

## WRITING 320: SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

**Instructor:** Dr. Brian Gazaille (he/him/his)  
**Office:** PLC 206  
**Office Hours:** MW 11:00-12:30, and by appointment  
**Phone:** 541-346-5935  
**Email:** [gazaille@uoregon.edu](mailto:gazaille@uoregon.edu) (please give 48 hours for a response!)

**CRN:** 35685  
**Term:** Spring 2019  
**Location:** 193 Anstett  
**Time:** MWF 1:00-1:50

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces research and writing skills needed for an array of scientific and professional contexts. Covering a variety of communication forms and styles, students will learn strategies for increasing their awareness of audience, writerly purpose, and genre. This course is reading- and writing-intensive, based around a term-long independent research project. The major genres explored include proposals, process analyses, executive summaries, and literature reviews.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- ✓ Name and identify key features of the writing they will use in their academic or professional field
- ✓ Analyze sample texts to identify their rhetorical situations (audience, purpose, genre, topic, authorial role)
- ✓ Write purpose-driven documents that are relevant to their contexts and appropriate for their audiences
- ✓ Write documents that proceed logically and connect ideas effectively according to genre, purpose and context
- ✓ Produce documents that adhere to academic or professional conventions, especially regarding grammar, syntax, and punctuation; tone, style, and diction; and formatting, design, and documentation
- ✓ Revise the content, structure, and style of a document based on peer and instructor feedback

### REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

- ✓ *Technical Writing*, Open Oregon Press Books, eds. Michele DeSilva, et al.
  - This is a free digital textbook. You can access the textbook using this link:  
<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/technicalwriting/>
  - This text is available in a variety of formats, including PDF, HTML, and EPUB. Use whatever format is most helpful to you, preferably one that allows you to take notes in the margins of the text.
- ✓ *Purdue OWL* (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>)
- ✓ Access to Links and Materials on Canvas (<https://canvas.uoregon.edu/>)

### ASSIGNMENTS

- |                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| ○ Audience Analysis Kit        | 10% |
| ○ Research Proposal (2 Drafts) | 10% |
| ○ Process Analysis (2 Drafts)  | 15% |
| ○ Informational Interview      | 15% |
| ○ Research Presentation        | 10% |
| ○ Literature Review (2 Drafts) | 30% |
| ○ Research Portfolio           | 10% |

The above assignments work in tandem. After completing an *Audience Analysis Kit*, which offers you ways to consider the needs and rhetorical expectations of a particular audience, you will develop and see through a term research project. You will use a *proposal* to articulate a scholarly or professional “problem” that requires research. You will then complete assignments – *process analysis*, *informational interview*, *literature review*, and *formal presentation* – that simulate how you might conduct and report research in your field. These assignments will also hone your abilities to evaluate and synthesize difficult texts.

**You must save all written work done for this class. At the end of the term, you will re-submit your assignments in a research portfolio**, complete with a *cover letter* that introduces your material and an *executive summary* that outlines the purposes, methods, and conclusions of your literature review, which is the term’s most important and labor-intensive assignment.

### COURSE POLICIES

#### *Attendance*

Attendance is mandatory *because you are vital to our discussions*. Come on time, with required materials in hand, ready to discuss. You may miss *three* (3) classes without penalty. Your final course grade will drop 1/3 of a letter—e.g., B+ drops to B—for each subsequent absence. But you can make up an absence by attending my office hours or scheduling an appointment so that

we can discuss the material you missed. When you are absent, you are ultimately responsible for submitting work on time and knowing any materials covered in class. Nine (9) or more absences, regardless of the reason and even in spite of efforts to make up absences, will mean course failure. If you cannot come to class for *any* reason, please stay in contact with me.

#### *Assignment Submission*

You must submit all assignments in *printed copy*, though I reserve the right to ask everyone to submit work on Canvas. Regardless of formatting guide (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE), each assignment must be double-spaced, with 12-point Times New Roman font and 1" margins on all sides. See the *Purdue Online Writing Lab* for examples.

#### *Grading Rough and Final Drafts*

Research and writing are *processes*. Your assignments reflect this idea. You will submit two drafts of your proposal, process analysis, and literature review. The rough drafts will not earn formal grades; they earn "ghost grades" that indicate their merits and shortcomings. You will then revise based on instructor and peer feedback. Final drafts of these assignments will earn the formal grades. Failing to meet requirements for any draft will result in a 10% deduction from your assignment grade. Failure to submit a draft, first or final, will mean that you can earn no higher than a C (75%) on the assignment.

#### *Late Work (\*Please Read Carefully\*)*

Deadlines are critical in technical writing, so we will use assignment deadlines as practice for punctuality. All assignments are due *by the beginning of class* when indicated on the schedule of assignments. Failing to turn in an assignment by the start of class means it is late. An assignment will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade for each calendar day late (i.e. an A- paper turned in one day late will earn a B+, two days late brings the grade to a B, and so on). Please note that I will *not* excuse late work due to problems like printer jams. Technology can be treacherous, but you should be organized enough to anticipate and work through these issues. If you expect trouble making a deadline, contact me 24 hours in advance to make alternate arrangements.

#### *Technology in the Classroom*

You are welcome to bring a laptop or iPad to class. Do what you need to enhance your learning. But if you do bring a gadget to class, please refrain from surfing the Web, texting, working on papers for other classes, chatting with friends, or otherwise getting off-task. Activities like those are distracting to me and to your classmates. They also signal your unwillingness to add to discussion. I will assess technology-related disruptions in your attendance grade. Three disruptions will equal one absence.

#### *Academic Honesty*

Especially in a writing course, it is important to understand "authorship" and "ownership." When you use someone else's words or ideas without telling your reader where they come from, you are PLAGIARIZING. Common examples of plagiarism include incorrect citation and copying and pasting parts of an essay from the internet. Getting too much help from someone editing your writing is also a form of academic dishonesty. *I am looking to help you improve and gain important experience in technical writing. I am not expecting perfect writing. If you have a question about using ideas and words from others in your essays, please ask!*

All work submitted in this course must be your own and written exclusively for this course. Unacknowledged borrowing of others' words or ideas constitutes plagiarism, a serious academic crime that results in disciplinary action. If you use someone else's words or ideas, you must quote and cite them. If you have any questions about plagiarism or the University's policy on it, talk with me or refer to the *Code of Student Conduct on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards* website. In cases where academic dishonesty has been clearly established, awarding an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the Composition Program, so it is imperative that you speak with me about any questions regarding outside sources.

#### *Observance of Religious Holidays*

Students who observe their religious holidays at times when academic requirements conflict with those observances must inform instructors in advance of the holiday. Students are responsible for making up missed work according to a schedule determined with the teacher.

#### *Access*

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoac@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoac@uoregon.edu).

#### *Incompletes*

A request for the grade "Incomplete" must be placed in advance of the end of the quarter. Such approval will be granted only in cases when some minor but essential aspect of the course cannot be completed by a student through unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

All reading and writing assignments are due on the day listed. Bring assigned readings to class in print or digital form. “Tech” refers to readings from our digital textbook, *Technical Writing*. Locations for other readings are specified as needed.

### Week #1: Rhetorical Situations

M 4/1 *Syllabus Overview; Introduction to Technical Writing*

W 4/3 *SOAP: Rhetorical Situations*

Reading: Velasquez-Manoff, “Can Dirt Save the Earth?” ([Click here](#) or refer to Canvas > Pages > Links to Readings)

F 4/5 *Kinds of Audiences; “De Copia” Exercise*

Reading: Tech, Chapter 2 (all subsections)

\*Bring “Can Dirt” to Class Again\*

### Week #2: Starting a Research Project

4/8 *From Interests to Research Questions: The Research Process*

Reading: Tech, Chapter 4 (introduction - §4.3)

**Assignment Due: Audience Analysis Due**

4/10 *Triangulating a Topic*

(no additional reading)

4/12 *Writing Proposals*

Reading: Tech, Chapter 3 (all subsections)

Reading: Sample Proposals (Canvas > Pages > Links to Readings)

### Week #3: Engaging Sources and Documenting Sources

4/15 *Sources and Resources*

Reading: Tech, Chapter 4 (§4.4 and §4.5)

**Assignment Due: Research Proposal (Draft)**

4/17 *MLA/APA Citations*

Reading: Chapter 5 (all subsections)

4/19 *Evaluating Technical Articles*

Reading: Tech, Chapter (§4.6, including the video)

### Week #4: Objectivity in Scientific and Technical Writing

4/22 *Procedures, Processes, and Instructions*

**Assignment Due: Research Proposal (Final)**

4/24 *Objectivity and Clarity, Grammar and Style*

Reading: Montgomery (Canvas > Pages > Links to Readings)

4/26 *Ethics in Technical Reporting*

Reading: Tech, Chapter 9 (all subsections)

### Week #5: Organizing Your Findings: Previewing the Literature Review

4/29 *Writing a “Research Story”: Organizing a Literature Review*

Reading: “Literature Reviews,” from the UNC Writing Center

**Assignment Due: Process Analysis (Draft)**

5/1 *Synthesizing Your Sources*

(no additional reading)

- 5/3 *Outlining Strategies*  
Reading: Tech, Chapter 7 (all subsections)

Week #6: Writing Your Findings

- 5/6 *PIE: A Recipe for Paragraphing*  
**Assignment Due: Process Analysis (Final)**

- 5/8 *Using and Integrating Sources*  
(no additional reading)

- 5/10 *Using and Integrating Sources (cont.)*  
(no additional reading)

Week #7: (Re)Mediating Data: Oral and Visual Rhetoric

- 5/13 *CRAP: Basic Design Principles*  
Reading: Tech, Chapter 11 (introduction, subsections 11.4 through 11.6)  
**Assignment Due: Interview Assignment**

- 5/15 Re-mediating a Report: Oral Presentations  
(no additional reading)

- 5/17 Graphic Elements in Presentation  
(no additional reading)

Week #8: Finishing Touches: Compiling Reports

- 5/20 *Abstracts and Executive Summaries*  
Reading: Tech, Chapter 10 (introduction-§10.3)

- 5/22 *Formatting Considerations*  
Reading: Tech, Chapter 10 (§10.4-§10.7)

- 5/24 *Presenting Conclusions*  
Reading: Tech, Chapter 10 (§10.8)  
**Writing Due: Literature Review (Draft)**

Week #9: Research Presentations

- 5/27 Presentations  
5/29 Presentations  
5/31 Presentations

Week #10: Presentations

- 6/3 Presentations  
6/5 Presentations  
6/7 Presentations

Finals Week

- 6/12 **Assignments Due: Literature Review (Final) and Research Portfolio**  
Submit to my office (PLC 206) by 5:00 PM