Technical Approach to Writing
WRIT 222

SYLLABUS: SPRING SEMESTER 2013

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Office hours: 10-11 a.m. and noon-1 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and by appointment

1) Required materials
   The Elements of Technical Writing, by Gary Blake and Robert W. Bly
   The Write Stuff: spring 2013 fac pac for WRIT 222, available at UC Bookstore
   Three-ring notebook for papers and exercises
   Stapler

2) Course description
   You'll focus on writing simply, clearly, correctly, precisely, and concisely. After honing those skills through in-class and five homework exercises, you'll put them to use writing and revising short papers.

   Assignments will include a persuasive essay, a how-to paper, and an application letter. Two hourly exams will not only measure your progress but also help you learn.

3) Course outcomes
   By the end of the semester, successful students will know how to
   ✓ use an appropriate tone
   ✓ convey a message simply, clearly, and concisely
   ✓ use good grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and diction
   ✓ employ tricks of the trade many professional writers and editors don't know
✓ demonstrate critical thinking and sound logic
✓ organize writing and ensure that it flows well
✓ write persuasively
✓ use accurate information and support points with solid evidence
✓ attribute information correctly and ethically
✓ write an essay appropriate for the Writing Proficiency Assessment
✓ write an effective letter for applying for jobs and other openings

4) Requirements
a) Readings: You must read materials before the class for which they’re assigned and be ready to discuss them. I’ll call on you regularly. Class participation, including familiarity with readings, will affect your grade.

b) Bring the fac pac and syllabus to every class. You will need the fac pac for many in-class exercises and may need to update the syllabus.

c) Strict deadlines for writing assignments: You must finish writing assignments by the beginning of class on the due date. I won’t accept papers afterward unless you had a legitimate emergency and told me about it before the start of class on the due date.

d) Document preparation
   • Type all papers, carefully following content and length requirements. (You may neatly write by hand answers to the punctuation, grammar, and clear-writing exercises.)
   • For every paper except application letter, follow manuscript format on fac pac, p. 222. As it shows:
      ▪ Double-space.
      ▪ Indent each paragraph.
      ▪ Use one-inch margins.
      ▪ Use an easy-to-read roman, not italic, 12-point type.
      ▪ On the first page, type your name in the upper right-hand corner.
      ▪ One line down from your name, type your section number.
      ▪ Beneath your section number, triple-space down to your title.
      ▪ Center a suitable, maybe even creative title covering your whole paper, not just the part of it you’re submitting, such as the thesis.
      ▪ Double-space down to your first paragraph.
      ▪ Number all pages; bottom center looks good.
Always save your papers on computer.

Spell-check and proofread your papers.

Staple pages – no corner folds.

Turn in two copies of every draft of a paper. My having a set of your papers provides a back-up in case you lose your copies and helps me track your progress.

e) Drafts

You must revise critiqued drafts, incorporating corrections and suggestions, before turning in a new draft. Each time you fail to do so will cost you one grade on your paper. For example, your paper would drop from an A to a B.

You also must staple all critiqued drafts to one copy of your newest version. For example, when you turn in two copies of your final draft of the persuasive essay, staple to one of those copies your two critiqued earlier drafts. Failing to submit all critiqued versions will cost you points.

Certain errors will cost you points even on drafts. Such errors include plagiarism, a sentence fragment or run-on, no title, the wrong viewpoint, a paper too long or short, no bibliography, the wrong bibliography style, no attributed quotes and paraphrases in the persuasive essay, attributed quotes or paraphrases in the how-to paper, not turning in two copies, or not turning in the critiqued drafts with the latest version. The reason is simple: You must follow instructions and give each draft your best shot, not save your best effort for your final draft.

f) Automatic deductions applied to assignments

See the three bulleted items above, in the “Drafts” section.

One letter grade deducted from the final draft of a paper for not doing by the start of class on the due date all parts of an assignment. Examples are turning in only the first draft of the how-to paper or only the second draft of the application letter. For example, your final grade for a paper would automatically drop from an A to a B.

Any final draft of a paper including a sentence fragment or run-on will receive a score no higher than 85 percent.

Any form of cheating, such as collaborating on an exercise or a paper or turning in someone else’s work as your own, will cost you, at a minimum, a zero on the
assignment. If you commit one more breach of ethics, you'll at a minimum receive an F for the semester. See items b and c below.

5) Conduct

a) Please don't disrupt class with private conversations or other distracting behavior. Be sure to turn off your cell phone before class.

b) From the vice president for student affairs: “All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm?page=1321.”

c) All work you turn in must be your own. UM’s Student Conduct Code forbids

- “representing someone else’s words, ideas, data, or materials as your own (plagiarism)”;
- **NOTE:** “copying from another student’s paper or, without authorization, giving information to another student or collaborating with one or more students on assignments” (★ I’ll be happy to help you. Be sure to work only with me or a Writing Center tutor.)
- “knowingly submitting false, altered, or invented information, data, quotations, citations, or documentation”;
- “knowingly helping or trying to help another student commit academic dishonesty”; and
- **NOTE:** submitting work you or another student turned in for another class, including an earlier section of WRIT 222.

d) **NOTE:** If you’ve taken all or part of WRIT 222,

- see me after the first class, and

- turn in all new work, including using different reasons in your persuasive essay if you’ve written about the topic before; writing about a different topic in your how-to paper; and, in your application letter, applying for a different kind of position at a different organization.
6) For information on the Writing Proficiency Assessment: www.umt.edu/udwpa

7) For tutoring: www.umt.edu/writingcenter

8) Grading: I'll base your semester grade largely on this point system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation*</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly exam I</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive essay</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How-to paper</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly exam II</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application letter</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,000 points</strong></td>
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*Participation* includes attendance, engagement in class discussion, completion of exercises and other homework, and demonstration of familiarity with assigned readings.

9) **Bonus points:** You'll have a chance to raise your semester total by 30 points on Bonus Bonanza, a written, in-class exercise based on lectures, readings, and exercises.
Preliminary Class Schedule*

1) **Tuesday, Jan. 29**
   Exhibit A: Technical writing that packs a punch
   Overview of course
   **Assignments for next class:**
   a) Read *The Elements of Technical Writing* (Elements), Chapter 1.
   b) Read fac pac, pp. 107-115. **NOTE:** Be ready to discuss these articles.

2) **Thursday, Jan. 31**
   Technical writing: importance and characteristics
   Assessing technical writing: fac pac, pp. 105-115
   **Assignments for next class:**
   a) Read Elements, Chapter 3.
   b) Read fac pac, pp. 73-74 ("Fix Fragments"). Also become familiar with
      proofreaders' marks on pp. 218-219, and use them in exercises, exams,
      and peer-editing.

3) **Tuesday, Feb. 5**
   Punctuation and grammar boot camp I
   Sentence fragments and run-ons (fac pac, p. 116); comma uses and abuses (fac pac,
   p. 119); and capitalization (fac pac, p. 123)
   In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 117-118, 120-122, and 124
   **Assignments for next class:**
   a) Read fac pac, pp. 2 ("agreement of subject and verb: some tricky
      cases"); 74-76 ("Pay Attention to Word Order"); 104 (**NOTE:**
      Become familiar with these symbols and abbreviations, which I’ll use
      to critique your papers); 137 ("The Truth About ‘Lie’ vs. ‘Lay’"); and
      125-126 (parallel structure).
   b) **Punctuation exercise** (fac pac, pp. 200-201)

4) **Thursday, Feb. 7 (continued on next page)**
   Turn in punctuation exercise.
   Punctuation and grammar boot camp II
   Parallel structure (fac pac, pp. 127-128); agreement (fac pac, p. 130); and dangling
   and misplaced modifiers (fac pac, p. 130). Briefly review "lie" vs. "lay" (fac pac, p.
   137).
   In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 129, 131-133, and 137
Assignment for next class:

a) Read fac pac, pp. 38-40 (“Simplicity”); 69-73 (“Effective Sentences” through “Avoid Overpacking Your Sentences”); 80 (“Avoid Pretentiousness”); 85-91 (“Selecting the Best Words” through “Do call things by their proper names”); and 321-326 (“Living Precariously With Wolves and Cattle” and “With Lasers and Daring, Doctors Race to Save a Young Man’s Brain”). **NOTE:** Be ready to discuss these articles.

5) Tuesday, Feb. 12
Writing simply and clearly I
In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 321-326
Assignments for next class:

a) Read Elements, Chapter 5, and review pp. 53-56 (Rules 32-34).

b) Read fac pac, pp. 31-37 (“Business Writing”) and 174-181 (“Write to reach your readers”).

c) Grammar exercises:
   ✓ Fac pac, pp. 202-203. (★For significant help, refer to fac pac, p. 2: “agreement of subject and verb: some tricky cases.”)
   ✓ Fac pac, p. 204: “Correct or Incorrect?” Retype each sentence, using the correct form of “lie” or “lay.” ★NOTE: Even if a sentence is already correct, retype it as is. Be sure to keep original tense and meaning. [ALSO] Be sure to review fac pac, p. 137: “The Truth About ‘Lie’ vs. ‘Lay.’”

6) Thursday, Feb. 14
Turn in grammar exercises.
Writing simply and clearly II
In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 134-136
Assignments for next class:

a) Read “The New Meaning of Mobility” (fac pac, pp. 327-330), the basis of a persuasive essay worth 225 points total. ★NOTE: Be ready to discuss this article. ★ALSO: Unlike what instructions say on pp. 240-245, you’ll write essay in THREE, not four, parts. Your second draft will combine your body paragraphs and conclusion.

b) In preparation for writing thesis for “The New Meaning of Mobility” essay, type at least three reasons author Christine Rosen is or isn’t justified in her concern over Americans’ use of what she calls “technologies of mobility,” such as cell phones, computers, and televisions. Write only one sentence for each reason, put only one reason in a sentence, and stick to one side of the argument. Print three copies.

c) Clear-writing exercise (fac pac, pp. 205-206)
7) Tuesday, Feb. 19

Turn in clear-writing exercise.
Turn in two copies of reasons Christine Rosen is or isn’t justified in her concern over Americans’ use of what she calls “technologies of mobility,” such as cell phones, computers, and televisions. Keep other copy for reference.

Assignment for next class:

a) Read fac pac, pp. 44-50 (“How to Write a Good Title” through “Avoiding Common Errors in Thesis Statements”) and 240-260 (persuasive-essay instructions, outline, and good student examples).

★REMINDER: Unlike what instructions say on pp. 240-245, you’ll write essay in THREE, not four, parts. Your second draft will combine your body paragraphs and conclusion.

8) Thursday, Feb. 21

Thesis statements

Discuss thesis statement for persuasive essay [instructions for whole paper plus outline: fac pac, pp. 240-246 (see item a above about number of drafts); for thesis only: fac pac, pp. 243-244].

In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 138-141 and 207

Assignments for next class:

a) Read fac pac, pp. 51-61 (“The Topic Sentence” through “Inductive Order”); 81-84 (“Developing a Lively Style” through “Avoid overuse of any one kind of construction in the same sentence”); 94-99 (“Strategy One: Development by Example” through “Describe clearly, using specific details”); and 146-153 (student examples of telling and showing).


9) Tuesday, Feb. 26

Turn in two copies of “The New Meaning of Mobility” thesis and “Words to the Wise.”

Topic sentences, sentence variety, paragraphs, evidence

In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 142-143

Assignment for next class:

a) Read fac pac, pp. 4 (“attribution dos and don’ts”) and 100-102 (“Incorporating Your Source Material” through “Don’t let reference material dominate your essay”); reread 241-243 (“Citing Sources” and “Revisions”).

10) Thursday, Feb. 28 (continued on next page)

Quoting and paraphrasing
In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 154-158

Assignment for next class:
  a) Read fac pac, pp. 102-103 ("Avoiding Plagiarism").

11) Tuesday, March 5

Discuss "The New Meaning of Mobility" thesis statements.
Documenting and plagiarism
In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 159-164

Assignment for next class:
  a) Read fac pac, pp. 61-68 ("Transitional Words and Phrases" through "Avoiding Errors in Conclusions") and 167-169 ("Strategies for Writing a Conclusion"). **NOTE:** Be sure to read student essay with great conclusion: fac pac, pp. 170-171.

12) Thursday, March 7

Transitions and conclusions
In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 165-166 (Boone and Crockett Club); 167-168 ("Echoing the introduction"); and 208-209 ("Building Bridges: Transitions")

Assignments for next class:
  a) Read fac pac, p. 84 (Don’t change your point of view between or within sentences”).
  c) “The New Meaning of Mobility” body paragraphs AND conclusion (fac pac, pp. 244-245), added to revised thesis. **NOTE:** This draft, like final one, must be 2½-3 pages. Turn in two copies, and staple to one your critiqued thesis plus fac pac, pp. 228-229 ("Words to the Wise"). **ALSO NOTE:** Be sure to follow outline on fac pac, p. 246.

13) Tuesday, March 12

Turn in two copies of “The New Meaning of Mobility” body paragraphs AND conclusion, added to revised thesis statement; critiqued thesis statement; and "Words to the Wise."

What to study for first hourly exam
Audience, tone, point of view
In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 182-186

Assignment for next class:
  a) Review for first hourly exam.

14) Thursday, March 14

Hourly exam I
15) **Tuesday, March 19**
Discuss “The New Meaning of Mobility” body paragraphs and conclusion.
Attribution workshop

**Assignment for next class:**
- Read fac pac, pp. 41-43 (“Clutter”); 77-79 (“Developing a Concise Style” through “Avoid Redundancy”); and 172-173 (“Wordy Phrases” and “Redundancy”).

16) **Thursday, March 21**
Cutting deadwood
In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 210-211

**Assignments for next class:**
- Read *Elements*, Chapter 9.
- Read fac pac, pp. 261-282 (instructions and student examples). Jot down notes about every student example (fac pac, pp. 263-282).
  
  **★ NOTE:** Be ready to discuss these examples.
- **Final draft of “The New Meaning of Mobility” essay (fac pac, p. 245).** Turn in two copies, and staple to one your critiqued thesis and body and conclusion drafts plus fac pac, pp. 230-231 (“Words to the Wise”).

17) **Tuesday, March 26**
Turn in two copies of final “New Meaning of Mobility” essay, added to revised thesis and body and conclusion drafts; critiqued thesis and body and conclusion drafts; and “Words to the Wise.”
How to write instructions
Discuss how-to paper (fac pac, pp. 261-262) and bibliography. First draft, due Thursday, April 11, must include Chicago-style bibliography (see fac pac, pp. 223-225). At bottom of bibliography, type which kinds of Chicago-style examples you followed on which pages of fac pac (e.g., First source: Books: Single Author, fac pac, p. 223).  

**★ NOTE:** First draft, like final one, must be three pages, not counting bibliography.
In-class practice: Discuss fac pac, pp. 263-282.

**Assignments for next class:**
- Read fac pac, p. 80 (“Carefully Consider Your Passive Verbs”).
- Read *Elements*, Chapter 4.
- **Deadwood exercise** (fac pac, pp. 212-213)

18) **Thursday, March 28 (continued on next page)**
Turn in deadwood exercise.

Active vs. passive voice
In-class practice: fac pac, pp. 187-190
Assignments for next class:

a) Read *Elements*, Chapter 8.
b) Read fac pac, pp. 283-296 (instructions, student examples, and design suggestions).
c) **Deadline for application-letter idea** (instructions for writing whole paper: fac pac, pp. 283-284). **Type ONLY the kind of position you'd apply for and the name, professional title, and street address or P.O. box of the person to whom you'd write. This information must be fact, not fiction.**
d) Passive-voice exercise (fac pac, pp. 214-215). **Follow instructions carefully.**

**Tuesday, April 2, and Thursday, April 4**

_No class: Spring break_

19) **Tuesday, April 9**

Turn in all required application-letter information (see assignment c above).
Turn in _both_ parts of passive-voice exercise.
Application letters I

Assignment for next class:

a) **First draft of how-to paper, with Chicago-style bibliography. This draft, like final one, must be three pages, not counting bibliography.**
Turn in two copies, and staple to one fac pac, pp. 232-233 ("Words to the Wise").

20) **Thursday, April 11**

Turn in two copies of first draft of how-to paper, both with Chicago-style bibliography, and "Words to the Wise."
What to study for second hourly exam
Application letters II
Discuss application-letter assignment (fac pac, pp. 283-284 and 295-296); first draft due Tuesday, April 30.
In-class practice: Discuss fac pac, pp. 290-294.

Assignment for next class:

a) **Review for second hourly exam.**

21) **Tuesday, April 16**

_Hourly Exam II_
22) **Thursday, April 18**

Discuss first draft of how-to papers: what went right, what went wrong. **Be sure to get copy of “How to Check Your How-to Paper.” You’ll use this checklist to help you revise your first draft, then staple it, filled out, to final draft.**

**Assignment for next class:**
- a) **Final draft of how-to paper.** Turn in two copies, both with Chicago-style bibliography, and staple to one your critiqued first draft; your completed “How to Check Your How-to Paper” checklist; and **fac pac, pp. 234-235 (“Words to the Wise”).**

23) **Tuesday, April 23**

Turn in two copies of final draft of how-to paper, both with Chicago-style bibliography; critiqued first draft; completed “How to Check Your How-to Paper” checklist; and “Words to the Wise.”

**Proofreading**
- In-class practice: **fac pac, pp. 216-217; use symbols on pp. 218-219.**

**Assignment for next class:**
- a) If you still need to pass the Writing Proficiency Assessment, read **fac pac, pp. 299-320.**

24) **Thursday, April 25**

Preparing for the Writing Proficiency Assessment

**Assignment for next class:**
- a) **First draft of application letter.** ★ **NOTE:** Bring at least two copies to class; three or four would be better, making it easier to read each peer-edited copy.

25) **Tuesday, April 30**

Peer editing of application letter

Bring at least two copies of first draft of application letter. Give me one copy, and have as many peer editors as possible – ideally, three or four but at least two – review the other copy or copies. Peer editors should refer to **fac pac, pp. 297-298, when making suggestions.**

**Assignment for next class:**
- a) **Final draft of application letter.** Turn in two copies. Staple to one your peer-edited drafts plus **fac pac, pp. 236-237 (“Words to the Wise”).**

26) **Thursday, May 2 (continued on next page)**

Turn in two copies of final draft of application letter, all peer-edited drafts, and “Words to the Wise.”

**Using style guides**
- In-class practice: **fac pac, pp. 220-221**
Assignment for next class:
a) Review notes, readings, and exercises to prepare for Bonus Bonanza, a written, in-class exercise worth 30 bonus points.

27) *Tuesday, May 7*

**Bonus Bonanza: Your chance to make up some of those lost points!**

28) *Thursday, May 9*
Discuss final draft of application letter, and be sure to pick up yours.
Review Bonus Bonanza.
Wrap-up
Fill out course evaluations.

* Class schedule is subject to change.

* **NOTE:** This class is offered for a traditional letter grade only. It is not offered under the credit/no-credit option.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR CHANGING COURSE OPTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 16-April 8 (45th instructional day)</td>
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<td>April 9-May 10</td>
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