Pierce College
English 235: Technical Writing Syllabus

Instructor:	Shannon Wilson
Course Title:	ENGL& 235, Technical Writing; 5 credits
Item #:	2164
Term:	WINTER 2014
Meeting Times:	MONDAY, 12:00-2:10 PM
Location:	CASCADE 523 & CANVAS

Welcome to Technical Writing. Over the course of this quarter, we will explore, practice, and refine our approaches to technical writing and technical communication. We will also interrogate our positions as technical writers, students, co-workers, citizens, and human beings in contemporary society.

Course Description & Prerequisite:

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Learn the principles of organizing, developing and expressing technical information. Study rhetorical patterns common to scientific and technical disciplines. Also, understand technical writing conventions as they apply to students during their academic careers.

Prerequisite:

ENGL& 101 with grade of 2.0 or better.

Course Content:

A. Development of at least three technical (analytical) reports containing appropriate content and format.
B. Accurate and appropriate use of graphics.
C. Creation of a set of instructions.
D. Acquisition of information competency.
E. Active participation in collaborative assignments including a team project.
F. Ethical and multicultural issues in technical writing.

Student Outcomes:

1. Identify the purpose of, gather appropriate and accurate information for, and write technical reports for specific audiences (resume, claim letter, instructions assignment, investigative report, proposal, feasibility report).
2. Acquire the skills of Information Competency; be able to access, evaluate, and apply information appropriately (investigative report, proposal, feasibility report, essay tests, objectives tests).
3. Transform instructions into informational units set down in a numbered sequence that is in logical order, in both writing and illustrations (instructions assignment).
4. Analyze the accuracy of and use appropriately graphics in technical documents (graphics assignment, instructions assignment, objective test, investigative report, proposal, feasibility report).
5. Write at least three different analytical reports implementing the appropriate content and format for each (investigative report, proposal, feasibility report).
6. Participate actively in collaborative assignments (classroom assignments, feasibility report).
7. Complete a collaborative team report, such as a real-life feasibility report (feasibility report).
8. Identify and articulate ethical and multicultural issues in technical writing (classroom assignment, essay test, objective test).

Degree Outcomes:

Effective Communication:
Graduates will be able to exchange messages in a variety of contexts using multiple methods.

Communication:
Graduates identify, analyze, and evaluate rhetorical strategies in one's own and other's writing in order to communicate effectively.

Instructor Information:

Name:	Shannon Wilson
Email Address:	swilson@pierece.ctc.edu
Meeting Hours:	by appointment

Canvas:

This course will utilize Canvas/ECampus. We will use Canvas/ECampus for document storage, submission of assignments, online discussion, delivery of instructions, and completion of homework. See the instructions below for first time login.

To log in the first time:

The students are auto-enrolled and will login at: http://pierce.instructure.com

Username: SID (925XXXXXX)

Password: first 6 letters of their last name... all lower case.

(If less than 6, start over at the beginning and continue until 6 characters are reached — ex. Ron May=maymay, Ron Paul=paulpa, Zing Tu=tututu)

Textbook and/or Resource Material:

Dobrin, Sidney I., Christopher J. Keller, and Christian R. Weisser.
    Technical Communication in the Twenty-First Century. 2nd ed.
    Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prenctice, 2010. Print.

Schell, Jesse. *The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses.* Burlington,
    MA: Morgan Kaufmann, 2008. Print.

Grades and Major Writing Assignments:

In this course, we will complete three major projects, each composed of smaller assignments. These assignments are designed to help you refine your approach to technical writing. Class participation is also a significant factor in your grade, measured not only by verbal participation in class but also by your ability to work with your classmates on group work, peer review, discussions (online and in the classroom), etc.

A note on group work: Many of us are understandably reluctant about group projects, in part because many times the "group" part of the project fails to add anything to the learning opportunities of the assignment. Technical writing (and, indeed, all composition) is often collaborative, and in this course, we will be employing good community and collegial practices. This will be measured not only be how much each person "completes" in a project, but in the ability of the group to effectively communicate with each other and those outside of the group, when necessary.

Assignments and grade weights:

Weekly Journaling & Discussion:	15%
In Class Participation & Writing:	5%
Homework:	15%
Proposal project:	20%
WikiHow project:	20%
Board game project:	25%
Total	100%

Grades are nonnegotiable. Your final course grade will be based on your work in the course. If you are concerned about a grade, see me during regular office hours or make an appointment if you cannot meet during office hours. In order to receive any grade other than F, you must complete all assignments in the order they are listed on the course syllabus.

Class Schedule and Major Deadlines:

Weekly Journaling & Discussion

Each week, you will journal about the week's readings, discussions, and projects on Canvas. These journal entries must be completed by Friday evening (at midnight). You are then asked to respond to two of your peers' entries by Sunday evening (at midnight). Finally, you need to respond to any comments that your classmates have made on your entries before our class meeting on Monday. If nobody has commented on your entry for the week, you should comment on the responses left on others' entries. The purpose of this weekly writing is to initiate conversations that are based on our readings but go beyond them to include the personal expertise we all bring to the class.

In these journal entries, you are expected to synthesize and analyze the week's materials. Your journaling should go beyond evaluation (e.g. "I liked this reading" or "this reading was really difficult to understand") to a deeper analysis of the implications of what you've read and discussed (e.g. "Haas's argument that Native American wampum as hypertextual, predating the Western colonial 'discovery' of hypertext, should encourage us to look beyond hypertext to other instances of colonial rhetorics of 'discovery' in technical writing, including the very idea of technical writing as a 'professional' practice"). We will use our class time on Mondays in part to unpack our online discussions and delve deeper into what we've been thinking and learning. <u>Because we do not meet in person for five hours/week, this is a major component of your final grade. Take it seriously and do not skimp.</u>

Homework

This includes any daily take-home work or other assignments not included in any of the larger projects. Many of these assignments will take place during the first few weeks of the semester, as we practice different techniques and technical writing strategies.

Proposal Project — Due Monday, 2/10

In this project, you will write a full proposal for a project you have designed to make the Pierce College campus more sustainable. This is in response to a fictional funding opportunity for PC students, but I encourage you to think of this project as one that you could actually put into practice.

WikiHow Project — Due Monday, 2/24

In this project, you will design an online instruction manual for any topic you choose. You will make use of effective technical writing strategies to clearly help your audience navigate through your planned activity through the use of multiple medias, including videos, hyperlinks, graphics, sound, etc.

Board Game Project — Due Monday, 3/17

In this project, you will work in groups to design a board game from scratch, complete with the board, any necessary pieces, packaging, instructions, and a poster advertisement. You will put into practice the technical writing strategies we have learned through the semester, in both the board game as a technical writing artifact as well as in the communication/writing strategies you use with your teammates.

Reading Schedule:

A note on readings: I encourage you to plan ahead and divide up each week's readings into manageable chunks. Attempting to read all of the selections the day before your journaling entries are due is difficult, but separating them into smaller daily readings should make for a far more pleasant experience. It will also allow you to more fully digest what you've read and apply it to other readings.

Classroom Etiquette:

Discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, sex, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability will not be tolerated. If a student uses discriminatory language in class, the student will be asked to leave and

will be counted absent for the day. If a student uses discriminatory language in an assignment including major papers, the student will be required to redo the assignment. Students will treat each other and the instructor with courtesy and respect.

The use of cell phones during class is strictly prohibited. This includes but is not limited to making and taking phone calls, texting, using social media such as Facebook and Twitter, and playing games. If you are expecting a crucial phone call during class, please let me know before class, turn your phone to vibrate, and excuse yourself from class to answer the call. If you violate the cell phone policy, you will be asked to leave class and will be counted as absent for the day.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments. *You must complete all required work in English 101 in the sequence outlined on this syllabus to receive a passing grade.*

You are expected to meet class according to the times published in the fall schedule of classes. No more than **three absences** are allowed. For each absence beyond the third, your grade will be dropped one step. For example, if you have been absent four times and have a B average, you will be assigned a B-. **If you are not prepared for class, e.g. you have no rough draft on peer review day, or if you have been consistently late for class, you will be counted absent. Three tardies will be counted as one absence.** When you do miss class, remember to talk to a classmate about that day's lesson. You will be held responsible for completing any work assigned while you are absent. If you know in advance that you will miss a class, you are responsible for informing me via email as soon as possible.

Late Papers:

You are required to submit assignments to me in class on the due dates listed in this syllabus. Late submission of assignments (major or minor) will result in a deduction of 10 percent of the total points per day and

will not be accepted without prior approval from the instructor. The instructor reserves the right not to accept late assignments.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services.

Academic Integrity:

Any apparent scholastic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism) will be promptly reported. If you have questions about using and documenting sources, please consult your handbook or ask your instructor. Papers that fail to attribute sources properly will receive a grade of 0 and will be reported.

Handouts:

The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. "Handouts," include all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to exams, quizzes, syllabi, in-class materials, sample papers, and peer critique sheets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy handouts, unless your instructor expressly grants permission.

Course Topics, Calendar of Activities, and Major Assignment Dates are subject to change. You will be provided notice of any and all changes.

Week 1: 1/6-1/10
Read TCTC Chapters 1, 2, 12

Week 2: 1/13-1/17
Read TCTC Chapters 4, 7, 13 Read Katz "The Ethic of Expediency"

Week 3: 1/20-1/24
Begin Proposal Project Read TCTC Chapters 20, 6, 3

Week 4: 1/27-1/31
Read TCTC Chapters 10, 11 Read Haas "Wampum as Hypertext"

Week 5: 2/3-2/7
Read TCTC Chapters 15, 16

Week 6: 2/10-2/14
Submit Proposal Begin WikiHow Project Read TCTC Chapters 17, 18, 19

Week 7: 2/17-2/21
NO CLASSES: PRESIDENTS DAY Read TCTC Chapters 8, 9 Read TAGD Chapters 1, 2

Week 8: 2/24-2/28
Submit WikiHow Project Board Game Project Introduced Read TAGD Chapters 3,4, 5, 23, 24

Week 9: 3/3-3/7
Read TAGD Chapters 7, 8, 25, 26

Week 10: 3/10-3/14
Read TAGD Chapter 31

Week 11: 3/17
Peer Review Board Game Project Course Evaluation

Finals Week: 3/20