SYLLABUS (Sample)
ENGLISH 1050 – INTRODUCTION TO TECHNICAL & PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Professor:	Dr. Stephen E. Severn	Office Phone:	(615) 898-2648
Office:	PH 302A	Office Hours:	TTh 9:30AM – 10:30AM
Email:	Use D2L		

REQUIRED TEXTS
Markel, M. and Selber, S.A. (2021). *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*, 4th Edition.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
ENGL 1050 will introduce students to the basics of technical and professional writing – including both the principles that such writing rests on and the genres that define it – and it will develop their ability to write effectively in these contexts

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon successful completion of ENGL 1050 a student will be able to
- Conduct effective audience analysis
- Conduct effective primary and secondary research
- Produce effective technical and professional writing that demonstrates the following qualities:
  – Clear
  – Concise
  – Comprehensive
  – Ethical
  – Accurate
- Demonstrate an understanding of the essential concepts of *rhetoric* and argumentation
- Demonstrate an understanding of the stylistic and content differences between academic writing and technical writing
- Demonstrate an understanding of the production of and incorporation of visual elements such as charts, tables, and images
- Analyze the design effectiveness of technical documents
- Demonstrate familiarity with basic documentation systems such as MLA, APA, IEEE, CMS, etc.
- Demonstrate familiarity with the conventions associated with a range of professional and technical writing genres, including
  – Instructions
  – Standard operating procedures
  – Proposals
  – Lab reports
  – Other (non-Lab) reports
- Produce effective professional and technical writing documents across a range of genres, including
  – Instructions
  – Standard operating procedures
  – Proposals
  – Lab reports
  – Other (non-Lab) reports
- Demonstrate an understanding of essential ethical concepts associated with professional and technical writing

TRUE BLUE CORE

For all catalogs 2024-2025 and beyond, ENGL 1050 course satisfies the True Blue Core (TBC) curriculum requirement (3 hours) for Information Literacy (Info Lit). To learn more about TBC requirements: https://w1.mtsu.edu/truebluecore/core.php.

For all catalogs prior to 2024-2025, ENGL 1050 may NOT be used to satisfy general education requirements. Students wishing to switch to the 2024-2025 catalog should see their advisors to discuss the implications of changing catalogs. To learn more about general education requirements for catalogs prior to 2024-2025: https://w1.mtsu.edu/gen_ed/requirements.php..

The TBC outcome for Information Literacy: Students demonstrate competence in information literacy by determining what information they need, where to access it, how to evaluate information they encounter, and how to use information effectively and ethically.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

> **Note:** Unless otherwise specified, all assignments must be turned in by 5:00PM CST on the due dates given below. In keeping with general industry practice, 5:00PM is considered "close of business" (COB). Documents submitted after COB will be considered late.

READINGS

Students are required to do all readings assigned in the Markel text and any information contained in them is testable. Additional readings from other sources will be assigned at points during the course. These will either be posted on D2L or will be available on the World Wide Web. All material in the additional readings is also testable.

DAILY WORK

Quizzes

There will be unannounced, short quizzes throughout the course that cover the assigned readings and our class discussions. Missed quizzes may not be made up.

Classwork

Throughout the semester, you will undertake in-class writing assignments and group work that will further develop both your comprehension of the assigned texts and your writing abilities. Missed classwork cannot be made up.

LANGUAGE & FORMATTING HOMEWORK

Throughout the semester, you will be assigned two types of homework:

1. Language exercises posted on D2L
2. Formatting exercises for MS Word and MS Excel

By 5:00PM CST on the dates specified on the Assignment Schedule, you must upload to the drop boxes provided on D2L your responses to the homework assignment.

Naming conventions for each file will be provided on the drop boxes.

DRAFT CONFERENCES

Prior to submitting the final versions of your major assignments, you will participate in a brief draft conference with Dr. Severn to review your progress and offer you suggestions on improvements that can be made.

You will be required to sign up for a conference time, and you *must upload your draft prior to coming to your meeting*.

You are advised to complete your draft conference well before the deadline, as Dr. Severn will likely have limited availability for conference times once the cutoff date approaches. Remember that final versions of your major assignments will not be accepted for grading until you have completed a draft conference. If the final version of your paper is late because your draft conference was late, you will pay a late penalty.

Grades will be assigned for draft conferences based upon the following rubric

Level of Performance	Grade
Student has substantial draft to review	100%
Student has little or no draft to review. Session consists primarily of brainstorming / planning.	75%
Student misses conference without contacting Dr. Severn beforehand	– 20%

Note that a "substantial draft" does *not* mean that the document must be either complete and/or in a finished form. It only means that there is enough content to discuss during the conference. Depending on the situation, a detailed outline could serve as a substantial draft.

ETHICS CASE STUDY

Rough Draft: Sep 25th
Final Versions: Oct 2nd
Minimum Length: Approximately 650 words

The first major writing assignment is a two-part project that will develop your understanding of ethical concepts that are vital to your success in a professional environment.

Both parts will focus on a hypothetical workplace scenario that will be provided to you.

APPLICATION COVER LETTER AND RÉSUMÉ

Submission of Job Posting   October 2nd   (D2L)
Rough Draft: October 16th
Final Versions: October 21st

The second major writing assignment will help you to prepare effectively for the job-search process.

Part 1 – Internship Search

Using any resources you desire, such as MTSU's Career Counseling Services or online job boards, you will locate an internship in your field of study (or a related field that interests you) that you are qualified for. The internship must start no later than June 2025.

If you will be graduating during the 2024 – 2025 academic year, you may elect to focus instead upon an actual full-time position in your field of study that you are qualified for.

Using the Discussion Forum provided on D2L inform Dr. Severn of the details of the internship / job posting no later than October 2nd .

Part 2 – Application Letter & Résumé

Create an application letter for the internship found in Part 1. Your application letter must fit on a single page with 1" margins.

Create a traditional résumé that has been tailored to the internship posting of Part 1. Your résumé must fit on a single page with 1" margins.

You will submit both to the Drop Box provided on D2L.

REPORT EVALUATION AND REVISION

Rough Draft: November 9th
Final Version: November 16th
Expected Length: Approx 650 Words (Evaluation)

This is a two-part assignment that will prepare you for performing the editorial function that is a critical component of office place writing.

For the first part, you will evaluate the effectiveness of the visual design and content of an actual report. Your evaluation should:

- Make an overall judgment about the effectiveness of the original report's design and content
- Identify those elements in the original report that you feel <u>most</u> need improvement
- Argue convincingly for why those elements are ineffective
- Indicate the changes that you would make
- Argue convincingly that your proposed changes would constitute an improvement

For the second part, you will submit a revised and improved version of the report provided to you. In addition to addressing all of the shortcomings that you specifically identify in your evaluation, your version must enhance all aspects of the original that require improvement.

You will submit your project as a single file with page numbers in the bottom center. You must, however, restart the page numbers at 1 on your revised version of the report.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE RESEARCH REPORT

Rough Draft: November 30th
Final Version: December 2nd
Expected Length: Likely at least 1950 Words (Report body)

Your final and most extensive assignment will require you to take a detailed look at where you stand academically – both in terms of your performance this semester and your undergraduate career as a whole.

Following the guidance set forth in the Markel text on report writing, you will produce a formal report that analyzes the quality of your academic performance to this point in the semester and sets forth a detailed plan for accomplishing all of the tasks, projects, assignments, quizzes, exams and/or other work is left to do in your courses.

Your APRR will be based upon data collected from several sources.

For <u>every class</u> that you are currently enrolled in, you must personally conduct a detailed interview with a faculty member assigned to the course (teaching assistants meet this requirement) about your performance to date and those tasks that you have yet to complete.

Ensure that you make an appointment with your instructors *well in advance* of the assignment due date. Faculty members have busy schedules. If you are unable to complete your report on time because you have not met with your teachers, you will pay the full late penalty.

You will also be required to consult administrative documents such as
- Course syllabi
- Course policies
- Course schedules
- University *Undergraduate Catalog* (especially degree and other academic requirements)

FINAL EXAM

A final exam will be given on December 4th at 10:00AM in PH 326. Mark your calendars accordingly because except in the case of an extraordinary emergency, no make-ups will be given.

The exam will be delivered using the D2L system. You must be present in HELC 22 to take the exam. Any attempt to take the exam from a remote location will be considered a violation of academic integrity.

GRADING MATTERS

Grade Equivalents for English 1050

A = 90-100%   B = 80-89%   C = 70-79%   D = 60-69%   F = 59% or below

Brief Assignment Description	% of Final Grade
Ethics Case Study	10 %
Cover Letter and Resume	10 %
Report Design Eval and Revision	15%
Academic Performance Report	15%
Draft Conferences	10%
Classwork	10%
Language and Formatting Homework	15%
Final Exam	15%
Totals	**100%**

There is no curve in this class. You are not being graded against each other. Instead, all assignments will be judged on their own merit according to the grading criteria included in Appendix A.

Grades for the class will be calculated using the gradebook function in D2L. You are responsible for periodically checking your grades and verifying that you have received the appropriate credit for all assignments that you have submitted.

PAPER GRADES

The grade for each assignment will be calculated according to individualized rubrics that will be posted on D2L.

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS / FILE FORMATS

Except for classwork, all assignments will be submitted electronically using drop boxes provided on D2L.

Please use one of the following formats for your file:

- MSWord (.doc)
- MSWord 2010 (.docx)
- Rich Text File (.rtf)

In addition, please adhere to the file naming conventions posted on the drop boxes. Failure to do so may result in the lowering of your grade.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Except for the draft versions of your papers submitted for draft conferences (or otherwise specifically stated), papers and homework must be uploaded by 5PM CST on the day they are assigned to receive full credit.

All homework assignments and papers may be turned in late up until the final exam. A submissions' grade will drop by 10 % for every working day that it is late. After 5 working days, the grade that the assignment earns will be reduced by half. Thus, if you submit a paper 1 month late and it would have received a grade of 76% if it had been submitted on time, you will receive a grade of 38%.

Technical difficulties are no excuse for submitting work late. If you need tech support for D2L please contact the IT Help Desk.

OTHER MATTERS

ATTENDANCE

Although you are strongly encouraged to attend class, there is no formal attendance requirement. Any classwork or quizzes that you miss because of absence, however, cannot be made up.

BAD WEATHER

It is possible during the course of the semester that university classes may be canceled due to inclement weather. In the event that this happens, continue with your readings and assignments as stated on the syllabus until receiving further guidance. I will promulgate any changes to the syllabus via email as soon as possible after the weather event. As such, it is imperative that you check D2L regularly for news in the event of a cancellation.

OFFICE HOURS

My office hours are listed above. Please stop by whenever you have questions or need guidance with the course. Remember that the longer you wait to come to me with concerns, the less I am able to help you. So, stop by early when you see issues arising. If you have occasional conflicts with the times posted, I will strive to make others available to you by appointment. I have a strictly open door policy. You can speak with me about any aspect of the course without fear that doing so will lower your grade.

CHEATING & PLAGIARISM

Anyone caught cheating or committing a willful act of plagiarism may receive a zero for the assignment and any subsequent offenses may result in a final grade of F for the course.

TITLE IX

MTSU faculty are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are legally obligated to share reports of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking with the University's Title IX coordinator to help ensure student's safety and welfare. Please refer to MTSU's Title IX site for contact information and details. http://www.mtsu.edu/titleix/

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Middle Tennessee State University is committed to campus access in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any student I interested in reasonable accommodations can consult the Disability & Access Center (DAC) website www.mtsu.edu/dac and/or contact the DAC for assistance at 615-898-2783 or dacemail@mtsu.edu.

WRITING CENTER

The Margaret H. Ordoubadian University Writing Center is located in LIB 362 and online at www.mtsu.edu/writing-center. Here, students can receive valuable (and FREE!) one-to-one assistance on writing projects for any course. Conferences are available by appointment (904-8237). Visit early and often!

LOTTERY STATEMENT

Do you have a lottery scholarship? To retain the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship eligibility, you must earn a cumulative TELS GPA of 2.75 after 24 and 48 attempted hours and a cumulative TELS GPA of 3.0 thereafter. A grade of C, D, F, FA, or I in this class may negatively impact TELS eligibility. If you drop this class, withdraw, or if you stop attending this class you may lose eligibility for your lottery scholarship, and you will not be able to regain eligibility at a later time. For additional Lottery rules, please refer to your Lottery Statement of Understanding form (http://www.mtsu.edu/financial-aid/forms/LOTFEV.pdf) or contact your MT One Stop Enrollment Coordinator (http://www.mtsu.edu/one-stop/counselor.php).