Syllabus

Course: CMST 3050—Technical and Professional Communication
Semester: Fall, 2021; Sect. 1
Course Times: Wed. 4:30-7:00 p.m.
Course Room: Main 119
Instructor: Preston Parker, Ph.D.
Email: preston.parker@usu.edu
Office Hours: by appointment
Google Voice (cell): 661-pparker (772-7537)

Prerequisites: 2.5 overall GPA and Permission of Instructor

Course Objectives: This course is designed to give students experience in learning and applying the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for effective technical and professional communication. This includes areas like business writing, interviews, social media, presentations, proposals, and personal portfolio items. We will combine in-class discussions with readings and assignments. This is meant to be a very hands-on experience, as one of the main objectives is to be able to communicate yourself and your reputation effectively to the world.

“I have a spelling checker;
It came with my PC.
It plainly marks four my revue
Miss steaks eye can not sea.
I’ve run this poem threw it.
I’m shore your pleased too no
Its letter perfect inn it’s weigh.
My checker tolled me sew.”

Reading Materials:
Handouts: Selected readings handed out in class by the instructor.
Online: Selected readings chosen by the students.

Some suggested places to start are:

http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Professional_and_Technical_Writing/Table_of_Contents
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_communication

Expectations:
Readings: It is expected that students will come to class prepared by having completed assigned readings. The fact that a student is or is not completing the readings will be evident in classroom participation and in the quality of assigned work.
Blogs: Each student will establish a professional Blog. Students should post their Blog address in the Blog List location in the Facebook Group (see below) before the second day of class. If a new professional Blog needs to be established, it is recommended to use www.blogger.com or www.wordpress.com or www.tumblr.com (though you can use another format if you desire). If you have a blog already, you can use it, even if you are using it for other purposes (like for another class). It is preferable to use a name for a blog which is some amalgam or diminutive of your real name, first and last, (so something like: janedoe) not some code name (so, not something like: princessboy).

Nowadays, every professional needs a web presence and a Blog is a great place to start. Some students may even be “discovered” because of what is posted on their professional Blogs. Students should not mention they are making a post for a class. Instead they should simply post assignments as if they are any other professional post. In fact, students are welcome to make professional posts to their professional Blog, other than CMST 3050 assignments. And you might link from your online portfolio to your professional blog; or, perhaps, your professional Blog becomes your online portfolio.

It is recommended to type an assignment in a word processing program (saving regularly and often) and to copy and paste it into the Blog. A time and date stamp will then be automatically applied which will establish when it was posted. The subject/title/slug of this Blog entry should be the assignment name (in bold on the calendar) to make it easier to find (ex: “Letter to Cousin”).

Blog Comments:
Each student is expected to read at least two of their classmates’ assignments and post one comment to each Blog entry that was read. These comments are to be posted outside of class time. They are also required to be posted by 11:59 p.m. the day after the submission of the respective assignment. When posting a Blog comment, students should use their real names when possible, not a username or code name. The assignments which are to be posted to the Blogs and for which the Blog Comments are to be done are identified in the “Grading” section below with “[BC]”.

These comments can be about anything really, i.e. the quality of writing, a critique, corrections, additional ideas, comment on an earlier comment, links to other online articles, etc. Not only are these comments graded according to style and content (at least 2-3 sentences), but experience has shown that the more thoughtful comments made are, the more likely a student will learn and understand the course material (and, hence, earn a better grade in the course).

The idea in making Blog comments is to enable students to take advantage of Social Learning. Each student can learn from one another. This course encourages students to help each other learn. The instructor would be ecstatic if everyone were to individually earn high marks, especially if from learning together.
Facebook Group:
Class organization, including communication, assignments, and syllabus, will be handled in a Facebook Group (www.facebook.com/groups/cmst3050fall2021/). All students should request to join this Group, then add their blog info to the Blog List file. Remember, this Group is public, so anyone can review anything.

Cheating:
Simply put, do not do it. You know what it is. The benefits do not outweigh the costs.

Disabilities:
If you have a disability of any kind, please have it documented at the Disability Resource Center and the instructor will accommodate you as best possible.

Grading Expectations:
Each assignment will be graded on Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation (mechanics of communicating); Presentation (quality of communicating); and Reporting (how well course content is understood, how well information is gathered and relayed, proper length, and assignment requirements met). Each of these categories will be worth approximately 1/3 of the assignment grade.

Grade Records:
All grades will be posted under Grades in Canvas: https://canvas.usu.edu

Grading:
Blog Comments (BC) 70 points (14x5 points)
Letter to Cousin Assignment [BC] 30 points
Personal Stakeholder Analysis 40 points
Initial Business Letter Assignment 25 points
Response Business Letter Assignment 25 points
Resume Draft Assignment 35 points
Cover Letter Draft Assignment 35 points
Vanity Search Assignment 30 points
Online Reputation Assignment [BC] 50 points
Social Media Case [BC] 40 points
Infographic Assignment (Team) [BC] 60 points
LinkedIn Profile Assignment 60 points
Proposal Letter Assignment (Team) [BC] 50 points
Press Release Assignment (Team) 30 points
Interview Assignment 60 points
Technology Assignment [BC] 40 points
Team Member Evaluations 100 points
Presentation Assignment (Team) [BC] 120 points
Portfolio 100 points
Total: 1000 points
Extra Credit:
Complete a second social media case study assignment 25 points possible
Other accepted assignments ? points possible

Grade Breakdown:
A 925-1000 points  C 735-764 points
A- 895-924 points  C- 695-734 points
B+ 865-894 points  D+ 665-694 points
B 835-864 points  D 635-664 points
B- 795-834 points  D- 595-634 points
C+ 765-794 points  F Below 595 points

Semester Calendar (Subject to Change):

Day, Date:
Class Discussions
Assignment Descriptions
Assignments Due

Wed., Sept. 1:

Class Discussions
Intros, Syllabus, Blog List, Facebook Group, Writing Style, Business Letters

Assignment Descriptions
Letter to Cousin
Business Letter (Initial and Response)

Wed., Sept. 8:

Class Discussions
Personal Stakeholder Analysis

Assignment Descriptions
Personal Stakeholder Analysis

Assignment Due
Blog Address Posted
Letter to Cousin
Initial Business Letter
Wed., Sept. 15:

Class Discussions
Writing Style
Business Letters

Assignment Due
Personal Stakeholder Analysis

Wed., Sept. 22:

Class Discussions
Legal: Discrimination, Privacy
Invited Guests: USU Career Services

Assignment Descriptions
LinkedIn Profile
Resume
Cover Letter
Vanity Search

Assignments Due
Response Business Letter

Wed., Sept. 29:

Class Discussions
Legal: First Amendment and limitations
Reputation Management (Including Online)
Cover Letters
Resumes
Memos

Assignment Descriptions
Online Reputation
Social Media Case

Assignments Due
Resume Draft Version (for in-class review)
Cover Letter Draft Version (for in-class review)
Vanity Search

Wed., Oct. 6:

Class Discussions
Electronic Media
Social Media
Infographics
Legal: Intellectual Property
Set up teams, exchange contact info and schedules, discuss clients

Assignment Descriptions
Infographic

Assignments Due
Online Reputation
Resume Draft Version (for turning in)
Cover Letter Draft Version (for turning in)

Wed., Oct. 13:

Class Discussions
Social Media Case
Proposals
Law of Exchange
Divide into teams to work on assignments

Assignment Descriptions
Proposal Letter

Assignments Due
Social Media Case

Wed., Oct. 20:

Class Discussions
Press Releases

Assignment Descriptions
Press Releases

Assignments Due
LinkedIn Profile
Infographic

Wed., Oct. 27:

Class Discussions
Presentations (course content, i.e. not doing presentations)
Assignment Descriptions
Team Presentations

Wed., Nov. 3:

Class Discussions
Paper-based Portfolios
Organizational and Individual Brands
Set-up Presentation Schedule
Set up Interview Schedule

Assignment Descriptions
Portfolio

Assignments Due
Proposal Letter

Wed., Nov. 10:

Class Discussions
Electronic Portfolios
Building Individual brand Across Multiple Social Media Platforms

Wed., Nov. 17:

Class Discussions
Interviews and Surveys

Assignment Descriptions
Interview and Survey

Assignments Due
Press Release

Wed., Dec. 1:

In-Class Team Work Day

Assignments Due
Interviews with Instructor (in class)

Assignment Descriptions
Technology
**Wed., Dec. 8:**

**Class Discussions**
Technology

**Assignments Due**
Team Presentations (in class)
Technology
Team Member Evaluations Due (in class)

**Mon., Dec. 13:**

**Assignments Due**
Final: by 5 p.m. delivered to instructor
Portfolio
All Extra Credit