



## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Introduction to Professional and Technical Writing

ENG 2700-D600 (#32360)

Dates: 1/30/2017 to 5/26/2017

## FACULTY INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Dr. Patrick Corbett, Assistant Professor of English

**Office:** Namm #520

**Telephone:** (718) 260-5429 (office phone)

**Email:** [plcorb@gmail.com](mailto:plcorb@gmail.com) (primary—use for quick questions)  
[pcorbett@citytech.cuny.edu](mailto:pcorbett@citytech.cuny.edu) (official—use for “business”)

You can also send me your questions (but not assignments) via email. If an email response is necessary, you can expect it within 24 hours.

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 11:40 p.m. to 12:40 p.m.  
Thursdays 11:40 p.m. to 12:040 p.m.

Other times on a case-by-case basis (email me first).

Please make an appointment. I welcome drop-ins, but students with appointments always receive priority.

## COURSE INFORMATION

**Credits:** 4

**Course Format:** Computer-aided classroom

**Course Meeting Times:** Tuesdays/Thursdays 10:00 to 11:40 a.m. (N601-B)

**Pre-requisites:** ENG 1121

**Catalog Description:** Academic as well as occupational writing such as lab reports and bids, emphasis on the documented report, summarizing material and writing letters. Written presentations frequently utilize visual aids such as graphics, maps and charts.

ENG 2700 will provide you with foundational concepts necessary to your work as a writer in professional and technical workplaces. This course adopts a technical communications perspective, which integrates ideas and techniques in writing with design and technology to develop effective texts under a variety of realistic conditions and across written and visual media.

As part of your work in ENG 2700, you will be responsible for the thorough study and review of course readings, and the development of a repertoire of writing and design techniques that you will integrate into your own writing process. **This will require extensive and dedicated practice on your part.** By the end of this course, you will confidently and skillfully create shorter, high-value documents within realistic workplace conditions and expectations.

**Competencies:** This course stresses competencies in the following areas:

Content creation • Design thinking • Audience analysis • Problem solving • Research skills • Global perspectives • Revision • Editing • Ethics • Usability • Genre awareness • Cultural dynamics • Project management

**Capabilities:** This course requires the skills and access to the technology listed below:

- Work independently and responsibly under continuous deadlines.
- Produce written Standard Business English with good design.
- Use MS Word, Adobe InDesign, or MadCap Flare with increasing confidence.
- Maintain cloud or USB flash storage for backing up your work.
- Access to stable high-speed Internet.
- Use a computer keyboard and mouse effectively.
- Conduct online research using search engines and the digital library.
- Learn basic WordPress to create content in OpenLab.
- Print course materials and assignment drafts.

**Textbooks:**

**Technical Communication**

Author(s): Lannon & Gurak, Publisher: Longman, Edition: 13th, Year Published: 2013, Price: 110.53 (retail) USD, Notes: 13th edition only. Major students should not rent. Digital okay. Used okay.

ISBN: 978-0-32-189997-2

**The Non-Designer's Design Book**

Author: Williams, Publisher: Peach Pit Press, Edition: 4th, Year Published: 2014, Price: 27.99 (retail) USD, Notes: 3rd or 4th edition okay. Do not rent. Digital okay. Used okay.

ISBN: 978-0-13-396615-2

## COURSE STRUCTURE

ENG 2700 is a four-credit course that meets twice per week for 100 minutes each meeting. The presentation of this course is a combination of short lectures and presentations, class discussions, small group work, workshops, and presentations.

This is a **hands-on** course, which means your active participation and preparation are **crucial** to your success as a student, your preparation as a professional, and the intellectual dynamic of this class. To get what you need out of this course and to earn an honor grade, you should expect to spend an average of 10 hours per week (150 hours for the semester) on class readings, assignments, and projects.

- Blackboard:** This course does not use the Blackboard OLS.
- Google Drive:** Course materials will be available to you on Drive. To access our materials on Drive, please provide me with your email address (gmail preferred).
- Course Competencies:** The following course competencies are determined by the College.
- Identify and understand the functions, conventions, and purposes of primary technical and professional writing genres including letters, memos, emails, reports, proposals, technical descriptions, technical definitions, and technical manuals.
  - Produce professional caliber technical documents.
  - Analyze rhetorical situations and develop writing strategies that adapt to their constraints, purposes, audiences, uses, and contexts.
  - Strategically orchestrate elements of document design and layout, including type, spacing, color, and medium.
  - Research effectively for the needs of profession situations.
  - Revise for content, organization, style, clarity, and emphasis.
  - Produce documents within independent and collaborative contexts for professional and technical writing.
  - Work with peers in order to provide written and oral feedback.
  - Understand ethical issues in professional and technical writing.

## CLASS POLICIES

**Student Responsibilities:** Students are expected to be familiar with CUNY and City Tech policies and procedures. Many of the important policies and procedures are in the Student Handbook on the City Tech website, located here:

<http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/files/students/handbook.pdf>

Additionally, you must accept full responsibility for the consequences of your words, your actions, as well as any classes and/or work that you miss. You must come physically, emotionally, and intellectually prepared to perform under the pressures associated with a structured learning environment.

**Instructor Duties:** As your professor, I commit to communicating openly and frequently with you about this course. I will maintain a professional and safe learning environment that adheres to the policies of the College. You can expect a reply to communication, be it via e-mail, through online discussions, voicemail, or in person, within 24 hours. If you have a problem with this class, my evaluation of your performance, or any other aspect of our professional relationship, please reach out to me to discuss your concerns.

**Class participation:** Obviously, you are expected to participate. Students who participate in the intellectual life of a course learn more, earn better grades, and are uniquely prepared to enter the professional workforce.

As the professor of this course, I am responsible for creating and maintaining the conditions that facilitate your learning, but you must actively engage the intellectual challenges presented to you.

If you are not actively participating in this class then you are wasting precious money and time, and you will not graduate with the range or depth of skills necessary to ensure your employment as a degreed professional.

**Attendance:**

Your attendance is recorded and reported to the college according to CUNY policy. Because this course is designed as a hands-on experience (meaning that you actually *work* in class to prepare for working outside of class) missing even one class will impair your ability to complete future assignments. Make no mistake, virtually all students who earn an F, do so because they fall behind and cannot catch back up no matter how much effort they expend. If you know that you will be missing classes, or are prone to illness, be sure to avoid unnecessary absences.

**Late arrival:**

Arrive for class and be prepared to begin on time. Late arrivals are disruptive and disrespectful to your peers. Likewise, do not prepare to leave until you are dismissed at 8:30. Plan in advance for adverse travel conditions like MTA delays and weather.

You are seeking employment as a degreed professional in a reputation-based world. People who have difficulty arriving on time are seen as irresponsible in the fields to which you aspire to work. If you cannot make it to class on time, I can't give you an effective recommendation for an internship, let alone a job.

**New York City College of Technology Policy on Academic Integrity:** Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.

**Submitting Work:**

All work must be uploaded to the specified location (usually Google Drive) by 11:59 p.m. on the day specified on the assignment sheet. Typically, you will submit assignments as a document file (.doc, .rtf, .docx, or .pdf---**not a google doc**).

Please name your file with the assignment name, and your last name. For example, *Research Paper 1\_Smith*. Be sure to exercise effective document control in your Drive folder, so that I can easily find and evaluate the correct draft of your work. It is sad when a student loses a letter grade because I can't find their assignment buried in a pile of messy files, but it happens.

For the sake of sanity (primarily mine), I do not accept or even acknowledge coursework that is submitted by email unless I directly solicit it. Seriously, you will be sad if you try to email me your work.

**City Tech Email:**

You can email me at my gmail address, however, official course communications from the College will be delivered to your student email. When you contact me by email about something important, please do so from your City Tech email account. Student e-mail can be accessed at: [http://cis.citytech.cuny.edu/Student/it\\_student\\_email.aspx](http://cis.citytech.cuny.edu/Student/it_student_email.aspx).

**Electronic Devices:**

College-wide policy prohibits you from using personal communications devices for non-instructional purposes in class, which is from 10:00 a.m. until 11:40 p.m. Your use of these devices disrupts class business. If you must use your phone, please excuse yourself from the classroom. Do not engage in texting conversations or video watching while in class. Please remove your listening accessories before you enter the classroom. Disable your blinking notifications. Do not interpret my occasional neglect towards enforcing this rule to be an invitation to break it. I will hold it against you.

**Recording:**

You will be asked to sign a media release form so that photos and videos may be taken and shared in class. You must get my permission each time if you wish to record in class.

**Use of Social Media:**

Please do not use class time to explore or update these sites.

**Class Cancellation:**

Official closures will be announced on local public radio stations and the City Tech website. If you are unable to safely come to campus, please stay home and notify your professors via your City Tech email. Coursework is due whether we have class or not.

## GRADING METHODS

As your professor, I will use a variety of methods to evaluate your work, including: holistic rubrics, analytical rubrics, non-rubric responses, credit for completion, oral feedback, and occasionally...a distant exasperated stare. Graded evaluations in this course are on a points system. You will receive points for each assignment that is graded based on how well it meets the criteria articulated on the assignment sheet. The value of the points you earn in this course will be divided by total number of points available to determine your final letter grade for the course.

Generally speaking, points equivalent to the grade of C will be awarded to work that is "average." You can earn a C by showing up to our class meetings, doing the course work, and fulfilling all of the course objectives. The grade of B is awarded for work demonstrating qualities that appreciably exceed what might be expected of "average." An A is an honor grade, signifying consistent quality and effort that is often "outstanding."

**Late Work:** This course is a PTW major course and moves very quickly through material. Late work dramatically disrupts your ability to learn. Consistently late assignments is the number one predictor of withdraw from or failure of the course. Significantly late assignments indicate your inability to meet the demands of the course. Further, they fall out of sequence for the class and receive less timely and less responsive feedback.

All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the date specified on the assignment sheet. Late assignments (except the final course deadline) are generally accepted for regular credit for up to two weeks past the deadline. Very late assignments (more than two weeks) are accepted at my discretion and with a credit reduction up to 50%. Assignments more than a month late will not be accepted except under extraordinary conditions and with a credit reduction of 50%.

### Grading Scale:

| Grade     | % Attained |
|-----------|------------|
| <b>A</b>  | 93-100     |
| <b>A-</b> | 90-92.9    |
| <b>B+</b> | 87-89.9    |
| <b>B</b>  | 83-86.9    |
| <b>B-</b> | 80-82.9    |
| <b>C+</b> | 77-79.9    |
| <b>C</b>  | 70-76.9    |
| <b>D</b>  | 60-69.9    |
| <b>F</b>  | 59.9-0     |

## ASSIGNMENTS

The workload of this course is appropriate for a 2000-level "gateway" course to a writing major. You can expect to devote way more time than you want or think you need to outside work for this class. While 10 hours a week is enough commitment to be successful in this course for most students, it is only the average amount of investment necessary to prepare you to communicate effectively in a professional environment. In other words, even if you spend 10 hours a week on this class alone, that is still not enough time for you to confidently earn a shot at gainful employment as a working writer.

This is what you will be doing for this course:

- Carefully reading materials from the textbook and other sources every week.
- Contributing daily and substantively to our class activities and discussions.
- Complete weekly assignments and projects related to course topics and projects.
- Write a researched and designed technical report.
- Write a researched group document.
- Contribute to a portfolio of documents hosted on OpenLab.
- Present your work, both formally and informally.

For each assignment, you will receive a detailed specification sheet, typically one or more weeks in advance. For projects, you will receive an overview and then a detailed specification sheets for each step in the project. The specifications will explain the parameters of each assignment and how it will be evaluated.

**Assignment Table:**

| <b>Course Work</b>         | <b>Approximate Percentage of Grade</b> |
|----------------------------|--|
| Assignments                | 25%                                    |
| Course study guide         | 20%                                    |
| Team documentation project | 20%                                    |
| Research project           | 25%                                    |
| Final Exam                 | 10%                                    |
| Total                      | 100%                                   |

**Extra Credit:** Opportunities for extra credit in this class occasionally appear. Unless you are active in the course, you won't be in a position to earn them.

## STUDENT ASSISTANCE

**Office Hours:** I am available to you in Namm #520. You can email me to make an appointment (first-come, first-served).

I cannot stress enough the importance of using my office hours as part of a successful learning strategy. They are the place where we can work one-on-one when you need it the most.

**Technical Assistance:** If your technology problem is not directly related to the content of the course, I will not be able to help you. Help is available at the Student Computer Help Desk on the first floor of the Namm Building. Consultants are available by phone at (718) 260-4900. You can receive help online (if you are connected) here:

[http://cis.citytech.cuny.edu/Student/it\\_student.aspx](http://cis.citytech.cuny.edu/Student/it_student.aspx).

These services are available during the following times:

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday, Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

If you encounter a problem, seek help immediately. Do not wait until the last minute.

**Learning Center:** Please consult with me when you have questions about how to do a particular assignment, or how to develop your ideas. Many students find the workshops and tutoring assistance of The College Learning Center to also be helpful. The College Learning Center can be found in the Atrium of the Namm Building at AG-18.

**Disability Statement:** City Tech complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Please contact Disability Resources Services at (718) 260-5143 for

more information. The resource office is located in the Artrium Building, Room A-237.

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me in private so that we can discuss the accommodations that you need in this class. ***It is best to do this at the beginning of the course.***

## COURSE CALENDAR

This course calendar will help you to create your schedule and budget your time. Prior to each class you will receive a more detailed synopsis of what you need to prepare for our next meeting. As the semester develops, this calendar may change to meet the objectives and needs of the class.



| Date       | Class Topic(s)   | Readings                           | To Do                          |
|------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1/31<br>W1 | <b>Course Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-evaluation</li> <li>Course overview</li> </ul>                    |                                    |                                |
| 2/2<br>W1  | <b>Technical Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>What's It?</u></li> <li>How do we understand it?</li> </ul>     | L&G, pp. 1-15                      | Study guide project assigned   |
| 2/7<br>W2  | <b>Concerning Audience</b>   | L&G, pp. 16-34                     |                                |
| 2/9<br>W2  | <b>The Elements of Persuasion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>   | L&G, pp. 35-60                     |                                |
| 2/14<br>W3 | <b>The Tech Writing Process</b>  | L&G, pp. 105-121                   |                                |
| 2/16<br>W3 | <b>Writing Proposals</b>   | L&G, pp. 554-588                   | Final project assigned         |
| 2/21<br>W4 | <b>Visual Structure of Documents</b>   | L&G, pp. 192-208                   |                                |
| 2/23<br>W4 | <b>Design Studio #1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to paper prototyping</li> <li>Proximity in design</li> </ul> | TBD (prototyping)<br>RW, pp. 10-32 | Final Project Proposal Due     |
| 2/28<br>W5 | <b>Design Studio #2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Adobe InDesign</li> <li>Alignment in design</li> </ul>    | TBD (InDesign)<br>RW, pp. 33-54    | Documentation project assigned |
| 3/2<br>W5  | <b>Design Studio #3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repetition in design</li> <li>Contrast in design</li> </ul>               | RW, pp. 55-68<br>RW, pp. 69-84     |                                |
| 3/7<br>W6  | <b>Design Studio #4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing pages and documents</li> </ul>                                  | L&G, pp. 292-316                   |                                |
| 3/9<br>W6  | <b>Design Studio #5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typography</li> </ul>   | RW, pp. 149-186                    |                                |
| 3/14<br>W7 | <b>Design Studio #6</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding and using color</li> </ul>                                  | RW, pp. 95-112                     |                                |
| 3/16<br>W7 | <b>Design Studio #7</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating visual information</li> </ul>                                    | L&G, pp. 245-291                   |                                |
| 3/21<br>W8 | <b>Design Charette</b>   |                                    |                                |
| 3/23<br>W8 | <b>Ethics in Tech Communication</b>  | L&G, pp. 61-81                     |                                |
| 3/28<br>W9 | <b>Working on Teams</b>  | L&G, pp. 82-104                    | Documentation project due      |
| 3/30<br>W9 | <b>Critical Thinking and Research</b>  | L&G, pp. 124-151                   |                                |
| 4/4<br>W10 | <b>Evaluating Information</b>  | L&G, pp. 152-172                   | Midterm Grade Discussion       |
| 4/6<br>W10 | <b>Research Process</b>  |                                    |                                |

|             |                                   |  |  |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| 4/11        |                                   |  |  |
| 4/13        | <b>Spring Break – No Class</b>    |  |  |
| 4/18        |                                   |  |  |
| 4/20        | <b>Monday Schedule – No Class</b> |  |  |
| 4/25<br>W11 | <b>Writing Studio #1</b>          |  |  |
| 4/27<br>W11 | <b>Writing Studio #2</b>          |  |  |
| 5/2<br>W12  | <b>Writing Studio #3</b>          |  |  |
| 5/4<br>W12  | <b>Writing Studio #4</b>          |  |  |
| 5/9<br>W13  | <b>Writing Studio #5</b>          |  | Study guide project due                  |
| 5/11<br>W13 | <b>Peer review</b>                |  |  |
| 5/16<br>W14 | <b>Peer review</b>                |  |  |
| 5/18<br>W14 |                                   |  |  |
| 5/23<br>W15 | <b>Final Presentations</b>        |  | Deck Presentations<br>Final Projects Due |
| 5/25<br>W15 | <b>Final Exam</b>                 |  | Final exam (in class)                    |
| 5/30        | <b>Grades Due</b>                 |  |  |