

# CCBC

Fall, 2023

School of Writing, Literacy, & Languages

English 213, Sections E2A (90087) Technical Writing

## A. Course Description:

ENGL 102 increases the writing and thinking skills developed in English 101; applies critical thinking and writing skills to a variety of academic assignments, including analyzing complex texts, conducting library and Internet research, developing a research paper, documenting research, and working collaboratively with peers.

## B. Basic Course Information:

1. Andrew Rusnak
2. AHUM 212, [Arusnak@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:Arusnak@ccbcmd.edu), 443-653-2777
3. **Office Hours:** M,W,F - 12:10-3:10; T - 3-5; R - 10-2
4. We can schedule an office appointment if we need to. You are welcome to stop by during office hours at any time. The most immediate and readily accessible way to reach me is to send me a text to alert me that, for instance, you have sent me an email regarding an assignment, or to tell me you will not be in class that day. I will respond very close to "immediately."
5. Essex Campus: AHUM 210, Tuesday evenings, 5:45-8:25
6. Students are expected to complete all reading and writing assignments on time. I generally do not do tests, but since much of our success this semester is contingent on the reading material, if it becomes apparent that students are not completing the readings as demonstrated by lack of participation in class discussions based on those readings, we will have reading exams to measure content and understanding.
7. **Materials:** *Solving Problems in Technical Communication*, Johndan Johnson-Eilola, Stuart A.Selber, editors, University of Chicago Press; **and** *Writing on the Job: Best Practices for Communicating in the Digital Age*, by Martha B. Coven.

## C. Course Goals

**Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Develop and implement the concise writing style that is the basis of all technical writing;
2. Understand the stylistic differences between academic writing and technical writing;
3. Create texts using the stages of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, and editing);
4. Apply a variety of strategies for revising texts to accomplish specific communication objectives and to meet the needs of specialized audiences;
5. Apply the technical writing style to a variety of formats, including business letters, resumes, manuals, proposals, and technical reports;
6. Work collaboratively with peers to critique assigned writing projects;
7. Understand the basic of page layout techniques;
8. Utilize computer-generated graphics as a means of conveying information;
9. Conduct Internet and/or library research as needed to complete assigned writing projects; and
10. Develop critical editing and proofreading skills to create polished, professional documents.

### Course Major Topics

1. Definition of technical writing;
2. Characteristics of clear, concise, audience-directed texts;
3. Writing as a recursive process;
4. Revision;
5. Proofreading/polishing texts;
6. Page layout techniques;
7. Use of computer-generated graphics; and
8. Print and electronic research.

### Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

1. Use computers to complete all assigned writing projects;
2. Participate in class activities;
3. Create at least four writing projects, each of which employs a different technical writing format (i.e. manuals, proposals, reports, etc.);
4. Written assignments and research projects: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources in their research and cite sources according to the style selected by their professor.

### Professors Rationale and Additional Goals



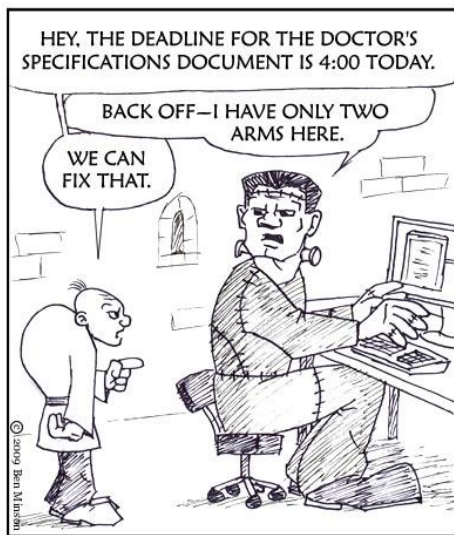
This class is designed for students who are pursuing careers in health, technology, engineering, business, education. It is based on the understanding that all effective writing, reading, and interpretation of text and graphic materials is paramount to professional success. If an employee demonstrates high proficiency in written and oral communication, he or she will be looked upon as a “go-to” person, one who is surely a candidate for growth and leadership.

**T**hink critically and think imaginatively. These two parts of your mind are critical to good technical and work-related writing. Imagination is critical to the process, analyzing audiences—thought patterns, assumptions, expectations—reaching beyond. Critical thinking is obviously important in comprehending objects, finite operations and procedures, equipment, logical sequencing, and data. This class will cover:

- The process and evaluation of imaginative and critical technical writing and communication;
- Some background on history of technology and philosophy of science;
- How and where technology interfaces with culture and the resultant (if any) ethical implications;
- The importance of creating strong visual rhetoric;
- An understanding and application of the rudimentary principles of grammar, mechanics, and usage;
- Editing and revision;
- Writing Features, Profiles, Press Releases, Flyers, Reports, and Operation Manuals; and
- Giving presentations.

You will be successful in this class if by the end of the semester you can say:

- “I worked very hard”;
- “I learned a great deal”;
- “I can successfully apply what I learned in a variety of ways”; and
- “I had fun”.



In Dr. Frankenstein's Documentation Department

This class will attempt to streamline curricula to meet needs peculiar to writing about technical issues and products in the workplace. Students will be able to customize writing assignment subject matter to build portfolios that are relevant. I will attempt to bring in working professionals who can speak authoritatively to the class. The keys here are:

- Class participation, expressing your ideas and opinions, bringing passion to the discussion;
- Defining the circumstances in which you will use technical writing and communication in your careers;
- **Understanding that there is not an antithetical relationship between “language arts” and language skills, and understanding and expressing technical and scientific concepts. The world of success and progress is a much more synthesized.**

## Academic Integrity

1. Academic integrity is a core institutional value at CCBC. Students, faculty, administrators, and staff have the right to a learning environment where academic integrity is valued, respected, and upheld. For CCBC’s complete policy regarding student academic integrity, go to the CCBC’s College Catalog: Student Code of Conduct: Standards of Classroom Behavior/Academic Integrity. Violation of this policy will result in sanctions according to the Student Code of Conduct.
2. The commercial use of academic material is prohibited under the College’s Academic Integrity Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, selling of course material to another person, entity, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the college and/or the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, instructional slides, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, videos, etc.

## D. Netiquette Statement

### CCBC Netiquette Statement

The rules of etiquette that apply when communicating online are different from those that apply when communicating in person. Netiquette rules have emerged to facilitate online interactions in the absence of visual and auditory cues (Marx, 2004). CCBC’s Netiquette Statement is grounded on the principles of mutual respect, professionalism, ethics, courtesy, and kindness.

CCBC’s Netiquette Statement applies to all individuals who work or learn at CCBC. CCBC’s Netiquette Statement also applies to all virtual communication methods, including but not

limited to synchronous lectures, discussion board posts, written assessments, recorded presentations, artistic representations, social media, and emails.

We will have many discussions in class. In some cases we may not agree. We expect and appreciate all students' voices to be heard, but, we must practice tolerance, respect, and common courtesy at all times. Just because you may disagree with someone does not give you the right to be aggressive towards that person. Express your views in a diplomatic way, which may require you to turn down the volume on your passion. Also, keep this in mind: You are under no obligation whatsoever to agree with me. There are certain parameters that we must adhere to, I will set the guidelines for class dynamics. But it is important, on issues discussed in class only, not on policy or assignment requirements, that you develop your own, independent thinking. My job is to facilitate the discussions. Sometimes, because I'm human, my opinions might sneak out, or you might interpret my facilitation and questions in a certain way, but please do not feel obligated to agree. Develop and defend your own ideas, base them on factual information, recognize the difference between facts and mis- and disinformation, and, it's worth repeating again, always practice tolerance and respect. In this class we will constantly challenge our preconceived ideas. We will explore how we've come to think what we think, what has shaped and influenced our thinking, why we believe what we do, and how much room to we give ourselves to honestly entertain a point-of-view we never really explored before.

## E. Evaluation

Technical Writing is not a full-fledged objective enterprise. It requires, craft, art, and imagination.

**This is your mantra for the semester:** *Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited to all we know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.* —Albert Einstein

*Irrationally held truths may be more harmful than reasoned errors.* —Thomas Huxley

*We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master.* —Hemingway



<b>Assignment: Technical Writing.</b> Good writing is good thinking, no matter the context. We will assign readings and due-dates in class.	<b>% of Grade</b>
<b>Class participation, completing the readings and in-class writings:</b> Your attendance and participation in class is critical to your final grade. Bring your own ideas, be original, passionate, be respectful, tolerant. There may be quizzes on the readings.	20 %
<b>Assignment #1: Portfolio: Writing in the Technical Work Environment.</b> Throughout this course in <b>Writing and Communication in the Technical Work Environment</b> you will take on various assignments as a communications employee working for a company that manufactures technical products or delivers technical services. First, find a manufacturer or service provider that you like, that you can see yourself serving as a technical writer and communicator for. It can be anything in any industry, from biotech to automobiles to cosmetics. You will model your company after this one and come up with a new name for your version of your company that represents the industry you are passionate about. You are creating your own hypothetical workplace and products. You will carry out the exercises below with your created business in mind. Use <i>Writing on the Job: Best Practices for Communicating in the Digital Age</i> , by Martha B. Coven as a reference guide for formatting the projects below, Read the relevant chapter. We will go over these in class.	40 %
<b>A) Prepare a memo</b> that introduces new safety standards to employees working at the company; Properly format the memo “TO, FROM, DATE, SUBJCT.” You will have to use your imagination to determine what safety standard is being violated. This will be related to your company and its product(s).	
<b>B) Write a press release</b> that introduces a new product or service your company has created and that addresses a specific problem your product or service will solve. This release is going out to all trade and mainstream press outlets and will inform their readers of this new product or process and what it will do. Properly format the release on company letterhead.	
<b>C) Write a 500-word feature for the monthly company newsletter</b> on this new product or service. Your audience here is current employees and potential customer base. You must define the specific market characteristics in detail.	
<b>D) Prepare a 1000-word technical report</b> on why this new product or process is a good idea and should be introduced to the public right away. Be sure to identify the problem in the introductory summary, provide the details of the investigation, and detail the solution or recommendations you are making. We will go over formatting in class.	
<b>E) Prepare a detailed set of user instructions</b> on how to use this product or service. You must include graphic representations/art. Do the best you can. Set your document up in Word, but use different software as needed to create art (graphics, illustrations, etc...)	
<b>Assignment #2: Write a 1,500 word biographical profile</b> on someone you know who works in health, science, or technology. We will go over interviewing techniques and how to approach this profile assignment in class. Assume this profile will appear in a technical trade journal.	20%
<b>Assignment #3: Solving Problems in Technical Communication</b> , Johndan Johnson-Eilola & Stuart A. Selber, editors. In teams of two, pick out two chapters from this text and create an 8-10 slide PowerPoint presentation for each that explains/defines the relevant “problem” in technical communication, or the technical communication environment. And then what is offered as a resolution.	20 %
<b>Total:</b>	100 %

## **Additional Evaluative Measures**

- 1) Be on time for class;
- 2) No electronics in class, absolutely no cell phones. If you want to use your laptop for class, that's fine, but only for class-related activity. If you insist on using your cell phone in class I will ask you to leave;
- 3) If you miss more than 2 classes without a legitimate excuse you will drop a letter grade. If you miss 5 classes you will drop another letter grade.
- 4) Turn your papers in on time and use the correct format;
- 5) Do all the readings and be prepared for reading quizzes as necessary;
- 6) Actively participate in class discussions and in-class writings (speak your mind);
- 7) Be prepared to think critically and imaginatively; and
- 8) English 102 is a three-credit course. Students should expect to work two hours on assignments and preparation outside of class for every one hour of class time.

## **F. Course Procedures**

This syllabus may be changed with notification to the class. For college-wide syllabus policies, such as the Code of Conduct for Academic Integrity, Grades, and Grading (including FX and progress grades), and the Audit/Withdrawal policies, please go to the Syllabus Policies tab on the myCCBC student portal.” (linked edited to: <https://myccbc.ccbcmd.edu/CCBC/mySyllabi-Policies>);

College-wide student services To access information about student services, such as Academic Advising, College and Community Outreach/Success Navigators, and Disability Support Services, students may refer to the Student Support Services link on the CCBC catalog home page. Once on the page, select the appropriate catalog academic year at the top if necessary: [Search CCBC \(ccbcmd.edu\)](https://myccbc.ccbcmd.edu)

\*Students should first attempt to take concerns to the faculty member. If students are unable to resolve course-related concerns with the instructor, they should contact (name and position of discipline or program coordinator, or other “next level” contact in the event that the instructor IS the coordinator or department chair) at (appropriate contact information).

### **Plagiarism (from the student code of conduct) will not be tolerated**

1. Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., not citing a source);
2. Using ideas from any source without providing proper citation of the source;
3. Excluding a source or misrepresenting a source leading to an improper citation;
4. Copying or presenting material word for word from any source without using quotation marks and/or the proper citation of the source;
5. Copying and/or altering a few words from a source in order to avoid exact quotation, without providing the proper citation of the source;
6. Rewording (i.e., paraphrasing) an idea found in a source without providing proper citation of the source;
7. Submitting the same paper or assignment to fulfill separate course requirements, in either the same or different courses; and
8. Submitting a previously graded paper, assignment, or speech, without prior approval from the instructor.