Syllabus

PRESTON PARKER · WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2018

Course: CMST 3050—Technical and Professional Communication
Semester: Fall, 2018; 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)
Teaching Assistant:

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://writingcommons.org/open-text
http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Professional_and_Technical_Writing/Table_ofContents
http://libraryasp.tamu.edu/tds/int/Newsletters/Online_Newsletters/v18n2/Communications.htm
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.

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 (https://www.facebook.com/groups/CMST3050Fall2018/). All students should request to join this group, then add their blog info to the Blog List doc. 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 out-weigh 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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blog Comments (BC)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter to Cousin Assignment [BC]</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Business Letter Assignment</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 (Team) Assignment [BC]**  60 points  
LinkedIn Profile Assignment  60 points  
**Proposal (Team) [BC]**  50 points  
Press Release (Team) Assignment  30 points  
Interview  60 points  
**Technology Assignment [BC]**  40 points  
Team Member Evaluations  100 points  
**Presentation (Team) [BC]**  160 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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>925-1000 points</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>735-764 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>895-924 points</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>695-734 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>865-894 points</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>665-694 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>835-864 points</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>635-664 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>795-834 points</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>595-634 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>765-794 points</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 595 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Semester Calendar (Subject to Change):**

**Day, Date:**

- Class Discussions
- Assignment Descriptions
- Assignments Due

**Wed., Aug. 29:**

- **Class Discussions**
  - Intros, Syllabus, Blog List, Facebook Group, Writing Style, Business Letters
Assignment Descriptions
Letter to Cousin
Business Letter (Initial and Response)

Wed., Sept. 5:

Class Discussions
Writing Style
Business Letters

Assignment Due
Blog Address Posted
Letter to Cousin
Initial Business Letter

Wed., Sept. 12:

Class Discussions
Legal: Discrimination, Privacy
Invited Guests: USU Career Services (Krystn Clark)

Assignment Descriptions
LinkedIn Assignment Description
Resume Draft Version
Cover Letter Draft Version
Vanity Search

Assignments Due
Response Business Letter

Wed., Sept. 19:

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
Cover Letter Draft Version
Vanity Search

Wed., Sept. 26:

Class Discussions
Electronic Media
Social Media
Infographics
Legal: Intellectual Property

Assignment Descriptions
Infographic

Assignments Due
Online Reputation Assignment Due

Wed., Oct. 3:

Class Discussions
Proposals
Law of Exchange
Divide into teams to discuss clients

Assignment Descriptions
Proposal Letter

Assignments Due
Social Media Case

Wed., Oct. 10:
Class Discussions
Press Releases

Assignment Descriptions
Press Releases

Assignments Due
LinkedIn
Infographic

Wed., Oct. 17:
Class Discussions
Presentations (course content, i.e. not doing presentations)

Assignment Descriptions
Presentations

Wed., Oct. 24:
No Class (Instructor Attending Conference)
Team Work Day

Wed., Oct. 31:

Class Discussions
Paper-based Portfolios

Assignment Descriptions
Portfolio

Assignments Due
Proposal Letter

Wed., Nov. 7:

Class Discussions
Electronic Portfolios
Building Individual brand Across Multiple Platforms
Wed., Nov. 14:

Class Discussions
Interviews and Surveys
Set up Interview Schedule

Assignment Descriptions
Interview and Survey

Assignments Due
Press Release

Wed., Nov. 21:
No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Wed., Nov. 28:
Team Work Day

Assignments Due
Interviews with Instructor (in class)

Wed., Dec. 5:

Class Discussions
Technology

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

Mon., Dec. 10:

Assignments Due
Final: by 5 p.m. handed into instructor or delivered to CMST Department
Portfolio
All Extra Credit