

Fall 2015: Technical Reporting

Nicolet Area Technical College

Instructor: Ed O'Casey	Course ID: 1039
Semester: Fall 2015	Office Hours: MW, 1:30-2:30; TR 9:30-10:30 & 12:30-2:00; and by appointment
Class Times: F 8-10:55 Location: NC 114, ITV	Email: eocasey@nicoletcollege.edu Office Phone: (715) 365-4405

Course Description

Technical Reporting will teach you to prepare and present oral and written technical reports. Types of reports may include progress reports, proposals, technical letters and memos, technical research reports, and case studies, with an eye toward, language use, formatting, and design. The assignments in this course will include individual and group work. Most of the assignments will require the use technology for communication, design, research, and/or making presentations. You will learn how to produce clear and effective writing.

Course Competencies

Technical Reporting will teach you to

- Design communication for a specific audience and purpose
- Create visual elements for incorporation into communication products
- Model ethics in professional communication
- Write a set of procedures or instructions
- Prepare an informal report
- Incorporate information sources
- Develop a proposal
- Prepare a formal report
- Apply the principles of teamwork to collaborative communication
- Present an oral report

Texts and Materials

The following materials are required for successful completion of English 218G:

- **Required:** Gerson, Sharon J. and Steven M. Gerson. *Technical Communication: Process and Product*. 8th Edition
- **Required:** A computer with a stable Internet connection to access email and Blackboard
- **Recommended:** A Writer's Reference, like the one used for English Composition
- **Recommended:** A flash drive or external hard drive to back up all your assignments and research

Course Policies

Participation

This is a work-intensive, workshop-oriented class, and much of the learning takes place on the basis of discussion posts and exercises. Therefore, participation in this class is mandatory. I expect that you will email me if you have any concerns or questions, and I will do the same.

The following rules concerning participation apply at all times throughout the semester:

- Participation accounts for a portion of your final grade; I will periodically check participation throughout the semester
- If you will be unable to participate for any portion of the course, let me know beforehand, or as soon as possible. If you cannot contact me immediately, find someone who can do so for you

Email Etiquette

I expect that you will use professional tone, language, and formatting when sending emails. Use an informative subject line that conforms to the rules of standard grammar, and sign your name: it may be impossible to respond effectively to an email that has no identifying information. A quick note about language: it's no concern of mine how you communicate with your friends and loved ones over email, but I expect that for this class you will use professional language without abbreviations.

Respect for Each Other

I will not tolerate language or behavior that discriminates against any individual's gender, race, class, ethnicity, disability, religion, or sexual orientation. If you feel inclined to joke, keep in mind that not all jokes are received lightly by *everyone*. Thus, comments, jokes, remarks, or quips that demean the worth of an individual will not be tolerated.

Plagiarism

I define plagiarism as "using another person's work without acknowledgement, making it appear to be one's own." Plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty will result in serious consequences, such as failing an assignment, failing the class, and/or being removed from the school. In addition, it is academically dishonest to submit your own previously written work for a current assignment or to submit an assignment in more than one class without the prior permission of the instructors. Put simply, please don't cheat; I can almost always tell, and I always assign consequences for it.

Expectations

I expect the following from each of you:

- Prepare yourself for class by completing any assigned readings
- Take this course seriously by turning in professional quality work: proofread and properly format all work
- Follow assignment instructions and submit assignments to Blackboard on time; I do not accept late work, nor do I accept work over email
- Actively participate in class discussions boards and ask all questions you have (no matter how silly)

You can expect the following from me:

- I will be prepared and will talk with you individually if you need additional help; I am regularly available at my desk and via email, or I can schedule a time to Skype or chat online if necessary
- I will provide you with constructive feedback
- I will explain assignments to you to ensure that you understand what is expected of you
- I will notify you if I need to make any changes to the course calendar
- I will treat each of you with respect and answer your questions to the best of my ability
- I will check my email daily, Monday through Friday, and get back to you within 1 business day of receiving your message (if you email me Friday, you might not here back until Monday)

My Office Hours

You can do well in this course without ever coming to visit me in my office. That being said, if you have any questions or concerns that we can't take care of in class, or if you need extra help with an assignment, please visit me during my scheduled office hours. If you want to come see me, please let me know in advance. I tend to be at my desk during my office hours, but sometimes I will use that time to go to the library or take care of other work on campus. If I know you're coming, I'll make sure to be at my desk. If you can't schedule a meeting with me during my regular hours, let me know; I'm sure we can schedule a meeting at a time that will work for both of us.

Grading

The following is how I will break down your grade for this course:

<i>Weekly Exercises*</i>	10%
Participation**	5%
Style Quiz	10%
Design Case Study	10%
Correspondence Case Study	10%
Résumé Case Study	15%
Proposal Case Study	15%
Team Instructions Case Study	15%
Informal Report Case Study	5%
Video/Oral Presentation	5%

If you turn in work late (without any prior notification), or if you turn in work that is not prepared according to my instructions for formatting, organization, and style, I reserve the right to give that assignment a grade of F. Each of the above assignments has received a description in Blackboard, except the two described below.

* The Weekly Exercises portion of your grade is based on a 100-point scale. Each exercise listed on the syllabus (in italics) is worth 10 points; once you've reached 100 points, you've got an A for Weekly Exercises

** Participation in this course is based on your activity in class discussions and your communication with me; in general, I've asked you to respond to at least one of your peers in each discussion--do that and stay in touch with me, and you'll be fine

Just in Case

If you have issues with me as a teacher or person, or you have questions about the course or school that I can't answer, please contact my supervisor (the Dean of University Transfer and Liberal Arts) Emily Stuckenbruck. Her office is UTC 301, and her

phone number is (715) 365-4481. Or email her at estuckenbruck@nicoletcollege.edu. I don't anticipate any issues like this, but if you feel uncertain about trusting me with some issue related to this class, I want to make sure you have a resource where you can take your concerns.

Nicolet College Policies (aka the "fine print")

Americans with Disabilities Act Statement

It is the intent of Nicolet College to fully comply with section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing prospective and enrolled students with disabilities equal access to College services and programs. If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and require assistance or support services, please seek assistance through the Office of Disability Support Services: 715-365-4448. A Counselor will coordinate those services. Details on Accessing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities can be found on the Nicolet College website.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Nicolet College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in employment, admissions, or its programs or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the College's nondiscrimination policies:

Director of Human Resources
Nicolet Area Technical College
5364 College Drive
P.O. Box 518
Rhineland, WI 54501-0518
715.365.4449
Deaf/hh: 711 (relay)

Withdrawing from This Class

Withdrawing from a course is a serious decision. To withdraw from this course you must complete the official Course Withdrawal Form available from the Welcome Center or the College website, and submit the signed form to the Welcome Center either in person, by fax, or via email. You cannot withdraw from this course after 75% of the course duration has elapsed (for example, after 12 weeks in a semester-long course).

You may withdraw from this course, but you should be aware of the following:

- An official withdrawal from this course will not affect your GPA.
- You cannot withdraw from this course by not attending. If you stop coming to class or never attend, you will receive a failing grade.
- Failing grades or withdrawals may require you to pay back some or all of your financial aid, and may affect future financial aid as well.
- A failing grade will lower your GPA, which could affect either or both your financial aid and academic standing.

To ensure you fully understand the implications associated with withdrawing from this course, you are strongly encouraged to consult with your instructor, the Financial Aid office, the Welcome Center, and your academic advisor before you withdraw. Please refer to Chapter 2 of the Nicolet College catalog for further details.

Incompletes

Under extenuating circumstances, students may request an Incomplete grade. To receive an Incomplete, students must have completed 50% of the coursework. It is up to the instructor to decide if the request is feasible based on the reason for the request, the type of class, and whether or not it is possible for the student to complete the course work in an acceptable method and time frame. A signed Incomplete Contract between the student and the instructor must be filed in the Welcome Center by 4:00 pm on the deadline day. The deadline for submitting an Incomplete Contract is one calendar week prior to the end of the course. Exceptions to this deadline will only be made due to extenuating circumstances as approved by the Registrar. An Incomplete grade can be carried for only one semester (summer session does not count as a semester.) If a grade is not issued by the completion of the following semester, a grade of "F" will automatically be recorded on the student's transcript. Once given, the Incomplete grade cannot be changed to a Withdrawal grade. The instructor will file a change of grade upon completion of work specified in the Incomplete Contract.

Administrative and Board Policies Related to Students

Students are to follow Administrative Policies and Board Policies as well as additional Student Policies and Procedures. These policies may be accessed via the policies tab in Blackboard, the Nicolet College Catalog, and the Nicolet College website <http://www.nicoletcollege.edu/about/policies/student/index.html>

The following list of Administrative and Board Policies are provided for convenient reference:

- Student Standards Of Conduct - Administrative Policy 1.06
- Acceptable Use Of Computers And Electronic Media - Administrative Policy 7.01
- Access For Students With Disabilities - Board Policy 4.05
- Accommodation Of Student Religious Beliefs - Board Policy 4.08
- Alcohol And Drug Use - Administrative Policy 4.05
- Campus Security - Board Policy 5.01
- Inclement Weather / College Closing - Administrative Policy 6.02
- Possession And Use Of Weapons - Board Policy 5.02

- Privacy Of Records - Release Of Written Information - Administrative Policy 2.02
- Student Complaints And Grievances Policy And Procedure - Board Policy 4.03
- Student Email - Administrative Policy 7.02
- Tobacco-Free Campus - Administrative Policy 3.03
- Discrimination Complaint Resolution - Board Policy 4.07

Readings and Assignments (dates are subject to change; page numbers from Gerson & Gerson)

Week 1 8/28	What we'll do in class:	Introduction to Technical Reporting Addressing an Audience
	What to read:	Chapter 1 "An Introduction to Technical Communication," p. 2-27 (read this on your own, no quiz, but it's valuable); "32 Bad Words" on Blackboard
	What's due:	<i>Exercise:</i> Addressing Audiences
Week 2 9/4	What we'll do in class:	Written Style
	What to read:	Chapter 3 "Objectives in Technical Communication," p. 50-75
	What's due:	<i>Exercise:</i> Achieving Clarity, Using Active Voice, Limiting Paragraph Length, Reducing Word Length, Reducing Sentence Length, p. 73-74 <i>Exercise:</i> Paragraph Revision
Week 3 9/11	What we'll do in class:	Written Style Visual Design
	What to read:	Chapter 10 "Document Design," p. 242-263
	What's due:	Style Quiz
Week 4 9/18	What we'll do in class:	Visual Design
	What to read:	Chapter 11 "Using Visual Aids," p. 264-293
	What's due:	Design Case Study
Week 5 9/25	What we'll do in class:	Letters, Memos, & Email
	What to read:	Chapter 7 "Routine Correspondence," p. 150-183
	What's due:	<i>Exercise:</i> Correspondence Language <i>Exercise:</i> Subject Line Quiz
Week 6 10/2	What we'll do in class:	Résumés and Cover Letters
	What to read:	Chapter 9 "The Job Search," p. 204-241
	What's due:	<i>Exercise:</i> Case Study, p. 239-240 Correspondence Case Study

Week 7 10/9	What we'll do in class:	Interviewing for a Job
	What to read:	Nothing
	What's due:	<i>Exercise:</i> Interview Questions Résumé Case Study
Week 8 10/16	What we'll do in class:	Proposals and Grant Writing
	What to read:	Chapter 18 "Proposals," p. 478-503
	What's due:	Nothing
Week 9 10/23	What we'll do in class:	Proposals and Grant Writing
	What to read:	Chapter 17 "Long, Formal Reports," p. 438-477
	What's due:	Proposal Case Study
Week 10 10/30	What we'll do in class:	Instructions and Documentation
	What to read:	Chapter 14 "Instructions, User Manuals, and Standard Operating Procedures," p. 342-373
	What's due:	<i>Exercise:</i> Team Contracts
Week 11 11/6	What we'll do in class:	Instructions and Documentation
	What to read:	Nothing
	What's due:	<i>Exercise:</i> Evaluation of Instructions <i>Exercise:</i> Changing Oil in Your Car, p. 372
Week 12 11/13	What we'll do in class:	Instructions and Documentations
	What to read:	Nothing
	What's due:	Team Instructions
Week 13 11/20	What we'll do in class:	Revision and Editing
	What to read:	Nothing
	What's due:	<i>Exercise:</i> Revision of a Written Passage
Week 14 11/27	What we'll do in class:	Thanksgiving Holiday (no class)
	What to read:	Nothing
	What's due:	Nothing

Week 15
12/4

What we'll do in class:

Presentations

What to read:

Chapter 19 "Oral Presentations," p. 504-531

What's due:

Exercise: Role Play Session

Week 16
12/11

What we'll do in class:

Presentations

What to read:

Nothing

What's due:

Video/Oral Presentations

Week 17
12/18

What we'll do in class:

Informal Reports

What to read:

Chapter 16 "Short, Informal Reports," p. 400-437

What's due:

Informal Report Case Study
