

Course Syllabus

Technical Writing & Editing
IDC 6001-900 Fall 2009

Course Documents **What is a syllabus?**

A syllabus describes the course and provides information on the instructor, textbooks, and technologies. **Course policies** reference the university's regulations and define the instructor's rules and requirements for the course.

Short Course Description

This advanced writing and editing course is designed to provide you with the skills necessary to create and edit professional quality documents that demonstrate sound research, critical thinking, analysis and rhetorically effective writing. Using the report as the focal document for the course, IDC 6001 provides you with the opportunity to develop documents for a variety of audiences and purposes.

IDC 6001 is also a graduate level writing-intensive course with a formal research component. We will cover both writing and editing; as well, we'll review mechanics, APA references/citations and look at ways to enhance our writing via tone and style. These skills will be applied to the various report genres required in the course.

Dr. Laura Palmer

- **Email**—for non-course related questions and comments only: laura_palmer@spsu.edu
- **Email**—for IDC 6001 questions: use our GeorgiaVIEW 8 course module
- **Office**: J323, 3rd Floor, Atrium Building, SPSU Campus
- **Phone**: 678-915-7203. Remember, I'm not in the office regularly; if you'd like to talk with me on the phone, please email me and set up a time.

Meeting with Me

Yes, I'd be pleased to meet with you in person or via a phone call. You should email me ahead of time to schedule either a face-to-face or phone conference.

Is an appointment necessary? While I do keep office hours on campus twice a week, I hold these during the day while you're probably working. Also, I have faculty meetings and I teach in the physical classroom during the day; thus, I may not be in the office. It's better for you if we set something up in advance

About The Course

As a discipline, Technical Communication offers a broad range of career paths—from content development to instructional design to usability testing. These paths differ significantly in terms of the day-to-day responsibilities of practitioners, but they all require exceptional reading and writing skills. Professional communicators, whatever their area of expertise, must be able to synthesize highly technical and nuanced information, then translate that information for non-expert audiences clearly and economically.

IDC 6001 is the gateway course to our grad certificates and degree programs at SPSU. We want you to succeed in your graduate studies and, because these studies will be writing intensive, we want you to make sure you've got your writing skills up to par for the demands of the program.

IDC 6001 will help you with writing, editing, research, analysis, synthesis, and presentation. IDC 6001 can also help you:

1. Determine if graduate studies are right for you
2. Decide if you can handle the demands of an advanced writing course
3. Assess if you're the kind of learner who can work well with online courses

Learning Objectives

In this course, you will:

- Define the iterative process of writing, editing and revising for professional audiences
- Apply the principles of English composition in writing various technical and business documents
- Analyze the information needs of readers and the rhetorical situation
- Apply research and analytical skills to problem solving

Brief Assignment Descriptions

Here, you can view **summaries of each assignment** in the course. More detailed descriptions will be available as assigned.

About You

Maybe you haven't written regularly since college and you feel, well, a little rusty. Don't worry. Technical Writing & Editing starts with a small group exercise. Make the most of this opportunity to refresh your writing skills.

Maybe you write at work regularly, but you're not always confident about the choices you make. In this class, you'll refine not only your mechanics but the rhetorical choices and strategies you can employ to reach your audience.

Maybe you've been writing for ages and wonder how this course could possibly help you become a better writer. For seasoned writers, the most valuable aspect of this course will be the feedback you receive. You'll see how feedback can help you define your tone and style and make your work rhetorically effective for the audience and the situation.

Keys to success

- Devote at least 15 hours a week to the course
- Log on to the course every day
- Create your own "to do" list each week and follow it
- Meet all deadlines
- Use the feedback you receive to improve your work
- Turn mistakes into learning opportunities

Logistics

Fall 2009: Monday, August 24th to Wednesday, December 9th

This course is delivered in 15 weekly modules. Our weeks begin on Thursdays and conclude on Wednesdays.

Each Thursday, the week's instructions are posted. You need to logon within 48 hours to review the material and fulfill our attendance requirements as per the course policies.

Each week you should make yourself a "to do" list with notes on what you need to read and complete. If there are dates outside of the usual 1-week model or team members you need to contact, then it's a good idea to write this information down too!

Course Schedule

The **course schedule** outlines the next 15 weeks and identifies key milestones in the course. Be sure to print a copy.

Course Technology **The Basics**

Our course is delivered through GeorgiaVIEW Vista 8. For creating your assignments, you'll need access to Microsoft Word, Excel and Acrobat. Specific technology requirements are found in the course policies.

Required Textbooks

Textbooks

I have listed our required texts at SPSU's Barnes & Noble bookstore outlet. You can also check with various online booksellers to find our textbook. If you shop early, there's usually a good

chance you can find used copies at reduced prices (and re-using is environmentally friendly).

Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach, 6th edition

Author: Paul V. Anderson
Published: 2007
ISBN: 978-1413017700

Concise Rules of APA Style, 6th edition

Author: American Psychological Association
Published: July, 2009
ISBN: 978-1-4338-0560-8

Rhetorical Grammar, 5th edition

Author: Martha Kolln
Published: 2006
ISBN: 978-0321397232

Print or Electronic

I've been using *Business Writing for Results* in other classes and I believe it's got some great strategies for writers. Additionally, one of the reasons I chose this text, aside from a refreshing approach to content, was the price. It was economical. However, I think I may have single-handedly driven up the price of a print version to a near-impossible dollar value. This humble text is now selling for a minimum of \$35 on Amazon and I'm shocked.

Why an e-book, then? The e-book version (PDF) is only \$14.95. The book is an easy read and you may find you don't need hardcopy at all. If you do, you can print select pages once you download the PDF. As well, you don't need to download it until the third week of class and the download is instant.

Business Writing for Results

Author: Jane Cleland
Published: 2003
ISBN: 978-0071405706

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