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# Technical and Business Writing

Alaya Swann Dr.  
*Collin College*

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**COLLIN COLLEGE**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Course Information**

**Course Number:** ENGL 2311

**Course Title:** Technical and Business Writing

**Course Description:** Intensive study of and practice in professional settings. Focus on the types of documents necessary to make decisions and take action on the job, such as proposals, reports, instructions, policies and procedures, e-mail messages, letters, and descriptions of products and services. Practice individual and collaborative processes involved in the creation of ethical and efficient documents.

**Course Credit Hours:** 3

Lecture Hours: 3

**Prerequisite:** ENGL 1301

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

**State Mandated Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Recognize, analyze, and accommodate diverse audiences.
2. Produce documents appropriate to audience, purpose, and genre.
3. Analyze the ethical responsibilities involved in technical communication.
4. Locate, evaluate, and incorporate pertinent information.
5. Develop verbal, visual, and multimedia materials as necessary, in individual and/or collaborative projects, as appropriate.
6. Edit for appropriate style, including attention to word choice, sentence structure, punctuation, and spelling.
7. Design and test documents for easy reading and navigation.

**Withdrawal Policy:** The last day to withdraw from courses is October 19.

**Collin College Academic Policies:** See the current *Collin Student Handbook*

**Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:** In compliance with applicable law, Collin College provides equal access to education and safeguards against discrimination by offering specialized services and reasonable accommodations to qualified students with a disability.

If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning based on disability, please contact the ACCESS Office (<https://rainier.accessiblelearning.com/Collin/ApplicationStudent.aspx>)

**Note:** Instructors will provide reasonable accommodations only to students who present a Course Accessibility Letter issued by the ACCESS Office.

## **PROFESSOR INFORMATION**

**Professor's Name:** Dr. Alaya Swann

**Office Number:** U-153, in the University Building on Preston Ridge Campus

### **Office Hours:**

- Monday, 12:15-2:15pm
- Tuesday, 1:15-2:15pm
- Wednesday, 12:15-2:15pm
- Thursday, 1:15-2:15pm
- and by appointment

**Phone Number:** (469) 365-1840

**Email:** aswann@collin.edu

Email is my preferred method of contact. I will generally respond to emails within 24 hours, though it may take a little longer on weekends. I will only respond to emails sent from CougarMail or within Canvas, not from outside email addresses.

Please remember to use full email etiquette in all emails to me, including replies and emails containing attachments. That includes a clear subject line, an appropriate greeting, a clear and detailed description of your question, request, or message, and a clear signature including your full name and class section. I will not open attachments without a full, clear explanation in the body of the email of what the attachment is and why you are sending it to me. Additionally, please be aware that I will only discuss grades in person, not via email.

### **Class Information:**

**Section Number:** ENGL 2311 P70, CRN 22726

**Meeting Times:** M 7-9:45pm

**Meeting Location:** L212

### **Course Resources:**

- Markel, Mike. *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*, 2nd edition, with the 2016 MLA update. Macmillan Learning, 2017, ISBN 9781319143138.

### **Minimum Technological Requirements:**

- Students need to have access to, and be able to use, Cougarmail and Canvas
- Students need to know how to use Google docs to store and transfer work
- Students need to have access to, and be able to use, a word processor that can save documents as .doc or .docx files (such as Word). If you use another word processor such as Pages, Google Docs, or Open Office, you must download/save your files as .doc or .docx files before you submit them
- Students need to know how to upload and download files and attachments

## **GRADING METHOD**

The class is graded on a point scale, with a total of 1000 points for the semester. The breakdown of individual point values is as follows:

- Unit 1 correspondence project: 50 points
- Unit 2 job application project: 50 points
- Unit 3 progress report project: 100 points
- Unit 4 proposal: 100 points
- Unit 5: oral presentation project: 50 points
- Unit 6: poster project: 100 points
- Unit 7: instruction manual project: 100 points
- Weekly collaborative projects: 140 points (10 points each)
- Quizzes: 100 points total (25 points each for 4 quizzes)
- Portfolio: 50 points
- Final Reflection: 50 points
- Participation: 110 points\*

TOTAL: 1000 points

\*The participation grade includes regular and active participation in class activities and quizzes, process work (rough drafts, peer review, outlines, etc), and other homework and class assignments.

**Course Grading Scale** (out of 1000 points total)

A	900-1000+ points
B	800-899 points
C	700-799 points
D	600-699 points
F	0-599 points

**EXPLANATION OF GRADING**

**Unit projects:** The major projects will be graded according to the grading rubrics available on Canvas for each assignment. They must be submitted through the appropriate submission link in Canvas on time and in the correct file format (.doc or .docx). Work that is not submitted in the correct file format or in the correct location will not count as submitted on time. All paper drafts must be typed in 2016 MLA formatting, unless otherwise noted and must use 2016 MLA citation rules. All projects must be completed independently, unless otherwise noted. All work must be written *for this class*; do not submit recycled papers written for another class. You may use an existing resume or cover letter for your Unit 2 projects, but only if you modify it according to the assignment guidelines.

If a final draft of a project is submitted after the deadline, it will be considered late. The late penalty is 10% per 24 hours (5% for the first 12 hours after the due date). In some cases, I may be willing to extend deadlines for major projects. This is done on a case-by-case basis; please communicate with me as early and as completely as possible if you feel you have unusually difficult circumstances so that we

can discuss a potential extension. No late project submissions will be accepted after the start of the final exam period for this course.

**Weekly collaborative projects:** Each week in class, I will ask you to work together in groups on small projects that can be completed during class time. If you are not present for class, you cannot get credit for these activities. You will be graded according to completeness and thoroughness, demonstration of knowledge of course concepts and texts, organization, thoughtfulness, attention to detail and instructions, clarity of writing, and effective collaboration.

**Quizzes:** You will take four quizzes throughout the semester on the material covered in your textbook and in the class. The quizzes will not be cumulative. You must be present in class to take the quiz; in cases of documented emergency, you need to contact me immediately to discuss your situation. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis; if you do receive an extension, you will need to take the quiz the day you return to campus in the Testing Center.

**Final Reflection and Portfolio:** The final reflection and portfolio will be comprised of worksheets, assignments, and activities you complete throughout the semester, as well as a final reflective essay you will complete during the final exam period. Make sure you save all work throughout the semester in your portfolio; a running list of the portfolio assignments will be available on Canvas throughout the semester. Some portfolio assignments may be completed late if you are absent, but group assignments cannot be made up if you miss class during those assignments (any portfolio that starts with the word “group”). The reflection and portfolio will be graded according to completeness and thoroughness, demonstration of knowledge of course concepts and texts, organization, thoughtfulness, attention to detail and instructions, and clarity of writing.

**Participation:** Your participation grade is composed of all non-portfolio homework and classwork assignments, as well as your daily participation grade.

- **Rough drafts and other process work:** in order to allow students to work on thorough revision and editing, rough drafts and other non-portfolio writing assignments must be on time and *complete* – they must meet minimum word, formatting, and research requirements for the assignment in order to receive full credit. If the daily schedule requires submission both in hard copy and online, the work must be submitted in both places to receive full credit. Drafts submitted after the end of each unit will not receive credit.
- **Daily Participation Grade:** this grade is determined by your active preparation and engagement in class activities. Each student receives the maximum number of points at the beginning of the course, but you may lose points for absences, excessive or repeated tardiness, disruptive behavior, using cell phones without permission during class, lack of engagement in class activities, failing to be prepared for class, failing to have required materials, failing to complete required readings or other preparation for class, or otherwise not adequately participating or engaging.

**Standards for Instructor Response:** The turnaround time for homework, quizzes, and other small assignments will generally be within 3-4 days, and grades will be recorded on Canvas. The turnaround time for major papers will generally be around 7-8 days, and students will be able to access feedback and grades on Canvas.

**Scholastic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:** Please see section 7-2.2 of the *Collin Student Handbook* for definitions of scholastic dishonesty and plagiarism and information on Collin’s policies. Plagiarism includes errors such as missing quotation marks around a quote, missing or incorrect citations, missing

Works Cited pages, taking credit for someone else's idea or words, colluding with other people on individual assignments, etc. If a student is found responsible for academic dishonesty or plagiarism (intentional or unintentional), a penalty ranging from a 0 on an assignment to an F in the course will be assigned based on the instructor's interpretation of the severity of the situation.

**Extra Credit:** There will be several opportunities to gain a small amount of extra credit; this can allow you to make up for missing any in-class activities, etc. Instructions will be available on Canvas. All extra credit must be submitted by 11:59pm on Sunday, December 2. No late extra credit work will be accepted.

### **ATTENDANCE AND OTHER POLICIES**

**Attendance:** Attendance is vital in this class. You should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. *You cannot get credit for an in-class activity if you are not in class.* Additionally, I will cover material during class that is not in the readings but will be required in your essays and assignments; you will still be held accountable for course concepts even if you are absent from class when we go over them. In other words, your grade in the course will be directly impacted by not attending class.

**If you are absent, you should still be prepared for the next class that you attend.** Get contact information for classmates to make sure you stay caught up. Homework assignments are always available in the syllabus; if you ask me what the homework is, I will refer you to the syllabus.

**Religious Holidays:** Please notify me beforehand about any class days you will miss for religious holidays so that I can plan accordingly. Please reference Section 2 Policies and Procedures, Sub-section 2.23 Religious Holidays in the current *Collin College Student Handbook*.

**Tardiness and Leaving Class Early:** Tardiness is frequently disruptive to other students and to the teacher; please be prompt and prepared for every class. Being significantly or frequently late to class may result in loss of participation credit. If you need to leave class early, please let me know before class whenever possible, and leave as quietly as you can. If an emergency arises and you do leave without letting me know before class, please send an email afterward as a courtesy to me.

**Civility:** Over the course of the term, we will likely discuss sensitive matters and explore differing viewpoints. Please be considerate and respectful towards everyone throughout the course in both discussion and writing. Audience awareness and respect are key components of successful composition and academic/professional communication.

**Disruptive Behavior:** Behavior that detracts from the positive learning environment of the classroom will not be tolerated (Please reference Section 7 Student Code of Conduct, Sub-section 1.2 Disorderly Conduct in the current *Collin College Student Handbook*).

### **TECHNOLOGY**

**Computer and printer problems are not valid excuses for late or missing work;** make sure you save your work on a flash (USB) drive, email it to yourself, and/or save it to a cloud service (like dropbox, OneDrive, or Google docs) to make sure you don't lose it if anything happens to the computer or internet connection.

**Technical Help:** Please complete work early to give yourself extra time in case of technical problems. Students needing technical help with software, attachments, or e-mail should seek help here:

<http://www.collin.edu/aboutus/helpdesk.html>

**Submission errors:** If you ever have problems submitting work on Canvas, please immediately email me a copy of the completed work to show me that it was finished by the due date, with a full explanation of what you are sending me. An email without the completed work attached as a .doc or .docx will not demonstrate that the work was completed on time. I do not open emails that just contain attachments; make sure you use full email etiquette as always. You must still submit your work on Canvas as soon as possible in order to receive credit.

**Cell phones:** Please have all cell phones and other electronic devices on vibrate during class time. If you are expecting an emergency call, please step outside the classroom to take your call. If you think there may be an educational reason to use your cell phone, please ask me whether it's ok to take it out. Use of a cell phone without permission may result in loss of participation points.

**Laptops and tablets:** You may bring and use laptops or tablets during the portions of the class when you are doing in-class writing or other activities where they may be useful. Please have the laptops and tablets closed or off during large- or small-group discussions so that you can participate more fully in those discussions. Use of a laptop for non-class activities may result in loss of participation points for the day.

## **SOBI**

Collin College's Strategies of Behavioral Intervention (SOBI) team is an interdisciplinary, college-wide team whose mission is to provide support for students, faculty, and staff, and to facilitate a positive and effective learning environment. In order to accomplish this, the SOBI team has designed a process for assisting students who may display various levels of concerning behavior (e.g., strange or unusual behavior; changes in dress, personal hygiene, or physical appearance; threats of harm to self or others; etc.). Any behavior that becomes a concern to you or that negatively affects your ability to succeed as a student at Collin College may be referred to SOBI.

Please note that SOBI is not a disciplinary committee, and SOBI actions are not a substitute for disciplinary procedures. Reports of Student Code of Conduct (Code) violations will be referred directly to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

To submit a SOBI referral through CougarWeb, go to the "Student" tab, scroll down to the section entitled, "Safety and Wellness" and then click on "Refer information of concern (SOBI)". Complete the form as fully and as accurately as possible. You can obtain more information about SOBI (including how to submit a referral from off-campus) on the SOBI website, which can be found [here](https://www.collin.edu/studentresources/SOBI/) (<https://www.collin.edu/studentresources/SOBI/>).

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

This schedule may be subject to change; if I make any adjustments, I will announce them in class and through Canvas beforehand. Be aware that all assigned readings may be tested through unannounced quizzes in class.

<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 1 MEETING DETAILS</b>
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<p>Monday, August 27</p>	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions. Syllabus review. Introduction to Canvas. Audience awareness activity. Introduction to portfolio and projects. Introduction to groups and groupwork. Chapter 1 in book. Review readings. Go over Unit 1 writing assignments. Review organization and formatting. Practice reading and understanding correspondence and directions. Collaborative activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign the “Student Syllabus Agreement.”</li> <li>• Read <i>Practical Strategies</i> Chapters 1, 2 and 9 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>• Complete your Unit 1 writing assignment rough drafts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>DATES</b></p>	<p><b>WEEK 2 MEETING DETAILS</b></p>
<p>Monday, September 3</p>	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No class: Labor Day</li> </ul>
<p><b>DATES</b></p>	<p><b>WEEK 3 MEETING DETAILS</b></p>
<p>Monday, September 10</p>	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer review. Comma splices and fragments. Revision and editing. Clarity and concision. Audience awareness. Review readings. Audience awareness and tone practice. Collaborative activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Practical Strategies</i> Chapter 4 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>• Revise Unit 1 assignments.</li> <li>• Also, study for Quiz 1: Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 9.</li> </ul>
<p><b>DATES</b></p>	<p><b>WEEK 4 MEETING DETAILS</b></p>
<p>Monday, September 17</p>	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Unit 2. Review readings. Practice making job ad. Quiz 1: Chapters 1, 2, 4 and 9. Collaborative activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Practical Strategies</i> Chapter 10 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>• Complete your rough draft of your Unit 2 materials.</li> </ul>
<p><b>DATES</b></p>	<p><b>WEEK 5 MEETING DETAILS</b></p>



Monday, September 24	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer review. Revision and editing. Clarity and concision. Audience awareness. Review readings from Chapter 10. Review ethical decision making. Discuss layout and design elements. Collaborative exercise.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Practical Strategies</i> Chapter 7 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>Final draft of Unit 2 materials due.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 6 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, October 1	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Unit 3. Review readings from Chapter 7. Practice project report. Create timelines. Practice research and citation. Collaborative exercise.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Practical Strategies</i> Chapter 12 and Chapter 5 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>Rough draft of Unit 3 materials due.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 7 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, October 8	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review readings. Peer review Unit 3 materials. Read models. Go over citation practices. Collaborative exercise.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final draft of Unit 3 materials due.</li> <li>Also, study for Quiz 2: Chapters 5, 7, 10, and 12.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 8 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, October 15	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Unit 4: proposal. Practice proposal in class. Target audience and review of audience awareness. Collaborative activity. Quiz 2: Chapters 5, 7, 10, and 12.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Practical Strategies</i> Chapter 11 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>Rough draft of Unit 4: proposal due.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 9 MEETING DETAILS</b>

Monday, October 22	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer review and revision/editing. Review readings. Discuss how/where to use graphics. Audience awareness and language/jargon. Organization and clarity of concepts. Collaborative activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Practical Strategies</i> Chapter 6 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>Revise Unit 4 materials.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 10 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, October 29	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Unit 5: oral presentation. Presentation practice in groups. Collaborative activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Chapter 15 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>Complete your Unit 5 materials and prepare for your oral presentation of your proposal.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 11 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, November 5	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review readings. Practice presenting; collaborative activity. Present your Unit 5 materials. Introduction to Unit 6.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Chapter 8 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>Prepare your rough draft of your Unit 6 materials.</li> <li>Also, study for Quiz 3: Chapters 6, 11, and 15.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 12 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, November 12	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer review in class. Review elements of design. Practice rhetorical analysis together. Collaborative activity. Quiz 3: Chapters 6, 11, and 15.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Chapter 3 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>Revise Unit 6 materials.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 13 MEETING DETAILS</b>

Monday, November 19	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review readings. Introduction to Unit 7. Practice creating instructions. Review audience awareness. Discuss liability and ethics in Ch. 2 again. Collaborative activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <i>Practical Strategies</i> Chapter 14 and complete portfolio assignment.</li> <li>Complete rough draft of Unit 7 materials.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 14 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, November 26	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer review for Unit 7 materials. Revision. Grammar review. Collaborative activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise your Unit 7 assignments. Study for Quiz 4: Chapters 3, 8, 14.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 15 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, December 3	<p><b>In class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz 4: Chapters 3, 8, 14. Collaborative activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finish portfolio.</li> </ul>
<b>DATES</b>	<b>WEEK 16 MEETING DETAILS</b>
Monday, December 10, 7- 9:45pm	<p><b>Final exam:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final reflection during the final exam period.</li> </ul>