

Mid-State Technical College
Technical Reporting
Independent Study
Fall 2011

This is an Independent Study course. Your last assignment is due 18 weeks from the day you contact me, telling me you are ready to begin! For the rest of your assignments, create a table or calendar for me which presents your other due dates. Creating this calendar will be your first assignment. It is explained on the last page of this syllabus. Complete this table/calendar assignment as soon as you are ready to begin and send it to me as soon as you can. Warning: The semester slips by quickly! Work on this course every week if you can.

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Course prerequisites:

- You must possess adequate skills in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- You must have completed Written Communication or an equivalent course.
- Knowledge of Excel and PowerPoint is helpful. If you don't know how to use these two programs, visit your ASC and begin learning.

Text: Technical Communication. Sixth edition. Rebecca Burnett.

Course goals:

- Develop an understanding of the writing process in business and industry.
- Develop the ability to write effective technical reports and proposals.

Course guidelines:

- All assignments must be word processed in **12-point Times New Roman font**. Of course you will vary font somewhat when producing certain documents. Use your best judgment. You want all your work to look professional! I will not accept hand-written work, nor work containing hand-drawn charts, graphs, maps, or other illustrations.
- You may complete any or all of the assignments with a partner who is also taking this course. You will receive the same grade.
- Please do not submit more than three assignments at a time. LABEL EACH ASSIGNMENT (number of assignment, page numbers of the book, question

numbers, date, your name.) Also, even though your email will identify that the assignment is from you, **please use the header or footer function of Word and have your name appear on each page of your assignment.** Sometimes I am at my computer and send all incoming assignments to the printer one after the other, then go and collect them from the printer. If your assignment doesn't have your name on it, I have to go back and open all the emails to see whose assignment it is. So please label **each page of each assignment. It makes things so much easier for me.** Thank you!

- Assignments must be completed in the order given on the syllabus. I will return an assignment if I feel it is unacceptable. You may re-do it once. If it is still unacceptable, you will receive the higher of the two grades given.
- You may begin work on your next assignment even if you haven't received your grade for the previous one.
- You must submit each assignment on or before the due date indicated in the table or calendar you create. The instructions for creating the table or calendar appear at the end of the syllabus. Please send it to me as soon as possible (within one week of the day you register). If an assignment is not in by midnight on the due date, I will not grade it and you will receive a zero.
- The work from each chapter is worth 25 points. An essay introducing yourself to me is worth 10 points. Your table or calendar is worth 10 points. Your final project is worth 40 or 50 points, depending upon whether you work alone or with a partner or group. You must earn 60% to pass the course (156 out of 260 possible points).

60-69% = D

70 - 79% = C
90% and above = A

80 - 89% = B

- To send an assignment, you may
 - ✓ Email it to me at the above address (make sure I know your email address and phone number as well).
 - ✓ US mail it to me at

Anne Dyken
MSTC
933 Michigan Avenue
Stevens Point, WI 54481

Or

- ✓ **Drop it off at the front desk at the Stevens Point campus. Please ask the staff person to initial and date your assignment. If you choose this option, send me an email to let me know you submitted it or I might not check my mailbox.**

Course assignments

I will award 10 points for creating a table or calendar which presents your due dates to me in an easy-to-read format. This assignment appears at the end of the syllabus and is due one week after you register for the course. Please complete this assignment as soon as possible.

Please take 15 to 20 minutes and type a short essay introducing yourself to me. It can be anything about you: your goals, plans, wishes, hopes, dreams, hobbies, interests, family, pets, travel . . . whatever. You can even attach a photo of yourself if you like! Email it to me when you are done. I will not grade you on grammar, but I will give you 10 points for completing this essay. It should be about 250 words.

Lesson one.

- 1) Read Chapter 1, pages 3 – 28, “Characterizing Workplace Communication.”
- 2) Answer question #1 on page 28.
- 3) Write a one-to-two paragraph memo that communicates necessary information from you, an employee, to your supervisor. You can write this memo with your current workplace in mind, or you can fictionalize the workplace and situation.

Lesson two.

Read Chapter 3, pages 77-104, “Reading Technical Information.”

- 1) Complete question #3 on page 105.

Lesson three.

Read Chapter 4, pages 111-133, “Addressing Audiences.”

- 1) Complete question 5 (both “a” and “b”) on page 136, and question 7 (“a” and “b”) on page 137. You don’t have to do “c” on page 138.

Lesson four.

- 1) Read Chapter 12, pages 409-457, “Using Visual Forms.”
- 2) Complete question 5 on page 458, and question 7 on page 459. If you don’t have access to a document for which you could create a visual, you may choose one from the Internet. You may also inquire at your workplace to see if any of your coworkers or supervisors has a document which would be suitable. For the visual, you may use Excel, Word, or any other suitable program.

Lesson five.

- 1) Read Chapter 10, pages 345-371, “Organizing Information.”
- 2) Complete question 1 on page 372 and question 3 on page 374.

Lesson six.

- 1) Read Chapter 7, pages 227 – 254, “Planning and Drafting.”
- 2) Complete question #6 on page 256.
- 3) Complete question #7 on page 256 - 257.

Lesson seven.

- 1) Read Chapter 19, pages 677-714, “Preparing Proposals.”
- 2) Complete any two questions on page 714. Remember, you can collaborate with a classmate. Consider submitting up to four drafts of this assignment. I will assign points only to the final draft. **NOTE: The link to the proposal mentioned in number 1 on page 714 does not work.** If you want to revise this proposal, you will have to type it over. If you would like to revise a proposal but don’t care for the one in figure 19.11, email me and I will send you drafts of student proposals which need revising.

Lesson eight.

Read Chapter 20, pages 719-767, “Preparing Reports.”

- 1) Complete any one of these assignments:

Number 2 on page 767

Number 5 on page 768

Number 6 on page 769

Final Project.

Your final project, which you may complete with one or two other people who are taking this class, is worth 40 points (if you work alone) or 50 points (if you work with someone else). You will be asked to formulate a question and attempt to answer it for a specific audience and then present your findings in an oral report which you will give on the Stevens Point campus sometime in the last two weeks of November, 2010. A description of the final project is in a separate document which will be sent to you via email.

When I grade your work, I take off one quarter of a point (.25) for every punctuation or grammatical error. I also take off a quarter of a point for stylistic concerns (wordiness, awkward phrasing, choppiness), format (spacing, indents, margins, font, appearance), content (inappropriate or incorrect information, or lack of information), and organization. **If you would like specific feedback on an assignment, you can email me after you receive your grade and I will make comments using the “track changes” feature in Microsoft Word.**

I will have office hours on the Stevens Point campus on Fridays from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 am and then from 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm. If you need to see me any other day of the week, email me and I will try to work something out so we can meet.

**Scroll down for the calendar
assignment!**

Here is your first assignment for Technical Reporting!
Create a table or calendar which presents the due dates for your eight assignments.

**Include your name,
the date you registered for the course,
due dates for the eight assignments
and your final project presentation.**

You can US mail this to me, or send it as an attachment to an email.

Note: You can submit your assignments at any time before the due date, but please don't submit more than three assignments at a time.

Assignments 1 and 2 are due before 25% of your course has lapsed. This would be approximately the beginning of week five after your registration. So take the day you registered and count five weeks ahead.

Assignments 3 and 4 are due before 50% of your course has lapsed. This would be the beginning of week ten.

Assignments 5 and 6 are due before 75% of your course has lapsed. This would be the beginning of week 15.

Assignments 7 and 8 are due the last day of your 18-week allotment for the course. So count 18 weeks from the day you registered for the course. *NOTE: Assignments 7 and 8 are much more time-consuming and complex than the other six. Please give yourself extra time to complete these assignments.*

Your Final Project presentation will take place sometime between November 13 and December 9. Email me so we can arrange a time that works for us. Include the names of your group members. Please note that you will also be required to submit questions and other information pertinent to your project as the term progresses. Indicate those due dates on your calendar as well.