Department of English  
University of Waterloo  
English 210B  
Technical Communication  
Winter 1997

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Course Description: This course aims to provide students with many of the strategies and skills that they will need as technical communicators. The course focuses on analyzing technical documents, technical writing, graphic design, and the processes that lead to technical documentation including project management, interviewing and document production techniques. Much of this course will be conducted via workshops both in-class and within computer labs.

Text: Killingsworth, M. J. Information in Action

Course Policies: Late assignments are seriously frowned upon in this course. The assignments, in fact, lead into each other, and students need feedback before proceeding to the next step. Accordingly, we will deduct 5% per day for any late assignments. Of course, illness and other life events often conspire to prevent even the best of us from fulfilling our obligations. Consequently, we have placed a coupon at the end of this outline that allows you to be three days late for ONE assignment (except the Eudora project).

Assessment:  
Document Analysis 15%  
Product Description 15%  
Audience Analysis 15%  
Eudora Project 25%  
Analysis of Eudora Project 20%  
Professional Participation in Eudora Project 10%

Due as per course schedule

1. Document Analysis 15%

Choose two of the three available brochures and evaluate them for their organization, style, production features and for specific
criteria related to brochures (see Society for Technical Communication assessment guide). Write up your findings into a comprehensive, readable report of about 1,000 words.

2. Product Description 15%

Before technical communicators can write any documentation that have to understand their product. Using interview data as well as your own findings as you explore Eudora, write a 3 page product description of Eudora.

3. Audience Analysis 15%

Before technical communicators can write any documentation they also have to understand their audience i.e., what the audience already knows, how they plan to use the product etc. Your audience for the Eudora project will be faculty and students in the English Department at the University of Waterloo. In groups interview members of your audience and write up individual 1000 word reports of your audience.

4. Eudora Project 25%

This is a group project in which you can choose to either write up documentation to support Eudora or develop public relations material to promote Eudora (brochures, pamphlets etc.) Your audience will be members of the English Department at the University of Waterloo. In preparation for this project groups will develop a short proposal as well as a document management plan.

5. Analysis of the Eudora Project 20%

Individual students will analyze and justify the decisions that their groups made as they developed their Eudora project. In particular, these 1500 word reports should focus on the strategies and techniques the groups used in order to convey information to their audience.

6. Professional Participation 10%

This mark will come from self-evaluation, peer evaluation and our observations about individual group member's participation in the Eudora project.
Course Schedule

Week of Jan 6. Introduction
Read: Killingsworth, Chapt 1 Rhetoric, Management and Ethics

Week of Jan 13. Technical Style
Read: Killingsworth, Chapt 5.

Week of Jan 20. Purposeful Graphics
Read: Killingsworth, Chapt 3.

Week of Jan 27. Analyzing and Designing An Effective Document
Read: Killingsworth, Chapt. 6
Workshop: STC

Week of Feb 3. Research and Genres of Technical Communication
Read: Killingsworth, Chapt 2
Workshop: Computer Lab--using Eudora
Due: Document Analysis 20%

Week of Feb 10. Technical genres (product descriptions and proposals) and the Document Production Process
Read: Killingsworth Chapt 7 and 11
Workshop: Eudora proposals and project management

Week of Feb 17. Reading Week

Week of Feb 24 Eudora project - Audience analysis
Due Monday: Product description 15%
Due Wednesday: Eudora proposals

Week of Mar 3. Eudora project - Tasks and Features
Due Wednesday: Eudora project management plans

Week of Mar 10. Eudora project - Review process
Due Wednesday: Audience analysis 15%

Week of Mar 17. Eudora project - TBA
Week of Mar 24. Eudora project - TBA

Week of Mar 31. Eudora project - TBA
Due: Eudora project 30%

Week of Apr 7. Eudora project - TBA
No classes
Due: Analysis of Eudora project 20%

This coupon entitles you
to hand in ONE assignment
up to three days late.

Name:
Date Due: