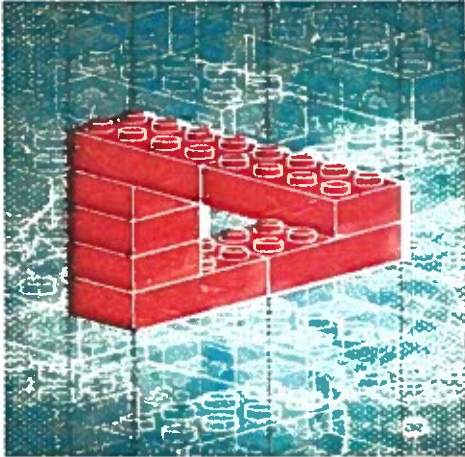


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Fall, 2015

## Technical and Business Writing



**Location:** ACR 203

**Time:** MW 11-12:15

**Instructor:** Theron Francis, PhD

**Email:** [tfrancis@sulross.edu](mailto:tfrancis@sulross.edu)

**Office:** Morelock 112c

**Office Phone:** 8283

**Office Hours:** Monday 12:30-1 pm and 2-3 pm  
W 1-3 pm  
TT 11-2; or by appointment

### Texts

No textbook required. We will be using Purdue's Online Writing Lab (OWL) for guidance and models: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

### Course Description

English 2311 teaches students the rhetorical principles and writing practices necessary for producing effective business letters, memos, instructions, reports, and collaborative projects in professional contexts. The curriculum is informed by current research in rhetoric and professional writing and is guided by the needs and practices of business, industry, and society at large, as well as by the expectations of SRSU students and programs. English 2311 should take place in a networked computer classroom to ensure that students taking the course are prepared for the writing environment of the 21st-century workplace. The course teaches the rhetorical principles that help students shape their professional writing ethically, for multiple audiences, in a variety of professional situations.

### Departmental ENG 2311 Course Objectives

1. Interpret and analyze texts for various audiences
2. Develop persuasive strategies
3. Strengthen collaborative writing skills and
4. Experiment with written genre and multiple media in the fields of technical and business writing.

The course promotes skills in the following areas:

#### The Writing Process

Developing and understand various strategies for planning, researching, drafting, revising, and editing documents that respond effectively and ethically to professional situations and audiences.

#### Writing in Context

Analyzing professional cultures, social contexts, and audiences to determine how they shape the various purposes and forms of writing, such as persuasion, organizational communication and public discourse.

#### Research

Understanding and using various research methods to produce professional documents, including analyzing professional contexts, assessing and using information resources, and

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determining how various media and technologies affect and are affected by users and readers.

**Technology**

Developing strategies for using and adapting various communication technologies to manage projects and produce informative and usable professional documents.

**Document Design**

Learning to argue with visual data, understanding and implementing various principles of format, layout, and design of professional documents that meet multiple user and reader needs.

**Within the SRSU English program, graduating students will demonstrate that they can,**

1. Construct essays that demonstrate unity, organization, coherence, and development
2. Analyze literary works by applying principles of literary criticism or theory
3. Produce research papers that demonstrate the ability to locate a variety of acceptable sources, employ them effectively through quotations or paraphrases, integrate them smoothly into the writer's own prose, and document them correctly using MLA format
4. Demonstrate creativity or originality of thought in written or multimedia projects
5. Compare/contrast and analyze major works and periods within World, English, and American literature.

**Attendance and Class Participation**

The class participation grade will be determined by

- a. Attendance
- b. Participation in classroom discussion and problem solving.
- c. Collaboration in teams
- d. The help you give to others in conferencing and editing.

**Attendance Policy**

Two absences are permitted during the semester. One letter grade will be subtracted from the Class Attendance percentage for each additional absence. ***More than six (6) unexcused absences will result in the student being dropped from the course with a failing grade.*** Absences resulting from required school activities, direct personal emergencies, or health issues will be excused—but you must notify the instructor within one week of the absence and make up any class work in a timely manner.

**Professionalism**

Professionalism is always being present, punctual and prepared to participate in the business of the class. Because this is a business writing course, most projects will be collaborative. If a team member proves not to be reliable, the other team member can remove him from the group. Because the student failed to contribute to the team, even if they complete the project independently, their grade will be lowered. The success of this course depends upon everyone participating in classroom discussion. As a result, 10% of your course grade will be rewarded for the quantity and quality of your class participation. Your attendance, the degree to which you support the efforts of other students in class, and your own effort will also be considered as a part of this grade.

**Classroom Etiquette**

The course content is relevant to your undergraduate study as well as your lives. Class time will not be wasted. Also, your peers and professor will appreciate respect and courtesy. So avoid behaviors that might offend or disrupt others (like cell phones and early departures). Please also be careful to avoid excessively argumentative, sexist or racist language that may offend others and undermine the free exchange of ideas. Sexual harassment among students also threatens each student's sense of security. Anyone can make a mistake now and then, but repeated insensitivity to others will result in being asked to drop the course.

## **PROJECTS**

### **I. Employment Project (300 points)**

For Project 1, you will be asked to locate two jobs for which you are or will be qualified, and develop a portfolio of employment documents for two applications. Step 1 of the project asks you to learn about and use various web-based resources for job seekers and select two jobs to pursue. Step 2 asks you to prepare cover letters (i.e., "Job Application Letters"). Step 3 asks you to prepare a resume/s suitable for the positions. In Step 4, you will assess your experience in a reflective memo, which contrasts your two letters to demonstrate how each is adapted to readers. In the process of completing each step, you will work closely with your peers and me to shape your writing so that it represents you and your qualifications fully and effectively, given the rhetorical circumstances.

#### **Employment Project Elements:**

1. Cover Memo, explaining how you adapted your two letters differently for the two different audiences and why (Project Assessment Document). 90 points
2. Two contrasting letters of application. 90 points
3. One resume. 90 points
4. Three pre-writing activities (30 points; 10 points each)

### **II. Instructions Project (300 points) – Team Project**

Giving special attention to graphics and layout, you will compose a variety of instructions, showing how to perform something, how to assemble something, or how something works. All instructions will be designed as a team, beginning with a list of Do's and Don'ts for writing instructions, with examples you have found online. Instructions illustrate processes; therefore, you must show how something works in discrete steps. Your design must also show more visually, than explain verbally. As an exercise in instruction design, we will design Lego creations in teams, design instructions, test the instructions on users, and revise the instructions, and submit the final Lego instructions with a cover memo. As a segue to the Service Project, as the final phase of the instructions project, you will design a brief set of instructions, which could be useful to a potential client for the final unit of the course.

#### **Instructions Project Elements:**

1. Examining Examples to Show Do's & Don'ts (50)
2. Lego Instructions (50)
3. Reflective Memo on Lego Instruction with results of Usability Study (100)
4. Applied Instructions related to Potential Client (100)

### **III. Service Project (300 points) – Team Project**

Compose a research report that can fit into one of several different genres: a recommendation report, a white paper, a grant proposal, an informative brochure, a position letter, or a set of well-developed instructions. This project will be completed in several phases through the course of the semester. Because tasks will overlap, time management will be planned through using a Gantt chart, which will be included in the team's project proposal.

The Service Learning Project contains the following sub-projects:

#### **1. Project Proposal**

- a. Summary of the type of writing project decided upon with the client, a list of work responsibilities for each member of the team, and a Gantt chart showing which tasks will be finished at what date.
- b. Client Field Research Memo: an analysis of a professional context which includes the results of an interview, an analysis of documents used by the client of model documents using ISIS (image, structure, information, style), and an observation of the client's place of business. (100)

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2. A graphic done by each student, illustrating an important idea in your project. (50)
3. A presentation to the client. (50)
4. A section of a larger report completed collaboratively as a team (100)

**Some Possible Service Learning Projects**

1. Proposals for a Sul Ross Vegetable Garden and recycling at the cafeteria.
2. Bicycle advocacy and project proposals for the Big Bend region (see Adventure Cycling Project).
3. Ballot redesign project: evaluate accessibility and reliability of voting methods in the region and compose a recommendation report for changes in technology and procedures.
4. Publicity Materials and a promotional campaign for the Alpine Community Garden.
5. A Usability Study and Recommendation Report for the SRSU Library's website.
6. Carbon Footprint Reduction Campaign for SRSU, any SRSU department, or a local corporation. (See Carbon Footprint Reduction Campaign)
7. Proposal to Study Economic feasibility of Municipal Wi-Fi
8. Environmental Impact Position Statement (See Poly Chemical Risk Assessment)
9. E-Commerce recommendation report for a regional non-profit organization or SRSU student organization.
10. Sports equipment safety standards proposal for a SRSU or other local sports team. (See NCAA Bats Standards Case)

**IV. Final Exam Core Assessment (50 points)**

The final exam will be done in class and submitted online through blackboard. The assessment will be the same as the first-day-of-class assessment, and should demonstrate increased skills and knowledge. For these assessments, you will compose a report in memo format on a topic related to professional writing.

**V. Class Participation (50 points)**

The class participation grade will be determined by

- a. Attendance
- b. Participation in classroom discussion and problem solving.
- c. Collaboration in teams
- d. The help you give to others in conferencing and editing.

**GRADING**

You can earn up to 1000 total possible points. The number of points needed to earn the following grades are: 900-1000=A, 800-899=B, 700-799=C, 600-699=D, 0-599=F.

Projects	Due Date	%	Points
Employment Project	September 28	30	300
Instructions	October 26	30	300
Do's & Don'ts	September 30	5	50
Lego Instructions	October 19	10	100
Lego Instructions Cover Memo	October 19	5	50
Applied Instructions	October 26	10	100
Service Learning Project	December 9	30	300
Client Analysis Memo and Proposal	November 5	10	100
Final Exam (Core Assessment)		5	50
Class Participation		5	50
Total Points Available		100	1000

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### DEADLINES

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments will be turned in at the beginning of class on their due dates. All alternative arrangements must be approved before the relevant deadline. Late work without previous arrangement with me will only be accepted upon demonstration of extenuating circumstances.

### Blackboard

If you confront technical issues which interfere with your ability to use Blackboard, contact the LTAC (Lobo Technology Assistance Center) at 432-837-8888 or <https://techassist.sulross.edu>

### Accommodating Students with Disabilities

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Sul Ross State University provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodation because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, as soon as possible please contact Counseling and Accessibility Services:

Mary Elizabeth Schwartze  
Accessibility Services Coordinator  
Counseling and Accessibility Services  
Ferguson Hall Rm. 122  
432-837-8399  
[mschwartze@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartze@sulross.edu)

### Writing Center and Academic Learning Center

The Writing Center is located in MAB 102 and the Academic Learning Center is located in FH 213. Tutors are available to help you with any problems you may have with an assignment. Take advantage of this service any time you need help. The tutors are there for you. I will give you extra credit if you show evidence that you have seen a tutor at the Writing Center. You may contact the Writing Center at extension 8270 and email [writing@sulross.edu](mailto:writing@sulross.edu)

### Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Dishonest acts, such as plagiarism (using words or a specific author's ideas from another source without acknowledging the source) or collusion (having other people write parts of your paper for you), may result in an "F" on the assignment and may lead to a disciplinary hearing conducted through the office of the Dean of Students, which could result in suspension or expulsion from SRSU. If you have questions about whether your use of other sources (such as books, websites, friends, or Writing Center tutors) is fair or not, please ask before turning in the work that you have a question about.

### Course Calendar

Dates	Activities	Topics	Objectives, Resources and Due Dates
Week One			
<b>Unit One: Employment Project</b>			
M 8.24	Introduce Course & Core Assessment	Principles of Professional Writing	<i>Week Objectives:</i> Introduce syllabus and first project, do core assessment, and begin Job ad search
W 8.26	Introduce Employment Project  Research Job Ads	Basic Formatting	Finding Job Ads

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	Self-Assessment Worksheet: skills, goals, experiences (10)		Job and Career Resources  SRSU employment resources
<b>Week Two</b>			
M 8.31	Resume Style: OWL And examples in BB	Multiple Readers	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Resume Drafting
W 9.2	Research Job Ads  Using a Table  Drafting  Keyword pre-writing Worksheet (10)	Multiple Points of Entry  Resume Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White Space</li> <li>• Symmetry</li> <li>• Hierarchy</li> </ul>	
<b>Week Three</b>			
M 9.7	Objective Statements	Resume Techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullets</li> <li>• Verb Phrases</li> <li>• Detail and Conciseness</li> </ul>	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Complete a resume (Turn in with portfolio at end of unit; 90)
W 9.9	Resume Peer Review With 30-second test  Resume Peer Review Worksheet (EC 10)		
<b>Week Four</b>			
M 9.14	Discuss Letter Style, Survey examples	Rhetoric of the Job Application Letter	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Write two letters of application and begin to critique them. (Turn in with portfolio at end of unit; 90)
W 9.16	Brief Peer review of your letters  Tailoring Worksheet (EC 10)	Rhetoric of the Letter	
<b>Week Five</b>			
M 9.21	Further Peer Review of Your Letters  Memo Style	Memos and Email  Style and Editing	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Complete the reflective memo on the different rhetorical strategies you used in your two letters. (90)  Complete two letters of application (90)  Organize and revise your Employment Project portfolio
W 9.23	Cover Memo Pre-Writing Worksheet (10)  Project checklist  Letter Peer Review Worksheet (EC 10)		

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Week Six			
<b>Unit 2: Instructions Portfolio: All tasks submitted online</b>			
M 9.28	Employment Project Due	Designing Instructional Documents	<b>Due: Employment Portfolio (300 total)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 job ads</li> <li>• A reflective memo on how you wrote the letters</li> <li>• 2 letters of application</li> <li>• a resume</li> </ul> <i>Week's Objective:</i> Collect and critique exemplary instructions
W 9.30	Introduce Project on Instructions  Critique Instructions found online  Write a list of <i>Do's and Don'ts</i> for <i>Instructional Design (50)</i>		
Week Seven			
M 10.5	Lego Instructions	Lego Model Documentation	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Create Instructions for a Lego Creation
W 10.7	Draft Lego Instructions		
Week Eight			
M 10.12	Plan Usability Test of Lego Project	Usability Testing	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Complete Usability Testing  Begin client field research
W 10.14	Introduce Service Learning  Perform Usability Testing		
Week Nine			
M 10.19	Design draft of Applied Instructions useful to your client	Workplace Writing	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Complete Applied Instructions
	Submit brief instructions proposal memo		
	Revise Lego Instructions after Usability Test		
W 10.21	Research and begin contacting potential clients  Revise applied instructions		

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Week Ten			
<b>Unit 3 Service Learning Project</b>			
M 10.26	Draft Cover memo for Instructions Portfolio	Managing Projects	<b>Due Instructions Portfolio</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Containing:</li> <li>• Do's &amp; Don'ts Analysis</li> <li>• Lego Instructions</li> <li>• Cover Memo on Lego Instructions with usability testing results</li> <li>• Applied Instructions (300)</li> </ul> Submit project peer evaluation forms  <i>Week's Objective:</i> Complete ISIS Analysis Memo, comparing sample professional documents (50)
W 10.28	Managing Team Projects  Begin Client Analysis and Proposal Memo  ISIS Analysis of Two Professional Documents (Genre depends on client needs)  Team Research and Writing	Gantt Charts and Time Management	
Week Eleven			
M 11.2	Organizing arguments	Building Arguments	Select Client and Complete Analysis of the Professional Context with Service Project Proposal (50)
W 11.4		Arranging Information	
Week Twelve			
M 11.9	Teamwork		Last Day to Drop with W: 11.13 Friday
W 11.11			
Week Thirteen			
M 11.16	Using Graphics	Constructing Visuals	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Each student completes a well-designed, logical graphic (50)
W 11.18	Peer Review Visual		
Week Fourteen			
M 11.23	Making Presentations and Preparation	Oral Presentations	<i>Week's Objective:</i> Prepare for presentations
W 11.25 Thanksgiving	No Class		



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Week Fifteen		
M 11.30	Prepare for presentations	Week's Objective: Give presentations to clients and class  Submit final peer evaluation form
W 12.2	Last Day of Class Presentations (50)	
Week Sixteen		
W 12.9 Final Exam, 10:15 a.m.	Course Evaluation  Final: Core Assessment (50) Presentations (50) Submit Service Learning Project (100) with Evidence of submission to client	