participation points.

Late Work: Our classroom standards reflect workplace standards; a due date is a deadline and you don't miss deadlines without informing your supervisor of your progress on the report in advance. If you feel circumstances are working against you, you may make arrangements for an extension PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE. Late work will lose 10% automatically and may suffer additional penalties. If any late assignments are turned in after Week 9, I cannot guarantee that I will be able to read them before the end of the term, and the assignment may result in earning zero credit for those assignments.

Plagiarism: Do your own work! Using someone else's work as your own or using information or ideas without proper citations can lead to your failing the assignment or the class. Bibliographies (Works Cited or References) and in-text citations are required whenever you use outside sources, including the Internet. Depending on the severity of the plagiarism, the student may be subject to administrative action. Ask if you are uncertain or have any questions.

### Course Activities and Practice:

I. Participation: You will be asked to participate in weekly activities in class to practice concepts you will be learning. Your participation in these activities and your record of attendance will raise or lower your participation grade.

II. Assessments: Usability review workshops are a time for you to get helpful feedback from

your colleagues. To complete this activity, you will bring drafts of assignments to class. These workshops are designed to develop your growing audience awareness, helping you understand not only how your writing sounds to others but also how it affects or fails to affect others.

III. Projects: Assignments are designed to gradually increase in difficulty and assigned length.

### **Resources**

The Writing Center: While enrolled in Writing 227, you are encouraged to seek extra help at the Writing Center (917-4684), located on the second floor of Willamette Hall, in the Learning Resource Center above the Library. If needed, they will also be able to direct you to the ESOL lab for additional support. Visit their website at <https://www.linnbenton.edu/writing-center> for hours and information. The Online Writing Lab is also available to submit writing electronically for feedback. Follow the link to the Writing Center homepage. You are encouraged to seek help early in the term. This is a free service to all LB students.

Computer Lab Resources: You may use either LRC 213 or Forum 204 as a drop-in computer lab whenever classes are not scheduled and space is available.

Library Information: The LB library homepage can be found by following the links from: <http://library.linnbenton.edu/home>. The site provides library hours, an online catalogue, as well as many helpful research databases.

**LETS WORK TOGETHER!** Developing technical writing skills for effective individual and teamwork means a great deal of thoughtful effort on your part. Your commitment will enhance your results in class and in your future employment. Email me or visit during office hours to discuss an assignment or your progress at any point in the term. I look forward to working with you this term. Let me know what I can do to make this a successful learning experience for you!

Students who have emergency medical information the instructor should know of, or who might need special arrangements in the event of an evacuation, or students with documented disabilities who have special needs, should make an appointment with the instructor no later than the first week of the term. If additional assistance is required, the student should contact LBCC's Office of Disability Services at 917-4789.

Students who need to talk to somebody can talk directly with me. If you are struggling with personal issues, please know there are people you can turn to: Contact the LBCC Career and Counseling Center 541 917 4780.

### **Accessibility**

You should meet with your instructor during the first week of class if:

- you have a documented disability and need accommodations,
- your instructor needs to know medical information about you, or
- you need special arrangements in the event of an emergency.

If you believe you may need accommodation services please contact Center for Accessibility Resources, 917-4789. If you have documented your disability, remember that you must make

your request for accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources Online Services web page every term in order to receive accommodations.

### **Disability Services**

If you have a documented disability, I will help you in any way I can. Talk to me during the first week of class. If you think you might have a disability, but you are not sure, contact Disability Services, 917-4789. [Here is a lot more useful information about Disability Services and LBCC's disability policies.](#)

### **LBCC Non-Discrimination Policy**

EVERYONE IS WELCOME! LBCC maintains a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity in employment and admissions, without regard to race, color, sex, marital and/or parental status, religion, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, Vietnam era, or veteran status. (See Administrative Rule No. E029 and Board Policy Series No. 6090, found at <http://po.linnbenton.edu/BPsandARs/>.)

## APPROXIMATE WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

- Week 1: Jan. 6 & 8  
Jan. 6 Introductions  
Jan. 8 Writing Center resources  
Reading: Chapters 1 & 6
- Week 2: Jan. 13 & 15  
Jan. 13 What is Technical Communications and where is it going?  
Jan. 15 Library Resources  
Reading: Chapters 18 & 19
- Week 3: Jan. 20 & 22  
Jan. 20 Know your audience  
Jan. 22 Know your self  
Reading: Chapters 2, 10, & 3  
Due: Jan. 20 literature review of interest
- Week 4: Jan. 27 & 29  
Jan. 27 Informal, day-to-day writing  
Jan. 29 Online writing voice  
Reading: Chapters 21, 25, & 26  
Due: Jan. 29 literature review of grammar book
- Week 5: Feb. 3 & 5  
Feb. 3 Informal, on-the-job writing  
Feb. 5 Formal, on-the-job writing  
Reading: Chapters 14, 15, & 16  
Due: Proposal idea due
- Week 6: Feb. 10 & 12  
Feb. 10 Professional and personal standards  
Feb. 12 Building in assessments  
Reading: Chapters 7 & 4  
Due: Resume due
- Week 7: Feb. 17 & 19  
Feb. 17 Service-writing  
Feb. 19 Give the people what they want  
Reading: Chapters 8, 9, & 20  
Due: Cover letter due
- Week 8: Feb. 24 & 26  
Feb. 24 Professional best practices  
Feb. 26 Proposal components  
Reading: Chapters 11, 17, 23

Due: Proposal summary due

- Week 9:      March 3 & 5  
                  March 3 Visual and graphic design  
                  March 5 Tables, Figures, and Graphs? Oh, my!  
                  Reading: Chapters 12, 13, & 24  
                  Due: Presentations
- Week 10:     March 10 & 12  
                  March 10 Working with other professionals  
                  March 12 Finish what you start  
                  Reading: Chapter 5 & 22
- Week 11:     Final Exam, no class this week.  
                  Due: Final Proposals due by 4:50pm, Monday, March 16.  
                  Monday 3:00 p.m. - 4:50 p.m.