



Course Information

Course Number: ENGL 3309
Course Title: Professional Writing
Section: 080
Semester: Spring 2024
Time: 9:25am-10:40am
Location: Grant 206
Credit Hours: 3

Instructor Details

Instructor: Justiss Burry, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: T/H 11am-2pm

Introduction to the Course

Hello everyone! You may be wondering what this course is about, and that's a valid question. While the course material on Canvas will make course content clearer, I wanted to take some time to explain how this course will help you in your future career endeavors. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, [career readiness requires competencies](#) that help students move successfully into the workplace. This course will directly impact and help with competencies such as critical thinking/problem solving, demonstrating, and articulating successful communicative ideas and thoughts, strengthening your leadership skills, developing your work ethic, and learning to learn from differences and intercultural situations.

Course Description

This course is located within the [English and Languages Department](#) and the purpose of this class is to help students prepare for the type of writing they will do in the workplace and in their lives. The emphasis on practical application is achieved through problem-based scenarios that allow students the opportunities to work through complex communication problems in the safe environment of the classroom. The course of this purpose is to facilitate student learning through the following objectives:

- Investigate rhetorical principles of discourse and technical written communication
- Analyze rhetorical situational purposes, audiences, and these design choices
- Promote critical thinking and exploration of ethical documents and the work they do

The ultimate goal is to provide students with the communication tools needed to have greater impact and influence in the workplace.



Course Requirements

This course employs a teaching and learning style referred to as problem-based learning (PBL). In this style of teaching, students learn writing strategies for various citations that might occur outside of the academy. Thus, the course focuses a great deal on problem-based learning scenarios to encourage modes of rhetorical writing. In short, there are often scenarios that students respond to; these situations are meant to parallel workplace writing and are applied writing concepts.

All assignments, projects, and exercises are critical because they relate to, and measure, student learning outcomes (SLOs) given below. Each project is described in full in Canvas, and you are provided with a rubric that will guide your understanding of what you are being graded on. Below are brief descriptions of the components of your grade in this course and the percentage they comprise.

How to Succeed in This Course

Come to class and do the work. I greatly value effort and the work that you put into this course as I appreciate students who consider my job responsibilities and engage in course materials. I do not expect every student to love the course material, but I do expect every student to try. If you are having difficulty in the course, please come to me and ask for help. I am here to help you!

Communication Expectations

Make sure that you utilize your Tarleton email to send me communications. I ask this because I am quicker to respond since my email forwarded to my phone. Remember that these emails are public record, so sometimes the best email is one that requests a meeting. Note that I tend to email back quickly, but please allow me up to 48 hours to respond should I not be around a computer/I'm playing Toon Blast/Royal Match on my phone. Also, please make sure to employ professional language and tone in your emails to me, or you will receive an email that asks you to reorient your email and/or tone as a learning moment. Here's an example of an effective email a previous student sent to me because it includes salutations, a purpose, and is succinct (don't indent—it's only indented for demonstrative purposes):

Good Afternoon Professor Burry,

Per our conversation the other day, attached is the photo of the practice plan from my flip grid video since it wouldn't focus. I had such a hard time trying to finish it... just my luck. It took three laptops and about 8 attempts, but I did my best and the working video is now posted.

Thank you for your help... again!

Best regards,



Student Student

Outline of Course

Table 1 below provides an overview of the assignments in ENGL 3309. Note that the course requires participation and the successful completion of four major projects. Activities and tasks related to each project are posted in Canvas, and assignments will be uploaded to Canvas as designated in the directions for each task. Following Table 1 is a description of the assignments.

Table 1: A breakdown of major graded projects

Assignment and Description	Percentage of Final Grade
<p>Project 1 (Document Series)</p> <p>This project asks students to consider how letters, memos, and emails function rhetorically in various scenarios.</p>	15%
<p>Project 2 (Information Design)</p> <p>This project requires students to integrate prose and visuals in a technical report to a selected audience.</p>	20%
<p>Project 3: Research Summary</p> <p>This project encourages students to examine research in PTC and create their own report using similar data collection and analytic strategies.</p>	20%
<p>Project 4 (Collaborative Report)</p> <p>Lastly, this project synthesizes concepts from the course in a formalized group project (of their choosing) to demonstrate workplace writing and PTC research and delivery methods.</p>	30%
<p>Exercises</p> <p>Exercises are the weekly work assignments (process work) that are scaffolded throughout the term leading up to the major writing assignments listed above.</p>	10%
<p>Participation</p> <p>This grade is meant to help as long as you attend class and actively participate in discussion while coming to class prepared.</p>	5%



Textbook and/or Resource Materials

To keep the class equitable and as fair as possible, the textbook for the class is free and is an open educational resource (OER). While the textbook is written by the University of South Florida (my previous institution), the book serves as a great and free resource for this course until an OER is completed for the courses at Tarleton. The textbook is:

- Zarlengo, T., & Griffith, J. (2023). *A Rhetorical Approach to Workplace Writing*, 10th ed. [Link to the textbook that you should download](#)

Google Docs can also be accessed directly through docs.google.com, but students must be signed in through their Google account to access the files. All texts in Google Docs can be downloaded or accessed through the pdf link to guarantee that access to the content will not be dependent on an internet connection or access to Google suite.

Course Prerequisites

ENGL 1302 – Composition II

Course Learning Outcomes

Students completing this course will develop the following skills and abilities:

- Rhetorical strategies for writing in the workplace
- Genres and conventions of technical and professional communication
- Collaborative writing and project management
- Document design and writing technologies
- Ethics, accessibility, and inclusion in the workplace

Student Learning Outcomes

- Analyze and write in a specific context defined by purpose and audience
 - Analyze 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.
- Learn effective document design
 - Learn to argue with visual data, understanding and implementing various principles of format, layout, and design of documents that meet multiple user/reader needs.
- Write within a genre
 - Learn and practice writing in various genres of professional and technical discourse like the memo, letter, technical reports, proposals, and descriptions, etc.
- Develop your writing process, style, and editing techniques
 - Develop and understand various strategies for planning, researching, drafting, and revising documents. Develop a clear, concise, and functional writing style. Develop techniques to become an effective critic and editor.
- Practice Collaboration



- Learn and apply strategies for successful collaboration, such as working and communicating on-line with colleagues, setting, and achieving project goals, and responding constructively to peers' work.

Course Policies: Grades, Technology, and Expectations

The following sections are meant to help facilitate expectations for the course. If you have any questions about the policies listed here, please feel free to email me at Jburry@tarleton.edu to set up a meeting time.

Grading Policy

Please allow up to two weeks for me to return all grades and feedback to you. I require two weeks because I have multiple classes to grade, so I rotate them for each assignment. For example, Class 1 may be graded first so they receive grades and feedback within a week or so. Class 3, however, will not receive grades and feedback until the end of week two.

See Table 1 above under “Outline of Course” for specific major writing assignments and corresponding grade weights. Please refer to the current University Catalog for additional information regarding grades and course withdrawal policies.

Grading Scale and Grade Conversion

These are the grades that will appear on your transcript and in Duck Trax because the system doesn't record plus or minus grades. Grades will be determined through a 10-point scale as indicated in Table 2:

Table 2: Grade points-to-letter scale

A is total 90-100 grade points
B is total 899-870 grade points
C is total 799-770 grade points
D is total 699-670 grade points
F is total 599 grade points or fewer



This system is based on the university grading system, found in the “Academic Information” section of the University Catalog.

Incomplete, Blank, or Incorrect Assignment Uploads

All uploads to Canvas must be completed drafts of the correct assignment. If an incomplete or blank draft or an incorrect assignment is uploaded, the submission will be counted as no submission and no points will be awarded. If attempts to submit work to any platform are unsuccessful, the work must be submitted to your instructor immediately by email with an explanation of the failed attempt and a copy of the submitted help information technology (IT) ticket.

Technology Policy

It is 2024 (Happy New Year!), so I do not mind electronics in the classroom. In fact, technology can offer powerful and supportive assistance; however, if I notice that your work is not getting done in class, or if you are not participating in class discussion and/or peer groups, your participation grade may be negatively affected. In short, I encourage use of technology in the classroom, but remember that Facebook and the like are ancillary to learning in the classroom. This policy is conditional and subject to change at any time during the term if technology use distracts from learning. We are fortunate enough to be in a classroom that has computers, so we will use them to supplement course material. Sign in to the computer in class every day.

Technology Requirements

Students are required to have regular access to a computer, the internet, a word processor, Canvas, Tarleton email, and a printer. There are many technology labs on campus that students can use at no extra cost, so students should have regular access to all required technology via Tarleton campus resources.

Creating and Maintaining an Effective Classroom

This course is a thinking classroom space. We are committed to a learning atmosphere that acknowledges and appreciates the diverse students at Tarleton State University and their views on race, ethnicity, ability, gender, religion, and socio-economic status. In this class you will have the opportunity to express and experience that culturality through the varied voices of your classmates as it relates to the content of the course.

For me, accepting people is actively championing and campaigning for the rights of those that have been disenfranchised. Activism without action is just another “ism” that people employ to make themselves feel like they are helping and contributing to another cause. For this reason, my ontological approach to an open-door policy is to *do* something that



engages students in work that isn't myopic.

As such, this course is an open classroom space. We, as a community of students, are committed to a learning atmosphere that acknowledges and appreciates the varied experiences of students at Tarleton. In this class you will have the opportunity to express and experience cultural diversity through the voices of your classmates as it relates to the content of the course. The learning objectives related to student learning outcomes (SLOs) that students bring to this class will be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit, and it will enhance students' learning needs.

Classroom Etiquette

Fostering a conducive and positive learning environment is the responsibility of every participant in this classroom and is especially important during current politicized times with politics, masks, vaccine hesitancy, etc. In fact, one fostering tenet is the expectation that everyone treats one another with respect. You may disagree with others' opinions/comments in this class (including in person and/or online), and that's ok...an important learning crux for academics is disagreeing and navigating others' ideas. *It is the way people express their disagreement that matters.* Be aware of your tone, language, and body language when disagreeing, and remember to keep it appropriate for the classroom which includes online discussion spaces. Also, you must avoid crude, disrespectful comments, and/or jokes that may disrupt the positive learning environment. Some of these comments may be but are not limited to:

- making jokes and/or comments about one's race, sex (see Title IX regulations)
- religion
- sexual orientation
- age
- personal history.

Failure to foster and maintain this respectful environment may result in a severe detriment to one's grade. If problems should arise, or if this paragraph is unclear, please see me during my office hours to discuss.

The Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In this course, we will be integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies into our curriculum to enhance learning and engagement. AI tools such as CHATGPT will be used for rhetorical invention and revision processes providing you with hands-on experience and a deeper understanding of the course material.

The use of AI in our course is motivated by its potential to personalize learning, increase student engagement, and prepare you for the increasing prevalence of AI in professional settings. For instance, AI can provide personalized feedback, adapt



course content to individual learning styles, and simulate real-world scenarios.

Your use of AI tools will be assessed through course workshopping and exercises, evaluating your understanding of AI and your ability to use AI tools effectively. However, you should not use AI in your writing assignments unless specifically required to do so. Trying to subvert this policy may result in an academic integrity violation. If you have any questions or need assistance with the AI tools, please reach out during office hours or email Jburry@tarleton.edu.

Attendance Policy

Attendance and participation are required and connected. Attendance is recorded using the Canvas application Roll Call Attendance, which calculates and displays the total percentage of the course attended. Since this is an online course, the attendance will be demonstrated through the completion of small-stakes exercises throughout the week. While all exercises are due on Sunday, please don't wait until the last minute to complete them.

Students are required to keep up with and submit work even when out of town and/or negotiating other time commitments. Work submitted before the due date will be accepted whether in class or not. Course content is available on Canvas, so students do not need to ask instructors what material was missed. Questions about missed activities should be asked to the instructor during office hours. Students can also contact peers to discuss missed class activities.

Other Expectations

I am a human. It's strange to really understand, perhaps, but I am. As John Dryden, a famous poet noted, "To err is human / to forgive divine." In other, non-fancy academic speak, respect me and my time and I promise to do the same for you! I consider myself a facilitator of learning and our classroom is our thinking space. Trust, I'm not here to flex about my knowledge etc., but I know a few things; y'all do too, so let's learn together.

Late/Make-up Work Policy

Late and missed work will not earn assignment credit. You'll receive credit for all the work you do for our class, inside or outside, if you follow proper protocol for submission and submit your work on time. You will submit most of your work to Canvas.

Course Schedule

This course utilizes a [Student Work Syllabus \(SWS\) via Google Docs](#) that lists exercise and assignment due dates as well respective point values. Students should regularly check the SWS as it is often the first document updated, followed by Canvas.



*Note: this course schedule is subject to change throughout the semester. There will be as much notice as possible given when items change.

Learning Management System Usage (Canvas)

Our class learning management system (LMS) is Canvas:

1. All materials for class will be housed there (except for the SWS).
2. All official communication for our class will take place through announcements in Canvas.
3. Your grades will be accessible via the Grades link in Canvas.

If you have any problems accessing Canvas, you will be directed to the Canvas help desk via Canvas. To access help, click on the Help link on the left-hand side of your screen and look for the link specifically for student-related questions. Should you need additional help, the Tech Spot in the library (directly behind Study Grounds Café) is there for assistance.

Important Dates

For more information, please see the [Tarleton Academic Calendar](#) -

- **Holidays and No-Class Days**
 - Martin Luther King Day – January 15, 2024
 - Spring Break – March 11-15, 2024
 - No Class - March 29 - April 1, 2024
 - Conference on College Composition and Communication – April 2-7, 2024
 - Rhetoric Society of America Conference – May 22-27, 2024
- **Grade-related Dates**
 - Midterm Grades Due – March 11, 2024
 - Withdrawal Deadline – April 5, 2024
- **Finals and Commencement**
 - Last Day of Class – April 30, 2024
 - Final Exam – May 2 and May 7, 2024 from 8am-10am
 - All grades due May 13, 2024 by 12pm

Learning Resources

Tarleton's Writing Center offers assistance to any student who wants to improve writing skills. Rather than offering editing assistance, during a session in the Writing Center, consultants and students work together to enhance the organization, development, grammar, and style of any type of writing across the disciplines. Students are encouraged to visit the Writing Center at any stage during the writing process, from brainstorming and pre-writing to final polishing. The Tarleton Writing Center is conveniently located on the second floor of the O.A Grant building. Students are



encouraged to make an appointment by visiting the Writing Center during office hours or calling 254-968-1814. Additional feedback is available via Zoom, an online application. Students may also email their work to writingcenter@tarleton.edu. For more information or to make an appointment, visit [Tarleton University Writing Center](#).

University Policies

The following are university policies and must be followed by all students, faculty, and staff.

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

Cheating, plagiarism, or doing work for another person who will receive academic credit is impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notebooks, or other sources in order to secure or give help during an examination, the unauthorized copying of examinations, assignments, reports, or term papers, or the presentation of unacknowledged material as if it were the own work. Disciplinary action may be taken beyond the academic discipline administered by the faculty member who teaches the course in which the cheating took place. Consult the following links for further information on academic conduct.

- Student Judicial Affairs: <https://www.tarleton.edu/judicial/academicconduct.html>
- Student Handbook: <https://www.tarleton.edu/studentrules/code-of-student-conduct.html>

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - Student Success

Tarleton State University is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (www.ada.gov) and other applicable laws. If you are a student with a disability seeking accommodation for this course, please contact the Office of Disability Resources at 254.968.9400, disability@tarleton.edu, or visit <https://www.tarleton.edu/drt/>.

Academic Affairs Core Values in the Classroom

The following sections will outline important policies per the university.

Academic Integrity

Tarleton State University's core values are integrity, leadership, tradition, civility, excellence, and service. Central to these values is integrity, which is maintaining a high standard of personal and scholarly conduct. Academic integrity represents the choice to uphold ethical responsibility for one's learning within the academic community, regardless of audience or situation.



Academic Civility

Students are expected to interact with professors and peers in a respectful manner that enhances the learning environment. Professors may require a student who deviates from this expectation to leave the face-to-face (or virtual) classroom learning environment for that particular class session (and potentially subsequent class sessions) for a specific amount of time. In addition, the professor might consider the university disciplinary process (for Academic Affairs/Student Life) for egregious or continued disruptive behavior.

Academic Excellence

Tarleton holds high expectations for students to assume responsibility for their own individual learning. Students are also expected to achieve academic excellence by:

- Honoring Tarleton's core values
- Upholding high standards of habit and behavior
- Maintaining excellence through class attendance and punctuality
- Preparing for active participation in all learning experiences
- Putting forth their best individual effort
- Continually improving as independent learners
- Engaging in extracurricular opportunities that encourage personal and academic growth
- Reflecting critically upon feedback and applying these lessons to meet future challenges

Academic Affairs - Service Learning Opportunity (For Spring Semesters)

In support of Tarleton's core value of service, each student is expected to participate in a service-learning experience as a part of the Spring term's week of service. This experience will challenge students to be engaged in the local community, address a community need, connect course objectives to the world around you, and involve structured student reflection. In this service-learning experience, you will not only enhance your knowledge and skills, but actively use those skills as you serve your community.

Student Rules

Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the policies and information contained in the [Tarleton Student Rules](#).

College and Department Policies

The following policies are specific to the department of English and Languages. If you



have any questions about them, please set up a time to discuss any confusion.

Athletic Department/Greek Life Grade Sheets

If you are on an athletic team, or if you're in a fraternity or a sorority and need to have me sign a "progress report" form, I will be glad to have you come to my office to discuss your progress in the course. I will send a personal memo to your coach detailing your work in class, and I will also provide a copy of the memo to you if you request it. Make sure that you schedule your visit in advance of your deadline.

Withdrawing from ENGL 3309

Hopefully, no one will need to drop this course. Sometimes, though, that may be necessary. Before you make this decision, you should schedule a time to talk with me as well as meet with your academic advisor to ensure this is the most successful move for you to make.

Check the university calendar or catalog (available online through the Tarleton home page) to see when the withdrawal period begins and ends.