

ENGL 3355: Workplace writing
CRN # 31738
Summer II, 2009

Instructor: MarohangLimbu

Location: UGLC 236

Office: Vowell 103

Time: 09:20 – 11: 20 (MTWRF)

Office hours: after class/by appointment

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Course Description

In this course we will examine the role that language plays in our lives and organizations, from our ways of acquiring and expressing knowledge, to the ways that we perceive the world, ourselves, and others. More specifically, we will examine workplaces as *discursive formations*, taking a rhetorical approach to workplace writing and communication, and seeing organizations as complex, polycontextual, and distributed. The first half of the course takes a broad theoretical approach, introducing influential readings from researchers in Professional/Technical Communication and Rhetoric and Writing Studies. The second half of the course applies these theories to common workplace writing contexts through case analyses and developmental projects.

Course objectives: Students will...

- Investigate and implement theories of language, rhetoric, and analysis.
- Explore and practice methods of rhetorical thinking and metacognition.
- Explore and practice the common conventions of workplace writing and organizational communication.
- Explore and practice writing research in the workplace.
- Investigate and practice writing as a way of thinking, knowing, and being, using their writing to negotiate their world.

Key Terms and Phrases

*Rhetoric—Discourse/Discursive—Metacognitive—Distributed Work—
Epistemology —Ontology—Organizational Identity—Agency—Invention—
Rhetorical Thinking—Rhetorical Dispositions—Polycontextual—Multilingual—
Recursion—Aggregation—Inquiry—Structure—Power—Image—
Subjectivity—Assembly—Indicators—Effectiveness—Knowledge Work*

Required Textbooks

- *Community Action and Organizational Change*. Brenton D. Faber. SIU Press, 2002.
- *Strategic Business Communication: An Integrated, Ethical Approach*. Robyn Walker. Thomson South-Western, 2006.

Storage and Backup

- This course depends heavily on computer-mediated writing and analysis, and much of the work you will do this semester (and in the workplace) will involve interface with technology. Therefore, it is important that you take responsibility for your assignments, including the storage and backup of digital work. This course will require the consistent use of one or more of the following storage devices:
 - USB Drive (recommended)
 - UTEP My Space Storage
 - Hard Drive

Assignments and grading

- All assignments are due by class on the day they're listed on the syllabus. **Late work:** If you miss a deadline for any reason, you may still choose to submit your work, but you will be docked one letter grade for each **day** that passes beyond the deadline.
- The major assignments and their grading rubrics are described at the end of this syllabus. To help you, previous student samples will be posted on WebCT. I encourage you to look at these samples to guide you in completing your work.
- Assignments will generally be turned in on WebCT unless otherwise specified

Course Assessment and Calculation of Final Grade

• Participation			100
• WebCT Reading Responses			100
• Applications/Case Analyses (3)			100
• Job Application Packet			100
• Reading quizzes			100
• Mid-Term Examination			125
• Oral Presentation of Recommendation Report			125
• Final Project:			
○ Proposal	+50		
○ Recommendation Report		+100	
○ Project Assessment Memo	+100		250
		○ Total:	1,000

Attendance

We will use our class time to write, talk about our work, discuss the readings, and engage in group work. This ongoing conversation is at the heart of your improvement as a writer. In addition, we will be moving through the assignments at a very fast pace. In other words *you will not succeed in this class unless you are here to work and think and talk*. Here is the policy: Anyone missing more than three classes will fail. Showing up to class more than 5 minutes after we have started counts as a half-absence. There are no excused absences. **If you have to miss class, be sure to turn in assignments for the missed class and contact me ahead of time so I can help you keep up with your work.**

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

- Proper citation is a hallmark of good scholarship. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without giving credit to the source of that information or wording: it is not acceptable. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. You may not submit work for this class that you did for another class. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy.
- Refer to <http://www.utep.edu/dos/acadintg.htm> for further information.

Students with Disabilities

- I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally before or after class within the first few days of class, or make an appointment to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Disabled Student Services Office in the East Union Bldg., Room 106 within the first two weeks of classes. The Disabled Student Services Office can also be reached in the following ways:

Web: <http://www.utep.edu/dsso>

Phone: (915) 747-5148

Fax: (915) 747-8712

E-Mail: dss@utep.edu

A Final Note

While we will follow this syllabus closely, I reserve the right to alter schedules, assignments, and policies. I will notify you of these changes in class and via email as they occur.

Schedule of Readings and Major Assignments

Complete the reading assignments **before** the class as assigned, and be prepared to participate in discussion and group exercises.

M 7/6

Introduce each other, discuss syllabus
Explain focus of the course and introduce epistemic rhetoric.
Introduce conventions of APA style

T 7/7

Brummett(1977) “Three meanings of epistemic rhetoric” and Emig’s (1982) “Inquiry paradigms and writing.” **Found on WebCT under “Course documents and articles.”**

W 7/8

Spinuzzi (2006, 2007) “What do we need to teach about knowledge work?” and “Guest editor’s introduction: Technical communication in the age of distributed work.” **Found on WebCT under “Course documents and articles.”**

TH 7/9

Faber Chs. 1 & 2

F 7/10

Faber Ch. 3/Workplace Discussion

M 7/13

Faber Ch. 4/Final Project Discussion

T 7/14

Faber Ch. 5

Winsor (2006) “Using writing to structure agency: An examination of engineers’ practice.” **Found on WebCT under “Course documents and articles.”**

W 7/15

Faber Chs. 6 & 7/Case Analysis/Workplace Application Discussion

TH 7/16

Mid-class exam

F 7/17

Introduction to Case Analysis, Projects, and common Business Writing/Organizational Communication Practices
Walker Ch. 1, Ch. 8 (pp. 208-217)

M 7/20
Walker Ch. 2
Case analysis/workplace application due

T 7/21
Walker Ch. 3/Final Project Discussion

W 7/22
Walker Ch. 4
Case analysis/workplace application due

TH 7/23
Walker Ch. 5
Proposal for final project due

F 7/24
Walker Ch. 6
Case analysis/workplace application due

M 7/27
Walker Ch. 7
Bring job application draft to class for peer review

T 7/28
Walker Ch. 8
Job application packet due

W 7/29
Oral/visual presentations

TH 7/30
Oral/visual presentations

F 7/31 Exam period
Oral/visual presentations
Final projects due