

WR 227, Technical Writing

("Clear and Effective Writing")

Fall 2021, CRN 20836

About the Class:

This course teaches you to communicate in ways that will get you a job, earn good grades on four-year college papers, gain admission to an important program, win permission to do a project you conceived, or land other real-world rewards. It also will turn your long-held beliefs about writing upside down. Fortunately, I suspect you'll enjoy yourselves!

Class-Specific Objectives:

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

- Reading, understanding, and explicitly following instructions and specifications.
- Designing work that meets the needs and wants of the intended readers.
- 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. Email EganB@LinnBenton.edu, cell phone (541) 740-0540

Office hours: One required one-on-one Zoom every other week, plus as often as you need it – email, text, or call me!

Class Hours and Locations:

- Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. Required class – attend or view recording. Zoom access: <https://linnbenton.zoom.us/j/94893167425>, passcode useful! (Meeting ID: 948 9316 7425)
- By scheduled arrangement: Four 10-minute one-on-one Zoom meetings (one every two weeks).

Textbook:

I will direct you to on-line textbook articles and web pages to read. No charge.

Attendance and Assignments:

Because of Covid-19 and the difficulties of distance learning, I have reduced the number and size of assignments, but they are all mandatory. There are no quizzes or exams – your entire grade depends on completing all your assignments in a timely and satisfactory manner. To be successful, attend all the lectures (or view their recordings, a less preferable alternative), do the reading, and watch the videos.

Requirements and Recommendations:

1. Assignments will be completed in Google Docs or Microsoft Word (which you can get for free at <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/products/office>).

2. You must have access to reliable internet. If this is a problem, talk to me!
3. You must visit the class Moodle page at least every other day. You will find updates, new resources, corrections, etc.
4. I 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 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 Zoom 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. New topics rely on your knowing the previous ones. Please don’t fall behind.
8. Back up your WR227 work!

Approximate Course Schedule (undoubtedly will change slightly):

Week 1	Introduction, technical writing concepts, The Audience
Week 2	Emails, persuasion
Week 3	Cover letters and business letters
Week 4	Résumés
Week 5	Research tools, citations, plagiarism, organizing material
Week 6	Reports – Context setting
Week 7	Reports – Conveying the material
Week 8	Reports – Typography, illustrations, quality assurance
Week 9	Presentation techniques, review
Week 10	Student presentations
(Week 11	There will be no final exam. You’re free!)

Writing Assignments:

Assignment instruction sheets will be posted in Moodle.

Due dates are firm. 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.

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	6%
Cover Letter worksheet (final only, no draft)	25	5%
Cover Letter draft and final	75	15%
Résumé draft and final	75	15%

Job Application Package Email (final only, no draft)	25	5%
Technical Research Report Topic Email (final only, no draft)	10	2%
Technical Research Report Outline (final only, no draft)	25	5%
Technical Research Report Introduction/Summary draft	25	5%
Technical Research Report Body draft	40	8%
Technical Research Report Front/Back Matter draft	15	3%
Technical Research Report final version	80	16%
Presentation delivery	20	4%
Presentation visuals	10	2%
Four one-on-one conferences	20	4%
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Total possible points	500	~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.)

Grading Rubric:

This course is intended to prepare you for the writing tasks that you will encounter in the workplace and/or a four-year college. I critique based on how I [subjectively and objectively] would react to the work if given to me there:

- 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. Bottom line: If this were part of your job application, I would immediately bring you in for an interview. If it were your WR227 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.
- 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.
- 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: You are out of the running.
- F** Too many problems to submit 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.
- 0** 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%	450 - 500 points	=	A
≥80%	400 - 449 points	=	B
≥70%	350 - 399 points	=	C
≥60%	300 - 349 points	=	D
Below 300 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 is still plagiarized 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 (although there are a few exceptions to that).

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:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/avoiding_plagiarism/plagiarism_faq.html.

Special Needs or Accommodations

I am here to help you in any way I can. No matter what the problem, please talk to me and/or to CFAR. “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.”

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status, disability, veteran status, age, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. For further information see [Board Policy 1015](#). Title II, IX, & Section 504: Scott Rolen, CC-108, (541) 917-4425; Katie Winder, CC-102, (541) 917-4535, LBCC, Albany, Oregon. To report: https://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:

1. Create documents designed to help readers make decisions and solve practical, real-world problems.
2. Evaluate and adapt to different technical and workplace writing situations by analyzing audience, purpose, context, stakes, and the writer.
3. Demonstrate mastery of technical and workplace writing conventions including clean and clear design, style, and layout of print and web communications.
4. Find, evaluate, and integrate credible research in written documents clearly, concisely, and logically; credit sources as appropriate.