

# WR227, Technical Writing

("Clear and Effective Writing")  
Spring 2019

## About the Class:

This class teaches you to communicate in ways that will get you a job, earn good grades on four-year college papers, gain you admission to an important program, win approval of a project you conceived, or land other real-world rewards. This class also will make you feel overworked, frustrated, and possibly angry, because it will turn your long-held beliefs about writing upside down. Fortunately, despite the discomfort, I suspect you'll enjoy yourselves.

## Class Objectives:

After taking this class, the successful student will demonstrate the following habitual skills:

- Reading, understanding, and explicitly following instructions and specifications.
- Designing work to fulfill the needs and wants of the intended audience.
- Creating consistently error-free, accurate, complete, concise, usable, and useful work.
- Using quality-assurance techniques such as proofreading and peer review.
- Developing completely original material based on attributed research.

## Instructor:

Brian B. Egan, WR227@ClarityCorvallis.com (or EganB@LinnBenton.edu), cell phone (541) 740-0540

Office hours: Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. in the Commons Cafeteria (NE corner)  
Other days, times, and locations by arrangement – email, text, or call me!

## Class Hours and Locations:

CRN 43452    Tuesday and Thursday    8:30 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.    RCH-207

## Textbook:

I will loan you printed materials at no charge, and will direct you to web pages to read.

## Requirements and Recommendations:

1. You must create formatted documents in Microsoft Word (free to LBCC students), LibreOffice Writer (also free from LibreOffice.org), Google Docs, or another full-featured word processor that can save/download to .doc/.docx/.odt file formats. If you don't know how to use such an application, you will need to learn quickly.
2. You must have a reliable email account, and must know how (or learn how) to attach files to an email message.
3. You must visit my Instructor Web Page at least every other day. You will find updates, new resources, corrections, etc. This is my only way to reach you outside of class! To

view it, either: a.) browse directly at <http://tinyurl.com/wr227>, or b.) browse via the Instructor Websites link on the Faculty & Staff home page.

4. I very strongly suggest you exchange contact information with at least two classmates. Do this safely: exchange only LBCC emails, *not personal emails, addresses, or phone numbers*.
5. I strongly recommend that you also buy or borrow a book on grammar or find a good website that covers the basics (Google “basic English grammar”).
6. To get full credit for the class, you are required to make a 3-5 minute presentation during Week 10. If this is a genuine problem, talk to me during Week 1; chickening out at the last minute will cost you serious points.
7. Attendance is essential for an effective learning experience (and a good grade).
8. Back up your WR227 work!

### **Approximate Course Schedule** (undoubtedly will change slightly):

Week 1	Introduction, logistics, concepts; The Audience
Week 2	The Audience (cont.); email/memos, persuasion
Week 3	Persuasion (cont.); cover letters and business letters
Week 4	Cover letters (cont.); résumés
Week 5	Résumés (cont.); research tools, citation, avoiding plagiarism
Week 6	Organizing material, descriptions, reports
Week 7	Reports (cont.)
Week 8	Reports (cont.), proofreading, typography, illustrations, citations
Week 9	Presentation techniques, review
Week 10	Student presentations
Week 11	Final exam: Tuesday, June 11: 7:30 a.m. - 9:20 a.m. in RCH-207.

### **Attendance, Reading Assignments, and Quizzes:**

The majority of the material taught in this class is conveyed during the “lectures,” in-class discussions, and in-class consultation with your classmates. Your success in this class will depend on your regular attendance. Points are awarded for attendance, but not for unexcused absences. If you cannot get to a class or will be late, please let me know by email or text (just as you would notify your employer). Get the day’s notes from a classmate.

The reading assignments are not optional – there will be three no-notice closed-book, closed-notes quizzes!

### **Writing Assignments:**

Instruction sheets will be passed out in class and posted on the web as each assignment is made. Due dates will be specified on the instruction sheets.

There are a lot of tasks, and often several run concurrently. You are responsible for managing your time and deadlines! (Welcome to “real life”!)

## Late Work:

Tardy assignments will be penalized 1/3 letter grade (e.g., B to B-) per day or part of a day late. Assignments over one week late will not be accepted. Do not fall behind – you will not be able to catch up!

## Assignments and Weighting:

Task	Max. Pts.	~ Pct.
Demographic survey completion	5	1%
“Toast” (full credit if turned in, zero credit if missing)	10	2%
“My Position...” (final only, no draft)	10	2%
Persuasive Email draft and final	30	5%
Cover Letter worksheet (final only, no draft)	25	4%
Cover Letter draft and final	60	10%
Résumé draft and final	75	13%
Job Application Package Email (final only, no draft)	25	4%
Research Technical Report Topic Email (final only, no draft)	15	3%
Research Technical Report Outline (final only, no draft)	30	5%
Research Technical Report Introduction/Summary draft	20	3%
Research Technical Report Body draft	40	7%
Research Technical Report Front/Back Matter draft	10	2%
Research Technical Report final version	90	15%
Oral Presentation delivery	30	5%
Oral Presentation visuals	10	2%
Attendance at student presentations (5 pts each day)	10	2%
Three quizzes on reading and concepts (5 pts each)	15	3%
Attendance (2 points per class day)	40	7%
Final Exam	50	8%
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Total possible points	600	~100%

Most assignments require both a rough draft worth 1/3 and a final version worth 2/3. This provides you a “safety net”. (Hint: Testing and revision are keys to good technical communication.)

## Assignment Grading Rubric:

The emphasis of this course is to prepare you for the writing tasks that you will encounter in the workplace and/or a four-year college. Each assignment will be given a letter grade that reflects how I [subjectively and objectively] would react to the work if given to me by an employee or job applicant:

- A** Can be used for its intended purpose with very little or no further work. Well planned and thought out, well structured, no or very few grammatical or spelling errors, written for appropriate audience, clear, correct, and usable. Gives a very positive impression of the author. (It may not be perfect, but it's very close.) Bottom line: If this were your job application, I would immediately bring you in for an interview. If it were your Technical Research Report, I would ask you if I could use it as an example for future classes.
- B** Suitable for internal workplace use, but would need some editing of structure, wording, grammar/spelling, and/or presentation to meet corporate or university standards. No errors in technical content. Bottom line: You are in the running for the job or the scholarship, but I'll wait a bit to see if someone better comes along.
- C** Adequate, but could not be used without significant editing. May have minor technical inconsistencies, clarity problems, and/or spelling or grammatical errors. Gives a questionable impression of the author. Bottom line: You are just another person in line; I'll get back to you if nobody else applies.
- D** Could not be used without major editing. Has structural problems, factual issues, serious audience mismatch, and/or frequent spelling or grammatical errors. Gives a distinctly negative impression of the author. Bottom line: I will not hire you, because it's clear you don't care enough even to do a good job for yourself, much less to work hard for me.
- F** Too many problems to be worth submitting to an employer or educational institution. Does not meet two or more critical specifications, and/or writing is insufficient for instructor to understand intent, purpose, or content. Bottom line: I will mutter under my breath for the rest of the day.
- X** No credit, because assignment was plagiarized (see below), was not turned in at all, or was more than one week late.

I may specify + or – on a grade, which will affect its point value.

**Final Course Grade Scale:**

≥90%	540 - 600 points	=	A
≥80%	480 - 539 points	=	B
≥70%	420 - 479 points	=	C
≥60%	360 - 419 points	=	D
Below 360 points		=	F

**Plagiarism:**

*Plagiarism* is using someone else's words, pictures, ideas, concepts, etc. and representing them as your own work. It's illegal and unethical; it can get you fired, sued, thrown out of school, and/or discredited professionally. In this class, it will earn your assignment an instant "no credit" and I must report you to the school.

The most obvious example is when you copy material directly out of a book or a web site and paste it into your own document. Properly quoted and cited material may still be plagiarism if there is too much of it and too little original material.

You must cite every use of outside ideas, because you are using the knowledge even if you don't use the words. In this class, I expect you to write completely original material that is based on thorough research from reputable, cited sources. You may not paraphrase anything, nor may you quote material (there are a few exceptions to this).

The school requires me to report all plagiarism! For more information on plagiarism and fair use, visit the Using Research section of this excellent resource:  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>.

## **Request for Special Needs or Accommodations**

LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR) and would like to use your accommodations in the class, please talk to your instructor as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you believe you may need accommodations but are not yet registered with CFAR, please visit the CFAR Website (<https://www.linnbenton.edu/current-students/student-support/center-for-accessibility-resources/>) for steps on how to apply for services, or call 541-917-4789.

## **LBCC Comprehensive Statement of Nondiscrimination**

“LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, disability, veteran status, age, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. For further information see Board Policy P1015 in our Board Policies and Administrative Rules. Title II, IX, & Section 504: Scott Rolen, CC-108, (541) 917-4425; Lynne Cox, T-107B, (541) 917-4806, LBCC, Albany, Oregon. To report: [http://linnbenton-advocate.symplicity.com/public\\_report](http://linnbenton-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report)”

## **LBCC-wide WR 227 Technical Writing Course Outcomes**

“Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze the rhetorical needs (the needs of their audience in relationship to the assignment) for college-level evidence-based technical writing assignments.
- Apply appropriate levels of critical thinking strategies (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) in their written assignments, with an emphasis on technical, evidence-based analysis, reporting, application, and evaluation.
- Implement appropriate rhetorical elements and organization (executive summary, introduction, thesis, development and research-based support, visual evidence, conclusion, etc.) in their written assignments, with an emphasis on technical evidence-based analysis, reporting, and evaluation assignments.
- Locate, evaluate, and integrate high-quality information and opinion appropriate for technical evidence-based assignments.
- Craft sentences and paragraphs that communicate their ideas clearly and effectively using words, sentence patterns, and writing conventions at a high college level to make their writing clear, credible, and precise.”