

Course Syllabus and Information
English 381 (WID), Sec. 101: Technical Communication
Fall 2016
Professor Bill Knox

Course and Conference Information

Class meets: August 22 –December 16

Faculty Contact: Simpkins 013, 298-2505 (office), 298.2974 (FAX), wl-knox@wiu.edu

Office hours: 11:00-noon M W F, Th 4:00-5:30, and by appointment

Prerequisites

ENG 180 and 280, and/or permission of Director of Writing Programs

Text and Materials

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*. 7th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015. Print.

Knox, Bill. *Writing Fast-Writing Well*. Dubuque: Kendal-Hunt, 2013. (WFWW)

Markel, Mike. *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016. Print. (PS)

Initial Comments

To ensure greater success in ENG 381

- ***recall and apply past relevant learning from ENG 180 and ENG 280***
- ***visit our course syllabus and WesternOnline course site daily***
- ***study assigned material in Markel before beginning assignments***
- ***read report assignments thoroughly before beginning reports***
- ***ask me questions if the reading or assignments are unclear, and***
- ***complete assignments when due. (Late work earns a zero.)****

This syllabus outlines our work this semester; however, some details may change. Assignments and other communication (including changes) will be given in class and via Western Online. ***Class information sent to you electronically should be printed as backup.*** Discussions about the development of your assignments (as well as any other class matter) are encouraged with me in class, via telephone, during my office hours, and by appointment.

Although I am available via email outside of class and will usually respond within a day, I prefer you to phone or visit during the office hours for class business. As a rule, use email for routine questions. ***Please read all course material carefully because some questions may be already answered in the textbooks, assignments, and online material.***

Course Content

The 2016-2017 *Undergraduate Catalog* describes ENG 381 as “Developing informative, reader-centered technical communication. Writing, testing, and revising common genres and styles. Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID) course. BGS online writing course.” Further, “This course has been designated to meet the Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID) graduation requirement. WID courses provide instruction in the processes and formats for the writing content and style needed to be an effective professional in a student’s chosen field.” This course will introduce you to technical communication by means of individual yet related course projects. Study and practice, peer editing, and student-instructor conferences will help you to write clear, concise technical prose while improving skills, sharpening critical ability, creating awareness of writing habits, and fostering your writing confidence.

Your writing, the principal text in this class, should accomplish four goals:

- ***meet assignment requirements,***
- ***convey significant content,***
- ***interest the reader, and***
- ***define you as a technical writer.***

Course Calendar

Assigned reading should be done before the week indicated. **Writing assignments will be due and the beginning of class on the dates indicated in the "Due" column.**

Class Weeks	Unit Topic(s)	Reading	Due to Dropbox
1 08/22-26	Introduction and Summaries Intro Letter-Resume	Western Online Course Intro Ch. 1, "Introduction"; Ch. 2, "Ethical"; Ch. 3, "Collaboratively" + Ch. 6, "Writing"	How-to 1-4 (08/26)
2 08/29-09/02		Ch. 9 "Correspondence" + Ch. 10 "Job Application" Ch. 1, <i>WFWW</i> <i>Letter-Resume Partner Review</i>	How-to 5-8 (09/02)
09/05	Labor Day Recess	No Class	
3 09/06-09	Instructions	CH. 4 "Audience and Purpose" + Ch. 14, "Instructions" Appendix Part B "Editing"	1-Intro Letter + Resume WC 1 (09/06)
4 09/12-16		Ch. 5, "Researching" Ch. 2, <i>WFWW</i> <i>Instructions Partner Review</i>	How-to 9-12 (09/16)
5 09/19-23	Proposal-Feasibility	Ch. 11, "Proposals" + Review Ch. 6, pp. 111-115	2-Instructions WC 2 (09/19)
6 09/26-30		Ch. 7, "Designing" + Ch. 8, "Graphics" Ch. 3, <i>WFWW</i>	How-to 13-16 (09/30)
7 10/03-07		Ch. 12, "Informational" Appendix Part A, "Documenting" + Part B, "Editing and Proofreading" <i>Proposal Partner Review</i>	
8 10/10-14		Telephone Conferences	How-to 17-20 (Due before Conference)
9 10/17-21	Progress	Preview Ch. 13, "Recommendation Reports" Ch. 4, <i>WFWW</i>	3-Proposal Rpt WC 3 (10/17)
10 10/24-28			How-to 21-24 (10/24)
11 10/31-11/04		Review Ch. 6, "Writing" Ch. 5, <i>WFWW</i> <i>Progress Partner Review</i>	How-to 25-28 (11/04)
12 11/07-11	Research-Recommendation	Ch. 13, "Recommendation Reports" Review Appendix Pt. A + Pt. B	4-Progress Rpt WC 4 (11/07)
13 11/14-18	Public Presentation	Ch. 15, "Oral Presentations" Review Ch. 8 + Ch. 6, <i>WFWW</i>	How-to 29-32 (11/18)
11/21-25	Thanksgiving Recess	No Class	
14 11/28-12/02		Telephone Conferences	How-to 33-36 (Due before Conference) PowerPoint (Due after Conference) Recommendation Report (Due after Conference)
15 12/05-09			How-to 37-40 Recommendation Rpt WC 5 (12/05)
Finals Week	Final Activities		ENG 381 Learning Report + Online Learning Report

Class Activities

Class materials will structure assignments, invite responses, and guide evaluation of your original practical use reports in progress. Much class time in each unit will be yours to write, ask questions, discuss, and work with your classmates and me by means of stepped activities.

Our class is divided into units, requiring reading, reports, partner reviews, a set of PowerPoint slides, a portfolio, and a final project (built from the proposal-feasibility, and progress reports) demonstrating growing writing skill. From time to time, we will give attention to instruction and examples from *Pocket Style Manual* to gain sentence-level competence and confidence.

Outside of class, maintain daily writing and online habits. Keep up with the reading and class notes, and, to perform well on the assigned papers, write several drafts for each assignment.

Attendance, Due Date, Return and Revision Policy

>>>According to the *WIU Undergraduate Catalog*, “[s]tudents are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled.” Please see the following link for attendance policy:

(http://www.wiu.edu/student_services/student_development_office/current/absencepolicy.php).

In our face-to-face class, this means to be present, participating, and taking class notes to earn attendance points. If you have a laptop, I strongly encourage you to bring it to class for notetaking and drafting. All reports are due according to the course calendar. Assignments will be marked as soon as possible. I encourage your questions and careful revision prior to submission.

Academic Honesty

In this course, as in all others, “it is the student's responsibility to be informed and to abide by all University regulations and policies on Academic Integrity.” Please study the following link:

>>>(<http://www.wiu.edu/provost/students.php>). In other words, take responsibility for work on activities and reports and, as necessary, give credit where it is due to outside sources of information—whether a friend in person or an expert in print or online. Reports found not to meet this standard will not be accepted.

Use of Learning Technologies, Web Note, and Writing Assistance

Use WesternOnline to receive assignments and submit certain reports. Do not use the WesternOnline email system to contact me. Cell phones and ear buds should not appear in class, unless I approve it. Unapproved use constitutes an absence for that class. You are welcome to use your laptop or other device in class for note-taking and drafting. However, students using these for on-line chatting, shopping, doing work for other courses, or other non-class business, however, will be marked absent.

The **University Writing Center** (Malpass Library 3rd Floor and Simpkins 107) is available to assist you with general and specific questions on writing assigned in any discipline and at any academic level. The one-to-one assistance available at the Writing Center is valuable for generating ideas, talking about global-level issues such as organization, and finding help with writing correctness. See www.wiu.edu/uwc. Call ahead for an appointment (298-2815) and be sure to bring a copy of your assignment. If you cannot get to campus, you will also find online writing help at OWL, the Online Writing Lab-- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu--24/7>.

Assignments and Assessment (1000 Points)

Assignment	Points
1-Four (4) Reports and Letters on suggested topics (100 points each)	400
2- Final Project	200
3-ENG 381 Learning Report	100
4-Online Learning Report	100
5-PowerPoint Slides	50
6-Five (5) Writer's Checklists (WC-10 Points each)	50
7-Partner Review Forms—10 as writer + 40 as reviewer	50
8-How-to (H-t) Exercises based on the textbook (10 total)	50

Percentage Grading Scale

A=1000-930; A-=929-900; B+=899-870; B=869-830; B-=829-800; C+=799-770; C=769-730; C-=729-700; D+=699-670; D=669-630; D-=629-600; F=<600

(I reserve the right to add assignments and points for effort and improvement.)

Standards for Assignment Assessment

The table below provides a performance guide but the ultimate measure is how the document would be perceived by the professional audience, including a “robo-reader.” Therefore, bring the greatest care to your work.

Standards for Assignment Assessment

Area	Standard
Content	Precisely worded details and examples address a targeted, educated audience.
Structure	Order of document sections and transitions between them exhibit logic.
Correctness	Sentence structure, writing mechanics, and citations are copy ready.
Creativity	Meaningful thinking reflects imagination, not just conventional ideas.
Critical Thinking	Serious reflection values key information and rejection of easy answers.
Format + Layout	Text and visual standards are met with no distracting elements.

Summary of Dates for Your Attention

Last day to add course during open registration: 08/26/2016

Last day to add by permission or delete course: 09/02/2016

Last day to drop course with "W" grade: 10/30/2016

Disability Services

Students with disabilities: In accordance with University values and disability law, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations where there are aspects of a course that result in barriers to inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement. To file an official request for disability-related accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center at 309-298-2512, disability@wiu.edu or in 143 Memorial Hall. Please notify the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that this course is accessible to you in a timely manner.

Sex Discrimination

University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of any of these offenses, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at 309-298-1977 or anonymously online at: http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/request_form/index.php. If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Title IX policy is available at: <http://www.wiu.edu/vpas/policies/titleIX.php>.

Comment

Scheduling changes may occur, but I will usually announce these in advance. You are welcome to visit my office in Simpkins 013. At any time, feel free to tell me how the class can serve you better.

WID Course

This course has been designated to meet the Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID) graduation requirement. WID courses provide instruction in the processes and formats for the writing content and style needed to be an effective professional in a student's chosen field.