

**Dakota College at Bottineau**



**Introduction to Professional Writing ENGL 125 (Online)**

**Course Syllabus**

**Spring 2016 (2<sup>nd</sup> 8 Weeks) – March 21<sup>st</sup> – May 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Instructor/Contact Information:**

Instructor: John Hansen  
Office: Virtual  
Office Phone: 319-572-6744  
E-mail: [john.p.hansen@dakotacollege.edu](mailto:john.p.hansen@dakotacollege.edu)

The best way to contact me is through e-mail at [john.p.hansen@dakotacollege.edu](mailto:john.p.hansen@dakotacollege.edu). I check my e-mail several times throughout the day. If you do not receive a response within 24-48 hours, please resend your e-mail. You may also call me at 319-572-6744 -- please feel free to leave a voicemail if I do not answer and I will promptly return your call.

**Course Prefix/Number/Title:**

Introduction to Professional Writing: English 125 (online 2<sup>nd</sup> 8-week course)

Three credit hours (3)

**Course Description:**

This course is designed for students in all areas of study. Students will utilize critical thinking skills to apply their knowledge of the technical writing style, format, and strategy to various professional writing tasks. These tasks include correspondences, memos, and job application materials (resume, cover letter, etc.), to name a few.

**Course Policies and Procedures:**

**This class is not a self-directed class or an independent study.**

It will follow a strict calendar. *You should access each week's information early in the week, beginning Sundays, in order for you to have enough time to do the required assignments for the week.*

## **General Instructional/Specific Learning Outcomes:**

After completion of the course, students will be able to do the following:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the writing purposes, audiences, ethical and legal challenges, and collaborative writing situations faced by workplace writers.
2. Demonstrate understanding of outlines, headings; primary and secondary sources; reader-oriented sentences, paragraphs, and language; principles of document design; effective visuals; and front and back matter.
3. Demonstrate understanding of reader-oriented proposals and informal and formal reports, user-oriented instructions, manuals, web sites, and oral presentations.
4. Demonstrate understanding of business letters, memos, e-mail, netiquette, and job correspondence(s).

## **Textbook:**

Markel, Mike. Technical Communication 10<sup>th</sup> edition (Bedford St. Martins, 2012).  
ISBN-10: 0-312-67948-3 ISBN-13: 978-0-312-67948-4 Paper Text, 832 pages.

**Additional Supplies:** Memory stick or flash drive (highly recommended) to save your documents.

**Student E-mail Policy:** Dakota College at Bottineau is increasingly dependent upon email as an official form of communication. A student's campus-assigned email address will be the only one recognized by the campus for official mailings. The liability for missing or not acting upon important information conveyed via campus email rests with the student.

**Participation:** Participation is a significant part of your grade, and if you are not "present," then you obviously cannot participate. To be a successful college student, consistent and constructive participation each week of class is essential and expected. Habitual negligence of your coursework can result in a significant negative impact on your overall grade and financial aid status, and **if there has been a significant lack of participation or submissions for two weeks or more, you should not expect to pass the course and may be asked to withdraw.**

**Late Work Policy:** All assignments are due as stated on the course calendar (schedule) or as announced via Moodle. **Late work is not accepted -- no exceptions.** *All unit assignments are due by 11:55 p.m. on Sunday.*

A few things on this topic: You should not wait until Sunday night to begin the week's work nor ask for extra time because your computer or internet connection went out. I will have no way to verify such occurrences. Lastly, students are responsible for meeting all specified deadlines -- no exceptions.

**Professionalism:** In this class, you are a professional-in-training and as such will act like one. Remember that professionals are people who earn and give respect based on their actions. I insist on a class that maintains respect regarding others' ideas, thoughts, and perspectives. At any time, if I

feel students are not respecting each other or me, I will deal with the situation accordingly. This may require removing the disrespectful student(s) from the class altogether, in which case those students will be required to receive administrative consent before returning.

**Threaded Discussions:** To receive full credit for a discussion post, a student will do the following: Respond and fully address the initial question; reply with a substantive post to two or more peers and follows up on questions asked of you while the discussion is current according to the weekly schedule. **Note:** A substantive reply is one that acknowledges what peers have said, expands on what was said, asks questions, or otherwise re-engages and expands the discussion.

**Formatting Assignments:** The body text of all assignments will be formatted in double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, on a page setup with one inch margins on every side. Always include your name, my name, assignment name, and due date in the upper left hand corner. If you make your fonts or your margins bigger, I can tell. Don't do it -- it makes you look lazy and silly.

**Netiquette:** Communication in an online environment can be tricky because physical cues and auditory cues like intonation and loudness to help us decipher the communicator's meaning and intent are absent. Violation(s) of the netiquette policy may result in being removed from the course. Given that we only have the written word to determine a communicator's intent, here are some guidelines to keep in mind when communicating with the instructor or other students (such as posts on the discussion board):

- When you are posting comments on the discussion board, remember that you are addressing the class as a whole, not just the instructor, so do not say anything that you would not say publicly.
- Read your messages before you send them.
- Avoid using ALL CAPITAL LETTERS BECAUSE MOST PEOPLE INTERPRET ALL CAPITAL LETTERS AS SHOUTING.
- Online discussions can be rather informal, but try to express yourself using proper spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation so that your message can be clearly understood.
- Do not use text and chat abbreviations (e.g., OMG, BTW) because not everyone will know these abbreviations.
- Always respond to other people respectfully; do not attack.
- Avoid offensive language because as a college student you should be learning to express yourself more eloquently than the average person.
- Do not make discriminatory or hurtful comments about anyone based upon race, sex, gender identity, disability, religion, and sexual orientation. Remember, we live in a world that has a lot of diversity of beliefs and customs.
- Be careful when using humor and sarcasm because humor is highly subjective. Consider using emoticons {e.g., :) ;-) :-0 } if you are not sure whether the reader will know you are making a joke. Humorous comments are a great way to help people get to know you, but again, carefully scrutinize the comments you make; many psychologists argue that most humor is a form of aggression because there is typically a victim in a joke. (If you doubt this viewpoint, watch a stand-up comedian on TV or the internet and you will notice that there is typically a victim, i.e. a blonde, redneck, etc., in the jokes; sometimes the victim is the comedian him-/herself.)
- When you send an e-mail message, make sure that the subject line accurately describes what the message is about.

**Academic Integrity and Conduct:** Academic dishonesty, including but not limited to the following below shall be subject to disciplinary procedures:

- cheating
- plagiarism
- knowingly furnishing false information to the college
- forgery
- alteration or misuse of college documents or records

The integrity of the academic program and degree rests on the principle that the grades awarded to students reflect only their own individual efforts and achievement(s). Students are required to perform the work specified by the instructor and are responsible for the content of work submitted, such as papers, reports, examinations, and other work. Violations of academic integrity include various types of plagiarism and cheating.

**Plagiarism (including self-plagiarism):** Plagiarism is presenting the written, published or creative work of another as the student's own work. Whenever the student uses wording, arguments, data, design, etc., belonging to someone else in a paper, report, oral presentation, or other assignment, the student must make this fact explicitly clear by correctly citing the appropriate references or sources. The student must fully indicate the extent to which any part or parts of the project are attributed to others. The student must also provide citations for paraphrased materials. Plagiarism can result in failure of the course or suspension from the college. See the college's policies for more information. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about these issues.

**ADA Statement:** In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with documented disabilities can pursue accommodations as needed. To assure that accommodations and or modifications will be available when classes start, students are encouraged to make request as soon as possible. Students who require some modifications of seating, testing, or other course requirements, should contact the Dean of Students or academic adviser.

### **Evaluation:**

- 1) Eight Threaded Discussions over assigned readings (*remember to respond to others -- it is part of your grade!*) – 25 points each (200 points)
- 2) Seven Reading Quizzes – 25 points each (175 points)
- 3) Seven Writing Assignments – 25 points each (175 points)
- 4) Four Projects – 100 points each (400 points)
- 5) Personal Reflection – 50 points

**Total possible points for the course: 1000**

**Grading Scale:** Grades are assigned based on the following percentages: 100%-93% = A; 92%-90% = A-; 89%-87% = B+; 86%-83% = B; 82%-80% = B-; 79%-77% = C+; 76%-73% = C; 72%-70% = C-; 69%-67% = D+; 66%-63% = D; 62%-60% = D-; 59%-0% = F.

**Disclaimer:** The instructor reserves the right to change these policies and the schedule of assignments as conditions and ongoing review of the course indicate would be appropriate.

## **Class Schedule:**

**Spring 2016 (2<sup>nd</sup> 8-weeks) – March 21<sup>st</sup> – May 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Class Schedule (Tentative):** Unit assignments will be due at 11:55 p.m. Sunday (no exceptions, unless otherwise noted.) You must double check that you have correctly submitted your assignment to the appropriate dropbox by the listed due date. This is not a valid excuse.

### **Understanding the Technical Communication Environment**

**Unit 1 assignments due at 11:55 p.m. Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup>:** Class Introductions (discussion board); Read Chapters 1-3; Discussion board questions (remember to respond to two classmates); Reading quiz; Writing Assignment.

### **Planning the Document**

**Unit 2 assignments due at 11:55 p.m. Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Read Chapters 5 and 7; Discussion board questions (remember to respond to two classmates); Reading quiz; Writing Assignment.

### **Developing and Testing the Verbal and Visual Information**

**Unit 3 assignments due at 11:55 p.m. Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>:** Read Chapters 8 and 10; Discussion board questions (remember to respond to two classmates); Reading quiz; Writing Assignment; Project.

**Unit 4 assignments due at 11:55 p.m. Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup>:** Read Chapters 11-13; Discussion board questions (remember to respond to two classmates); Reading quiz; Writing Assignment; Project.

### **Learning Important Applications in the Workplace**

**Unit 5 assignments due at 11:55 p.m. Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>:** Read Chapters 14 and 15; Discussion board questions (remember to respond to two classmates); Reading quiz; Writing Assignment; Project.

**Unit 6 assignments due at 11:55 p.m. Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>:** Read Chapters 16 and 17 (review Chapter 15); Discussion board questions (remember to respond to two classmates); Reading quiz; Writing Assignment; Project.

**Unit 7 assignments due at 11:55 p.m. Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup>:** Read Chapters 21 and 22; Discussion board questions (remember to respond to two classmates); Reading quiz; Writing Assignment; Personal Reflection.