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**Course Title:** STS 300 RESEARCH AND WRITING: THE TECHNOLOGY CAREER PERSPECTIVE

**Course Description:** Focuses on research and writing in technology career fields. Students analyze documents, writing standards, and audiences. They integrate research findings to construct effective arguments. Genres include policies, procedures, reports, and presentations for the workplace and for community, professional, and governmental bodies. Assignments are customized to technology majors.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 121 Composition II: Research and Writing: The Public Experience

**Co-requisites:** Some programs may specify STS 300 as a co-requisite to a designated course in the student's major; other programs may specify STS 300 as a pre-requisite to a designated course in the major.

### **Requirements and Assessment**

STS 300 is a competency based course. Students must demonstrate satisfactory performance, or a grade of C, in the course to meet the WI requirement. Each document listed below will be assessed by rubrics consistent with the course outcomes. Points will be totaled and weighted for the final grade.

### **Grading:**

All assignments are weighted. The weights are as follows. There will be 500 total points possible for this class.

- 1) Each of the following assignments will be worth either 15 or 20 points.
  - Audience analysis exercise
  - Specificity exercise
  - Editing exercise
  - Fallacy exercise
  - Professional memo
  - Professional email
  - Business letter
  - Policy paper
  - Position paper
  - Executive summary
  - Procedure paper

- 2) The following assignments will be worth 100 points.
  - White paper
  - Position Paper
  
- 3) The following assignment will be worth 125 points.
  - Written Proposal

### **Grading Rubric**

Your final grades for the course will be determined by the following grading rubric. Please understand that this rubric is set in stone—only in the most extreme case will I consider ‘fudging’ a student’s grade from one level to the next. Thus, if your final point tally is 464 you can expect to receive an ‘A-’, and not an ‘A’, for the class, despite the fact that you only missed the cut-off by one point.

<i>Points</i>	<i>Grade</i>
500-465	A
464-450	A-
449-435	B+
434-415	B
414-400	B-
399-385	C+
384-365	C
364-350	C-
349-335	D+
334-315	D
314-300	D-
299-0	E

### **Text and Related References**

Since this is an applied writing course, and not a theory-based writing course, we will not have an assigned textbook. Instead, there will be lectures in the beginning of each course session which will provide the student with the information needed to complete the corresponding assignment.

### **Course Topics and Tentative Schedule:**

Session	Title	Topics
<b>Foundations for Writing in Technology Careers and Professions</b>		

1	Course Introduction	A review of course expectations and policies
2	Expectations for Writers	Discussion of writing expectations Assignment: Editing Exercise
3	Audience Analysis	Desired outcomes and actual responses Reader analysis and orientation Assignment: Audience analysis exercise
4	The Policy Paper	Understanding the purpose and scope of policy papers Introduction to policy paper structures Assignment: Policy Paper
5	The Procedure Paper	Understanding the purpose and scope of procedure papers Assignment: Procedure Paper
<b>Writing the Proposal</b>		
6	Professional Email	Exploration of professional email etiquette Overview of the structure of professional email Review of desired email outcomes Introduction to logical fallacies Assignment: Email exercise
7	Professional Memo	Introduction to the structure and purpose of professional memos Assignment: Professional memo exercise
8	White Paper	Lecture on the origins and purpose of white papers Overview of the preferred structure and subject of white papers Appropriate content and tone of white papers Assignment: Writing a white paper
9	Business Letters	Introduction to the scope and subject of business letters Assignment: Writing a business letter
10	Position Paper	Review of the elements of style that inform position paper composition Overview of the position paper: Content, tone, structure, purpose. Assignment: Writing a position paper
11	Written Proposal: Introduction	What is a proposal paper? Lecture on the purpose and content of written proposals Review examples of proposals relevant to the

		technology disciplines Assignment: Choose a topic for a written proposal. Instructor approval required
12	Executive Summary	Learning the basics of the executive summary Desired outcomes of the executive summary Lecture on the content, form, and limitations of the executive summary. Assignment: Writing an executive summary
13	Written Proposal: Advanced concepts	Designing and drafting the proposal Understanding the intended outcome of the proposal

**Writing Intensive Rationale for the Course:** STS 300 Research and Writing: The Technology Career Perspective is a writing intensive course designed to help students to write and present effectively. Working in technology career fields requires more writing and presentations than most students expect. In the workplace, graduates will engage in research, question assumptions as part of research tasks, and build effective arguments using the findings of research. They will write or revise a variety of internal documents, such as procedures, policies, manuals, proposals, and reports to carry out their work responsibilities. Graduates will also address concerns and challenges from communities and special interest groups, compliance requirements for governmental bodies, and proposals for change within their professional and certification bodies. Students must have the flexibility to write in response to these conditions. STS 300 will expand the student's ability to research, build effective arguments, write a variety of documents, address diverse internal and external audiences, and demonstrate the mechanics and application of writing standards in their career fields.

#### **Course Outcomes:**

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to write well-researched and reasoned documents that solve problems in their career field and conform to the writing standards generally expected of in the technology career field. Specifically students will:

- 1. Develop and employ successful, flexible writing and reading strategies that support sustained inquiry in their technology career field.**
- 2. Use writing strategies that achieve the purpose(s) for writing and address the expectations of audience(s) within a disciplinary context.**
- 3. Formulate research questions and employ strategies for researching and responding to those questions.**
- 4. Use discipline-specific genres to communicate information.**  
**Understand conventions for communicating, disseminating, and interpreting information within a discipline**

#### **Course Policies:**

**Research and Reference:** Be ready to read, write, use your reference manuals, and research topics during every class session.. In any activity, if a term or concept is not clear, students are expected to research the term as well as its usage in the technology field of study.

**Retain All Work for Entire Semester:** Retain all drafts, final papers, exercises, peer and adult reviews, and assessments. If there is a question during the class or after a grade has been awarded, these records serve as the basis for further discussion.

**Assignment Due Dates:** Keep to the assigned schedule. If an assignment is due on a particular day, it is due at the beginning of class. There are no tests in STS 300, but there will be frequent exercises that students must complete. There is no make-up opportunity for these activities except for verified emergencies (injury or health-related crisis to the student or to an individual under the student's direct care). See or communicate with the instructor immediately if you have an emergency that prevents you from completing work.

**Participation:** University Policy states: “. . . regular class attendance and active participation in classes are important elements in the learning process. Students are at the University primarily for the sake of their intellectual growth and development. Attendance and participation provide appropriate opportunities for the evaluation of the student's progress. . . .

“Each student is personally responsible for the satisfactory completion of the course work prescribed by her/his instructors even though much of the work in this class is to be accomplished by a team. This means specifically that she/he is expected to attend class regularly, and that she/he is responsible for the work assigned in class, the material covered in class and for participation in class activities (including discussion and listening) designed by the instructor as part of the learning experience.”

**Academic Honesty:** See University policy. A main outcome of the STS 300 course is the student's ability to incorporate the expertise of others into written documents and briefings. The course assesses the appropriate documentation of expert sources of ideas and words. Any concept that is not in the public domain or not the student's own creation must be documented for its source, whether in the form of a direct quote, a paraphrase, or part of a summary. Another main outcome of STS 300 is to integrate the writing styles of members of a team. Therefore, one member of a team presenting the wording of another team member as his/her own is not appropriate just as submitting the work of another student as his/her own constitutes academic dishonesty.

Other references for the course include:

Alley, M. (2000). *The craft of editing: A guide for managers, scientists, and engineers*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

American Library Association (ALA)/Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)/STS Task force on Information Literacy of Science and Technology. (current). *Information literacy standards for science and engineering/technology (DRAFT)*. Retrieved 3/4/2006 from the world Wide Web: <http://www.ala.org/ACRL> . (

Chambers, H. E. (2001). *Effective communication skills for scientific and technical professionals*. New York: Basic Books.

Friedland, A.J. & Folt, C. L. (2000). *Writing successful science proposals*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Hancock, E. (2003). *Ideas into words: Mastering the craft of science writing*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology. (current). *MIT open courseware: Writing and humanistic Studies*. <http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/Writing-and-Humanistic-Studies/>

Montgomery, S. L. (2003). *The Chicago guide to communicating science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Paradis, J. G. & Zimmerman, M. L. (2002). *The MIT guide to science and engineering communication (2d ed.)*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Purdue University. *Online writing laboratory: Writing and technology*. Retrieved 3-5-2006 from the World Wide Web: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/internet/resources/writetech.html>

University of Chicago Writing Program. (Current). *Writing science and technology*. Retrieved 3-5-2006 from the World Wide Web: <http://writing-program.uchicago.edu/courses/science.htm>

*Writing guidelines for engineering and science students*. (current). Alley, M., Crowley, L., Donnell, J. & Moore, C. (eds.) Retrieved 3-5-2006 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.writing.eng.vt.edu/> (Developed for use by programs at Virginia Technical Institute and State University, University of Illinois at Urbana, Georgia Tech and University of Texas at Austin.)