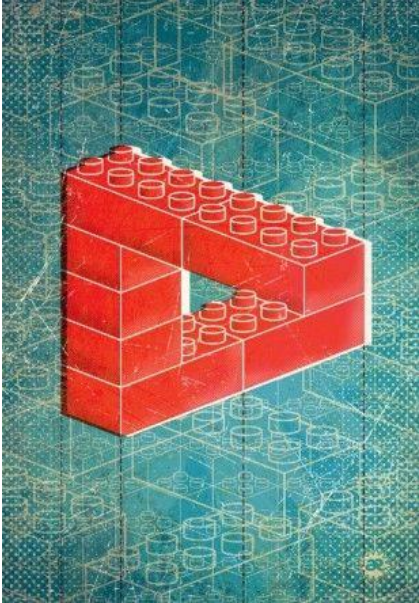# English 2311.001 Technical and Business Writing

Instructor: Theron Francis, Ph.D.

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Office Phone: 423-823-8283

Office Hours: Mondays 10-12 on Teams

Class Time/Place: Web-based, asynchronous

COURSE DESCRIPTION
English 2311 teaches the rhetorical principles and writing practices necessary for producing effective business letters, memos, instructions, reports in professional contexts (SLOs 1, 3). 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 in general, as well as by the expectations of SRSU students and programs (SLO 2). English 2311 takes place in a networked computer classroom or utilizes a wide-range of online resources for online students to ensure that students taking the course are prepared for the writing environment of the 21st-century workplace (SLO 4). The course teaches the rhetorical principles that help students collaboratively shape their professional writing ethically, for multiple audiences, in a variety of professional situations (SLOs 2, 3).

Textbook
No Textbook. All materials are provided through Blackboard.

Warning--No AI Writing Allowed.
If you do not use your own words and cite the sources used to develop your ideas, you have committed plagiarism. Plagiarism is academic dishonesty. Any instance of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero. The student may be reported to the Dean of Students office.

Course Learning Outcomes
1. Interpret and analyze texts for various audiences
2. Develop persuasive strategies
3. Strengthen collaborative writing skills and
4. Experiment with writing and multimedia in the genres of technical and business writing.

Marketable Skills:
1. Students will communicate effectively in writing and speaking.
2. Students will use different research strategies to address problems and develop ideas that engage a variety of perspectives.
3. Students will recognize how social and cultural contexts shape meaning and language.

English (Undergraduate) Student Learning Outcomes:
SLO 1 – Students will be able to construct documents that demonstrate unity, organization, coherence, and development, and are grammatically correct.
SLO 2 – Students will be able to analyze and interpret literary works by applying principles of critical thinking, literary criticism, or theoretical engagement.
SLO 3 – Students will be able to produce researched documents that demonstrate the ability to locate a variety of credible sources, employ them effectively through quotations and paraphrases, integrate them smoothly into the writer's own prose, and document them correctly using the style appropriate to the document.

The course promotes skills in the following areas:
1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **Research**
   Understanding and using various research methods to produce professional documents, including analyzing professional contexts, assessing and using information resources, and determining how various media and technologies affect and are affected by users and readers.
4. **Technology**
   Developing strategies for using and adapting various communication technologies to manage projects and produce informative and usable professional documents.
5. **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.

Distance Education Statement
Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and

requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

Student Responsibilities Statement
All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Student Handbook and the Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog and for abiding by the University rules and regulations. Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements of such laws.

Attendance Policy
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.

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 and Counseling Services
SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director or Ronnie Harris, LPC, Counselor, at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartze@sulross.edu or ronnie.harris@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

Counseling
Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/365 support by visiting Timelycare/SRSU. The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

SRSU Library Services
The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine. Offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's

website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your Lobo lD and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

Tutoring at the English Department's Online Writing Center
The English Department provides tutoring through Blackboard Collaborate. I will assign extra credit for major assignments receiving feedback from the tutors in the English Department's Online Writing Center.

Tutoring Center
The Lobo Den Tutoring Center offers FREE tutoring support to help you excel in your courses. Whether you need assistance in Writing, Math, Science, or other subjects, we're here to help!
Important Information:
- **Drop-in and Scheduled Appointments:** Flexible options to fit your needs.
- **Hours of Operation:** Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- **Workshops:** Attend our regularly hosted academic workshops on STEM topics and professional development, often in collaboration with specialized faculty.
- **Location:** BWML Room 128.
- **Contact Us:** For more information or to book an appointment, email tutoring@sulross.edu or call (432) 837-8726.

Looking for additional support?
- Tutor.com offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors.
- Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere.

Take advantage of these valuable resources to boost your confidence and performance in your classes. We look forward to helping you succeed!

Academic Integrity
Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources *unless permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

Classroom Climate of Respect
Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack.

No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Incompletes
Incompletes will only be granted if there is a valid reason why the student is unable to complete the course work due health, accident, or family emergency and at least 50% of the course assignments are completed.

Libraries
The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu/. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123). No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Projects
1. Employment Project (320 points)
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 resume/s suitable for the positions. Step 3 asks you to prepare cover letters (i.e., "Job Application Letters), each of which are "tailored" to its audience. In Step 4, you will assess your experience in a "Project Assessment Document," which is in memo format (header with to, from, date, re and block paragraphs with headings)

Elements of the Employment Project
1. Cover Memo, explaining how you adapted your two letters differently for the two different audiences and why (Project Assessment Document). 50 points
2. Two contrasting letters of application. 100 points
3. One resume. 100 points
4. Three pre-writing activities (70 points; 10 points each)

2. Instructions Project (250 points)
Giving special attention to graphics and layout, compose a brief instruction manual showing how to do something, how to assemble something or how something works. Prior to the project, analyze the rhetorical and design strategies in one example of instructions you find yourself. The project can convey a skill or a kind of technical knowledge. Then perform a usability study, testing to see if some is able to follow your instructions. Select an instructions project which in some way serves the needs of your client in the service learning project. There will also be a preliminary exercise which uses Legos or another form of module.

Elements of the Instructions Project
1. Examining Examples to Show Do's & Don'ts (50)
2. Lego Instructions with Usability Study (150)
3. Reflective Memo on your Lego Instruction design with Usability Test results (50)

3. White Paper Research Project (380 points total)
For the third project, you will be asked to do web-based research (and perhaps some library research) and to write an informative report about any issue important to you or your field of study. This project will have six phases:
Elements of the White Paper Project
1. A rhetorical analysis of two published white papers using the ISIS for analysis. (100)
2. A statement of purpose (30)
3. Annotated Bibliography (100). Critical summaries of 3 sources.
4. A graphic illustrating an important idea in your report (50 submit as draft)
5. A well-designed final report with graphics and bibliographical citation of sources (150)

4. Final Exam (50 points)
The final exam is the end of course assessment. It is intended to show improvement in writing skills by comparison with the beginning-of class assessment.

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	%	SLOs	Points
Employment Project		**37**	**1-5**	**320**
Resume	7.16	10		100
Two Letters of Application	7.18	10		100
Reflective Memo	7.22	5		50
7 worksheets and two job ads	7.9-7.21	7		70
Instructions Project		**25**	**1-5**	**250**
Do's & Don'ts Guide	7.24	5		50
Lego Instructions	7.29	15		150
Reflective Memo on Lego Instructions	7.30	5		50
White Paper Project		**33**	**1-5**	**380**
ISIS Memo	8.1	5		50
Statement of Purpose	8.4	3		30
Annotated Bibliography: 5 sources	8.7	10		50
Graphic	8.11	5		50
Completed 2-3 page White Paper per student	8.12	10		150
Final Exam	8.13	**5**		**50**
Total Points Available		100		1000

COURSE CALENDAR

Dates	Activities	Project Due Dates	Notes & Resources
Week 1 **Unit 1 Employment Portfolio** 1. Introduce course 2. Find two job ads (Submit as worksheet 1) 3. Begin designing resumé 4. Brainstorm resumé contents (Worksheet 2)			
7.7 M	Introduce Course & Employment Project		
7.8 T	Rhetoric of Professional Writing and its Types Begin Job Search	Objective: Find job ads for two separate jobs you are qualified for now.	Search sites on Bb SRSU Career Services • SR Job list • Job search engines
7.9 W	Begin resumé Design Contents • Header • Objective • Education • Experience, etc.	Upload two job ads for positions you are qualified for now (Upload in worksheets folder as submission #1)	The job ads are the hypothetical audiences for your two job application letters.
7.10 Th	**Resumé Design** Use a table to create a grid for layout Design concepts • White space • Hierarchy • Symmetry Three columns in a table can be used for headings on the left, main content in the center, and dates on the right.	**Worksheet 2 Due:** **Self-Assessment of Skills, Goals and Experiences**	Worksheet 2 helps you reflect on goals and draft content for the resume. Look over resumé examples in Blackboard site for 2311.
7.11 F	**Understanding Readers** • Multiple, diverse readers • Key words and mirroring the culture of the employer.	Begin worksheet 3 Word choice should show authority and reflect the culture of employers.	Other models and guides to resume design can be found in OWL links in Bb. The objective statement should match your skills to their needs.

Week 2
Unit 1 Employment Portfolio
1. Develop content for resumé and application letters (Worksheet 3)
2. Design resumé
3. Peer or self-review of resumé (Worksheet 4)
4. Complete
5. Draft two letters of application (Worksheet 5: tailoring)
6. Complete two job application letters tailored to different employers.
7. Complete a peer or self-review worksheet on one of your job letters (Worksheet 6)

7.14 M	**Detail and Conciseness**, two style features are in tension: detail shows and proves, while conciseness adds clarity.	**Worksheet 3 Due: Key Word Assessment**	Fill the page with relevant employment history. Never write a complete sentence in a resume. Fragments (noun or verb phrases) can be read faster.
7.15 T	**Fonts and other design features** Bold can be used to highlight headings. Indentation (through table layout) subordinates detailed info under headings.	**Worksheet 4 Due: Resumé Peer Review**	Fonts reflect personality. San serif fonts are modern; serif fonts may be more readable. 12-point font is more readable. White space between chunks of info adds readability.
7.16 W	**Rhetoric of Letters** **Format** • Left justification • Block paragraphs • Single spacing **Content: 5 Paragraphs** 1. Intro paragraph 2. Education 3. Experience 4. Extracurricular 5. Conclusion	**Resumé Due**	See examples of job application letters in Bb See OWL links in Bb for discussion of style, contents, format, and audiences.
7.17 Th	Discuss Letter Style, Survey examples in Bb	**Worksheet 5 Due: Tailoring**	The job application letter should fill one full page. The introductory

	The job application letter assignment asks you to "tailor" two different letters adapted two different employers.		paragraph names the position in the first sentence, calls attention to an important achievement, and ends with a thesis that lists skills important to the employer.
7.18 F	Job letters highlight and expand upon specific relevant achievements that show you have the skills to perform the job.	**Worksheet 6 Due: Peer Review for Letters of Application** **Two Letters of Application Due**	Each body paragraph demonstrates you have the skills you claimed in the intro. Brief 1-2 sentence stories about your achievements are the evidence for your claims.

Week 3

Unit 1 Employment Project
1. Write reflective memo showing your letters differ in order to adapt to different employer needs and values.
2. Worksheet 7: Tailoring research

Unit 2 Instructions --Begin
1. Complete PowerPoint showing five things you should do and five things you shouldn't do in designing instructions.
2. Design instructions for Legos

7.21 M	Memo Format
	• Header with
	    To:
	    From:
	    Date:
	    Re:
	• Single spaced, block paragraphs
	• Headings
		Worksheet 7 Due: Cover memo pre-writing worksheet
		This worksheet will help you draw contrasts between your two letters.
			Headers help readers understand the organization and find what they need to read quickly.
			
			Last Day to drop with W

7.22 T	Introduce Instructions Project Assignments • Do's and Don'ts in Instruction Design PowerPoint • Lego Instructions • Reflective Memo with Usability Test	**Reflective Cover Memo Due**	The reflective cover memo should show how your two letters are adapted to their two different audiences by discussing 4 rhetorical features in the letters: 1. Main argument 2. Evidence 3. Tone & Style 4. Word choice

7.23W	Using real-world examples of instructions determine what makes instructions succeed or fail. Create a PowerPoint that lists what you should and shouldn't do in instruction design, proving examples.		At the end of unit one you should have submitted: 1. A Cover Memo to show your letters are tailored (50) 2. Two Letters of Application (100) 3. A resumé (100) 4. 7 worksheets (70)
7.24 Th	Designing Instructions Basic elements of design Design instructions for a Lego creation Draft Instructions Select a format: • Word • PowerPoint • Video • CAD	**Due: Do's & Don'ts for Instruction Design Power Point**	Examine instructions you find in print or online and write a list of what to do and what not to do in instructions design. These are instructions on designing instructions with good and bad examples. Photographing each step and dropping the images into Word or PowerPoint is a common approach. Video or CAD are alternative options.
7.25 F			See examples of student instructions in Bb

Week 4
Instructions
1. Complete Lego Instructions
2. Write a reflective memo explaining your design approach and discussing the results of the usability test of your Lego instructions.

Unit 3 White Paper Project
1. Complete ISIS Memo analyzing two examples of White Papers

7.28 M			Instructions also can be laid out with a table: left column for images; center for step-by-step instructions; right for details or warnings
7.29 T	Usability Test of Lego Project	**Submit Lego Instructions**	Observe a user following your instructions to determine how the

			instructions should be revised.
7.30 W	Introduce the White Paper Project and ISIS Memo

White papers-also called backgrounders-are informative reports | **Reflective Memo Due containing usability test results.** | See sample white papers in Bb under ISIS project. Compare rhetoric of two for ISIS memo. The ISIS worksheet serves as the assignment and guide for writing the ISIS memo. |
| 7.31 Th | ISIS
• Image
• Structure
• Information
• Style | | Use the ISIS worksheet to analyze four rhetorical features of real-world white papers. Compare to white papers from a folder in Bb in order to analyze and understand this type of writing. |
| 8.1 F | | **ISIS Memo Due** | |

Week 5

Unit 3 White Paper Project
1. Submit Statement of Purpose for White Paper
2. Find sources and compose Annotated Bibliography
3. Design Graphic

| 8.4 M | Statements of Purpose
   Select a topic on a
   relevant issue | **White Paper Statement of Purpose Due** | A statement of purpose proposes a research subject for feedback. It names the subject, gives a rationale, and indicates some sources that could be used. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8.5 T | Building Arguments

Introduce Annotated Bibliography (3 sources, one scholarly). Annotations summarize and critique. | | See OWL links for discussion and models of annotated bibliographies. Examples of student annotated bibliographies are in Bb. |
| 8.6 W | Research and Citing Sources
APA Style | | An annotated bibliography is a complete bibliographical reference followed by a |

			summary with critical comments.
8.7 Th	Draft white paper	**Annotated Bibliography Due** **(3 sources with a critical annotation for each)**	Summarize in your own words in order to understand. Do not plagiarize annotations.
8.8 F	Designing a Graphic Draft white paper		A graphic should be an original bar, pie, or line chart created in Word or Excel, which represents data visually.

Week 6
White Paper Report
    1. Design Graphic
    2. Revise, edit, and complete White Paper

Final Exam

8.11 M	Labeling Graphics properly in APA style Draft white paper	**Graphic Due** This can be a draft of an original graphic.	
8.12 T	Review of technical writing format and edit white paper. Revise and complete white paper	**White Paper Report Due** 2-3 Pages - Business Format - Graphic - Cover Page - APA citation style	Cite sources in-text and in References section in APA style
8.13 W	Final Exam submitted online		
8.14			Grades submitted to Registrar

Educator Standards:

For students seeking certification, this course will cover aspects of the following TEA educator competencies:

English Language Arts and Reading EC-6 Subject I:

Competency 004 (Literacy Development: The teacher understands that literacy develops over time, progressing from emergent to proficient stages and uses a variety of approaches to support the development of students' literacy.

Competency 006 (Fluency Reading): The teacher understands the importance of fluency for reading comprehension and provides many opportunities for students to improve their reading fluency.

Competency 007 (Reading Comprehension and Applications): The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows the components and processes of reading comprehension and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension, including using a variety of texts and contexts.

Competency 009 (Reading, Inquiry, and Research): The teacher understands the importance of research and inquiry skills to students' academic success and provides students with instruction that promotes their acquisition and effective use of those study skills in the content areas.

Competency 010 (Writing Conventions): The teacher understands the conventions of writing in English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying writing conventions.

Competency 011 (Written Communication): The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction tjay promotes students' competence in written communication.

Competency 012 (Viewing and Representing): The teacher understands skills for interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and producing visual images and messages in various types of media, and provides students with opportunities to develop in this area.

Competency 013 (Assessment of Developing Literacy): The teacher understands the basic principles of literacy assessment and uses a variety of assessments to guide literacy instruction.

English Language Arts and Reading 4-8 Domain II:

Competency 004 (Reading Comprehension and Assessment): The teacher understands the importance of reading for understanding, knows components and processes of reading comprehension and teaches students strategies for improving their comprehension.

Competency 005 (Reading Applications): The teacher understands reading skills and strategies appropriate for various types of texts and contexts and taches students to apply those skills and strategies to enhance their reading proficiency.

Competency 006 (Written Language—Writing Conventions): The teacher understands the conventions of written English and provides instruction that helps students develop proficiency in applying written conventions.

Competency 007 (Written Language—Composition): The teacher understands that writing to communicate is a developmental process and provides instruction that promotes students' competence in written communication.

Competency 008 (Study and Inquiry Skills): The teacher understands the importance of study and inquiry skills as tools for learning in the content areas and promotes students' development in applying study and inquiry skills.

English Language Arts and Reading 7-12

Domain I:

Competency 001: The teacher understands and applies knowledge of relationships among the language arts and between the language arts and other aspects of students' lives and learning.

Domain II:

Competency 004: The teacher understands reading processes and teaches students to apply these processes.

Competency 005: The teacher understands reading skills and strategies for various types of nonliterary texts and teaches students to apply these skills and strategies to enhance their lifelong learning.

Competency 006: The teacher understands literary elements, genres, and movements and demonstrates knowledge of a substantial body of literature.

Competency 007: The teacher understands strategies for reading literary texts and provides students with opportunities to formulate, express, and support responses to literature.

Competency 008: The teacher understands and promotes writing as a recursive, developmental, integrative and ongoing process and provides students with opportunities to develop competence as writers.

Competency 9: The teacher understands effective writing and teaches students to write effectively in a variety of forms and for various audiences, purposes, and contexts.