



Spring 2016

Section 407B-1004
Days/Time online
Place WebCampus site

Instructor
Office
E-mail
Phone
Office Hours available by appointment, Skype and email strongly preferred

Description

English 407B aims to help you develop the skills you will need to write successfully in the workplace. The course introduces you to the rhetorical principles and compositional practices necessary for writing effective technical documents, analyzing and designing technical research, and communicating about technical issues in policies, reports, and presentations.

Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Write to multiple audiences, for various purposes
- Plan and manage short- and long-term writing projects
- Draft, design, revise, and edit documents
- Design and implement appropriate research strategies
- Write collaboratively (e.g., co-authoring, peer revising)
- Follow and adjust to technical writing conventions, including style and tone
- Design documents for both content and visual appeal
- Use writing to help prepare and deliver oral presentations
- Write ethically and responsibly in technical contexts

Prerequisites

- Completion of first-year composition requirement.
- Junior or senior status strongly recommended, but not required.

Required Materials

- *Business and Technical Writing, 5th ed.* by Jeffrey Jablonski. Just the textbook itself – we won't be using any of the textbook's online content.
- Everything else you need will be provided via PDFs, Word Documents, PowerPoint presentations and other readings via WebCampus. You **MUST** check WebCampus regularly, and if you are noticed checking it fewer than three times a week, your class participation grade will be affected.

Calculating Grades

Grades will be determined on a percentage basis. Major assignments will be graded on the standard letter-grade scale with plusses and minuses. Your overall grade and project grades are based on the following percentages:

A = 100 – 92 %	A- = 91 – 90 %	B+ = 89 – 88 %	B = 87 – 82 %	B- = 81 – 80 %
C+ = 79 – 78 %	C = 77 – 72 %	C- = 71 – 70 %	D+ = 69 – 68 %	D = 67 – 62 %
D- = 61 – 60 %	F = 0 %			

Assignments

Assignments will be evaluated on the standard plus/minus letter-grade scale and total 100 points. Use the table above to track your performance in the class, if you wish.

Assignment	Components	Overall %	Points	Your Grade
Intro Memo	Memo	5%	5	
Technical Description Project	Technical Description	10%	10	
Job Project	Resume and Cover letter	15%	15	
Usability Project	Report Presentation	15% 5%	20	
Assessments	7 reading quizzes	20%	20	
Drafts & Planning	Timely submission of drafts in preparation for editing; completion of planning assignments	10%	10	
Editing	Quality of feedback on student drafts	10%	10	
Discussion	Quality of participation on message boards	10%	10	
TOTAL		100%	100	

Grading Criteria

The instructor will explain specific criteria for each major assignment. Generally, however, three overarching criteria of professional quality writing will be used to assess your written work:

- **Purpose: *How effectively does the document accomplish its intended task?*** The overarching aim of all technical writing is to articulate complex concepts in a way that they can be easily understood by your audience. Your documents will foremost be graded according to how well your documents: meet your goals and the demands of the writing situation; solve a problem or need; meet readers' needs; provide relevant, useful, and accurate information; and provide sound arguments in support of claims.
- **Product: *How well constructed is the document?*** Your documents will also be graded according to orderly and coherent presentation of material, professional tone, appropriate style, page formatting, visual design, and correctness (mechanical issues of grammar, spelling, and punctuation).
- **Production: *How effectively was the document produced?*** Careful planning is required to produce professional quality writing. Your documents will be graded according to evidence of effective planning, collaboration, research, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. Your instructor will also assess how well you apply course principles and terminology in your documents and project assessments.

NOTE: Special Grading Policies

- You must submit for evaluation all project components listed above to pass the course.
- Late major assignments will be downgraded one letter grade per day late
- Computer problems, related to either PC malfunction or network access, are not a valid excuse for late work or incomplete assignments
- In group projects, students receive *separate grades* (poor participation can hurt your grade!)
- An act of plagiarism (or other form of academic/ethical dishonesty) will result in an F for the project and, if deliberate, for the course

Webcampus Policies

Electronic file submission format: All writing assignments must be submitted **ONLINE** in an MS Word 2007-2011 compatible format. Files with *.docx file extension are preferred. If you are using MS Word 2003 or older, you will have to install Microsoft's "Word 2007Compatibility Pack" to be able to read newer Word 2007-2011 file format. MS Works file formats or formats by other word processing programs will not be accepted.

Begin all documents with your last name. All files submitted in this course must begin with your last name. For example, if your name is "Jane Doe," and you were turning in the Introductory Memo assignment, you should name your file: "**doe_introductory_memo.docx**." If your name is Doe and you are reviewing Smith's draft, you should name the file "Doe_review_of_Smith_memo_draft.docx"

Response time: If you have questions for me, expect about a 1 day response time. Also, I may only occasionally check my WebCampus mail during the weekends, so expect that I will answer late-Friday or weekend questions on Monday.

Contacting me: Webcampus mail is the best way to reach me. My phone is generally on only during office hours and is not regularly checked. If you need to schedule an office visit, contact me via Webcampus mail to arrange a meeting time. I am far more available to meet online via Skype than to meet in person.

Late work: I will deduct a letter grade for each day an assignment is late.

Attendance Policy

Just as with an in-person class, attendance (in the form of scheduled comments on the message boards) is mandatory. If you do not let me know in advance that you will be unable to comment on the message boards on a given day, then missing any comment by its due date will affect your class participation grade.

Plagiarism, Academic Dishonesty, & Ethics

You must do your own original work in English 407B, and appropriately identify that portion of your work which is collaborative with others, or borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts. Whenever you borrow graphics, quote passages, or use ideas from others, you are legally and ethically obliged to acknowledge that use, following appropriate conventions for documenting sources. For more information:

<http://www.unlv.edu/committees/copyright>.

If you have doubts about whether or not you are using your own or others' writing ethically and legally, ask your instructor. Follow this primary principle: *Be up front and honest* about what you are doing and about what you have contributed to a project.

Academic dishonesty: Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty, defined in the UNLV undergraduate catalog as "any act that violates the academic process of the university" (p. 58). This includes giving your work to another to be copied, copying graded homework, looking at another student's exam, giving or selling class work to another student, handing in another's work as your own, and informing someone of questions that appeared on an exam. Penalties for academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, include failing the immediate assignment or the entire course. The instructor can also initiate disciplinary procedures through Student Judicial Affairs that could result in a warning, probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Act Professionally: In addition to following the basic principles of honesty and forthrightness in crediting the contribution of others to your work, you are expected to adhere to another basic professional principle: *treat others with the respect that you would wish them to grant you*. "Others" includes the people you work for and with (classmates, instructors, corporation, clients); the people you write to (audiences); and the people you write about.

Use of Samples: Caution!

This English 407B course may include samples of the kinds of documents you will be writing in the course, including samples from previous English 407B students. It is important that you understand how to use these models in this class. Generally, your instructor will lead class discussions of samples, critiquing them to discern their strengths and weaknesses and generating from this discussion principles and tactics for business writing. You should then apply the principles and tactics you learn to your own projects.

Do not copy or apishly imitate the models! Why not? 1) Because direct copying from models could be plagiarism. 2) Because not all the models are samples of *good* writing; you could imitate a bad sample or an ineffective tactic. 3) Though most of the samples are generally good ones, they are not good in all respects: you need to develop the judgment necessary to discriminate between effective and ineffective tactics.

Religious Holidays Policy—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor **within** the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or **within** the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <http://studentconduct.unlv.edu/misconduct/policy.html>.

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of I – Incomplete – can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed all course work up to the withdrawal date of that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student's control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. A student who receives an I is responsible for making up whatever work was lacking at the end of the semester. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the

confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Rebelmail

By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Library

Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the subject librarian is https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject. UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students' access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>