**Technical Writing - Spring 2020**

**Textbook:**

As I mention on the "Start Here" page on the Week 1 module, I am no longer requiring you to purchase or rent *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*by Mike Markel, though if you have purchased it and want to use it, feel free to do so, though the quiz questions may not align perfectly.

Instead, I will be using two **open educational resource (OER)** **textbooks.**OER means that these textbooks are available online and completely free to use. The two textbooks are:

* [*Professional and Technical Writing (Links to an external site.)*](https://www.oercommons.org/authoring/54645-professional-and-technical-writing)written by Suzie Baker
* [*Technical Writing (Links to an external site.)*](https://www.oercommons.org/authoring/54645-professional-and-technical-writing)written by Dr. David McMurrey

 **Instructor:**Bjorn Smars

Call me Bjorn, please.

**E-Mail (preferred method of contact):**smarsb@linnbenton.edu

**Basic Information About the Class**

**Prerequisites:**

Students must have passed WR 121 with a C or higher.

**Welcome to Writing 227: Technical Writing**

WR227 introduces you to the types of writing you encounter in business, industry, the academic world, and government. It examines the rhetorical nature of writing and asks you to think critically about content, audience, argument and structure.

**Course objectives and outcomes in plain language:**

After taking Writing 227, successful students will have learned to:

* Create documents designed to help readers make decisions and solve practical, real-world problems.
* Evaluate and adapt to different technical and workplace writing situations by analyzing audience, context, stakes, and the writer’s role.
* Demonstrate mastery of technical and workplace writing conventions including clean and clear design, style, and layout of print and web communications.
* Find and integrate research in written documents clearly, concisely, and logically; credit the source as appropriate.

**Official course outcomes from catalog:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

* Analyze the rhetorical needs (the needs of their audience in relationship to the assignment) for college-level evidence-based technical writing assignments.
* Apply appropriate levels of critical thinking strategies (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) in their written assignments, with an emphasis on technical, evidence-based analysis, reporting, application, and evaluation.
* Implement appropriate rhetorical elements and organization (executive summary, introduction, thesis, development and research-based support, visual evidence, conclusion, etc.) in their written assignments, with an emphasis on technical evidence-based analysis, reporting, and evaluation assignments.
* Locate, evaluate, and integrate high-quality information and opinion appropriate for technical evidence-based assignments.
* Craft sentences and paragraphs that communicate their ideas clearly and effectively using words, sentence patterns, and writing conventions at a high college level to make their writing clear, credible, and precise.

**Course Work:**

* Quizzes (10%)
* Homework Assignments (85%)
* Weekly Discussion Boards (5%)

Assignment descriptions are listed at the end of the syllabus and on Canvas.

**Required texts and materials:**

Enrollment in this course requires successful (i.e. "C" level) completion of WR121.

* See the textbooks listed above
* Internet access
* Access to a word processing program such as MS Word or Google Docs
* Computer literacy

**Free Version of MS Word**

While Google docs is a very robust tool, it can be hard to format documents in Google docs. Word is easier and it is available free to students and teachers. [Click here for details. (Links to an external site.)](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/students/default.aspx)

**How the Course Works**

**Canvas:**

This course will be on Canvas. **Please register and log in to our Canvas class page by Thursday of Week 1.**

By the beginning of the term, you will have received an email explaining how to log into Canvas. Please note, enrolling in the Canvas shell does NOT register you for the class. To register, please go to Webrunner.

Because Canvas is not the school supported system, I am your technical support for Canvas. If you have any problems, email me at **smarsb@linnbenton.edu.**

**Late Policy:**

* Late**quizzes** will not receive credit
* Late **discussion boards** will not receive credit
* Late **homework assignments** will not receive written feedback and are not eligible for a revision.

**Revision Policy**

* On-time homework assignments may be revised for a higher grade. These revisions will be due in Week 10, and there are a few additional requirements for the revisions. To read these additional requirements, please click on the **Assignments** tab and click on **Revision 1 or 2** for complete instructions on revisions.

I prefer that you chat with me before turning in a revision, but that is not required.

**General Guidelines for Remote Class Participation:**

**Participate and Contribute:**

Students are expected to participate by sharing ideas and contributing to the collective learning environment. This entails preparing, following instructions, and engaging respectfully and thoughtfully with others. More specific participation guidelines and criteria for contributions will be provided for each specific activity.

**Use Proper Netiquette:**

Please use good “net etiquette”:

* Identify yourself with your real name
* Write or speak in the first person (using the "I" voice)
* Use a subject line that clearly relates to your contribution
* Use humor or sarcasm carefully, remembering that non-verbal cues (such as facial expressions) are not always possible or clear in a remote context.

Additionally, while I certainly do not mind if you use profanity, that may not be the case for everyone in our class. In order to maintain good netiquette, your language should be:

* Generally free of profanity and/or respectful to the other people in our class
* Appropriate for an academic context
* Exhibit interest in and courtesy for others’ contributions.

Certain breaches of netiquette can be considered disruptive behavior.

**Interact Professionally:**

Our learning environment provides an opportunity to practice being professional and rigorous in our contributions. As much as possible, use correct spelling, grammar, and style for academic and professional work. Use discussions and activities as opportunities to practice the kind and quality of work expected for assignments.

Moreover, seize the chance to learn from others and develop your interpersonal skills, such as mindful listening and awareness of one’s own tendencies (e.g. Do I contribute too much? Too little?).

**Expect and Respect Diversity:**

All classes at Linn-Benton Community College welcome and respect diverse experiences, perspectives, and approaches. What is not welcome are behaviors or contributions that undermine, demean, or marginalize others based on race, ethnicity, gender, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion, ability, or socioeconomic status.

We will value differences and communicate disagreements with respect. We may establish more specific guidelines and protocols to ensure inclusion and equity for all members of our learning community.

**Help Everyone Learn:**

Our goal is to learn together by learning from one another. As we move forward learning during this challenging time, it is important that we work together and build on our strengths. Not everyone is savvy in remote learning, including your instructor, and this means we need to be patient with each other, identify ways we can assist others, and be open-minded to receiving help and advice from others. No one should hesitate to contact me to ask for assistance or offer suggestions that might help us learn better.

**Specific guidelines for best practices using Canvas Discussion:**

1. Use subject lines that clearly communicate the content of your post.
2. Write clearly and concisely and be aware that humor or sarcasm often doesn’t always translate in an online environment.
3. Be supportive and considerate when replying to others’ posts. This means avoiding use of jargon or inappropriate language, and it means disagreeing with respect and providing clear rationale or evidence to support your different view.
4. Keep focused on the topic and reference readings and other class materials to support your points (as applicable).
5. Try to use correct spelling and grammar and proofread your submissions.  After submitting, use the edit feature to make corrections and resubmit (don’t create a new or duplicate post that corrects your error).
6. Contribute and interact often!

**Class Policies, Expectations, and Resources**

**My Expectations for You**

* Check Canvas *at least* three times a week.
* Read all Canvas announcements carefully.
* Complete all reading and assignments.
* Contact me if you are having difficulties in the class or if a personal crisis or emergency impacts your ability to succeed in the class and you would like extra help or accommodation.
* Be courteous when communicating online.
* **Don't cheat or plagiarize.** Violations of academic honesty will result in failure of an assignment or failure of the course.

**My Promise to You**

I’m here to help you in anyway I can. You didn't sign up to take an online class, but the current situation has made that necessary. I am an experienced online teacher, and I can help you navigate the online learning environment.

I also want to help you overcome any barriers that stand in the way of your success in this class. That includes writing stuff and life stuff. If I can’t help, I’ll find someone who can. I check email once a day, Monday through Friday and try to empty my inbox every time. I answer student emails first, so **put WR 227 in the subject line.**

**Grading Procedure**

I will comment on every major writing assignment. My comments will focus on one or two things you did particularly well and one or two areas where you could improve your writing. If you’d like more feedback, contact me. My goal is to return comments and grades on your assignments within a timely manner, preferably within a week or two, though I may fall behind occasionally.

**LBCC Writing Center**

 From initial ideas to final drafts, the LBCC Writing Center can help you take your writing to the next level. Please feel free to drop in during regular hours to work one-on-one with one of the supportive Writing Assistants. In addition to your draft, please bring your assignment and any questions you have. You may also submit your writing online at lbcc.writingcenteronline.net where you will receive a personalized response within 1-2 business days. For more information, visit us online at http://www.linbenton.edu/go/learning-center/writing-help.

**School Policies**

**Incompletes**

If you have completed 80 percent of the course work by the end of the term but are unable, for reasons that are generally not your fault, to complete the rest, I will grant you an incomplete. You and I will then work on a plan for completing the remaining 20 percent of the course work before the end of the next term.

**Center for Accessibility Accommodations**

LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR) and would like to use your accommodations in this class, please contact your instructor as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you think you may be eligible for accommodations but are not yet registered with CFAR, please visit the [**CFAR Website** (Links to an external site.)](https://www.linnbenton.edu/cfar) for steps on how to apply for services. Online course accommodations may be different than those for on-campus courses, so it is important that you make contact with CFAR as soon as possible.

**Accessible and Inclusive Learning Environments**

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or that form barriers to your inclusion, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies that can enable you to succeed in this course.

**Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism is a type of academic dishonesty that involves the theft of another person’s idea, words, images, music/sounds, or creative works and/or deceit in the representation of who created the work by not properly crediting sources. Plagiarism, one form of cheating or dishonesty, is not just the failure to give credit for an exact quotation. Plagiarism includes both intentional and unintentional acts, such as:

* Obtaining a paper on the Internet and turning it in as the student’s own work; this is obviously intentional;
* Copying sections of another’s original document, photographs, artwork, songs/sounds, film, video images, lab project, or electronic files and putting the source material or text into one’s own work without documentation, as if it were one’s own original work;
* Copying a sentence, or an important exact phrase of two words or more, or a coined word (which may or may not have copyright protection) without the use of quotation marks and credit;
* Copying the structure of another’s argument or premise, thesis, theory, design, or composition and merely translating key parts;
* Using another’s results in one’s own words without giving him or her credit, failing to document any borrowing when quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, or importing and placing a graphic, sound bite or other medium.

**LBCC Non-Discrimination Policy**

Everyone is welcome at LBCC, regardless of whether they are black, white, Latino, native, gay, straight, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Iranian, male, female, transgendered, married, disabled, a veteran, a non-English speaker, an immigrant, or any number of other categories not listed here.  [For the official nondiscrimination policy click here.  (Links to an external site.)](http://www.linnbenton.edu/go/about-lbcc/policies/equal-opportunity)What is more, LBCC sees our differences as a source of strength and an important part of education.