

**ENGLISH 407B: Fundamentals of Technical Writing**

Spring 2017



**Instructor** Carl Lindner  
**Office** CDC 3-322 (or SU Starbucks)  
**Email** [REDACTED]  
**Phone** [REDACTED] (office hours only)  
**Office Hours** MW 1:00-2:30PM and by appointment

Sec 1001: MW 8:30-9:45PM CBC C311

Sec 1002: MW 11:30-12:45PM CBC C309

**Course Description**

English 407B aims to help you develop the skills you will need to write successfully in a technical workplace. The course introduces you to the rhetorical principles and composing practices necessary for writing basic technical documents, designing and analyzing technical research, and communicating about technical issues in common documents such as policies and reports.

*Prerequisites:*

- Completion of first-year composition requirement (ENG101 and ENG102).
- Junior or Senior status **strongly** recommended, but not required.
- Previous experience with Adobe and Microsoft productivity software recommended, but not required.

**Course Objectives**

After completing this course, you'll be able to:

- Write to multiple audiences, for various purposes (e.g. persuade, inform, earn or maintain good will)
- Plan and manage short- and long-term writing projects
- Draft, design, revise, and edit documents for both content and visual appeal
- Design and implement appropriate research strategies
- Write collaboratively (e.g., co-authoring, peer revising)
- Follow and adjust to technical writing conventions, including style and tone
- Use writing to help prepare and deliver oral presentations
- Write ethically and responsibly within the technical organization and as a member of society

English 407A/B uses a *significant* online component to facilitate the teaching and learning of technical writing. In this course you will be expected to participate successfully both online and in the classroom.

**Required Materials**

- *Business and Technical Writing* by Jeffrey Jablonski (6<sup>th</sup> Edition Only)
- [A UNLV ACE Account](#) – to access UNLV public and teaching computer labs as necessary
- At least a 4GB USB flash drive – to easily move files between computers in class
- Other TBA readings to support particular projects provided on Web Campus

**Grading**

Grades will be determined on a percentage basis. Your overall grade is based on the following percentages:

A = 100 – 92 %	A- = 91 – 90 %	B+ = 89 – 88 %	B = 87 – 82 %	B- = 81 – 80 %
C+ = 79 – 78 %	C = 77 – 72 %	C- = 71 – 70 %	D+ = 69 – 68 %	D = 67 – 62 %
D- = 61 – 60 %	F = 0 %			

## Assignments

All major assignments have multiple components and will be evaluated on the standard plus/minus letter-grade scale for a total of 100 points. Use the following table to track your performance in the class:

Projects	Overall %	Points
Case Project	15%	15.00
Job Project	15%	15.00
Procedures Project*	20%	20.00
Instructions Project*	20%	20.00
Reading Quizzes	10%	10.00
Writing Exercises	10%	10.00
Miscellaneous	10%	10.00
	<b>100%</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*Individuals receive separate grades for collaborative assignments

## Quizzes and Exercises

There will be **ten (10)** reading-comprehension quizzes administered on WebCampus, totaling 10% of the overall grade. Each quiz will contain ten (10) questions and they are designed to keep you on track in the course. **There are no make-up quizzes.**

There will also be **ten (10)** writing exercises assigned during the semester, totaling 10% of the overall grade. These exercises are designed to help you practice and apply the principles discussed throughout our course readings and our class discussions.

## Miscellaneous Grade

Your participation grade is determined by your attendance, in-class participation, and completion of the day-to-day assignments not listed in the major projects such as planning assignments, completing document drafts, and peer review. You are expected to participate in class activities, communicate with your peers, and contribute to group projects. Your grade will suffer if you fail to submit assignments, fail to meet group-established deadlines, or perform poorly on class assignments.

## Class Conduct

Another aspect of participation is classroom conduct. You are expected to act professionally: Respect your classmates and teacher as you would have them respect you. The class is only an hour and fifteen minutes long—if you have business to conduct, please do it **before** entering the classroom. Interrupting people, vulgar language, and general rudeness toward others or myself will not be tolerated. *I reserve the right to administratively drop any student who disrupts the harmony of the classroom.*

## Attendance

Class attendance is **required**, and absences will be recorded. Keep in mind that the allowed absences are intended for unavoidable absences due to illness or emergencies. If you have a medical or otherwise legitimate reason to have a missed class excused, discuss it with me *beforehand*. Students who will miss class because of religious holidays or official activities should refer to <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=839>.

- Absences exceeding the equivalent of **four (4)** classes result in a final grade reduction of **one letter grade**.
- Absences exceeding the equivalent of **six (6)** classes result in a grade of **F**.

Students who are late, leave early, or are unprepared for class will be penalized **1/2 absence**. It is possible to have a grade deduction or to fail the class simply by being late consistently. This is department policy and I have no authority to bend the rules for lazy students. **You've been warned.**

## Project Submissions

You are expected to produce high-quality professional documents. A part of that quality is the appearance of your work. ALL your documents must be typed or word-processed and should have appropriate margins, spacing, pagination, and formatting.

Furthermore, assignments must be submitted electronically through **Web Campus** by the scheduled deadline. Each Dropbox is automated and will close at the appointed time indicated on the syllabus. The boxes will **not** re-open for any reason. Assignments submitted in the wrong location, in an improper format, or with an incorrect filename **will not be graded**.

Finally, all group projects also require submission of a Project Assessment Memo (PAM). The instructor will use these documents to further assess your individual understanding and/or contributions to projects. Group project grades are assigned individually and *I reserve the right to adjust individual grades for group projects AND participation on a student-by-student, case-by-case basis*. Failure to complete/submit a PAM is also an automatic letter grade reduction for that particular project.

## Revision Policy

Most writing in business and technical contexts must be *professional quality* (i.e. excellent), so document review and revision is commonplace. You will have the opportunity to receive help from your peers and to submit your projects to me for review before you submit the project for a final grade. While you are *required* to participate in peer review, the submission to your instructor for review is *optional*.

Moreover, since you have limited experience in this form of writing, "failure is always an option." If you receive less than a C- on any major assignment, I will give you the opportunity to resubmit your work for a higher grade provided you meet the following requirements:

1. You submitted the project on time and you *fully* participated in Peer Review.
2. You resubmit your revision within one (1) week after I have returned your project evaluation.

Once you have resubmitted your work I will re-evaluate it and you can earn **up to ½ of the points** lost in the original submission. However, if your revisions appear haphazard or partial and/or you do not show *significant* consideration of my original comments on your paper, your grade will remain *unchanged*.

## Grade Disputes

If you disagree with my evaluation of an assignment and the grade you earned, I am always willing to discuss it with you and to reevaluate my assessment. I will ask that you do two (2) things before we talk:

1. Take the time to carefully read and consider my comments on your paper and to reread your paper
2. Define the specific reasons that you feel that the assignment deserves a different grade

Then, we will be able to discuss and evaluate the essay together.

## Late Work

Unless there's a good reason, this class operates much like the real work world does, where employees who habitually turn in their work late tend to be ex-employees. **There is no way for you to "make up" missed exercises or quizzes.** Asking me repeatedly to make up work will not change this policy. If illness or emergency prevents you from completing an assignment by its due date, contact me *beforehand*. Computer problems, related to either PC malfunction or network access, are **not** a valid excuse for late work or incomplete assignments.

**NOTE:** Late major assignments will be downgraded **one letter grade per day late**.

## Use of Samples

This course includes numerous examples of the kinds of documents you will write for this course, including several samples from previous English 407A/B students. **Do not copy or apishly imitate the models!** Why not? Because:

1. Direct copying from models is considered plagiarism and will not be tolerated
2. Not all the models are samples of *good* writing; you could imitate inappropriate structure and/or style

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, you accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. For a complete list of definitions, procedures, and sanctions, see: [http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=845#Stud\\_Acad\\_Misc](http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=845#Stud_Acad_Misc)

Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism – using the words or ideas of another, from the internet or any other source, without proper citation of the source – **constitutes grounds for failure in this course.**

## Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment sheet (if possible), and two (2) copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>

## Tutoring

The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring and academic assistance for all UNLV students taking UNLV courses. Students are encouraged to stop by the ASC to learn more about subjects offered, tutoring times and other academic resources. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Students may learn more about tutoring services by calling 702-895-3177 or visiting the tutoring web site at: <http://www.unlv.edu/asc/tutoring>

## Special Accommodations:

If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137. Their numbers are: (702) 895-0866/Voice; or (702) 895-0652/TDD; and (702) 895-0651/Fax. For additional information please visit: <http://www.unlv.edu/drc>

## Last Date to Drop:

The final date to drop or withdraw from the course without a grade being recorded is **March 24<sup>th</sup>**. No withdrawals will be permitted after this date.

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*A Syllabus is a contract. Your continued attendance in this class means that you have read and understood the rules, policies, and guidelines that this syllabus details.*

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